



Building energy infrastructure at warp speed

Roundtable pre-reading pack

5 June 2026, 1:30pm AEST

About this CPD roundtable (online)

To achieve current policy goals, Australia needs to accelerate the deployment of renewable generation 6x faster, transmission 5x faster, and we need to build out 10x the 2025 levels of utility-scale storage. These changes require a fundamental shift in how things are done.

CPD's roundtable brings together leaders across industry, government, unions and civil society to discuss how Australia can make this systems-level change.

The conversation will be held under the Chatham house rule, where ideas may be shared freely beyond the space, but not be attributed to any individual or organisation.

CPD is an independent, not-for-profit policy institute with staff in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra and Jakarta.

Our vision is a fair, sustainable society and wellbeing economy that serves current and future generations in Australia and Southeast Asia.

Our mission is to help create transformative systems change through practical solutions to complex policy challenges.

Agenda - Friday 5 June 2026 1.30-3.00pm AEST

1.30 pm	Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country
1.35 pm	Part 1 - The current state of renewable infrastructure deployment
2.00 pm	Part 2 - Ambition and appetite for a warp speed style deployment
3.00 pm	Summary and closing

You can join the meeting by [clicking this link](#).

Participants (RSVP to date)

Andrew Hudson	CEO, Centre for Policy Development	Kellie Caught	Program Director - Climate and Energy, ACOSS
Alison Wiltshire	Head of Division for Clean Energy Investment and Facilitation, DCCEEW	Mark Westbrook	Chief Project Officer, EnergyCo (NSW)
Anna Hancock	Board Chair, RE-Alliance	Michael Wright	Secretary, ETU
Annabel Wilton	Senior Strategy Manager, ARENA	Miles Prosser	Energy Transition Lead, CPD
Anthea Middleton	CEO, Powering Skills Organisation	Paul McCartney	Chief Investment Officer - Rewiring the Nation, CEFC
Catherine Gip	Head of Transmission, Energy Networks Australia	Ralph Griffiths	GM Policy and Regulation, AGL
David McElrea	CEO, Smart Energy Council	Rebecca Wright	CEO, Investor Group on Climate Change
David Shankey	CEO, NZEA	Richie Merzian	CEO, Clean Energy Investor Group
Esther Koh	Policy Adviser, CPD	Tim Nelson	Chair, NEM Wholesale Market Settings Review
Jacqui Phillips	Executive Director of Policy and Research, ACOSS	Toby Phillips	Economic Director, CPD
Johanna Bowyer	Electricity Lead, IEEFA	Vanya Kumar	Executive Director, Innovation, Commercial and Investment Attraction, DEECA (VIC)
Kate Griffiths	Executive Manager, Research and Policy, ASCI	Zoe Whitton	Board Chair, CPD

The energy system transition is more important than ever

Meeting Australia's climate and energy transition targets

Planning scenarios like AEMO's "step change" assumes significant inflection points to accelerate the deployment of key infrastructure, which are not on track to happen under current policy settings and trajectories.

Decarbonising the economy and developing new green industries

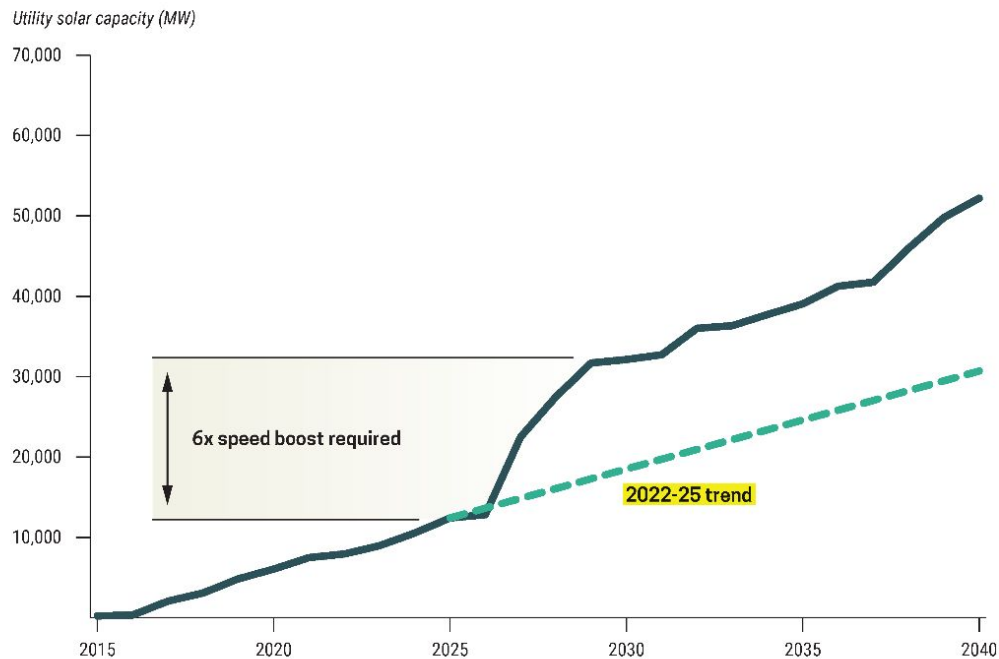
Establishing clean energy infrastructure and data centres is energy intensive, along with an economy-wide decarbonisation. These are likely to lead to increased demand at least in line with projections, if not more so.

