

EECA's Fortnightly Report to the Minister for Energy

27 March 2026

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1. Energy Security and Affordability

1.1 Fuel security response

EECA is engaged with the wider government response to increases in global fuel prices. We are leading development of a consumer information package to help households and businesses save on their fuel use. The campaign is designed to be able to scale up if more direct fuel-saving measures are required in future. We have provided collateral campaign to your office for visibility.

The evidence shows possible savings are significant, with small changes potentially achieving 20% more from every fill.

We also plan to provide support to the business fleet, via industry bodies, to make sure advice is aligned with their needs. This support will similarly be information based – ensuring the latest efficiency information and advice is available to those who need it.

9(2)(f)(iv)

This activity is being funded from re-prioritisation of our baseline. We will discuss this work with you at the 2 April EECA officials meeting.

Key Points:

- EECA leading development of a fuel use savings consumer information package as part of the wider government response to increases in global fuel prices.
- We will also provide information-based support to the business fleet via industry bodies.
- 9(2)(f)(iv)

Next Steps:

- We will discuss this work with you at the 2 April EECA officials meeting.

1.2 V2X trial expansion

We are moving forward with a potential urban vehicle-to-everything (V2X) trial. We have seen an excellent response from the market from our RFI, with 26 interested submissions received from across the energy sector and related service providers.

This work builds on EECA's existing Queenstown V2X trial, expanding the focus to urban settings and broader applications of bidirectional charging, including vehicle-to-grid (V2G) and vehicle-to-home (V2H).

Separately, we have provided you with advice on possible actions to signal government intent around V2X [refer EECA 2026 MEMO 180], which we will discuss with you at the 2 April EECA officials meeting.

Key Points:	• We received 26 submissions on our RFI for an expanded V2X trial.
Next Steps:	• We are assessing the submissions and will identify shortlisted partners, and confirm our procurement process.

1.3 EECA engagement with EDBs

You recently met with Vector to discuss work to strengthen collaboration and efficiency across the sector. We have a number of workstreams in place supporting these efforts, including significant engagement with Vector.

Recent engagement with electricity distribution businesses (EDBs) includes:

- **Co-funding EDB pilots:** EECA is supporting six large-scale flexibility pilots with EDBs to reduce peak demand in constrained areas, building on earlier trials that demonstrated strong consumer savings.
- **Tools and capability:** Working with EDBs (e.g. Alpine Energy) to develop digital modelling to optimise network and customer outcomes.
- **Standards and system settings:** Progressing smart device standards (including EV chargers) to support better demand management and network use, informed by EDB feedback.
- **Coordinated sector approach:** Partnering with the Electricity Authority, Commerce Commission, ENA and FlexForum to align pilots, data, and market settings.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this engagement with you at the 2 April EECA officials meeting.

Key Points:	• EECA is working closely with EDBs to support and scale existing sector collaboration and efficiency through pilots, tools, and standards.
Next Steps:	• We welcome the opportunity to discuss this at the 2 April officials meeting.

2. Accelerating Renewable Energy

2.1 Potential options to pilot or support NZ-made batteries

You have asked us to consider how NZ-made battery products could be supported through EECA's existing work programme.

There are a number of avenues to support NZ-made batteries:

- Our upcoming Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) request for proposals includes a preference for NZ-manufactured batteries where they are suitable and meet requirements.
- EECA's approved products programme (launching in April) will provide a clear pathway for battery products, including NZ-made options, to be assessed and listed. Further details are included in item 2.2 below ('Endorsement of solar industry accreditation programmes').
- There is potential for a targeted pilot of NZ-made batteries through existing schemes: EECA could pilot NZ-made batteries within existing suitable programmes (e.g. Scaled Pilots, CREF, Solar on Farms) where they meet requirements, to help build a track record.
- EECA is working with Master Electricians to get their members ready to deliver DF at scale. They could be an additional outlet to support NZ-made batteries.

