

Submission regarding NEM Reliability. From M. Gunter, former windsmith (1995-2003)

Thank you for the time extension to make this very late submission:

* **Demand-side management** must be brought under the control of energy customers, not the industry's incumbent participants. Collective action via firm public control of the monopoly distribution networks and energy retailers can have significant impacts on the cost of decarbonising NEM e.g. radical **retail tariff reform** and **Conservation Voltage Reduction** every night could rapidly and permanently erode the market share of baseload coal, during a transition to 100% renewables, such as proposed in Andrew Blakers'/ANU's exciting detailed modelling using wind, solar and pumped hydro interconnected via a new or strengthened inland EHV backbone west of the Great Divide.

* **Offshore wind farms** have a superior night-time power output in comparison to land-based wind turbines of the same installed capacity. During the essential, rapid decarbonising process these can also make significant inroads to cut Australia's carbon footprint.

* **Investment decisions for new generation** must not necessarily rely on continuing high and volatile wholesale prices in NEM's/AEMO's arguably dysfunctional spot market. Strong, sensible government reforms of the market might, and definitely should, at last favour big and small consumers, bringing price reductions and stability. This will be greatly enhanced by consumer empowerment in demand management, the "negawatts" idea of e.g. energy conservation, universal retrofits of solar hot water, evaporative cooling.

* **The public interest** is not the same as energy consumers' interests. Selfish, short sighted buyers in a deregulated energy market seek low prices, irrespective of the (currently hidden) carbon cost, yet the ultimate public interest surely is in not trashing the global commons with excess carbon pollution, so we all get a chance to be much more responsible consumers for hopefully many more decades and centuries. After three decades of intense neoliberal economic theory and practice, the public interest in maintaining a healthy planet has been sidelined, but it remains vital for the continued health of the biosphere and for the 7.5 billion people who rely on it for a continued human presence on Earth.

Supporting materials:

1. The late Robert Booth's speech to the South Australia Press Club, winter 2001: <http://www.sapressclub.com.au/transcripts/01-1406-RobertBooth.pdf> may provide useful insights into what ails the wholesale market, how it was doomed from the outset, and what might fix it up. See particularly pp 5-6.

2. My short submission to the Senate's Select Committee into the Resilience of Electricity Infrastructure in a Warming World: http://www.voltscommissar.net/docs/Sub_001.pdf gives some additional detail on the bullet points above. (Cover letter + 5 pages)

MG, 3 March 2017