

SYNERGY — EMERGENCY SOLAR MANAGEMENT

1457. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Energy:

I refer to my questions without notice 1361 and 1402 on emergency solar management and Synergy's Solar Rewards, noting that since 14 February, Synergy has had the capability of remotely turning on and off new and upgraded rooftop solar systems and has never once employed this capability.

- (1) Why has Synergy activated the \$450 000 Solar Rewards program, duplicating the capability that already exists in its power management regime?
- (2) Who formulated the financial incentive structure that is Solar Rewards and was the minister or his office consulted on the financial incentive rationale of Solar Rewards?
- (3) Will the information harvested by Synergy during the 1 October to 30 November 2024 contract period be publicly available at the conclusion of the contract period?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Energy.

- (1) Emergency solar management is a last resort measure to maintain system security in the south west interconnected system during extreme low-load events. ESM can be activated only by the Australian Energy Market Operator under emergency operating conditions. Synergy's Solar Rewards program enables Synergy to manage customers' rooftop solar on an opt-in basis for the value of customers and the grid. Value is derived under the program via a non-co-optimised essential system service contract between Synergy and AEMO intended to reduce the risks of extreme low load to the grid and avoid emergency operating conditions emerging. Solar Rewards is helping Synergy further build its capacity as a virtual power plant operator, consistent with the state government's distributed energy resources road map.
- (2) Synergy identified the opportunity for the program as part of its regular customer research and insight activities.
- (3) No.
- (4) Data regarding the management of rooftop solar ultimately belongs to the customer who owns those assets.