Strengthening energy security and easing the cost of living

The energy crisis globally is disrupting supply chains and exposing Australians to price shocks, and pushing for a greater shift to energy independence with clean and renewable sources.

The path to a future energy system has inflection points

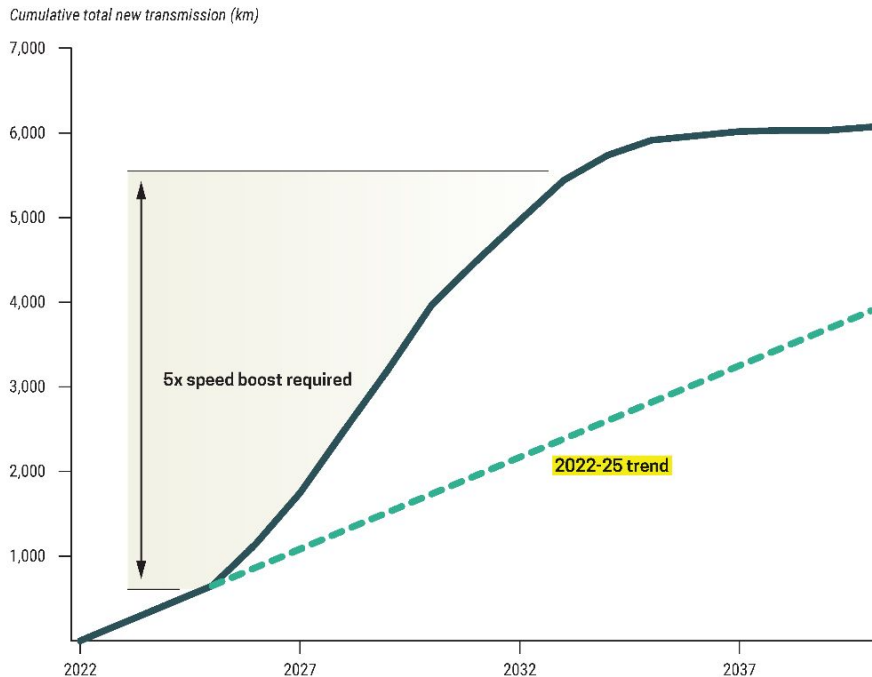
Over the next few years Australia must facilitate a six-fold increase in the build-out of generation...



Source: CPD calculations based on AEMO (2026) Draft 2026 ISP chart data

Do we want to continue on a BAU or warp speed pace?

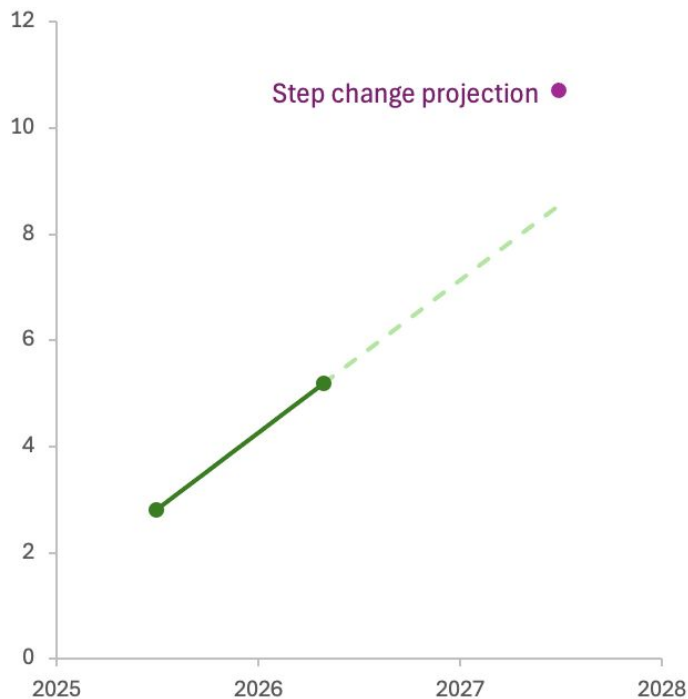
...and a five-fold acceleration of transmission.



