

Keeping the lights on: Electricity security of supply snapshot

28 July 2025



Information to help you understand this snapshot

The Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko is focused on making sure Aotearoa New Zealand has a **reliable and continuous power supply**, ensuring that everyone has electricity when it's needed.

To explain how well the electricity system is functioning to ensure the lights (and kettles, stoves etc) stay on, we have published a new explainer that we are calling Keeping the lights on.

Every week, we will publish a 'snapshot' of how our system is looking in terms of overall security, together with supporting information on rainfall, hydro storage, geothermal generation and wholesale electricity prices.

The graph on page 5 shows the **Electricity Risk Curves (ERCs) and national hydro storage**. The ERCs are based on how much fuel is available to generate electricity. They are designed to show how low hydro storage would need to be to cause concern about security of supply.

The black line shows where hydro storage normally is during the year, and the blue line shows how much hydro storage there has been since 2023. **You can see that it is currently below the typical level for this time of year and is above the ERCs.**

The three maps of Aotearoa New Zealand on page 6 show **the forecast rainfall over the next 35 days**.

The winter 2024/2025 comparison chart shows 'contingent arrangements' – the amount of fuel that is stored should it be needed for power generation. There has been a significant increase in fuel available for this winter compared to last winter.

The chart on page 8 shows **the amount of power generation infrastructure 'on outage'**, which means it will not be available to generate electricity.

The chart on page 9 provides **an estimate of spot prices for this month and quarter**, based on recent prices and forward prices.

The final chart, on page 10, shows **wholesale forward prices** - the cost for purchasing electricity for a given time period in advance. They reflect expectations of future electricity demand and generation costs.

This week's snapshot

This week's data shows that national hydro storage has fallen below the historic average. It has roughly followed the historic average over the past few weeks, but last week saw significant hydro generation to meet high demand as temperatures dropped. Storage is just below average.

September quarter 2025 futures prices are around \$125/MWh at Ōtāhuhu and \$114/MWh at Benmore. There is currently enough energy (stored coal, water and gas) in the power system to get through the winter.

It is important to understand there are different drivers of wholesale and retail price decreases. The decrease in wholesale prices since May are driven by increases in hydro and gas storage levels.



Summary of overall electricity system risk for the next three months

Forward prices

Average daily prices are likely to be around \$110/MWh for the rest of the month and \$130/MWh for the rest of the quarter.

Security of supply (energy)

Overall risk to national energy supply is significantly lower than last winter

Security of supply (capacity)

Transpower's NZ Generation Balance shows no days where capacity will be a problem

