

RENEWABLE ENERGY

272. Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY to the Minister for Energy:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to delivering more affordable energy for Western Australians and driving a cleaner energy system for the state.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on the McGowan Labor government's efforts in delivering reliable and affordable energy to households and businesses in Perth and the south west interconnected system?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house of what the Australian Energy Market Operator has said about this government's management of the energy system?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

- (1)–(2) I am very pleased to answer that question. I know that the member is very interested in the continued uptake of renewable energy, which sets her apart from the Liberal Party, which has just rejected one of the most exciting renewable energy projects ever proposed in Western Australia! It would be interesting to know whether the federal government would reject the member for Cottesloe's plan to build a renewable energy project close to the coast. Having rejected a private sector proposal, would it also reject the member for Cottesloe's proposal?

It is interesting that the energy transformation strategy in Western Australia is dealing with the higher amount of renewable energy of 1 350 megawatts of additional capacity into the south west interconnected system in the last four years. We are now putting on one megawatt per day of new rooftop solar panels. That is incredible; basically, every year we are putting on the largest power station in the system. We are responding to those additions by making sure that our new system adapts to that new dynamic.

The Australian Energy Market Operator, which operates the south west interconnected system and the national electricity market, has just made some comments about the way our system is evolving. A media release published last Thursday headed "Positive outlook for Western Australia's evolving power system", includes this information —

AEMO's CEO and Managing Director, Daniel Westerman said: "This is a profound transformation that calls for the highest levels of collaboration across the WA energy system—amongst market bodies, policy makers, industry participants and consumer groups."

...

"It is pleasing that AEMO's analysis in the 2021 WEM ESOO confirms sufficient generation capacity to meet forecast demand in the SWIS over the next decade ...

In other words, AEMO is saying that our careful planning will keep the lights on for the next 10 years. The media release continues —

AEMO Executive General Manager, WA, Cameron Parrotte said: "Our analysis shows that even with the expected staged retirement of coal generators, including Muja C ... in 2022 and ... 2024, connected and committed capacity is forecast to meet anticipated demand over the next decade."

Again, our careful management of the exit of coal is being acknowledged by the Australian Energy Market Operator. Mr Cameron Parrotte goes on to say in this media release —

"AEMO is supportive of innovative solutions to help address these challenges, pointing to the importance of projects already underway, like the WA Government's Energy Transformation Strategy, to help alleviate system security risks under certain conditions such as when minimum operational demand is low," ...

Members can see that we are being acknowledged for the hard work that we are doing here in Western Australia. We are bringing together the market participants. As recently as yesterday, I held another forum with AEMO, Western Power and Energy Policy WA to make sure that we are properly identifying all the challenges that are coming out into the system, including the whole-of-system plan, laying out 20 years of infrastructure investment; the distributed energy resources road map, showing how we can integrate rooftop solar and make it part of the system, not an adjunct of the system; and a completely new set of rules that includes reducing carbon emissions as one of the objectives of running our system in Western Australia. This is the way to do energy policy, not the mad schemes invented by the member for Cottesloe.

The SPEAKER: The member for Roe with the last question.