

Get Street Smart

Unlocking Affordable EV Charging for All
Australians

May 2026

From the CEO

Electric vehicles (EV) have the potential to deliver real, everyday savings for Australians, while also lowering emissions and making better use of our existing electricity grid. But today, too many Australians are missing out.

One key reason: we do not have enough accessible, affordable public charging.

This gap is holding Australia back. It is slowing EV uptake, leaving us behind other countries, and creating an uneven playing field. For many people, especially apartment dwellers, renters, and those without off-street parking, owning an EV is simply not practical without reliable and low-cost public charging. That is not fair, and it is not efficient.

We are stuck in a “chicken-and-egg” dilemma. Without enough chargers, people won’t switch to EVs. Without enough EVs, private investment in charging remains slow and still requires support. Breaking this cycle requires a practical, scalable solution.

That solution exists.

We are proposing a smarter way forward leveraging distribution infrastructure and skills to provide customers with access to competitive EV charging services at kerbside charge points.

By enabling distribution networks to install, own and maintain kerbside EV charging using existing infrastructure, such as power poles, we can deliver faster, more affordable, and more widespread access to charging where people need it.

This is about putting customers first.

What we are proposing will:

- ✓ **Lower costs** by using infrastructure we already have, avoiding unnecessary duplication
- ✓ **Expand access** so more Australians, including those without home charging, can benefit from EV savings
- ✓ **Increase choice** by allowing multiple independent providers to offer charging services
- ✓ **Drive competition** between charging providers, putting downward pressure on prices
- ✓ **Improve the grid** by increasing utilisation, which benefits all electricity users – not just EV owners

Importantly, this model maintains clear roles in the market. Distributors would not sell electricity or charging services. Instead, they would enable the infrastructure and provide open access, allowing retailers and charging companies to compete for customers. This mirrors the way energy is delivered to homes today.

It is not mandatory, and it does not crowd out other approaches. It simply unlocks a faster, lower-cost pathway to deliver the infrastructure Australians need.

This is about fairness, affordability, and making the energy transition work for everyone.

Dominique van den Berg
Chief Executive, Energy Networks Australia



THE PROBLEM

Australia's charging gap is holding back EVs.

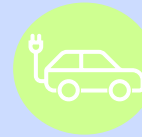
Too many Australians can't make the switch to an EV because they can't charge one at home or don't have the confidence they can when they're away from their home.

With only a quarter of the chargers per EV than the rest of the world, *Australia is caught in a cycle where chargers wait for drivers and drivers wait for chargers.*

That cycle won't break itself.

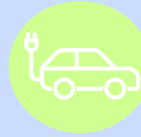
The numbers:

45



EVs per public charger
in **Australia**

11



Global average EVs
per public charger

Top barriers to EV adoption in Australia

59%

Purchase
cost

54%

Limited driving
range

51%

Lack of public charger

48%

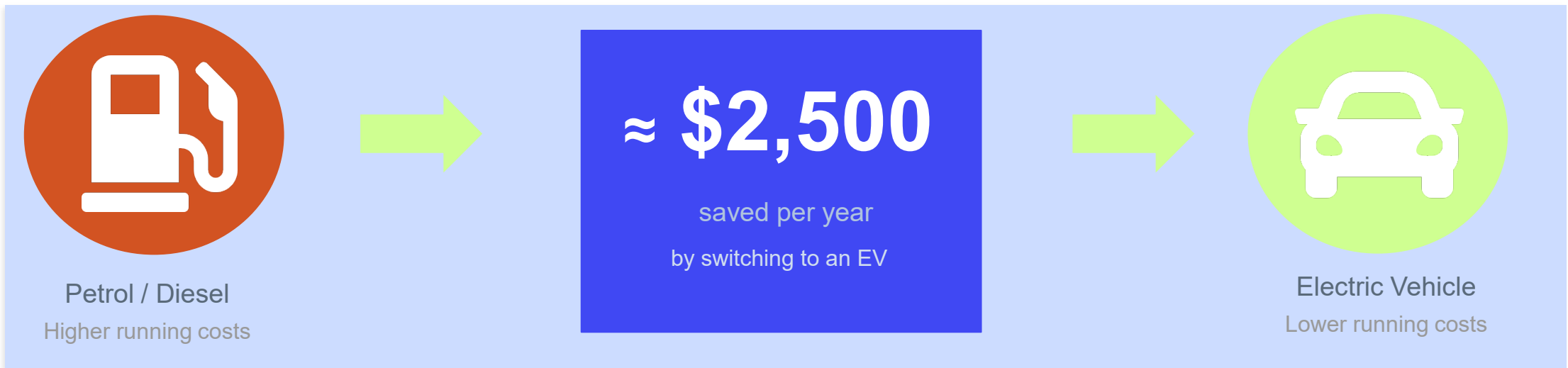
No access to charging at
home



THE STAKES

Without real action, Australians will miss out

Left at the kerb: EVs can save households thousands each year. And the benefits go beyond EV owners – all energy users win from improved utilisation of the grid, and a lower emissions energy system. But ***without action on charging, Australians will miss out***, especially those without access to home charging, like renters and apartment dwellers, meaning we also **risk deepening energy inequality**.



