Submission to Victorian Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee

Inquiry into Electricity Supply for Electric Vehicles

Evie Networks | 31 October 2025

About Evie Networks

Evie Networks is Australia's largest owner-operator of public direct-current (DC) fast EV charging infrastructure. Since our establishment in 2018 we have built a national network of more than 300 charging stations and 1,000 bays of charging, including over 100 sites across Victoria, with 60 of them serving intercity corridors and regional areas.

Over the past twelve months alone our national network has delivered approximately 25 GWh to drivers, enabling about 150 million kilometres of zero tail-pipe emission travel for drivers of passenger cars, light commercials and an emerging cohort of battery-electric trucks.

Executive Summary

Victoria's 50% ZEV target by 2030 can only be achieved by rapidly scaling up our charging network across all technologies.

At the moment, we are not on track, and the critical blockers to clear require systemic reform of the frameworks governing network pricing, connection processes, and infrastructure coordination.

Connecting EV fast chargers in Victoria is still too bureaucratic and expensive to meet the State's needs. For example, we recently were asked to pay $22,000 for a site in Victoria simply to get a quote for a grid connection, before paying the connection itself.

High costs, uncertain connection times and tariffs ill-designed for EV charging are key blockers to achieving Victoria's charging needs.

Victoria needs regulatory frameworks that enable rapid, cost-effective deployment of diverse charging infrastructure matched to driver needs. Today's network tariffs don't recognise controllable load characteristics, connection processes lack transparency and service standards, and coordination gaps between state policy, local government planning impede infrastructure delivery.

These are system design problems, not failures of individual actors. Networks, operators, councils and regulators are working within frameworks designed for a different era. As a consequence, networks are increasingly seeking to compete with industry, their own customers, to grow their regulated returns. This is clear evidence of misaligned incentives.

Reform requires aligning incentives and processes across all parties to enable the charging infrastructure Victoria needs, for the benefit of all consumers.

This is not just about Victoria's net zero goals, though it is critical to achieving them. **EV charging also delivers measurable grid benefits.** EV charging puts downward pressure on electricity prices for all Victorians by increasing asset utilisation, absorbing solar during midday peaks, and giving flexibility to the grid through highly controllable demand response in situations like heatwaves and generator failures.

Charging infrastructure is among the most controllable loads on the grid, with customers responding well to price signals and able to reduce demand by 50% or more during stress events while maintaining service quality.

International evidence points to clear solutions. Of the ten countries leading EV uptake, nine use competitive public-private partnership models rather than state-owned monopolies. The Netherlands and United Kingdom demonstrate how governments can accelerate deployment through targeted capability funding, demand aggregation, and competitive procurement, while encouraging private sector investment, innovation and efficiency. These models deliver dense networks, fast deployment and scaled private investment—outcomes Victoria can achieve through systemic reform.

Victoria should establish clear infrastructure targets matched to EV adoption projections, implement network pricing that recognises and rewards grid-friendly charging behaviour, create transparent connection processes with service standards and cost predictability, support local government capability to coordinate infrastructure with community needs, and direct public funding to areas where commercial viability requires co-investment, particularly regional corridors.

1. Strategies to reduce EV charging during periods of peak demand on the grid and increase charging during periods of peak supply

1.1 Principles

The grid benefits from well-integrated EV charging

Victoria's electricity networks are built to serve peak demand that occurs only for a few hours, a few days per year. For most of the year, substantial latent capacity exists that can be utilised by flexible loads like EV charging. This represents an opportunity to increase network efficiency and reduce unit costs for all consumers through better asset utilisation.

Transport electrification delivers measurable benefits for network economics. In the short term, increased utilisation of existing assets improves productivity without requiring new investment in most locations. Over the long term, as EV adoption scales, charging load that is properly integrated with solar generation patterns can defer or avoid costly network augmentation that would otherwise be required to manage bidirectional power flows from rooftop solar.

The key benefits EV charging delivers to Victoria's electricity system include improved utilisation of network assets built for peak events, absorption of midday solar generation that would otherwise require network investment to export or curtail, and highly controllable demand that can respond to grid conditions within minutes. During periods of network stress, modern charging infrastructure can reduce output substantially while maintaining customer service, as Evie demonstrated during last summer's heatwave events when we reduced demand at 11 NSW sites by 50% to support grid stability, on multiple occasions. **Importantly**, **this was made possible by a trial tariff** that is designed for EV charging and encourages complementary network utilisation. **Victoria has no such tariffs**.

