

Powering Bass Strait Islands

Commercial solar (above 7.46kW)

Frequently asked questions

Q. Where can I get information before installing solar panels?

The Clean Energy Council has a handy consumer guide that contains information to consider before installing commercial solar panels or engaging a solar installer, visit their [website here](#).

Q. What do I need to do when I decide to get solar panels installed?

You need to engage an accredited solar installer. The Clean Energy Council's website has the current list of accredited solar installers [here](#).

Your chosen solar installer must also hold a current Electrical Contractor's License to work in Tasmania.

Your licensed installer should provide you with a system design and a written quote.

Q. What are the costs (e.g. meter, connection etc.) associated with connecting solar panels?

You are responsible for the installation costs and also the costs involved in meeting the technical and safety requirements of your chosen system.

If a network upgrade is required to accommodate your commercial solar installation, you will be responsible for the cost of the upgrade.

If your application requires extensive investigation by our engineer to ensure network stability, you may be responsible for these costs.

We will review if the existing connection infrastructure is required, and if so, they will be at the cost of the consumer.

There is also an ongoing annual fee charged to offset the cost of additional network monitoring created by your solar installation.

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Q. Do I need approval to connect a solar panel system to the power network, and who do I approach to be granted approval?

Yes, approval is required. Once you have engaged a solar installer and selected the system you want, your solar installer should lodge a commercial solar application form to BSImailbox@hydro.com.au. The application will contain the specifications of your system and this will be reviewed by our electrical engineer to make sure your system meets the appropriate technical standards and requirements.

While Hydro Tasmania will make every effort to accommodate your application, approval is not guaranteed as all applications are assessed and approved based on overall stability of the network.

Q. What is the feed-in tariff?

A feed-in tariff (FiT) is a rate of payment made by an electricity retailer to a customer who generates electricity which is fed back into the grid.

The FiT for Bass Strait Island commercial solar installations are negotiated on a case-by-case basis..

Q. Who is responsible for switching my system on?

Hydro Tasmania will activate your system once all of the following three criteria have been met:

1. A signed Connection Agreement has been received

- This will be sent to you once your Solar Generation Connection Application has been approved. It needs to be signed and returned.

2. An Electrical Works Request (EWR) and Certificate of Electrical Compliance (CEC) have been submitted to Hydro Tasmania

- These two documents are completed by your solar installer at the time your solar panels are installed. The solar installer is responsible for sending them to Hydro Tasmania as indicated on the forms.
- A Tasmanian Electrical Contractor License must be held by the person lodging the Certificate of Electrical Compliance (CEC) and Electrical Works Request (EWR).

3. The meter equipment has been upgraded

- Once Hydro Tasmania receive the Connection Agreement, Electrical Works Request and Certificate of Electrical Compliance a job order will be raised for a Hydro Tasmania crew to go to your site to exchange your meter. Solar requires a meter that records both power used and power exported. This meter needs to be installed before your solar is connected to the network and you start getting the benefits from your solar.

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Q. What happens during a power outage?

For your safety, your solar panels are designed to automatically cut out during a power outage on the grid your system is connected to. Your solar installation must have the capacity for the network controller to connect and disconnect your system remotely to ensure network stability.

Q. What do I need to do to my solar installation after an outage?

Hydro Tasmania recommends that customers check to ensure that their solar installation has been restored after any planned or unplanned power outage. Not all solar inverters will switch back on automatically after an interruption to the power supply.

Q. What happens if process isn't followed?

If your solar installation has been installed and/or switched on without the correct process being followed, your solar installation will be switched off and tagged out for safety reasons until rectified.

If this happens to you, contact your solar installer immediately.

Q. Will my solar installation be checked for compliance?

In Tasmania all solar installations are inspected by Techsafe electrical inspectors under contract with the Department of Justice. Inspectors fly to the islands on a regular basis and will require access to undertake the inspection.

Faults may lead to your solar installation being disconnected until they are rectified. If any non-compliance is identified, the electrical inspector will inform your solar installer so that faults can be fixed.

Q. Can I make changes to an existing solar installation?

Ensure that you have written confirmation from Hydro Tasmania before you initiate any changes to your solar panel system and engage a licenced electrical contractor to undertake the work.

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Application form

The following information is required to enable Hydro Tasmania to assess the suitability of the connection of a PhotoVoltaic Solar Generator to its electricity distribution network on the Bass Strait Islands above 7.46kW.

Please send your completed application forms to BSmailbox@hydro.com.au

Property owner details – as shown on land title				
Name:				
Business name (if applicable):				
Date:		ABN:		
Postal address (if different from connection point address):				
Suburb:		State:		Postcode:
Phone Home/Work:		Mobile:		
Email:				
Connection point				
Street address:				
Suburb:		State: Tasmania		Postcode:
Meter number:		National meter identifier (NMI) (if known):		
Type of premises:			Pole identification number:	
Distance from Hydro Tasmania's existing electricity supply to proposed connection meters:				
Account holder				
Momentum customer no.:			Property Owner: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Customer name:				
The solar panel system equipment				
Solar panel module manufacturer:				
Number of modules:		National meter identifier (NMI) (if known):		
Rated output (watt per module):		Number of phases:		
Inverter manufacturer:		Inverter rating:		
Connection and protective equipment				
Incorporated in the inverter: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/>		Number of Inverters:		Capacity:
Inverter over-voltage setting and time delay			volts	sec
Inverter under-voltage trip setting and time delay			volts	sec
Inverter over-frequency trip setting and time delay			Hz	sec
Inverter under-frequency trip setting and time delay			Hz	sec
Approval/certification with AS4777 grid connection of energy systems via Inverters Evidence Cert. No.:				
To ride through distribution variations, protection setting are to be set at a minimum to:				
	Voltage		Frequency	
Under	216V	1 sec	46Hz	1 sec
Over	253 V	1 sec	53 Hz	1 sec
Equipment installer				
Name:		Phone:		
Address:				
Electrical contractor				
Name:		Phone:		
Address:				
One line diagram				
One line system diagram attached <input type="checkbox"/>				

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Checklist

Has your connection application been submitted to Hydro Tasmania?

To connect any solar installation to Hydro Tasmania's network, you need to apply for a new solar connection with us. We need to review your proposed installation specifications (including a one-line diagram) so get your solar installer to assist you with filling out the application.

A copy of the solar application form can be found above.

Has your connection offer been accepted?

Hydro Tasmania will perform a review of your proposed commercial solar installation to ensure the overall network stability is not adversely affected. If approved we will send a Connection and Power Purchase agreement to you, sign and return it to BSImailbox@hydro.com.au. Once we have received your agreement then your solar contractor can go ahead and install your solar installation.

Have Certificate of Electrical Compliance and Electrical Works Request been lodged?

Once your system has been installed, your contractor must send completed Certificate of Electrical Compliance (CEC) and Electrical Works Request (EWR) documents to Hydro Tasmania. This documentation lets us know that we need to come and change your meter. Your new solar meter will be able to measure the amount of electricity you use and also the amount you export to the grid.

Is my system switched off until my metering is checked?

Your installer must leave your system switched off and you must not switch it on. Your system will be switched on after we have confirmed that your meter is set up for solar export. Solar systems connected to meters that are not set up for solar, interfere with the meters functionality and cause them to not work properly which might result in high energy bills.