

16 January 2026

Chief Executive  
Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)

Email: [ISP@aemo.com.au](mailto:ISP@aemo.com.au)

**Re: Draft 2026 Integrated System Plan (ISP)**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2026 Integrated System Plan (ISP). The plan was the subject of a recent discussion by the Walcha Council at its final meeting for 2025.

The discussion on AEMO's ISP arose in the midst of the Council considering its position on renewable energy projects, given both intensification and advancement of projects, along with supporting infrastructure in recent times. This has seen the Walcha Local Government area being the subject of proposed transmission lines and a substation located within the immediate area.

The Council supports the general thrust of the latest iteration of the ISP. Our Council supports the apparent change in focus in the ISP from wind farms to large-scale solar farms with batteries. It would appear from this Council's vantage point that solar farms and batteries offer a less visually invasive means by which to secure renewable energy to meet the nation's needs. Further, the Council is of the fervent belief that future solar farm developments would be best located as close as practicable to where the demand is domiciled, in the interest of avoiding the need to build additional expensive and visually intrusive transmission lines.

The Council notes that the projections of the ISP are that grid-scale solar capacity is forecast to reach sixty-three GW by 2050. In contrast, wind is expected to reach fifty-seven GW by 2050.

Whilst the Council notes these figures suggest that solar in future will provide a slightly larger portion of the energy required to meet national market needs, it is suggested that the ISP look closely at these forecasts when next reviewing the ISP in order that they remain relevant to market and developmental forces. With the emerging yet strong trend of solar farms and batteries, it could well be that these forecasts may need considerable revision as both the market and communities adapt to the allure of solar farms and batteries.

The Council, in summary commends AEMO for its substantial analysis and forging a clear pathway for the nation to attain its renewable energy goals.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Parry', written in a cursive style.

Stephen Parry  
General Manager