Plus all consumers benefit from better use of the grid



How it works:

Three steps to accessible kerbside charging

1

Distributors provide the infrastructure

Install, own and maintain kerbside EV chargers on existing power poles



2

Charging providers compete at the socket

Open access means multiple providers compete to offer charging services



3

Customers choose their provider

Drivers pick their preferred retailer or charging company – just like electricity at home



Customers benefit from more choice and better prices

THE SOLUTION

A simple solution: use what we already have

Provide widespread access to convenient, affordable, and reliable kerbside charging by allowing distributors to leverage their existing workforce and infrastructure, such as power poles, to accelerate deployment.

The proposed model mirrors the way energy is delivered to homes today.



Benefits of leveraging distributors

Fairer & more affordable: In many cases, distributors can deliver public kerbside charging at lower cost, faster, with more competition and less disruption, leading to an improved customer & community experience.



More competition

Open access drives multiple retailers competing at every charge point, pushing prices down & driving innovation in service offerings



Lower cost

Over 50% cheaper than commercial operators by leveraging existing poles and workforce



Faster deployment

Up to 40 chargers per week per distributor using established infrastructure and crews



Fairer access

Give access to regional and remote customers, not just high-profit, urban areas – tackling the ‘chicken and egg’ problem for all customers



Better reliability

Expert asset management and maintenance – ensuring that the chargers work when EV drivers need them



Less disruption

Plug-and-play on existing poles avoids footpath excavation and community disruption



Clear roles, clear boundaries

Built on what works: In ENA's proposed rule, distributors provide the infrastructure, not sell electricity – mirroring the way energy is delivered to homes today in partnership with retailers.

What this reform does

- ✓ Unlocks faster, more affordable access to EV charging by allowing distributors to install chargers on existing poles as a regulated service
- ✓ Provides open access to the EV chargers to third parties who would then sell charging services to customers
- ✓ Customers benefit from more choice and better prices. All energy users win from improved utilisation of the grid, & a lower emissions energy system
- ✓ Subject to full AER regulatory oversight and cost scrutiny. Allows for a range of cost recovery mechanisms

What this reform does not do

- ✗ Distributors do not sell electricity or retail charging services to customers
- ✗ No exclusivity granted to any party at any charge point
- ✗ No chargers built away from existing network assets, and no fast chargers
- ✗ Does not prevent other types of charging models → complementary to commercial rollout
- ✗ Does not stop distributors from continuing to provide third party pole rentals



ENA's rule change at a glance

Better outcomes for all: ENA has submitted a rule change proposal that unlocks faster, more affordable access to kerbside EV charging by allowing distributors to install, own and maintain kerbside EVCI on existing network assets as a regulated distribution service.

Clarity on service classification

Creates a 'Distribution EVCI Service' classified as a direct control service under the NER, giving regulatory certainty and enabling it as an option without mandating it

AER oversight preserved

The AER retains full discretion on cost-recovery mechanism (standard or alternative control) and robust cost scrutiny and engagement through the revenue determination process

Deployment strategy required

Each distributor must publish a Distribution EVCI Deployment Strategy covering rollout plans, open access arrangements and stakeholder engagement

Transitional reopener

Allows distributors to apply to reopen current regulatory determinations so deployment can start now – not wait up to 5 years for the next reset



THE PROPOSAL

Get street smart.

Accelerate EV charging that's accessible to everyone.

Enable electricity networks to install, own and maintain EV chargers on existing power poles — unlocking a faster, cheaper roll out of kerbside charging for Australians.



Powered by existing network infrastructure

The reform will:

Five outcomes from one smart policy change



Lower costs

Use infrastructure we already have, avoiding unnecessary duplication.



Expand access

More Australians, including those without home charging, can benefit from EV savings.



Increase choice

Allow multiple independent providers to offer charging services on shared infrastructure.



Drive competition

Competitive provider market puts downward pressure on charging prices.



Improve the grid

Higher utilisation benefits all electricity users, not just EV owners.



This is about fairness, affordability, and making the energy transition work for everyone.

Find ENA's
rule change
[here](#)

Without action, the benefits of EVs will remain out of reach for many households. **With the right regulatory settings, we can unlock those benefits now**, delivering lower costs, greater choice, and a cleaner energy future for all Australians.