EECA's Fortnightly Report to the Minister for Energy

27 March 2026

EECA Contact: Will Jensen, Manager, Policy and Engagement

Phone: 04 470 2441 Mobile: [redacted]

EECA ENERGY EFFICIENCY & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
TE TARI TIAKI PŪNGAO

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) [redacted]

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) [redacted]
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]

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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

9(2)(f)(iv) [redacted]

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3.3 Official Information Act requests

Requestor	Request	Date received	Date due
9(2)(a) [redacted]	Requesting information on Open Country Dairy GIDI 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