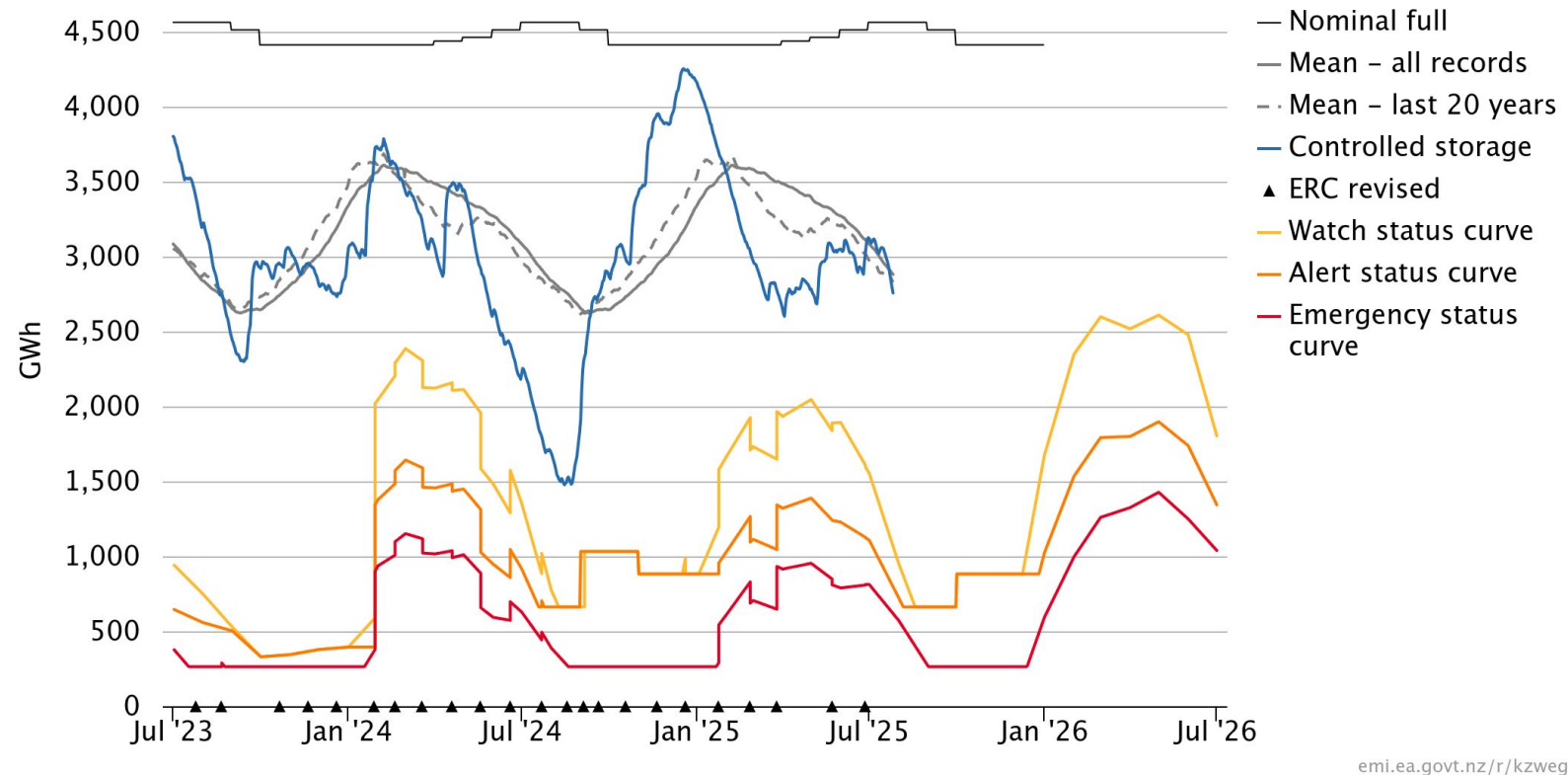
Security of supply outlook for the next three months:

Hydro storage has dropped below average, but remains above the risk curves. Storage may continue to decrease as we progress through the second half of winter, however as spring nears it is likely to increase again. Historically storage has tended to increase from late September. Fuel supply and generation capacity will be sufficient to meet national demand.

Electricity market information in this snapshot:

- New Zealand Electricity Risk Status Curves (Available GWh)
- 35-day rainfall forecast
- Winter 2024/2025 comparison
- Planned maintenance shut-downs of power generation infrastructure
- Forecast wholesale electricity spot prices
- Forward curve – average future wholesale electricity price.

