



Humboldt power station – see p. 3

TasReNews

Tasmanian Renewable Energy Alliance

December 2014

TASMANIAN RENEWABLE ENERGY ALLIANCE

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TREA's first birthday

TREA is now just over a year old. It's certainly been a turbulent time for the solar industry and now, more than ever, it is important that there is a strong and united voice representing the industry to the public and to government and regulatory bodies.

In our first year of operation we have:

- Established a strong presence with government, Aurora, TasNetworks and WorkSafe Tasmania.
- Successfully lobbied to increase the size of installations that don't require a building permit from 18m² to 38m².
- Worked with TasNetworks on power quality and overvoltage issues.
- Been invited to participate in TasNetworks' newly formed Tariff Reform Working Group.
- Organised locally based CPD events – CEC accredited installers who attended our CPD events have earned more than the 100 CPD points they have to achieve each year.
- Lobbied to ensure a metering solution that will allow solar owners to offset their solar generation against both tariff 31 and 41 usage which will increase the financial benefits of solar to customers.
- Made the case for the importance of the renewable energy industry for both jobs and economic development to Tasmania.

Our membership has grown to 33 organisations, representing both solar and hydro, solar sales companies, installers, and suppliers. But in this dynamic environment we need more members to continue our work. With your support we can defend and promote the renewable energy industry to the public and government, and continue to provide practical support to our members.

On behalf of the TREA committee I wish you all a safe and enjoyable holiday season and an active, prosperous and renewable new year.

Rob Manson, President, TREA

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About us

The Tasmanian Renewable Energy Alliance:

- Provides a united voice for the renewable energy industry in dealing with government and regulatory agencies.
- Provides services to members that assist them to conduct their business in an efficient and cost effective manner.
- Promotes the use of renewable energy in Tasmania.

TREA welcomes our newest Corporate Member, ABB Australia



Progress on metering

We are pleased to report some progress on the issue of metering of solar PV.

Customers who installed solar after the end of the 1:1 feed-in tariff and who export solar power while they are using power on their hot water, heating or air conditioning are being paid 6c for exporting power at exactly the same time as they are paying 14.9c to import power. **Effectively, solar customers are paying nearly 9c a kWh for electricity they generate and use themselves – power which never leaves their property!**

When the feed-in tariff was reduced in August 2013 the then state government announced that it had instructed Aurora Networks to urgently implement a solution to this problem. TREA has been following up on this issue ever since; with the previous Minister, with Aurora Networks, with the current Minister and most recently with TasNetworks. Initially we received verbal advice that this was not technically possible but following further lobbying we are very pleased to announce that TasNetworks have advised us that their meter supplier EDMI is now developing software solutions to solve this problem. This is expected to be available for testing by TasNetworks next February and on current plans, to be available for all new solar customers by July 2015. Existing solar owners will be able to upgrade to this solution for a fee.

TREA will continue to be active on this issue to ensure that solar owners are able to get the full financial benefit of solar power they generate.

Electrical safety recall

DC Solar Isolator: Katko-NHP brand, Metal and plastic versions sold at Electrical Wholesalers



All NHP DC Solar Isolator Switches type KDA-432 and KDM-432 have been recalled. **This recall includes switches replaced as a result of a previous recall in February 2014.** For more details see recalls.gov.au or www.nhp.com.au/recall.


Promoting solar to the public

While we believe the public remains enthusiastic about solar energy, recent changes to the feed-in tariff and uncertainty about renewable energy policy generally have certainly made homeowners and businesses more confused about the benefits of solar. To help overcome this, TREA have produced a brochure you can use with potential customers. You can download a copy at www.tasrenew.org.au/solar



Make sure you get approval before connecting

TasNetworks have expressed concern that they have come across solar installations that do not have a connection agreement. All solar installers are reminded of the guidelines for [how to connect solar](#) and the [new connection process](#). The official advice we have received from TasNetworks is below.



Attention is drawn to the Section 4.3 (i) of TasNetworks' Electricity Connection Contract (Part 1) - Standard Terms and Conditions:

“The Customer will not connect a generating system to the electrical installation or change an existing connection unless authorised in writing by TasNetworks.”

TasNetworks cannot knowingly authorise connections of generating systems that will generate unsafe voltages.

Customers should be aware that unauthorised connections run the risk of immediate disconnection from the electricity network – potentially leaving the customer with an expensive “stranded” generation asset.

Overvoltage disconnections

We are continuing to work with TasNetworks and Building Standards and Occupational Licensing (formerly WorkSafe Tasmania) on the issue of high voltages in the distribution network and resulting disconnections of solar installations. Electrical contractors can assist with this by reporting locations with high voltages (see box).

TasNetworks are currently conducting a pilot study to see whether it is practical to alter power factor settings in inverters to reduce the voltage rise caused by exporting solar power to the grid.

OVERVOLTAGE – ADVICE TO ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

If you identify a customer supply voltage of 254V or over (without a solar PV system operating), TasNetworks will send a fault crew to investigate.

Ring the TasNetworks fault line on 13 2004 and give them your contact details, the measured voltage and where it was taken.

