EECA's Fortnightly Report to the Minister for Energy

13 March 2026

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
TE TARI TIAKI PŪNGAO

1. Energy Security and Affordability

9(2)(f)(iv), 9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]

1.2 Upcoming RFPs going to market

We will soon go to market with several RFPs, demonstrating technologies and approaches to reduce business energy use and operating costs. These initiatives deliver on key elements of EECA's workplan, developed alongside MBIE, and presented to you at the recent EECA officials meeting on 12 February.

LEHVF charging hubs RFP

You recently approved EECA to utilise LEHVF funding to fund charging and refuelling infrastructure (refer EECA 2026 BRF 001). We will soon go to market for:

- Interregional heavy vehicle charging hub: Providing market confidence for investment in electric trucks for long-distance travel. The proposal is for a demonstration hub located at a natural rest stop, showing that mid-route charging does not reduce driver productivity.

- Urban opportunity charging demonstration: Demonstrating convenient, high utilisation charging for heavy vehicles operating in city environments.

Efficient demand flexibility

We are launching an RFP on 19 March to support commercial and industrial energy users to integrate technology (such as battery storage) that enables flexible energy use. EECA will provide co-investment, integration and technical support to successful applicants. We will also look to contract market development intermediaries who may be able to bring together businesses in a region or sector to achieve efficiencies and greater impact from flexible energy use. This has potential to deliver significant operational efficiency and security benefits for businesses and is likely to be highly replicable across sectors.

Very High temp heat pump Activator

EECA's Very High Temperature Heat Pump (VHTHP) Activator demonstration initiative is focused on improving energy efficiency and productivity in commercial and industrial settings. This type of heat pump technology can offer a practical pathway for businesses to reduce energy use and operating costs. From 19 March we will look to back promising projects through feasibility study and business case development.

Key Points:	• EECA is progressing with several initiatives to work alongside industrial and commercial businesses to improve their energy use.
Next Steps:	• EECA will keep you updated as these initiatives progress and any notable announcement opportunities.

2. Accelerating Renewable Energy

2.1 Solar on Farms case study

We have launched our first in a series of Solar on Farms video case studies, focused on Fairbank Farms in Southland, which integrated a 100kW solar and battery system into its dairy farm operations in August 2025. The case study is focused on the cost saving and resilience benefits of investment in solar. We have collaborated with Dairy NZ to share this through its channels, including social media.

Since installing the system, the farm has been able to continue operations through multiple grid outages which previously would have ground operations to a halt. The farm reports they are also seeing material financial savings. The large battery system provides Fairbank with enough capacity to power all its equipment at once - including milk chilling, effluent pumping, irrigating and fencing units.

We are continuing to work with the farming sector to drive solar uptake. We will continue to update you on progress and the impact of our tools and resources.

Key Points:	• We have recently launched our first in a series of Solar on Farms video case studies across our channels.
Next Steps:	• We are continuing to work with the farming sector to drive uptake of solar.

2.2 Use of NZ-made battery products in EECA programmes

Following your recent visit to Aotea Energy, you asked officials to investigate whether NZ-made battery products are being used in EECA or government-supported projects, and if not, whether they could be incorporated into current schemes.

To date, EECA has not used NZ-made batteries in scaled pilots, CREF, Solar on Farms, or other programmes. This reflects the stage of the market rather than any rule preventing their use. Current NZ-made batteries are comparatively new and mainly designed for homes. Installers and project developers have generally chosen products with a longer track record and proven performance in similar projects.

However, EECA's upcoming Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) RFP will note that NZ-manufactured batteries will be favoured where suitable. BESS is expected to provide significant energy security and affordability benefits, alongside the economic benefits of supporting NZ manufacturing.

For clarity, some products described as NZ-made may involve assembly in New Zealand using imported components.

Key Points:	• EECA has not used NZ-made batteries in its schemes so far. The products available are new and mainly sized for homes. • There is no rule stopping their use. They can be used if they meet EECA's requirements.
Next Steps:	• We will signal in the upcoming BESS RFP that NZ-manufactured batteries will be favoured where suitable. • We will keep engaging with NZ suppliers and assess new products against EECA's technical requirements as they become available.

2.3 Hiringa/TR Group Hydrogen Refuelling Network project

We are approaching the final milestone for the Minimum Hydrogen Refueling Network project with all hydrogen trucks due to be on the road by the end of the month.