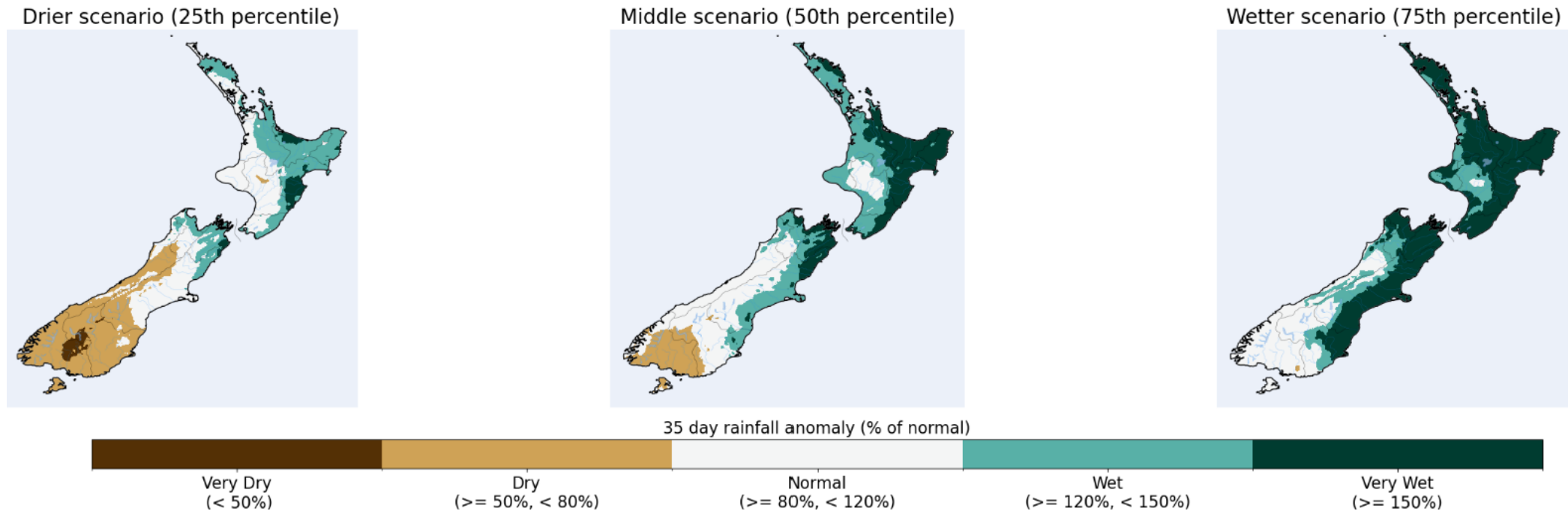
New Zealand Electricity Risk Status Curves (Available GWh)



This chart shows that national hydro storage remains above the risk curves. Significant hydro generation over the last week means national hydro storage has fallen below the historic mean.

