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1. Reduce the cost of meeting carbon targets

1. What could be done to improve the cost-effectiveness and alignment of policies to reduce emissions across the industrial, electricity and transport sectors?

A. During the May 3 2025 Federal Election campaign, the ALP promoted a policy of subsidizing battery installations at sites that already had Photovoltaic (PV) installed there. This is a worthwhile endeavor, however I feel that if implemented this way it will be rorted and subject to abuse in ways similar to the "home insulation" program of years earlier.

I would like to suggest that if the Commonwealth Government were to proceed with the Battery Subsidizing Program, it should be directed to the local Electricity Network/Distribution entity to install batteries as Community Batteries and these would become their "assets" like the infrastructure they currently oversee (poles, wires, transformers, and associated equipment). (In NSW, these entities answer directly to the State Government. Examples are Ausgrid, Endeavour Energy, etc.).

Installing batteries as Community Batteries would in my view have the following advantages with respect to the key criteria of "cost-effectiveness":

1. Infrastructure would be properly designed, properly constructed (including fire protection - battery fire threat often used by antagonists to instill fear in adopting RE) and properly maintained, including upgrades to software and hardware (batteries and inverters).

2. Existing sites owned by the relevant State Government or the Electricity Network/Distribution entity could be used. This would provide greater certainty for any infrastructure or energy capacity constructed and installed thereon.

3. Battery purchases and associated equipment purchases would be at a larger scale - possible bulk purchase cost savings, the savings that often occur when suppliers are dealing with large buyers and/or government agencies, and known quality.

4. The nature of the batteries used need not be of the same form as used in domestic or small business sites. Likewise with inverters - larger capacity inverters usually means greater energy conversion efficiency.

5. An Electricity Network/Distribution entity would have more influence with Standards Authorities, and equipment designers and suppliers when deficiencies are identified.

6. Benefits ALL users connected to the (local) grid whether they currently have or not have PV and/or batteries.

7. As the energy will be stored near where it's used, the need to upgrade or duplicate energy importing transmission lines will likely diminish. Major transmission lines could be

operated at a more constant loading rather than being designed and subjected to peak (highly variable) diurnal demands, and seasonal demands. Equipment operated at constant or essentially constant load tends to have a lower failure rate than equipment subject to peaking loads, with subsequent savings with maintenance. (The road network is an excellent example of having to accommodate highly variable traffic demands with fixed infrastructure that is difficult and expensive to modify).

8. A moderate capacity distributed storage system implemented by Electricity Network/Distribution entities could provide increased robustness from catastrophic events, such as generator failure (QLD Callide C generator), transmission line failure due to floods, bushfires, and extreme weather (wind, temperatures), solar storms, and non-benign disruptive activity. The secondary affects to business from such events are costs that they may no longer have to endure.

(At the time of writing, a conflict is taking place on the other side of the planet wherein cheap airborne drones are destroying amassed and large scale infrastructure assets very easily).

B. Other areas that may return a positive, though small reduction in GHG production at a reasonable monetary investment is the transport sector.

1. Increased use of freight railway for long-haul movements of goods, particularly between capital cities.

To emulate the ease and convenience that currently exists with transporting goods by road-truck transport between these centres, a drive-on, drive-off of the complete trucks, onto the freight train, would be employed. A level of subsidy may be needed to encourage the take-up. Furthermore the prime-movers currently used for long-haul transport could be upgraded to electric drive, as they will only need to operate in urban and periurban areas, and at speeds well below the 100-110kph on major highways/motorways. It has also often been reported that heavy haulage trucks do considerable damage to the roads. The cost of repairs of this collateral damage would be a saving.

The drive-on, drive-off arrangement using the railways is used in the English Channel Tunnel.

2. Urban traffic. With the increased investment in Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the ever present promise of the "self driving" car, investment in applying these technologies to develop visual awareness for traffic lights may improve traffic flows in capital cities particularly during out of peak times. This may save the emissions from ICE powered vehicles forced to stop then accelerate again just to let in one or a few vehicles which, had this event occurred 30 seconds earlier (or later) not disrupted anyone.

I am unable to provide quantitative supporting evidence other than a thought experiment based on simple observation as a qualified Electrical Engineer.

2. Are there gaps in the emissions-reduction policies in the industrial, electricity and transport sectors which should be addressed?

