

Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Bill 2023

Leaving private CER to the private sector.

Chris Lehmann & Georgia Holmes
29 November 2023



Master Electricians Australia (MEA) is the trade association representing electrical contractors recognised by industry, government and the community as the electrical industry's leading business partner, knowledge source and advocate. Our website is www.masterelectricians.com.au

MEA are strong advocates for electrification across Australia and therefore support endeavours to ensure grid is capable of efficiently integrating consumer energy resources (CER).

As a trade association representing small and medium (SME) private electrical contractors, we are pleased to see, and wish to provide a continued emphasis, on the amendments made to the *Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Bill 2023* (the Bill) regarding the importance of leaving private CER installation to the private sector.

MEA notes the Australian Energy Regulator's (AER) Ring-Fencing guideline under 3.1 Legal Separation where a "DNSP may provide distribution services and transmission services, but not provide other services"¹. We stress the importance that when Government Owned Corporations (GOC) are actioning s 3(b) of the Bill, works actioned are strictly limited to the transmission networks. We expect to see CER installation and maintenance within private household and business premises to be fulfilled strictly by private licenced electrical contractors where possible. MEA accepts that there will be circumstances where GOCs, in living up to community service obligations in remote areas, may find that it is not commercially viable for a private provider to provide the services, but that there are many Electrical Contractors in the private market in Queensland that specialise in private CER and off-grid installation and maintenance. These people employ staff in regional and remote areas, and provide an efficient market competitive product.

MEA believes very strongly in the principle of private assets being worked on by the private sector, and GOCs (such as Distribution Network Service Providers) DNSPs living up to the promise of "supplier of last resort". In short, if works are to be carried out on private property, the default position should be for a licensed electrical contractor in the private sector to perform the electrical works and the GOC to perform the regulated works (metering etc).

¹ Australian Energy Regulator *Ring-Fencing Guidelines Electricity Distribution, Version 3, November 2021, 7*