Source: Transpower as the system operator

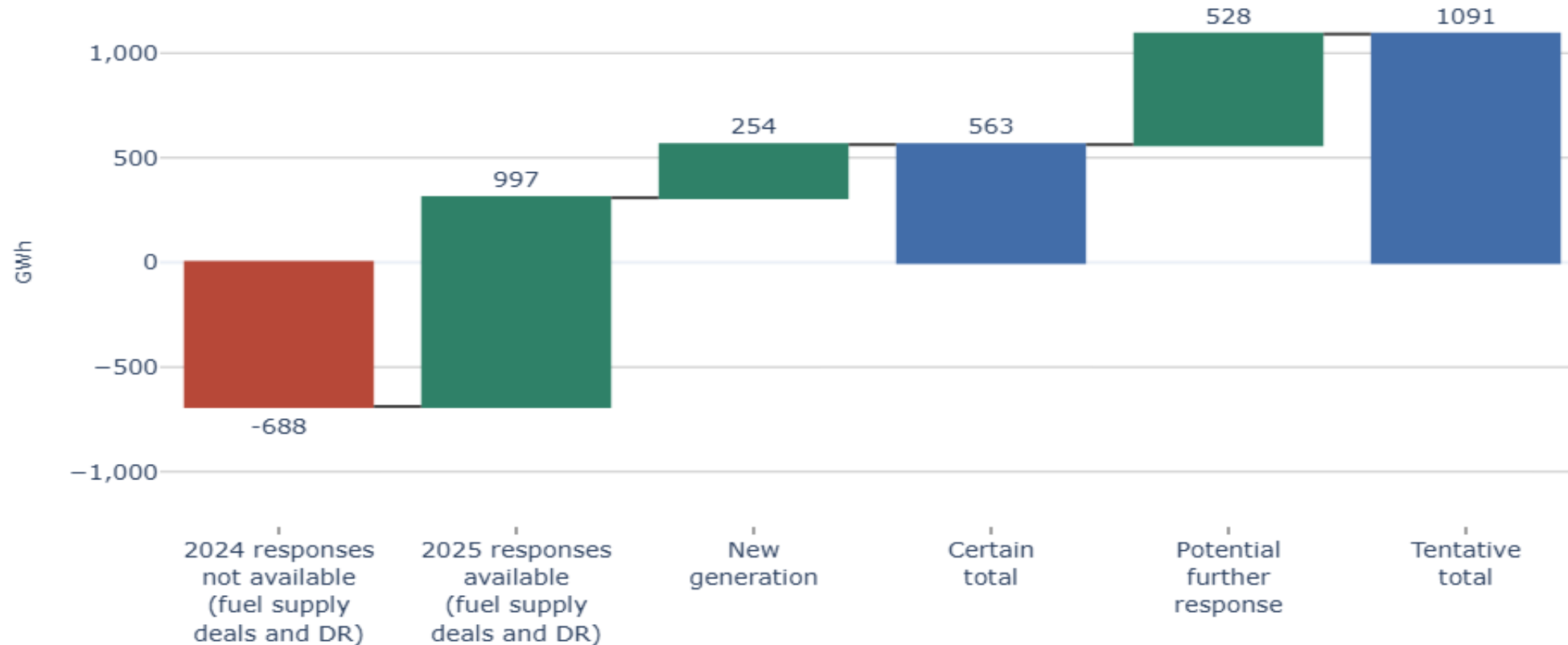
35-day rainfall forecast



These maps show that this week's forecast is that rainfall is likely to be normal or drier than normal over the next 35 days for most of the South Island where the main hydro catchment areas are located.

