

Media release

Thursday, 25 June, 2026

For immediate release

Final ISP 2026 makes clear: transmission and whole-of-system coordination are critical to least-cost delivery

- **Projected near-term need for new transmission right-sized down to 6,000km – almost half of which is already underway**
- **Collaborative use of existing distribution connected resources will reduce impact on customers' wallets**
- **National industry body represents Australia's electricity transmission and distribution and gas distribution networks**

Energy Networks Australia (ENA) says the final 2026 Integrated System Plan (ISP) confirms the scale of investment and coordination required to deliver a reliable, least-cost transition to net zero with coordinated delivery remaining the critical challenge.

The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) today released the final ISP, setting out the least cost roadmap for generation, storage and transmission infrastructure across the National Electricity Market (NEM) to 2050.

Developed under the National Electricity Rules, the ISP reinforces the central role of network investment and the need to deliver infrastructure at pace to support the energy transition.

ENA Acting Chief Executive, Dominic Adams, said the final ISP confirms that the energy transition is well underway.

"We are no longer questioning whether we should go ahead with the energy transition; we're doing it. Key to success is to ensure there is collaboration and no bottlenecks to delivering the fairest, lowest-cost solutions for all Australians."

Transmission remains central to lowest cost delivery

The ISP confirms the need for around 6,000 km of new transmission, down from an estimated 10,000 km (2022). This extends the existing network by approximately 14 per cent, with around 20 projects identified as actionable or already underway.

"Transmission remains the backbone of the future energy system, connecting renewable generation and storage to where electricity is needed, in a lowest-cost pathway," Mr Adams said.

The ISP's Optimal Development Path (ODP) also confirms stronger economic benefits from transmission investment, with updated analysis showing that \$6billion in transmission investment to 2050 will save consumers nearly \$30billion in avoided capital, operating and fuel costs compared to a pathway without transmission investments.

Growing recognition of distribution networks' ability to play a bigger role

The final ISP also highlights the role of distribution networks, identifying projects that provide a cost-effective pathway to connect utility-scale generation and storage to load centres.

Mr Adams said it was encouraging to see growing recognition that distribution networks can play a bigger role in enabling the transition, including through smart and innovative solutions that reduce pressure on transmission investment.

“Across the country we already have distribution assets that can and are working smarter to deliver a fair transition,” he said.

Lack of coordination and delivery risks remain the critical challenge

The ISP’s sensitivity analysis underscores the risks of delays in both transmission and generation build-out, which could increase costs and place pressure on system reliability.

Mr Adams said the modelling makes clear that delays come at a cost for consumers, for reliability and for the broader transition.

“The focus now is on working together across industry, governments and regulators to ensure this infrastructure is delivered efficiently and at least cost to consumers,” he said.

**** ends ****

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.

Media enquiries: Kirsten Hodgon, news@energynetworks.com.au, 0404 306 819