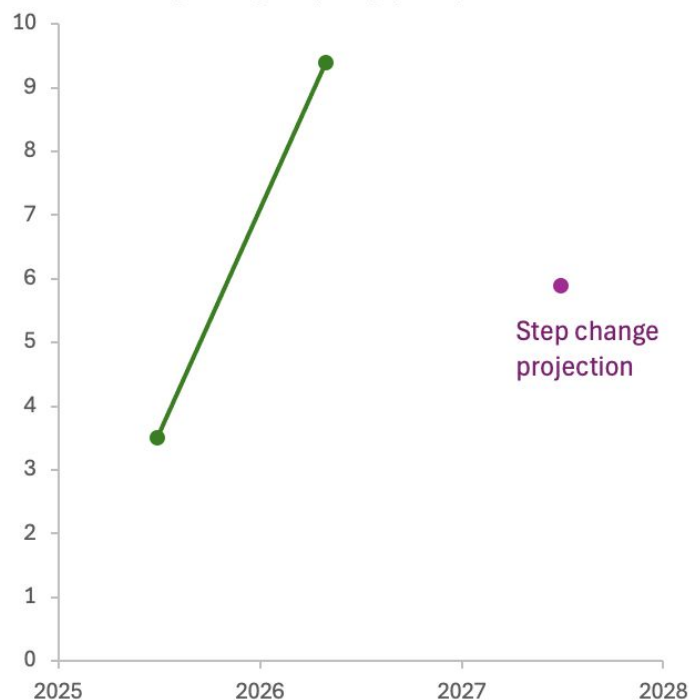
Source: CPD calculations based on AEMO (2026) Draft 2026 ISP chart data

Battery installation is roughly on track, with home batteries well ahead of projections

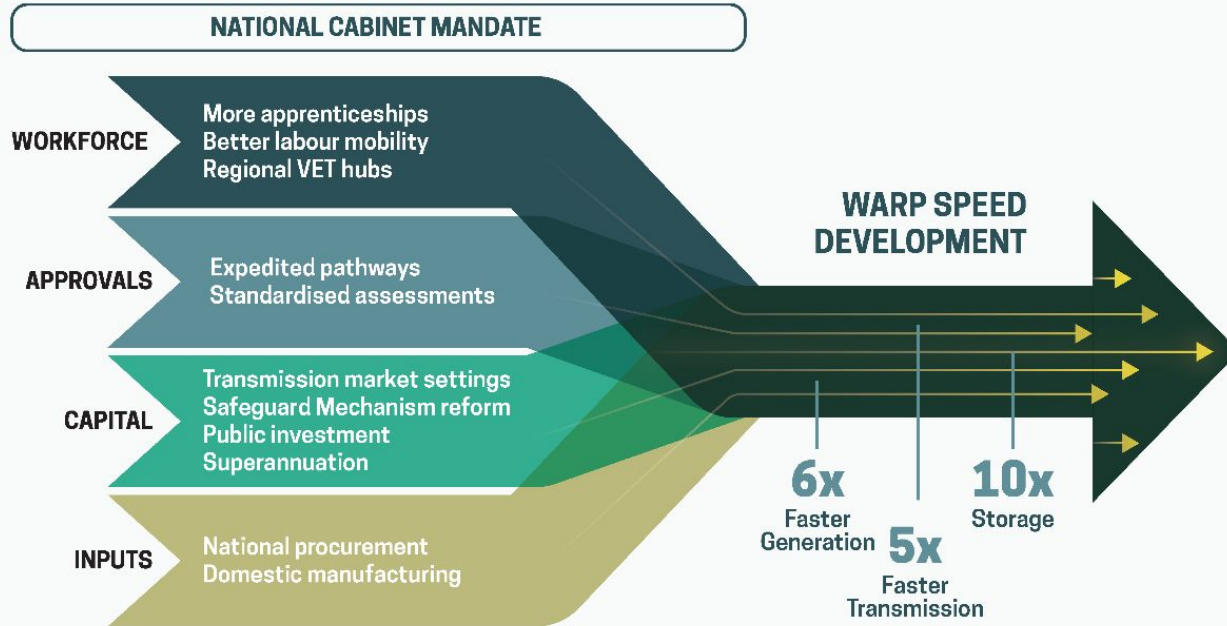
Utility scale power capacity (GW)



Home battery storage capacity (GWh)



CPD proposal: four areas of policy reform to speed up deployment at warp speed





The key question for the roundtable

What will it take to keep Australia's energy system transformation on track?

