

20 November 2018

## **NETWORK INNOVATION POWERING OUR ENERGY FUTURE**

Energy Networks Australia has today recognised network businesses that have shown leadership in innovation with the announcement of the finalists for the 2018 Industry Innovation Award.

Energy Networks Australia CEO Andrew Dillon congratulated the four finalists, Essential Energy, Evoenergy, Jemena and TasNetworks.

“The award recognises leadership in the design, development and application of a ground-breaking Australian energy network initiative, technology, service, or solution,” Mr Dillon said.

This year the judges reviewed 12 applications that demonstrated how networks are finding new and exciting ways to solve some of the complex challenges the energy industry is facing.

“The feedback from the judging panel was that the standard of applications had improved across the board, with businesses pushing what is possible and embracing new approaches,” Mr Dillon said.

“As you would expect, several finalists have used technology to help them innovate, but sometimes an innovative solution can be a simple, non-technology focused way to improve how a network does business.”

### **Essential Energy, Quality Assurance Lab**

Getting prices down is a focus for all networks and Essential Energy are doing this with a trailblazing testing laboratory for electricity network equipment.

“Field teams identified a need to test materials more thoroughly than manufacturing compliance standards to ensure they can stand up to the environmental conditions they were exposed to,” Mr Dillon said.

“The premise is simple and highly pragmatic but its impact has been enormous with the Lab contributing more than \$95 million of value over the past five years. Developed on a shoe-string budget and with staff donating their time to initially set up the lab, the Quality Assurance Lab is now a permanent business operation.”

### **Evoenergy, Demand reduction incorporating ACT Virtual Power Plant**

Developed in partnership with Reposit Power and SolarHub, the Canberra Virtual Power Plant is the first and largest of its kind in the world.

“Made up of more than 400 residential battery storage systems, the virtual power plant involves a number of technology providers and can remotely control the VPP to dispatch stored electricity back into the network when required,” Mr Dillon said.

“Along with other demand management strategies, the initiatives have proven how they can help future-proof the grid by having large and small customers able to respond at a moment’s notice to reduce the impact on the wider community.”

### **Jemena, Demand response trial: power chargers**

More than 600 households signed up to the Jemena trial that saw average peak electricity consumption on hot days reduced by between 23 and 35 per cent.

“The rich behavioural insights from the trial will help inform future demand response programs,” Mr Dillon said.

“Participants expressed a high level of satisfaction and reported feeling motivated to reduce their electricity usage, saving money on their electricity bill and motivated to be more conscious about conserving electricity.”

### **TasNetworks, CONSORT Bruny Island battery trial**

The trial helped 34 customers install solar generation and a battery on their homes to test the ability of distributed generation to be an alternative to a diesel generator during periods of peak holiday demand.

“The trial has shown how a modest number of residential PV and battery systems are able to provide a disproportionately large benefit to the grid,” Mr Dillon said.

“Diesel usage is down by about 30 per cent but more generally, the project delivers optimisation of distributed energy resources, which increases grid reliability.”

### **2018 Winner**

The Industry Innovation Awards will be announced at the Energy Networks Australia Annual Dinner on Tuesday 27 November and presented by the Minister for Energy, the Hon. Angus Taylor MP.

Details of the judging panels can be found [here](#).

### **ENDS**

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*Energy Networks Australia represents Australia’s electricity transmission and distribution networks and gas distribution networks. Our members provide energy to virtually every household and business in Australia.*