Outside locations experiencing very high connection growth rates, EV charging is unlikely to increase network congestion or trigger augmentation requirements. This is because charging naturally occurs during periods of network under-utilisation, can be readily controlled during the small number of peak demand hours, and often displaces other forms of energy consumption (such as petrol refining and transport) rather than representing net new load.

1.2 Barriers

Current pricing structures misalign incentives

The full grid benefits of EV charging depend on pricing structures that reward rather than penalise grid-friendly behaviour. Currently, network tariff designs developed for traditional load patterns create perverse incentives that increase costs, discourage optimal charging patterns, and ultimately harm Victorian electricity consumers.

To illustrate, consider a standard charging station that has 4 bays and 2x 150kW chargers. At a standard 10% utilisation the charging station would be exposed to Large Business tariffs that are characterised by year-round Demand or Capacity charges, measured at 30 minute intervals, irrespective of whether there are peak network events or not.

The cost to the charge point operator (CPO) would be over $2k per month in Demand / Capacity charges ($4k in summer months), with total network charges comprising 50-70% of the site electricity bill. This is outside regulatory objectives which have a typical target of 33% for network charges.[1]

The current AER Draft Determination for the 2026-2031 regulatory period demonstrates that there has been very little in the way of meaningful tariff innovation since 2021, and very little is planned through to 2031. This means that for 10 years where DER uptake has and will be accelerating, network tariffs are not keeping up with technology.

The blunt application of Demand/Capacity charges, irrespective of whether there is a high demand event on the network, forces the CPO to regularly reduce charging speeds for drivers in an effort to contain excessive network costs. This creates several problematic outcomes:

- **Charging prices must be set high to cover costs**, undermining the economic case for EV adoption for many driver segments.
- **Regular, poor charging experiences for drivers,** as slower charging speeds lead to longer wait times at bays.
- **Necessary high pricing stifles demand and utilisation** making the business case for investment less attractive. As a consequence, more government funding will be required to support rollout of charging infrastructure.
- **Lost network efficiency and reduced revenue for DNSPs**, resulting in consumers paying more for electricity.
- **Higher power charging stations are punished.** As EV uptake increases, Australians need larger sites with faster charging and more plugs. However, with tariffs that are not cost reflective, and do not recognise controllable load, there is a perverse incentive to build smaller sites, leading to queues and inconvenience for drivers.

This misalignment is particularly problematic because EV charging is fundamentally different from traditional large loads. Charging infrastructure has high instantaneous demand but low average utilisation during early adoption phases. It has proven capability to reduce load during actual network stress events. It exhibits load patterns that naturally align with solar generation, with utilisation peaks during midday periods. Modern charging infrastructure can respond to price signals within seconds, providing demand response capability that exceeds most other load types.

[1] Calculation based on current Citipower, Powercor and United network tariffs.

1.3 Solutions

Innovative reforms have been proven in other Australian jurisdictions

Innovative network tariff designs that recognise these characteristics deliver better outcomes for all parties. **Ausgrid's EA964 trial tariff** in NSW provides a working model. This tariff structure includes energy-only charges for baseline consumption, recognising that controllable loads during low-utilisation periods don't drive network costs. It incorporates critical peak pricing for the genuine network stress events that drive augmentation requirements, with caps on event frequency (maximum 20 per year, 2 hours per event) and minimum notice periods (24 hours) that enable customer response. And it provides low volume charges at other times to encourage greater network utilisation when there is available capacity.

The challenge is that innovative tariffs often include eligibility restrictions that limit their applicability as EV adoption scales. Ausgrid's EA964, for example, is limited to sites consuming less than 160MWh per annum. As successful sites grow beyond this threshold, they face significantly higher charges through tariffs designed for different load types. This creates a perverse outcome where successful infrastructure deployment is penalised. Furthermore, maximum benefits for the grid are achieved at high utilisation, but these benefits are being missed, and consumers end up paying more as a result.

Recommendations

Victoria can lead on tariff reform through several mechanisms that work within existing regulatory frameworks while driving national reform. The immediate pathway involves Victorian networks introducing trial tariffs under National Electricity Rules provisions. These trials are subject to modest revenue thresholds but can provide valuable evidence of customer impacts and grid benefits while permanent reforms are progressed.