Post-roundtable deep dive sessions

Over the coming weeks CPD plans to host informal deep dive sessions for those that are interested in exploring specific topics further. If you or someone else in your organisation would like to attend, please contact esther.koh@cpd.org.au

11th June
3-4pm AEST

Widening the **energy infrastructure workforce** pipeline

18th June
3-4pm AEST

Planning approvals reform beyond the recent EPBC amendments



Contact

Esther Koh

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Appendix: Report recommendations summary

Recommendation 1: National Cabinet and its subcommittees should adopt a “warp speed” policy agenda to rapidly accelerate the build out of grid-scale electricity infrastructure.	
Doubling the energy workforce pipeline	
Expand the institutional capacity for training and apprenticeships	Recommendation 2: State and territory governments should establish recurring capital grant programs that invest in training infrastructure and equipment.
	Recommendation 3: The Commonwealth Government should ensure there are enough placements for apprentices, for instance by imposing quotas for larger businesses to employ first and second-year apprentices and mature-aged apprentices.
	Recommendation 4: The Commonwealth Government should expand the Australian Skills Guarantee to cover all major projects in the energy sector receiving public finance, and extend the Guarantee to other occupations in the energy sector beyond construction.

Appendix: Report recommendations summary

Increase labour mobility across different sectors and Australian jurisdictions	Recommendation 5: The Commonwealth, through National Cabinet, should harmonise interstate licensing for critical clean-energy occupations including the electrical trades.
	Recommendation 6: The Commonwealth Government should boost labour mobility by creating a national digital skills passport, a single mandatory platform for advertising energy jobs and apprenticeships, and scaling the CERT program nationally.
Address labour shortages in regions through VET hubs and skilled migration	Recommendation 7: The Commonwealth and state governments should expand funding for dedicated VET hubs in REZs/near major projects, offering pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships and short courses linked to those projects, with a clear pipeline into local jobs.
	Recommendation 8: The Commonwealth Government should cut the financial and administrative cost of visas for energy-relevant “Skills in Demand” roles, ensuring that there are clear pathways for skills recognition.
	Recommendation 9: Where migrant workers are used to meet workforce shortages, they should have a clear pathway to permanent residency.

Appendix: Report recommendations summary

Halving development approval timeframes	
Use expedited approval pathways and provide support for significant projects	Recommendation 10: Use existing or new approval pathways that are dedicated to state significant developments for renewable energy projects.
	Recommendation 11: Use a legislated authority in the state planning department or a Coordinator General Office with expediting powers to streamline existing approval pathways.
	Recommendation 12: Provide integrated case management support early on and throughout for clean energy projects.
Limit the time and effort for assessments, requests for information and decision making	Recommendation 13: Along with statutory time limits for decision making, ministers should provide directives to regulators to encourage faster approvals.
	Recommendation 14: Limit the number of requests for information (RFIs) to one per stage.
	Recommendation 15: Ensure communities closely or directly impacted by projects have a proportionately greater voice in consultation and objections.
Simplify and standardise data inputs for assessments	Recommendation 16: Use clear and efficient ready-made assessment requirements (i.e. that are industry-specific) for projects that have predictable and mitigatable impacts.
	Recommendation 17: Identify best practice technical handbooks across Australia that specify knowledge and methodologies to assist proponents in impact assessments, and use them as common standards.

Appendix: Report recommendations summary

Encouraging capital flows	
Encourage effective capital allocation to energy infrastructure projects	Recommendation 18: The Commonwealth and NEM jurisdictional governments should establish the proposed ESEM as quickly as possible, and commission an independent review into transmission market operation.
	Recommendation 19: Establish policy settings or market interventions to ensure that requirements on heavy energy users to purchase green energy led to additional investment in renewable generation.
	Recommendation 20: The Commonwealth Government should expand the Safeguard Mechanism and ensure it provides sufficient price signals to encourage capital allocation into renewable energy infrastructure.
Direct public and patient capital where it is needed to crowd-in private investment	Recommendation 21: State government funding initiatives and the Commonwealth's SIVs should be provided with the necessary mandate to invest in higher-risk first-mover 'anchor' generation projects in priority renewable regions.
	Recommendation 22: Reform the Your Future, Your Super benchmarks to allow superannuation funds to benchmark against forward looking transition-aligned market indices.

Appendix: Report recommendations summary

Securing supply of key inputs	
Secure Australia's supply of global components and materials	Recommendation 23: The Commonwealth, supported by AEMO, should negotiate a national multi-year, multi-project procurement framework with key suppliers, allowing developers to draw down equipment under national agreements.
	Recommendation 24: The Commonwealth should direct the NRF and CEFC to develop a 10-year, ring-fenced program of targeted support - such as concessional finance and other risk-sharing tools - for commercially viable onshore manufacturing of critical grid components.