The project, demonstrating the potential for hydrogen to support heavy transport in the New Zealand context, received funding in 2020 through the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF). It includes:

- Four hydrogen refuelling stations across the North Island, delivered by Hiringa
- 20 vehicle fleet of hydrogen fuel cell trucks, owned by fleet leaser TR Group

The project has faced numerous delays over the years, including the original fleet supplier ceasing New Zealand-based operations and failing to deliver the contractually required 20 trucks.

Rolleston-based Global Bus Ventures (GBV) took over the build of 16 final trucks as per the agreed timeframes to a very high quality, with the modified truck design better suited to the New Zealand market, offering greater range and more power. Hyundai supplied the other four trucks.

We recently visited GBV's Rolleston operation, who would welcome hosting a Ministerial visit.

Key Points:	• We are approaching the final milestone for the Minimum Hydrogen Refuelling Network project.
Next Steps:	• We will keep you updated on any insights on the trial of the hydrogen refuelling network through future reporting. GBV would welcome hosting you for a visit of its Rolleston based site.

3. Other Updates

3.1 New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy – public consultation

MBIE has briefed you on the final draft public consultation document for the NZEECS (refer MBIE BRIEFING-REQ-0026856). The final draft reflects minor changes following largely supportive stakeholder engagement throughout January.

Subject to any feedback you have, your direction is sought on whether Cabinet approval is required to release the public consultation document. If not, then public consultation could commence as early as April, with the final Strategy published in June (subject to Cabinet policy decisions).

Key Points:	• You have received the final draft NZEECS for public consultation (refer MBIE BRIEFING-REQ-0026856).

Next Steps:	• Public consultation could commence as early as April, with the final Strategy published in June (subject to Cabinet policy decisions).

9(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

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[redacted]	[redacted]

3.3 Gas NZ peer review - Indoor Combustion report

As previously advised, in late 2025, we commissioned research on the health impacts of indoor combustion to inform EECA's programme design and reporting.

Gas NZ has queried some findings and commissioned an additional peer review of the report. As a result, we have updated the report to add clarity on queried aspects, including more discussion on association versus causality. We remain comfortable with the report methodology and figures connected with health impacts and costs.

For the sake of transparency, we plan to publish Gas NZ's review on our website, alongside the research and two peer reviews previously commissioned by EECA.

Key Points:	• Gas NZ has commissioned an additional peer review of EECA indoor combustion research, prompting additional discussion in the report findings.

Next Steps:	• We will soon publish the updated report, alongside the peer review.

4. Ministerial Servicing Updates

4.1 Current and upcoming advice to the Minister

Title	Purpose	Action and timing
V2X Signalling Package	To provide a proposed set of actions to strengthen the Government's signalling on V2X.	19/03/2026
TAFE programme activity for the 2026/27 financial year	To inform you of EECA's focus for the TAFE programme over the 2026/27 Financial year.	19/03/2026
EECA energy levies appropriation request 2026/27	To report back on the outcome of the recent public consultation on our proposed energy levy funding for 2026/27.	26/03/2026

4.2 Communications and events calendar

Date	Type	Activity/Event	Opportunities for engagement
9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

March	PR	We are planning joint media with Awarua Energy, who completed WKH installations on the Chatham Islands in March, which was received extremely positively.	We can provide talking points as an example of energy resilience and affordability, potential to release a PR.
9(2)(f)(iv)	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

4.3 Official Information Act requests

Requestor	Request	Date received	Date due
9(2)(a) [redacted]	Has any company / person requested financial support to decarbonise the used / waste oil industry in the last 4 years	18/02/2026	18/03/2026
9(2)(a) [redacted]	Seeking information on who EECA has formally consulted with on gas and electricity supply for the 2025/26 year (from July 2025 to the date of the request).	20/02/2026	20/03/2026

9(2)(a)	Requesting copies of all CNGP related papers to EECA's leadership team since 1 May 2025.	25/02/2026	25/03/2026
9(2)(a)	Seeking information such as costing and head count around EECA cleaning services	27/02/2026	27/03/2026
9(2)(a)	Requesting all materials related to referenced decision around board member conduct.	9/03/2026	8/04/2026

4.4 Consultations underway

Strategic priority	Title	Purpose	Action and timing
Empower energy users	High-temperature heat pumps guidance	Seeking public consultation for proposed updates to SNZ PAS 5210:2024 High-temperature heat pumps.	The draft is now open for public comment. Submissions close 20 March 2026.