



'Helping build a renewable a energy community'

DRREA Big Picture News April 2018

North V West facing panels

On Feb 27 (a fine sunny day) I read the inverters at St Marks Emerald and the Emerald RSL just after midday. Both systems are identical (1.5 kW) and about 300 meters apart.

The only difference is that the St Marks system faces north and the RSL west. At 12.30 St Marks had produced 3.2 kilowatt hours of solar power. In contrast the RSL (also in full sun) read just 0.5 kilowatt hours.

Out of curiosity, I went back at 6.15. By then the RSL inverter was reading 4.8 kilowatt hours. I guess that shows West facing systems definitely work best in the afternoon. Unfortunately the office at St Marks was closed so I could not get a final reading for it.

Review of An Activist life

I have just finished reading the book 'Christine Milne, An Activist Life'. It provided an interesting insight into many recent political issues and events. It also revealed a level of dedication to environmental, social justice and human rights causes which exceeded what I would have thought possible with the commitment to a full time job in politics.

New Feed in Tariff's for Vic.

From July 1, 2018 Vic will have new FIT's. See excerpts below from Renew Economy on Feb 28 for details. They are minor changes only from the current minimum of 14.3 cents per kWh.

Victoria's Essential Services Commission has finalised the details of its first-of-a-kind time varying solar feed in tariffs (FiT), which are to be introduced in July 1, 2018, and ultimately become compulsory. The rates will be more or less advertised in its draft report in December.

They will require retailers to pay a minimum 29c/kWh for those who manage to export between 3pm and 9pm, a minimum rate of 10.3c/kWh for the time between 7am and 3pm, and a minimum rate of 7.1c/kWh (down from 7.2c) in the unlikely event anyone is exporting between 10pm and 7am. The use of time-varying tariffs will be voluntary for retailers for just one year.

Renew Magazine, issue 143, April-June 2018 has an interesting analysis of what this change will mean.

National energy Guarantee?

In Renew economy on February 26 Giles Parkinson reported that even power companies have misgivings about the so-called National Energy Guarantee. Below are 2 brief excerpts from his article

“Major retailers and other groups have voiced strong concerns about one of the key design pillars of the proposed national energy guarantee (NEG), saying that it risks squeezing out competition, reducing market liquidity and visibility, and pushing up prices”.

“It shattered the illusion that federal energy minister Josh Frydenberg has sought to create about the “wide support” of industry to the proposed NEG. In reality, there are deep and profound concerns about how, or if, it could work”. Maybe this is what you get from a political response to a non political problem.

Why not Victoria?

As part of its re-election bid the former South Australian Labor government proposed no stamp duty on 100% electric cars and reduced rego fees for 5 years. This sounds like the sort of thing the Victorian government needs to be doing to encourage more of us to go electric.

Floating wind farm

This short excerpt from Joshua Hill from Cleantechnica touched on the merits of a relatively unknown form of wind generation.

“The world’s first floating wind farm, the 30 megawatt Hywind Scotland, is outperforming expectations and operating at levels consistently above that of its seabound offshore brethren, according to project developer Statoil”.

Floating wind farms are suited to water too deep for conventional off shore wind farms which typically are situated in shallow off shore waters. According to the April-June 2018 issue of Renew magazine wind farms situated in deeper waters, further off shore, operate at an average capacity significantly higher than shallow water wind turbines.

Floating solar farm

The northern New South Wales city of Lismore on Tuesday formally opened the country’s largest floating solar installation, and flagged plans to increase its size five-fold or more and to add battery storage.

The 100kW floating solar farm is installed on the East Lismore sewage treatment plant, and along with a 100kW solar installation at a local aquatic centre forms a key part of the local council’s plan to source 100 per cent of its electricity needs from renewable energy by 2023. Source of excerpt: Renew Economy

Co-located wind and solar farm opened

Australia’s first large-scale solar farm co-located with a wind farm was formally opened on Thursday, the first of more than a dozen projects likely to follow suit within the next few years.

Wind and solar have been paired in various off-grid locations, but the 10MW Gullen Range solar farm south of Crookwell in NSW is the first large-scale solar farm on Australia’s main

grid to be co-located with a major wind farm. As discussed previously the sharing of facilities such as grid connections saves considerable costs. Source: Renew Economy

Emerald Going solar

With 7 community buildings and 4 commercial buildings with solar systems Emerald already punches well above its weight. However to beat that one commercial building and three more community buildings are poised to go solar in 2018. Go Emerald!