The participant did not respond to this question.

3. Are there any duplicative emissions-reduction policies in the industrial, electricity and transport sectors which could be streamlined?

The participant did not respond to this question.

2. Speed up approvals for new energy infrastructure

1. Are planning and approvals processes for large energy infrastructure taking too long? If so, what causes the most delay?

Yes, in some instances. From recent reports on the ABC's "The 7.30 Report" (29 May 2025) political wannabes and "grandstanders" and others with vested interests appear to whip up discontent whenever they think it's to their advantage. The method that appears to be most often employed is highlighting the "catastrophic" failures (with the use of false or unrelated imagery), and downplaying the advantages.

In the long run, better general education may help, though concrete demonstrable successes are better at reducing anxiety and increasing confidence with the genuinely concerned folk.

"Science and the pursuit of knowledge are given high priority by successful countries, not because they are a luxury which the prosperous can afford; but because experience has taught us that knowledge and its effective use are vital to national prosperity and international standing" Margret Thatcher, speech to the Royal Society (climate change) Sept 1988.

2. How can planning and approvals processes be sped up without unduly compromising regulatory standards?

Make engineering regulatory standards a primary and an essential requirement.

If the science and engineering case stacks up, and the economic case is justified, push the project through.

The affects from Global Warming are a major threat to humanity and other life on this planet.

The former Prime Minister of Great Britain, Margret Thatcher, recognised this, and she stated her position in an address to the United Nations General Assembly in 1989

3. Should clean energy projects be treated differently to other projects for the purpose of environmental and other approvals? If so, how?

Yes. Clean energy projects should be categorized depending upon that projects permanency and impact on the immediate local area, not unlike the logic behind the NSW Complying and Exempt Development Code; if the projects meets certain minimum standards, it may require no approvals from Council/Government agencies, or minimal review and involvement by them.

The success of Roof Top Solar (PV) and also Solar Hot Water (SHW) are good examples. Neighbours appear rarely to complain, and the owners of the PV are contributing to both the energy transformation, and to their finances.

If the building/structure on which the PV and SHW is installed is demolished or destroyed, lingering waste products from these systems are non-exist, or not hazardous.

People seem to forget, nearly all the food that supports life on this planet, is generated from solar energy. That food gives all who consume it the energy to exist. When farmers grow a crop or a backyard gardener grow some vegies, they are harnessing solar energy.

4. What can be done to build local community support for new energy infrastructure projects?

For local community, especially in rural and regional areas, involvement in the construction, ongoing maintenance, and running of large scale projects.

In the case of all, for those with rooftop PV, a fair and reasonable "Feed-in Tariff".

Also for individual generating sites, electrical power sharing so that one site can "gift" their surplus (feed-in) power to a neighbour via the distribution network, whether they be next door or kilometers away. This gives those with PV a "stake in the game", and thus an interest in RE.

Adam Smith wrote in The wealth of Nations:

"To found a great empire for the sole purpose of raising up a people of customers may at first sight appear a project fit only for a nation of shopkeepers. It is, however, a project altogether unfit for a nation of shopkeepers; but extremely fit for a nation whose government is influenced by shopkeepers."

Replace the term "shopkeepers" with "renewable energy providers".

5. Please outline any evidence showing the productivity benefits of faster approvals for energy projects.

Though I don't want to live under an authoritarian government, an example of productivity benefits of faster approvals for [energy] projects is China.

3. Encourage adaptation by addressing barriers to private investment

1. What are the barriers and enablers impacting decisions by owner-occupiers, landlords and developers about how housing is built and updated over time so that it is resilient to the effects of climate change?

The participant did not respond to this question.

2. What information do people need to make decisions about where to live, how to build and how to upgrade their homes to appropriately factor in climate change?

The participant did not respond to this question.

3. What are the most cost-effective retrofitting options for improving the resilience of Australia's existing housing stock? What are their costs and benefits?

The participant did not respond to this question.

4. What role might minimum standards play in ensuring the resilience of Australia's housing stock?

The participant did not respond to this question.

5. The impacts of climate change are being factored into the regulation of where and how houses are built in different ways around Australia. What does leading practice look like? Where is there room for improvement? Are there lessons we can learn from other countries?

The participant did not respond to this question.