For permanent national reform, Victoria should work with other states and the Commonwealth through the ITMM to ensure EV suitable tariffs are available nationwide.

The key design parameters for effective EV charging tariffs are clear from Australian and international experience:

1. low **energy-only baseline pricing** that encourages use of latent network capacity;
2. **dynamic peak pricing** limited to genuine critical peak demand network events, with appropriate frequency caps and notice requirements;
3. strong **incentives for solar-soak charging** during midday generation peaks;
4. **no arbitrary utilisation thresholds** which render sites ineligible for the tariff, thereby penalising successful sites as adoption scales.

Getting network pricing right ensures Victorian electricity consumers capture the full value of transport electrification through reduced network costs, better solar integration, and improved grid stability.

2. Public charging infrastructure deployment rates in different parts of Victoria

2.1 Principles

Victoria needs diverse charging infrastructure matched to driver needs

Victoria needs a diverse mix of charging infrastructure to support drivers across metropolitan, suburban, and regional areas. No single technology or ownership model can meet all needs.

Public and kerbside charging is critical for renters and apartment residents who lack off-street parking. Travellers need reliable highway corridors and destination chargers, while professional and fleet drivers (crucial because they represent highest kilometre drivers) require dense DC fast-charging networks to minimise downtime. Businesses depend on a combination of depot, workplace, and public charging options.

Infrastructure priorities also vary by geography: older suburbs need higher public charger density, outer suburbs benefit from strategic fast chargers at commercial centres, and regional routes require dependable coverage to ensure range confidence.

The key policy challenge is coordinating rollout to match actual demand—stimulating private investment while supporting early-stage or low-viability areas—to avoid both stranded assets and service gaps. Right now Victoria is not on track to meet forecast demand.

2.2 Barriers

Victoria has substantial private sector interest in charging infrastructure deployment, with multiple operators active or planning entry. However, several systemic barriers slow deployment and increase costs, ultimately harming Victorian electricity consumers who bear these costs through higher charging prices and delayed realisation of grid benefits from transport electrification.

2.2 (a) Unpredictable connection costs and timelines:

Infrastructure operators face unpredictable connection approval timeframes that can extend from weeks to years depending on site characteristics, without transparent service standards. Connection costs vary substantially between similar sites, with limited transparency about cost drivers or opportunities for operators to manage costs through alternative technical solutions creating investment risk particularly for sites in areas where commercial viability is marginal.

Case study: A recent connection in our Victorian network required $34,000 for minimal scope work to disconnect and reconnect supply. Another connection received an initial quote of $75,000 that after we challenged, was reduced to $35,000 for identical scope. A third site required a $22,000 payment simply to receive a connection quote, with actual connection costs additional. These examples are not presented to criticise specific decisions but to demonstrate how current frameworks create unpredictability that increases capital costs and risk, ultimately harming Victorian consumers through higher charging prices.

This barrier is faced even by DEECEW's co-funded National Charging Network with NRMA. As noted in its *Lessons Learnt Report:*[2]

> *"Securing timely connections from Distribution Network Service Providers (DNSPs) has been one of the most time-consuming aspects of the project. DNSP approval processes often delay the installation of charging infrastructure, especially when dealing with new technologies like BTM batteries. The uncertainty surrounding tariffs and the extended timelines for connection upgrades have created a bottleneck, leading to prolonged delays."*

2.2 (b) Tariff structure mismatches: As discussed in section one, network tariff structures designed for traditional loads create perverse incentives for charging infrastructure. Operators must factor artificially high network cost projections into financial models, reducing the number of sites that achieve required investment returns.

This is particularly acute in regional and outer suburban areas where utilisation during early adoption phases is lower.

Case study: In one Victorian example, a site was assigned to a large business tariff because the connection "had the potential to go above 160MWh" despite forecast consumption of 80MWh and actual consumption proving to be only 40MWh. The site's network capacity charges exceeded total customer revenue, creating an unsustainable business model.

2.2 (c) Coordination gaps: Successful infrastructure deployment requires coordination between state policy objectives, local government planning and parking management, network capacity planning and connection delivery, and commercial site selection by operators balancing driver needs with financial viability. Currently, these elements operate largely independently, creating inefficiencies that delay deployment and reduce infrastructure effectiveness.

[2] NRMA. "National EV Charging Infrastructure Program – Lessons Learnt Report." Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), August 12, 2025. PDF.