Source: NIWA

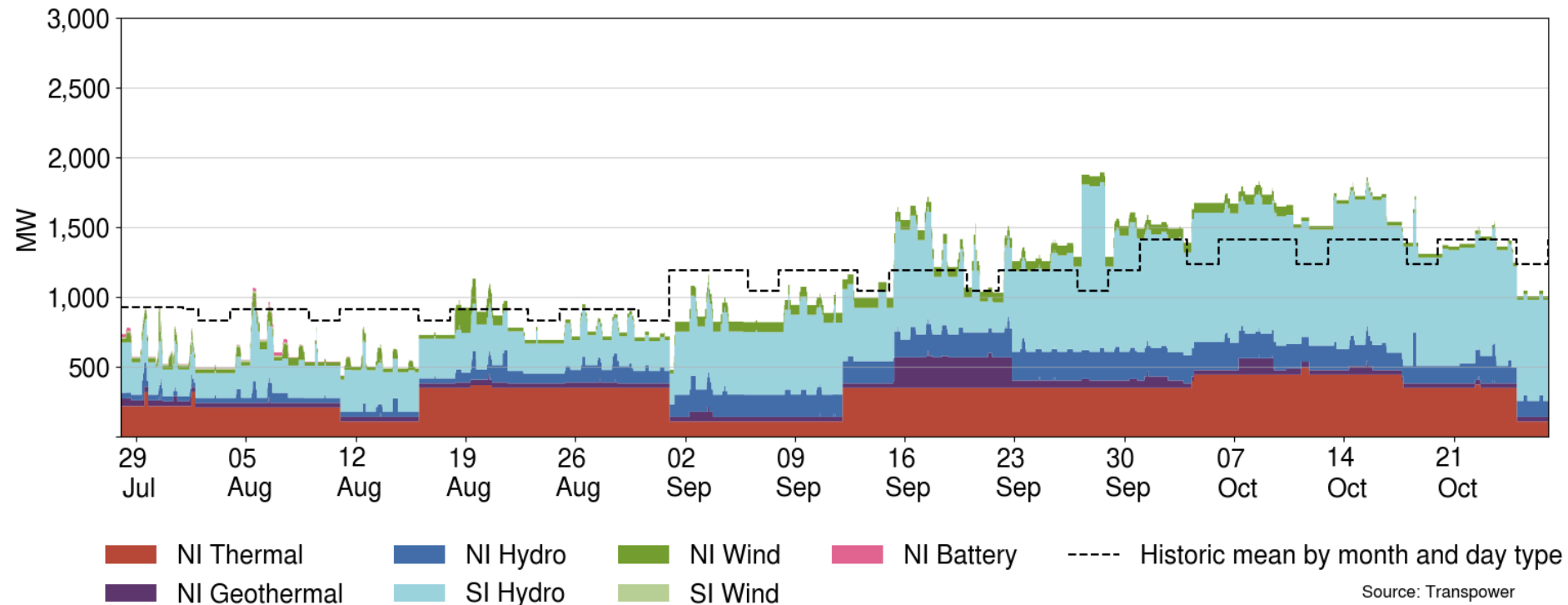
Winter 2024/2025 comparison



Source: Electricity Authority

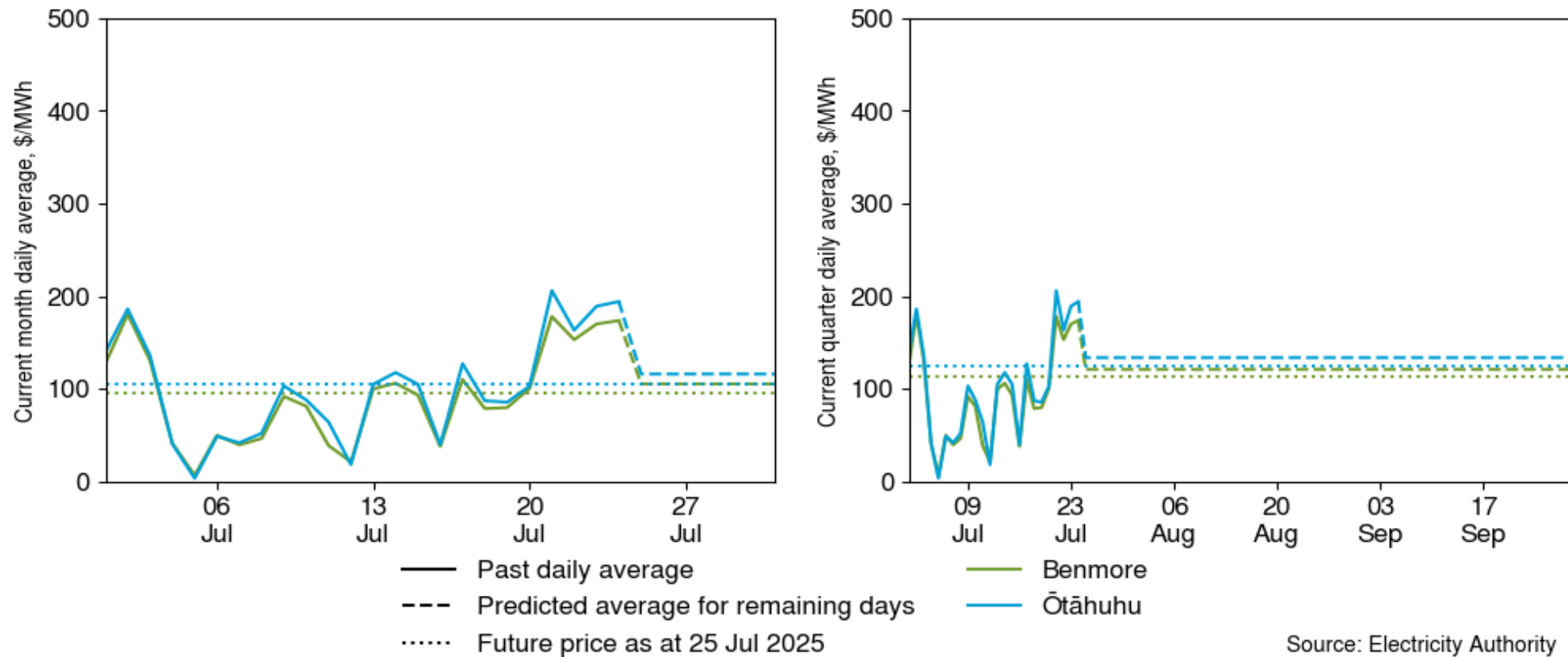
This chart shows that 'contingent arrangements' (fuel stored in case it's needed for power generation) is higher than it was in 2024. This reduces risk for this winter compared to last year, contributing to a total net improvement of 1,091GWh.

