

Steven Adams

Solar Submission

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Hi,

Over the years I have seen something highly peculiar happen with Solar. In 2008 there was a \$50 000 federal grant for schools to use on solar and my initial research found that we could only get a 5kw system. By the time that I had met all the requirements of the grant and 12 months had elapsed I found that I could get a 10kw system for the same system. A couple of years ago I look at Solar for my school again and found I could get a 40kw for \$50 000. The price of solar has plummeted and is predicted to go further again and now produces energy as cheaply as coal-fired energy. Coal has social drawbacks where the tab is picked up by the rest of society like climate change which is well documented. The other aspect are direct health costs of mining coal. Who picks up the tab when coal miners get the black lung? Who picked up the tab for the Hazelwood mine fire and the associated health cost on the local town? Coal is only 'cheap' with we exclude many of these costs.

The fact that solar is produced and used close to the source makes it far more valuable than coal-energy being produced hundreds of kilometres away. When I produce excess solar from my house this energy is used by my neighbours and just travels metres whereas coal-energy must travel through millions of dollars' worth of infrastructure. This is a factor that is never considered in the pricing of the feed-in tariff and economically this is patently unfair. I have seen the solar tariff drop of 60c to 28c to 25c to 8c to 6.2c to 5c. The price of energy is going up and yet the solar feed-in tariff keeps going down.

I know for a fact with discussions with the ESC that where energy is produced is not factored in and this is a massive oversight and you if the ESC is going to have any integrity as an organisation there this needs to be factored in future planning. I look forward to solar actually being priced correctly which has not happened for a large number of years now.