Local governments report challenges coordinating with multiple infrastructure operators pursuing different strategies, networks responding to connection applications without visibility of broader deployment plans, and state policy settings that don't clearly prioritise transport electrification in planning and parking decisions. Infrastructure operators report difficulty accessing network capacity information necessary for efficient site selection, limited engagement from some local governments on parking and planning matters, and absence of clear state frameworks that prioritise or streamline charging infrastructure as essential transport infrastructure.

2.3 Solutions

Countries leading EV adoption have developed effective models that coordinate investment without expanding utility monopolies. The Netherlands and the United Kingdom offer useful lessons for Victoria.

The **Netherlands' National Agenda for Charging Infrastructure** uses regional concessions where local governments aggregate demand and tender multi-year contracts to private operators. This approach provides investment certainty, enables coordinated rollout, and maintains competition through retendering. Electricity networks connect sites under standardised rules but do not own or operate chargers. The model has delivered around 175,000 installations, transitioning from public subsidies to full private financing as markets matured.

The **UK's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund** takes a complementary approach, building local government capability alongside infrastructure delivery. Grants fund staff, planning tools, and technical expertise, recognising that local capacity is essential to effective deployment. Competitive procurement ensures efficiency and alignment with community needs, with around 29,000 installations contracted to date.

Recommendations

Victoria should establish a comprehensive framework for accelerating charging infrastructure deployment that draws on these international lessons while addressing Victoria's specific circumstances. This should include:

1. **Clear targets and planning:** establish data-driven targets for charging infrastructure by region and type, broken down to local government areas and informed by EV adoption projections, international benchmarking of charger-to-vehicle ratios, and local factors such as housing density and off-street parking availability. These targets provide direction for both public and private investment, enable local governments to plan for parking and amenity impacts, and create accountability for measuring progress.

2. **Capability support:** Many local governments lack in-house capability for EV infrastructure planning, technical assessment, and stakeholder coordination. Following the UK LEVI model, at least 10% of any state infrastructure funding should support local government capability development. This includes dedicated staff positions for councils to develop and implement EV infrastructure strategies, access to shared technical resources and planning tools that smaller councils cannot develop independently, and coordination

mechanisms enabling councils to learn from each other and share effective practices.

3. **Tariff reform and connection standards:** Mandate EV business tariffs that reflect the unique benefits EV charging can provide to the grid. Beyond pricing, connection processes require transparent service standards with timeframes and cost guidance for standard connection types, published capacity information at street level to enable efficient site selection, and flexible connection options that recognise controllable load characteristics.

4. **Strategic co-investment:** Public funding should target areas where commercial deployment faces barriers, particularly regional corridors where utilisation during early adoption is insufficient for commercial viability, remote areas where usage may never justify full commercial investment but connectivity is essential, and locations serving transport-disadvantaged communities where market-led deployment may be slower. Funding should use competitive procurement to ensure efficiency, avoid distorting competitive markets where commercial deployment is viable, and include requirements for performance, accessibility and integration with state charging networks.

3. The best role for electricity distribution businesses in rolling out EV charging infrastructure, and how distribution network tariffs should be set for EV chargers

Victoria's electricity distribution networks are central to transport electrification: every charging site requires network connection. The critical question is what role best serves Victorian consumers: networks as essential infrastructure providers and enablers, or as infrastructure owners competing in markets that can function competitively.

3.1 Principles

Australian electricity regulation limits monopoly ownership to infrastructure where competition cannot function: the poles, wires and substations that constitute essential network infrastructure. Activities that can be performed competitively are open to competition because competitive markets deliver better consumer outcomes through innovation, efficiency pressure, and responsiveness to customer needs.

This principle exists because monopolies face fundamentally different incentives than competitive businesses. Monopolies earn regulated returns on capital invested, creating incentives to maximise capital deployment. Competitive businesses must earn returns through customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. When monopolies enter competitive markets, structural advantages (guaranteed cost recovery, access to competitor information, ability to prefer their own services) undermine fair competition and harm consumers.

Consumer facing charging infrastructure falls clearly on the competitive side.

International evidence

Of ten countries leading EV adoption, nine rely predominantly on competitive private-public partnership models rather than utility ownership. The exception is China, where state ownership of economic infrastructure is the norm. The Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, United States, Germany, France, Sweden and South Korea achieved high EV adoption with competitive charging markets, using government support like subsidies, planning facilitation, parking policies without utility monopoly expansion.

