

To The Electricity Authority/The Mana Hiko
PO Box 6143
Wellington 6143

Ashburton 24 November 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Willy Leferink, and I'm a Dairy Farmer/Investor living in Ashburton. Like many New Zealanders, I'm genuinely excited about the potential to empower consumers who are reshaping our energy future from the ground up.

We recently invested heavily for level of capacity in solar energy to mitigate our cost of electricity usage in future and to alleviate the stress on the network in high power demand periods for our district when we irrigate. We are planning to make further investments to minimise our environmental footprint by harvesting the CO₂ and Methane emissions from our effluent system and turn this into renewable electricity.

The proposed changes do not affect us in real terms as we are well above the minimum threshold, but we strongly support the aim of encouraging customers to supply power back to the network when it's most needed—and rewarding them fairly for the benefits they create. A peak distribution export tariff that pays customers based on the long-run network investment they help avoid would give everyone a clear, sensible incentive to pair solar with storage. That's good for household budgets, good for the grid, and good for Aotearoa.

However, I don't agree with the Task Force's proposed limit on what counts as a "small business."

Setting the threshold at a 45 kVA connection or 45 kW maximum generation capacity will unfairly exclude many genuinely small organisations—schools, marae, farms, and community groups—who should absolutely be able to access peak export tariffs.

Many of these groups won't have the expertise, capacity or bargaining power to negotiate directly with their local electricity distribution business. Realistically, they would simply miss out.

A fair peak export tariff is one of the most effective ways to encourage people to invest in batteries alongside rooftop solar. This doesn't just avoid unnecessary network upgrades and reduce system-wide costs—it also strengthens community resilience. Schools and marae with solar + storage can become vital hubs during outages, offering places to charge devices or EVs, access communications, and support vulnerable people when extreme weather hits.

Network costs make up almost half of household power bills and rising distribution costs are expected to drive most future price increases, so it is crucial that we support solutions—like local solar and storage—that can keep these costs under control.

In rural areas especially, solar and batteries on farms can be a win-win: a new revenue stream for farmers, lower system costs for nearby households, more reliable local power, and even the potential to create rural EV charging corridors. The positive effect of local power was shown in the Southern South Island recently during adverse weather events with solar keeping the lights on in several areas.

Placing unnecessary limits on who can access peak export tariffs would be a step backwards. It would shut out exactly the kinds of community-level projects that make our grid cleaner, cheaper, and more resilient.

If a limit is absolutely required, it should be set high enough—up to 1 MW of generation capacity—to include community groups and small-to-medium businesses that can't negotiate bespoke arrangements, while still excluding large industrial and utility-scale generators.

About Rewiring Aotearoa

Rewiring Aotearoa is a non-partisan, non-profit organisation working to ensure New Zealand's energy transition is equitable and affordable. Their mission is to rapidly reduce emissions, improve cost-of-living outcomes, and build energy security and resilience by



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electrifying the millions of fossil-fuel machines in our homes, communities, businesses, and on farms.

Kind regards
Willy Leferink
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