

## The transition plan — AEMO's ISP explained

*Australia's published roadmap for the changing grid and how to read it*

### The key idea: there is a plan and you can read it

The energy transition can look like a scatter of unrelated projects landing on communities at random. Behind it sits a published national roadmap: AEMO's **Integrated System Plan (ISP)**, updated every two years. The latest edition, the **2026 ISP published 25 June 2026**, maps the least-cost path for the east-coast grid out to 2050, including the growing demand from electrification and the digital economy.

### What the ISP is

AEMO models how electricity demand will grow, when coal plants will retire and what mix of generation, storage and transmission meets demand at lowest cost while meeting government policy. The result, the **optimal development path**, is a system built on renewable generation, firmed by storage and flexible gas, connected by new transmission. It names the projects and corridors the modelling says are needed and when.

### What it means near you

If a Renewable Energy Zone, transmission corridor or interconnector is proposed in your region, it almost certainly traces back to the ISP. That's useful in both directions: you can check whether a proponent's "this is essential" claim matches the plan and you can see what else the plan expects for your region in the years ahead.

### A plan is not an approval

The ISP identifies system need; it does not approve anything. Every project it names must still pass planning and environmental assessment, land-access processes and community consultation in its state. "It's in the ISP" answers *why here, why now*; it does not answer *whether this route, this design, these conditions* are acceptable. Those remain live planning questions where community input counts.

### What good practice looks like

- Proponents cite the ISP accurately, including where their project is optional or timing-dependent.
- System need (AEMO's job) kept distinct from project approval (the planning system's job).
- Regional communities briefed on the whole ISP outlook for their area, not one project at a time.
- Updates acknowledged: the plan changes every two years and projects should say what's changed.

### Questions to ask

Is this project in the current ISP's optimal development path, or is it proponent-initiated? What does the ISP expect for our region over the next decade? If the need case changes in the next ISP, what happens to this project?

**Want to know more?** The 2026 ISP and plain-language summaries are free on AEMO's website ([aemo.com.au](https://aemo.com.au)). *Status current at July 2026; the next ISP is due in 2028.* This sheet is general information, not legal or planning advice; a specific proposal is confirmed by qualified assessment.