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New power security plan confirms vital role of Transmission

Australia's transmission networks have welcomed reforms to ensure clear roles for power system security in a changing electricity system.

The Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) today released the Final Report of its System Security Market Frameworks Review. It recommends Transmission businesses be required to maintain minimum levels of 'inertia', or other equivalent services, to provide power system security.

Energy Networks Australia CEO John Bradley said transmission networks were ready to 'step up' to new challenges in maintaining system inertia and system strength as the generation mix changes.

"Transmission businesses are ready to extend their current role supporting system security by using their own resources and also buying services from the market if required," Mr Bradley said.

"The Finkel Report highlighted the need to modernise these rules and to be clear about the accountability and roles of each party, so system security can't 'fall between the stools'".

Mr Bradley said future closures of synchronous generation made it vital to anticipate, and carefully manage, impacts on frequency and system strength in Australia's power system.

"The loss of synchronous generation can make it harder to keep the system stable in frequency disturbances or reduce the strength of the system to manage fault events," Mr Bradley said.

"Under the reforms, Transmission networks would be responsible for ensuring inertia and system strength, and the report confirms they have strong incentives to minimise the costs of doing so."

Mr Bradley warned it was only a matter of time before similar system security challenges on the high voltage transmission network would need to be managed in distribution networks also.

"The current recommended reforms to National Energy Market are welcome but it's important to recognise the potential for rapid changes in system security in some parts of the distribution grid too," Mr Bradley said.

"Energy networks will work constructively with the AEMC and the Australian Energy Market Operator to ensure efficient solutions which maintain system security."

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