Please also report any measured voltage (without solar) of between 248-253V. TasNetworks will log the situation. They may not investigate immediately, but this will help identify the scale of the problem and help us lobby for a better long term solution.



News in brief

New TREA committee

Following our AGM on 30 October the TREA office holders are:

- President: Rob Manson, I Want Energy (0409) 255-124
- Senior Vice President: Trevor Seeney, Terrestrial Electrical (0416) 142-435
- Junior Vice President: Peter Burnett, I Want Energy (0429) 515-133
- Secretary: Jason Gulliver, Rexel Electrical Supplies (0418) 431-998
- Treasurer: Rick Gittus, Affordable Solar Tasmania (0428) 310-041
- Ordinary committee member: Andrew Farr, A S Farr Electrical (0412) 120-106
- Public Officer and Executive Officer: Jack Gilding (0407) 486-651

There are three vacancies on the committee and we are particularly keen to get representation from the north of Tasmania.

Join the TREA committee for dinner

Our final committee meeting for the year will be held at 6pm Thursday 11 December at Hotel Soho, 124 Davey St, Hobart. All members and other solar installers are welcome to join us, meet committee members and discuss the future of the solar industry over a drink and dinner.

TREA on ABC 7:30 Report panel

TREA Executive Officer Jack Gilding was part of the panel for a special 7:30 Report on the future of Hydro Tasmania. You can watch the show at

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-10-31/hydro-forum/5859246>



Opening of the Humboldt power station

TREA members Josh and Nigel Tomlin invite you to the official opening of the Humboldt River Power Station by The Honourable Matthew Groom, Minister for State Growth, Energy, Environment, Parks and Heritage at 150 Tyenna Rd, Tyenna on Saturday 6th of December 2014 at 10am followed by a tour and BBQ lunch. RSVP to Josh.Tomlin@riverpowertasmania.com.au or (0400) 265-378 by 28 November.

The Humboldt River Power Station is an innovative 560kW run-of-river small hydro project.



New version of AS/NZS 5033

An updated version of AS/NZS 5033:2014 Installation and Safety Requirements for photovoltaic (PV) arrays was published on 6 Nov 2014. The standard has a 3 month from publication lead in time, therefore compliance will become mandatory on 6 February 2015.

Legislative Council supports FiT review

On 28 October, the Legislative Council passed the following motion: "That the Legislative Council calls on the State Government to review the solar energy program and feed-in tariff with a view to implementing a tariff that will promote the installation of solar energy panels and provide a level of return that is both reasonable and fair to both the home owner and the energy provider."

Raffle winner

The winner of the TREA raffle of the AMI micro-inverter system was Ben Jones from Jonesy's Electrical Services in Triabunna. Thanks to AMI Microinverters who supplied the system, Jason Gulliver who organised the raffle and Dale Lund who helped with the installation.



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Invermay, Tasmania 7248

Energy Efficient Certifications

For professionals working in the industry, you would now be aware that the Building Regulations have been modified to require building approval for all solar PV installations in Tasmania that do not meet the exemptions in the [Building Regulations Advisory Note of November 2013](#).

Protek Building Surveying Services in conjunction with TREA have designed a system that will provide you with an efficient and cost effective means of obtaining approval and extend an offer of a 30% discount for TREA members.

If you want to relieve yourself of the hassle of dealing with multiple Permit Authorities and ensure a simple and speedy approval process, contact Paige on 6332 3700 or pRichardson@protekco.com.au to obtain a detailed explanation of the process and documents required.

Save the RET

Rally for Renewables

As part of the national Rally for Renewables in September, TREA organised a very successful rally outside the offices of Senator Eric Abetz. We hand delivered a letter to Senator Abetz's staff signed by those at the rally.

Tell your solar jobs story

We've all heard the statistics - at least 15,000 jobs are at risk if the Renewable Energy Target is cut or axed. The numbers are scary, but they only tell half the story. Every single number is someone who matters, someone with bills to pay, businesses to run and families to support.

Solar Citizens are getting requests from journalists asking about what's really going on in the solar and renewables businesses across the Australia with the Target at risk. Tasmania is a particular focus because of the importance of the renewable energy industry and the role of Senator Lambie in the changes the federal government is trying to make. Solar Citizens have set up a website to make it easy for people to be put in touch with journalists.

We urge you to register your interest in talking to the media about how threats to the RET affect your business and your livelihood.

Go to solarcitizens.org.au/ret_media_stories to **fill in a simple form** and help get the message out.



Join TREA

Your support for TREA will strengthen our voice with government. As a member you will be consulted on regulatory changes. Our education and professional development program will keep you up to date with industry developments and issues that are specific to Tasmania. We work with Clean Energy Council to organise CPD events that are locally based and relevant that will allow you to meet your professional development obligations without having to travel to the mainland.

We now have available a convenient direct debit arrangements that allows you to spread the cost of membership via monthly payments. For more details or to download an application form visit <http://tasrenew.org.au/about/join/>

Contact us

For more information visit our website at www.tasrenew.org.au, email info@tasrenew.org.au or contact our Executive Officer Jack Gilding on (0407) 486-651.



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Please support our Corporate Members

