Question on Notice
No. 1162
Asked on Tuesday, 10 October 2023

MR P WEIR ASKED MINISTER FOR ENERGY, RENEWABLES AND HYDROGEN AND MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS AND PROCUREMENT (HON M DE BRENNI)

With reference to renewable energy infrastructure projects—

Will the Minister confirm the number of projects awaiting (a) connection to the network, (b) a connection agreement and (c) a timeframe for both (a) and (b)?

ANSWER

The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) publishes key connection information for the National Energy Market (NEM) on a quarterly basis. According to the most recent release, as of 13 July 2023 there were 35 wind and solar projects with an active application to connect to the network in Queensland.

Connection enquiries are made by proponents early in a project's lifecycle, almost always before projects have begun construction.

The number of projects with a Connection and Access Agreement and awaiting commissioning (or connection) to the network is not published by AEMO.

Powerlink, as the Transmission Network Service Provider in Queensland, manages all network connection enquiries and applications. The precise timing required for projects to receive a connection agreement or to connect to the network depends on a range of technical and commercial factors including but not limited to the location of the project, the equipment used and easement access.

Powerlink provides indicative timings around the time taken for a project to go from initial connection enquiry to construction and commissioning. The processing of an application to connect may take 6–18 months depending on the project's technical and commercial complexity. The connection acceptance process, where a proponent formally enters into a Connection and Access Agreement, may take a further 1-3 months.

The construction and commissioning process can take an additional 9–24 months and includes the design, procurement, construction, testing and commissioning phases of a project. These indicative timings are publicly available from Powerlink.