

Media release

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For immediate release

Draft ISP aims to right-size transmission and reinforces networks as the backbone of the energy transition

- **Projected need for new transmission reduced from 10,000km to 6,000km**
- **Collaborative innovation to better leverage distribution connected resources, reducing impact on customers' wallets**
- **National industry body represents Australia's electricity transmission and distribution and gas distribution networks**

The release of AEMO's Draft 2026 Integrated System Plan (ISP) provides greater clarity on the scale of infrastructure needed to deliver Australia's energy transition at lowest cost, and importantly, aims to **right-size the task ahead**.

The Draft ISP reinforces the central role of transmission as the backbone of the electricity system. It confirms that around **6,000 kilometres of new transmission** will be required to connect new renewable generation and storage, with around **2,800 kilometres already underway**.

This represents a meaningful shift from earlier public commentary that suggested up to 10,000 kilometres of new lines may be required.

Energy Networks Australia CEO Dom van den Berg said the Draft ISP brings welcome clarity to the national conversation about networks.

"The ISP makes clear that networks are not an optional add-on - they are the backbone that allows new generation, storage and customer-owned resources to operate as a reliable, integrated system," Ms van den Berg said.

"It also confirms that transmission investment represents around seven per cent of the future capital cost of the energy transition, while delivering substantial whole-of-system benefits for consumers."

Ms van den Berg said the ISP appropriately highlights the need for the entire sector to remain focused on **total system costs**, not individual components in isolation.

"Industry, policy makers and regulators must stay eyes-wide-open on the affordability challenge and work together to keep costs down across the whole system," she said.

The Draft ISP also begins to more fully recognise the role of **distribution networks** in enabling the transition, including through innovative approaches that reduce the need for transmission investment.

“It is encouraging to see greater recognition of the role distribution networks can play, including projects like the proposed Dubbo hub in New South Wales, which would connect around 2.4 gigawatts of capacity directly to the distribution grid,” Ms van den Berg said.

“Smart use of distribution networks can complement the transmission build and deliver faster connections, lower costs and better outcomes for customers.”

Ms van den Berg said Australia’s world-leading uptake of rooftop solar, batteries and electric vehicles means consumer assets must be integrated into planning and operations in a way that benefits all customers.

“Australians are global leaders in rooftop solar,” she said.

“Ensuring those devices can be coordinated and used efficiently will help put downward pressure on prices and improve outcomes for everyone, including customers who can’t invest in these technologies themselves.”

Ms van den Berg said the Draft ISP shows the pathway to net zero is achievable, but delivery will be critical.

“This Draft ISP demonstrates that net zero is within reach but only if momentum is maintained and the sector continues to work together,” she said.

“ENA is committed to working with AEMO, industry partners, and governments to achieve the right mix of new infrastructure to deliver a reliable, affordable net-zero energy system at the lowest possible cost for all Australians.”

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Additional information:

- ENA is the national industry body representing Australia’s electricity transmission and distribution and gas distribution networks. Our members provide more than 16 million electricity and gas connections to almost every home and business across Australia.

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