

Industry review means brighter, safer future for solar

Solar installations will be safer for consumers and licenced electrical contractors will be able to compete on a level playing field thanks to a review into the solar industry by the Clean Energy Regulator (CER).

NECA provided extensive input to the [Integrity Review of the Rooftop Solar PV Sector](#), including sharing the challenges faced by members under the existing Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme (SRES) regulatory framework.

The CER took on board comments and proposals put forward by NECA, on behalf of its members, to improve regulation of the industry. In its published Review, the CER has incorporated six of the seven key recommendations made by NECA. The CER Review contains 13 recommendation in total.

The Review's recommendations are positive for licenced electrical contractors working in the solar industry as it will increase oversight, improve standards and should stamp out the minority of operators doing unlicensed work or using non-compliant products.

Key recommended changes include:

- The Clean Energy Regulator becomes the sole regulator and is given responsibility for setting the rules and framework for an installer accreditation scheme, replacing the co-regulation with the Clean Energy Council.
- Poor performing system retailers should be held to account.
- Accredited installers must prove they have been onsite to make the written statement of STC eligibility – and the statement to be made simpler and clearer.
- Increased component quality checks and stronger accountability for component manufacturers.

Carl Copeland, Branch Secretary for NECA WA, who led the organisation's national response to the review, said:

"This is good news for the vast majority of installers, retailers and manufacturers that make up the solar industry and do high-quality, safe work. They have played a key role in reducing the country's emissions and slashing energy bills for millions of Australians.

"However, for too long a monopoly has allowed unscrupulous operators to damage the reputation of the industry, with dodgy products and installations.

"NECA urges the Federal Government to implement the recommended changes as soon as possible, which will strengthen the industry and means a brighter, safer future for solar."