Key Points:	• EECA has pathways in place for NZ-made batteries to be used in its programmes, with options to strengthen uptake through targeted pilots and delivery channels.
Next Steps:	• We will look to integrate some of these changes into our current programmes and report back to you on progress.

2.2 Solar update

Residential solar campaign

Our residential public information campaign on solar continues to be well received. We are coordinating messaging with key partners to ensure consistency and clarity for consumers. Next week, ConsumerNZ will publish an article on the value of Solar and the Electricity Authority has now launched its plan-switching product "Billy" – both with consistent messaging and data to our public information campaign.

Engagement with industry

We are working closely with key stakeholders (industry and government) to finalise criteria for a solar industry accreditation scheme. We are hosting a webinar next month with solar installers and suppliers to discuss all of EECA's solar activity. We intend to explain the roll out of our 'approved products' and 'installer accreditation' programmes, and requirements to be included in our public facing lists.

Scaled Distributed Flexibility Pilot demonstrating the potential for residential solar

The first of six scaled distributed flexibility pilots, with Counties Energy, has seen significant interest. We have over 80 households involved so far. We are hoping to reach up to 500

households as the pilot progresses, with solar on at least 30 per cent to demonstrate its role in unlocking flexibility at a coordinated, system level and inform our knowledge of network barriers to scaled adoption.

We are also connected into Transpower's work to develop innovative non-network solutions to defer costly grid investments in areas with forecasted high electricity demand (Bay of Plenty and upper South Island). Our pilots will support the identification of the most cost-efficient way to enhance electricity supply in these areas.

Key Points:	We are undertaking a range of actions across consumer information, industry engagement and pilots to scale up distributed energy.
Next Steps:	We will continue to update you on the roll-out of our scaled distributed flexibility pilots, and any early insights we gain.

9(2)(b)(ii)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

2.4 Advice on Biomethane Strategy and Action Plan

GasNZ recently published its Biomethane Strategy and Action Plan.

EECA has some reservations around the economic and technical assumptions that underpin the strategy's headline figures and recommendations – specifically the claims that biomethane could meet half of New Zealand's natural gas demand by 2050 and that 1 PJ of

supply could offer \$61 million of co-benefits. We are working with MBIE to provide an appropriate response.

Key Points:	EECA has reservations about the economic benefit analysis presented by GasNZ to support its strategy.
Next Steps:	EECA is working with MBIE to inform advice on GasNZ's recommendations.

3. Ministerial Servicing Updates

3.1 Current and upcoming advice to the Minister

Title	Purpose	Action and timing
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 and seek your decision on EECA's levy funding for 2026/27.	26/03/2026
Technology and Fuel Enabler programme activity for the 2026/27 financial year	To inform you of EECA's intended focus for the Technology and Fuel Enablement programme over the 2026/27 financial year.	26/03/2026
V2X Signalling Package	To outline potential actions to strengthen Government signalling on V2X.	26/03/2026
Information on New Zealand's green hydrogen industry	To provide further advice on New Zealand's green hydrogen industry	31/03/2026
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

9(2)(f)(iv)

3.3 Official Information Act requests

Requestor	Request	Date received	Date due
9(2)(a)	Requesting information on Open Country Dairy GDI projects.	04/03/2026	01/04/2026

9(2)(a)	Requesting all materials related to decisions around board member conduct.	09/03/2026	08/04/2026
9(2)(a)	Requesting further information around distribution of waste oil research.	20/03/2026	20/04/2026

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13 March 2026

EECA Contact: Will Jensen, Manager, Policy and Engagement

Phone: 04 470 2441 Mobile: [REDACTED]



1. Energy Security and Affordability

9(2)(f)(iv), 9(2)(b)(ii)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[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).
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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)

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[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)			

4.3 Official Information Act requests

Requestor	Request	Date received	Date due
9(2)(a)	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)	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) [REDACTED]	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) [REDACTED]	Seeking information such as costing and head count around EECA cleaning services	27/02/2026	27/03/2026
9(2)(a) [REDACTED]	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.