

[REDACTED]

From: Dane Muldoon [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 17 September 2012 4:59 PM
To: General Electricity Address
Subject: Re: Estimating a Fair and Reasonable Solar Feed-in Tariff for Queensland

Hello,

Our company was founded thirty years ago by my father selling solar hot water systems. These days we offer a range of solar and energy efficiency technologies to residential and commercial customers to help them reduce their energy costs.

With our history and experience we've seen many government incentives come and go but unfortunately what we haven't seen much of is sustainable, long-term support. Solar power and wind have both combined to help lower the gross electricity consumption from the grid's perspective and lower wholesale electricity prices over the last few years that will eventually result in lower energy costs for every Queensland resident. The current net metering scheme in place for photovoltaic installation installed in Queensland allows solar power customers to take control of their energy costs, reduce their carbon footprint and help meet afternoon peak demand. The net metering scheme needs to be retained.

For years now we've heard from Energex and Ergon that surging residential peak demand between 4pm and 8pm is resulting in the need for extensive upgrades to our electricity network costing billions of dollars, but unfortunately it appears that much of this spending was to make the grid stronger, not smarter. Given this situation I feel that a great opportunity to promote solar power during peak demand periods has been lost. Why not offer a 44c/kWh solar feed-in from 4pm to 8pm and 8c/kWh feed-in at all other times?

Clearly for a customer to feed solar power back into the grid at 8pm they will need some form of energy storage. Currently grid-connected battery systems are very expensive (we already sell them) in the same way that solar power was very expensive just four years ago. Within a few years though we expect energy storage systems to be far more affordable and by simply offering 44c/kWh during peak times this process can be greatly accelerated. The technology to save solar power to energy storage during the day and then release it back into the building in the evening via a net metering scheme is already available on the Australian market today.

A peak period feed-in tariff will clearly help reduce peak demand and likely at a far lower cost than upgrading infrastructure. We don't actually need a stronger grid, we need a smarter grid and the fastest way to achieve that is to embrace solar power, not reject it. It's time to start seeing solar power as the solution not the problem.

Kind regards,
Dane

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Dane Muldoon
Commercial Sales

Ranked No. 11 in the *BRW* Fast 100 2011



p: 1300 750 055

m: 0401 644 546

e: dane@SolarGuys.com.au

w: www.SolarGuys.com.au