

31 October 2017

MEDIA RELEASE

Networks map path for a smarter, decentralised grid

Interactive maps of the Australian electricity grid to support more reliable, cleaner and local energy solutions have been released today in a collaboration between research agencies, government and industry.

The *Network Opportunity Maps* provide detailed information to encourage local renewable energy, battery storage and smart demand management in the Australian electricity grid.

“Energy Networks are excited about the potential for these maps to help build a smarter and more reliable grid, enabling alignment of customer assets to avoid spending more on poles and wires in the future,” Energy Networks Australia interim CEO, Andrew Dillon said.

Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) CEO Ivor Frischknecht said better information about the grid will help develop vibrant markets for new energy services.

“The Network Opportunity Maps complement the forthcoming Demand Management Incentive Scheme for network businesses, and ARENA’s three-year demand response trial projects. These initiatives should lead to creative solutions to reduce network costs and improve grid reliability,” Mr Frischknecht said

“This is where the sharing economy meets the electricity sector,” said ISF Research Director Chris Dunstan. “The Network Opportunity Maps will identify areas of emerging constraint in the grid. These may be areas where businesses and residential customers can use their own energy resources, like solar, batteries, and smart energy management to support the network and be rewarded for it.”

The new Maps include the latest network investment and load forecast data and indicate how much new generation – such as new solar and wind farms – can be connected in each area.

The Hon. Don Harwin, Minister for Resources, Energy and Utilities, said, “The NSW Government is proud to have supported the Network Opportunity Maps. I’m excited that this resource will make it easier to choose the right location and size of clean energy projects.

“The maps will help drive investment in regional NSW, and improve the grid whilst reducing network costs for consumers.”

Today’s map launch is the culmination of a three-year research project by the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) at UTS in collaboration with Energy Networks Australia. The maps were developed with support from ARENA, the NSW Government, CSIRO and industry partners including Ergon Energy, AusNet Services, Powerlink, ElectraNet and Transgrid. Energy Networks Australia will be responsible for ongoing management of the Maps.

Energy Queensland CEO David Smales said that the Ergon Energy network business was proud to have been a founding partner of the Network Opportunity Maps.

“Geo-spatial mapping and the provision of richer sources of information enable us to engage and interact with our customers in a more efficient and dynamic way to support the development of sustainable energy solutions for Queensland communities,” Mr Smales said.

The Network Opportunity Maps are now available on the Australian Renewable Energy Mapping Infrastructure (AREMI) site: <http://nationalmap.gov.au/renewables/>.

A webinar briefing on the maps will be conducted 2 November 2017 from 2.30-4:00pm. **Register [HERE](#).**

ENDS

MEDIA CONTACT

ISF

Xavier Mayes,

e: Xavier.Mayes@uts.edu.au

t: 0423 030 658

Energy Networks Australia

Emma Watts,

e: ewatts@energynetworks.com.au

t: 0402 459 565

About the Network Opportunity Maps

An early version of these maps was released in 2016.

The **final 2017 Network Opportunity Maps** updates all data and includes the following new information:

- **New “generation connection opportunities” layers** showing the indicative capacity of the network to accept new distributed power plants. Click [here](#)
- **Peak day load curve** information for most zones and constrained network assets in the National Electricity Market. Click [here](#)
- New **visualisation of proposed network investment** visualisation according to constraint season, investment driver and asset type. Click [here](#)
- Constraint data down to the **distribution feeder level** for AusNet Services (eastern Victoria) Click [here](#)
- The maps are also updated to cover the load forecast and investment planning period Winter 2016-Summer 2025/26 (current to Annual Planning Reports of December 2016 for distribution and July 2017 for Transmission)

More information: <http://www.energynetworks.com.au/network-opportunity-maps> ;
www.arena.gov.au

Contacts: **Chris Dunstan, Project Director:** Chris.Dunstan@uts.edu.au or **Dr Stuart Johnston:**
SJohnston@energynetworks.com.au

Energy Networks Australia represents Australia’s electricity transmission and distribution networks and gas distribution networks. Energy Networks Australia members provide energy to virtually every household and business in Australia. For further information, visit www.energynetworks.com.au.

The Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) is an interdisciplinary research and consulting organisation at the University of Technology Sydney setting global benchmarks since 1997 in helping governments, organisations, businesses and communities achieve change towards sustainable futures. We utilise a unique combination of skills and perspectives to offer long term sustainable solutions that protect and enhance the environment, human wellbeing and social equity. For further information visit www.isf.uts.edu.au.