Japan and South Korea's centrally planned, utility-led approaches provide cautionary evidence: overspending relative to outcomes, stranded infrastructure in poorly selected locations, and slower EV adoption than countries with competitive markets. These outcomes are predictable when incentives favour capital deployment over customer service and efficient site selection.

3.2 The CPU ringfencing waiver: a problematic precedent

In late October, the AER granted CitiPower, Powercor and United Energy a six-and-a-half-year ring-fencing waiver to own 100 pole-mounted AC chargers. This decision sets a worrying precedent for a number of reasons:

- The trial's stated learning objectives—testing demand management responses and tariff-driven behaviour—can both be readily achieved without network ownership. Industry is already performing this function and could have partnered with DNSPs to achieve this objective (indeed, Evie Networks made this offer to CPU but the offer was rejected).

- It positions CPU as both a monopoly supplier to charge point operators, as well now a competitor. This creates clear discrimination and competition risks since CPU controls both poles (input) and charging sites (output) leading to information asymmetry and margin squeeze.

Case study: Citipower tariffs available for public charging (CMG021 and CLLVT for >160MWh pa) result in network charges ranging from $0.14 to $0.28 per kWh.

Compare this with the new trial tariff that is being recommended by CPU. This will result in network charges of ~$0.045. CPU has decided, at their discretion, that this tariff will not be available to competitors in the fast (DC) charging market.

Therefore **DC charging will be at a disadvantage of c.$0.10 to $0.24 per kWh**, purely due to network charges. This is for charging that serves the same customers needs, with the AER recognising that there is "significant fluidity" between AC and DC charging.

- If the AER believes that a "build it and they will come" principle will speed up EV adoption, then it requires interrogation why this trial favours areas where adoption is already highest. In its waiver application CPU is proposing to deploy the majority of its 100 chargers in Melbourne's east while the western suburbs are largely neglected.

- Australia currently lacks Minimum Operating Standards for public AC charging sites, such as kerbside chargers, meaning there is no benchmark to assess monopoly-owned infrastructure. Existing national guidelines focus only on DC fast charging. This regulatory gap risks poor site design, reduced accessibility, and underused assets—especially from regulated monopolies with limited commercial incentives. This gap should be urgently addressed.

The CPU waiver means that instead of innovating in areas that are desperately needed, such as streamlining network connections, developing flexible LV connections and dynamic tariffs, CPU will be focussing energy on a trial that is bad for competition and consumers.

There is certainly a role for AC charging as part of Victoria's overall network mix. However the waiver decision sends a problematic signal to private capital that Victoria may be moving toward monopoly expansion in charging markets which could well have a chilling effect on the private investment that is essential for future public charging rollout.

Victorian policymakers should learn from this experience. The AER's waiver for CPU creates competition risks while relying on weak, self-reported conditions. Site access and pricing remain at CPU's discretion, and transparency obligations don't correct information asymmetry. The decision leaves an oversight gap that can entrench first-mover advantages, deter private investment, slow rollout, and raise long-term costs—undermining Victoria's goal of a contestable, innovative charging market.

Future regulatory decisions should require clear demonstration that learning objectives cannot be achieved through competitive market partnerships, robust mechanisms preventing cross-subsidisation and discrimination, and proportionate scale and duration genuinely reflecting experimental rather than commercial intent.

3.3 Recommendations

Enforce existing ring-fencing rules to clarify roles and responsibilities

DNSPs are crucial enablers to Victoria's charging networks. Reform efforts should be focussed on helping them better enable charging rollout through tariff and connection reform, not in expanding their monopolies to consumer facing charging provision. The first step must be to enforce existing ring-fencing rules, ensuring there is certainty as to the roles of each participant in the charging ecosystem. Only when roles and responsibilities are clear, and rules enforced in line with their design, can each participant operate efficiently, and private investment unlocked to its full potential.

Reform tariffs to recognise the benefits of public EV charging

Innovative, dynamic tariffs that recognise charging infrastructure's distinct characteristics will underpin future network rollouts by creating a sustainable, cost-reflective cost base for charging networks. As discussed already in this submission, this requires moving away from generic capacity and demand charges toward tariff structures rewarding the grid benefits charging provides.

The technical and economic case is strong. Charging infrastructure has fundamentally different load profiles, controllability characteristics, and grid impacts than traditional large loads. Treating charging identically to uncontrollable industrial or commercial loads misallocates costs and creates inefficient incentives. This is cost-reflective pricing aligning charges with actual network cost causation—not preferential treatment.