Planned maintenance shutdowns of power generation infrastructure – by infrastructure type



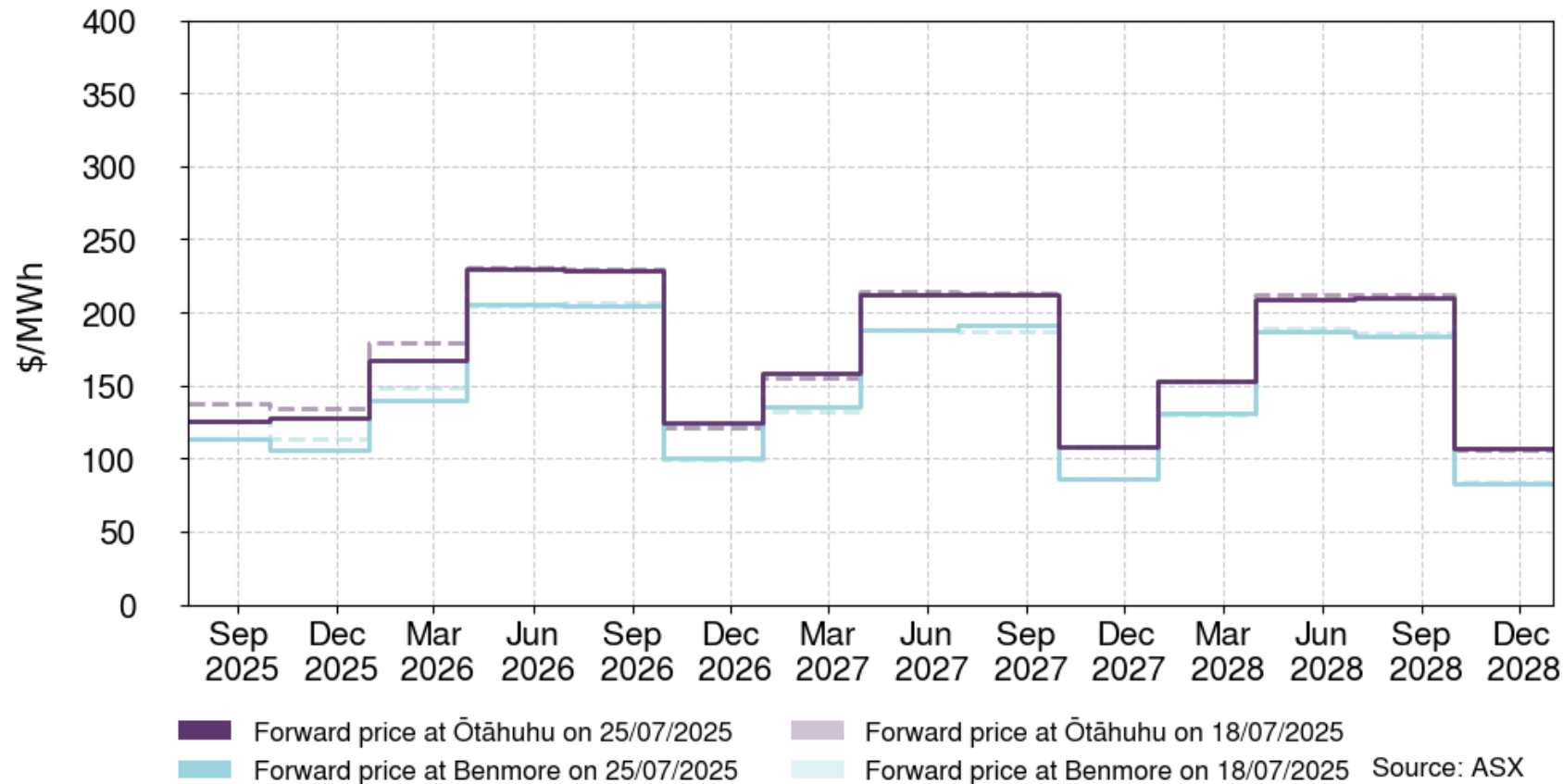
This chart shows that the amount of power generation infrastructure 'on outage' (shut down for planned maintenance) over the next three months. The amount on outage is expected to be below average on most days until mid-September, and then at or above average to late October.

Wholesale electricity spot prices



This chart shows that the forecast daily average wholesale spot prices are around ~\$110/MWh for this month, and ~\$130/MWh for this quarter. The prices reflect the underlying supply conditions, with average hydro storage levels.

Forward curve – average future wholesale electricity price



This chart shows that the average future wholesale price for Sept 2025 is currently \$125/MWh at Ōtāhuhu and \$114/MWh at Benmore, representing a decrease of around \$12/MWh at both Ōtāhuhu and Benmore. Long-dated futures did not change significantly.

Find more information
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