

3 September 2026

s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe ^{s 9(2)(a)}

Your request

Thank you for your request to the Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko (Authority), received on 5 August, under the Official Information Act 1982 (Act) for the following information:

can I oia you on any reports, minutes, notes, advice, emails, communications and so on relating to the deferral please.

Does this also include balcony "Big in Germany" solar? If so how does this reconcile with the recent regulatory review announcements?

This is very odd. Amazingly good work stopped. So could you give me a broad estimate of the cost incurred in progressing the work to this point please? A broad figure is acceptable. And none of that silly "most of that was salary shit" as if we all don't know opportunity cost, so please include the cost of the salaries of the officials involved.

So who made this decision? Note the Ombudsman says names of senior officials is public information.

Our response

The Authority has provided the relevant documents in Appendix 1 with some additional explanation below. In summary, the Distributed Generation Pricing Principles (DGPP) work was deferred as part of the Authority's wider 2026/27 work programme prioritisation. It was not cancelled, nor was a substantive decision made to stop the policy work.

The Authority is funded through public funding that is fully recovered through a levy on industry participants. Each year the Authority consults levy payers on its estimated costs for the upcoming financial year before finalising its Statement of Performance Expectations (SPE) and work programme. That process requires the Authority to prioritise activities so it can deliver the best outcomes for consumers within the funding and resourcing available.

For 2026/27, the Authority's funding remained constant from 2025/26, while the Authority also had to absorb over \$3 million of internal cost pressures within an operating cost base of approximately \$45 million.

At the same time, the Authority was required to respond to the updated Government Policy Statement and associated dry-year framework and security of supply work. The new Government Policy Statement emerged after the draft SPE, which had included DGPP as a priority initiative,

and before the final SPE, which did not include DGPP in the 2026/27 priority policy work programme.

The Authority is required to have regard to a Government Policy Statement, and the work programme was reprioritised as part of this process. The Board had to decide whether to pause, phase, or rescope some work so the final programme was deliverable and affordable. DGPP was one of the initiatives paused so the Authority could prioritise work expected to deliver the greatest value for consumers within available funding and resources.

The Authority continues to regard DGPP as important work that will deliver long-term value for consumers. It also recognises the project's relevance to related work on distributed energy resources, connection processes, and consumer energy technologies. However, in the context of the wider work programme and the need to focus available resources on other immediate priorities, the Board decided to pause work on DGPP.

This was a deferral, not a cancellation. The Authority anticipates returning to the DGPP work when funding decisions and other external factors allow. The Ministerial briefing provided alongside the final SPE states, in relation to DGPP, that "we plan to return to this in 2027 if resources allow". The costs incurred to date have contributed to work that can inform future policy development and related work. They are not considered wasted expenditure.

Total cost incurred to date

The total cost incurred to date to the nearest \$1,000 is \$452,000.

As noted above, these costs are not considered wasted expenditure. The work carried out will inform DGPP work when it restarts, and it also supports the Authority's understanding of relevant issues as it progresses related work.

Balcony solar

Although balcony solar is relevant to DGPP, a separate project is considering, among other issues, the regulatory settings for balcony solar and improvements to residential solar connection processes. The Authority expects to release a consultation paper in early September. This paper is the next stage of the Network Connections work programme. Further information on the programme is available here: [Network connections | Our projects | Electricity Authority](#)

The Authority is also undertaking work to support the growing use of consumer energy technologies, such as solar panels, batteries, and electric vehicles, and to help them play a greater role in the electricity system.

Who made the decision?

The Board made the decision. The Board is accountable for the Statement of Performance Expectations (SPE), which sets out the Authority's work programme and budget. Responsibility for approving the SPE sits with the Board under the Crown Entities Act and Public Service Commission guidance.

Additional information on your request

The Authority has provided the relevant documents in Appendix 1 with some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act related to personal information.

I am satisfied, in terms of section 9(1) of the Act, that the need to withhold the information referred to above is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, the Authority may proactively release a copy of this response on our website. All personal data, including your name and contact details, will be removed before publication.

If you'd like to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact us by emailing oia@ea.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Airihi Mahuika', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Airihi Mahuika
GM Legal, Monitoring and Compliance

Appendix 1

Item No	Date	Document Type	Title	Release (withholding grounds noted where applicable)
1	4 June 2026	Paper	EA06- Ministerial Engagement and OIA Communication - 2026-27 Work programme - costed with updated impact effort assessment	<i>Partial release as an excerpt under section 16(1)(e) of the Act</i>
2	16 June 2026	Board paper	EA08- Final Statement of Performance Expectations 26-27 and work programme	<i>Partial release as an excerpt under section 16(1)(e) of the Act</i>
3	19 June 2026	Email	EA11- Updates to final SPE 26_27	<i>Released in full, with some information withheld under section 9(2)(a)</i>
4	30 June 2026	Briefing	EA12- Final 2026-27 Electricity Authority SPE 29 June 2026	<i>Partial release as an excerpt under section 16(1)(e) of the Act</i>