The solution is dynamic tariffs with price signals that recognise the benefits of public EV charging. Features of a dynamic tariff designed for public EV charging would include:

- Critical peak pricing applying only during actual network peak demand events, with advance notice enabling load response. While CPOs can readily curtail chargers to avoid adding excess load during a peak demand event, providing a 24 hour notice period would also allow communication with EV drivers, so they can shift their demand away from the peak demand event.
- Ultra-low cost solar soak pricing during middle of the day periods. Solar soak periods are regular and predictable. CPOs can incentivise increased demand by providing pricing signals to drivers, who in turn could take advantage of the low rates.
- Low cost at other times to encourage complementary network utilisation
- No arbitrary utilisation thresholds which render sites ineligible for the tariff, thereby penalising successful sites and nullifying consumer benefits as adoption scales.

Evidence from **Ausgrid's EA964** trial in NSW demonstrates this approach is feasible, compatible with network cost recovery, and delivers better outcomes than generic capacity charges. Victoria should require its networks to implement similar tariff trials immediately under existing NER provisions.

Connection processes require transparency and service standards

As discussed already in this submission, network connection processes significantly influence infrastructure deployment pace and cost.

- **Transparent service standards** would create accountability for connection timeframe performance, provide operators with predictability for investment planning, and enable identification of process bottlenecks. UK networks face financial penalties for exceeding connection timeframes for EV sites—Victoria should adopt similar standards.

- **Cost transparency** would enable operators to evaluate site viability earlier, reduce time spent on ultimately unviable sites, and create competitive pressure on connection costs where benchmarking reveals substantial variations. This requires itemised cost breakdowns, clear explanation of cost drivers and alternative technical approaches, and caps on preliminary assessment fees.

- **Flexible connection options** recognising load controllability would enable efficient network capacity use during under-utilisation periods, reduce augmentation requirements by allowing controllable loads to avoid peak contribution, and lower connection costs for infrastructure demonstrating controllability. This might involve agreements specifying maximum demand during defined peak windows, real-time curtailment capability, and load response to network signals during stress events.

Improved connection processes benefit networks too by reducing disputes and repeat applications, standardising technical requirements to reduce engineering time, and enabling flexible arrangements that defer augmentation investment.

The CPU decision underscores the need for a regulatory framework that aligns incentives across all players—networks, governments, and private operators—to accelerate the EV transition efficiently.

The challenge ahead is not a lack of market capability but the need for smarter regulation that ensures every actor pulls in the same direction toward fair, efficient, and consumer-focused electrification.

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4. Strategies to facilitate EV ownership and bidirectional charging

Evie Networks' view is that tariff and connection issues, as discussed in previous sections, require urgent attention. Bidirectional charging is an exciting development and one which will require regulatory attention in time, but we consider it a secondary priority at present.

On the question of encouraging consumer uptake of EVs we would simply offer the following: infrastructure deployment and vehicle adoption are mutually reinforcing. Early infrastructure supports adoption, and growing adoption improves infrastructure economics, creating a virtuous cycle.

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5. Second-life EV batteries as household or community batteries

No submission is made.

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6. EV supply chain opportunities in Victoria

No submission is made.

Recommendations

Victoria's path to transport electrification requires building diverse charging infrastructure that serves all driver segments across metropolitan, suburban and regional areas while delivering grid benefits that reduce costs for all electricity consumers. Victoria will only reach its charging network goals with substantial private investment but unlocking that requires reform that aligns incentives across networks, infrastructure operators, local governments and state policy.

1. **Implement network pricing reform**

Direct Victorian networks to introduce trial EV charging tariffs under existing National Electricity Rules trial provisions for 2026 pricing year. These should include low cost energy-only baseline charges, critical peak pricing limited to genuine network peak demand events with appropriate frequency caps and notice requirements, and strong solar-soak incentives during midday generation periods. These tariffs must be designed for both AC and DC public charging, and must not exclude higher utilisation sites that provide the greatest benefit.

Ensure Victorian networks incorporate appropriate EV tariff classes into their 2026-31 Tariff Structure Statement determinations currently in progress, embedding these structures in the five-year regulatory framework with clear assignment criteria and no arbitrary utilisation thresholds that penalise successful sites.

Victoria should advocate strongly for those measures to be reflected in the state by state arrangements so that there’s uniformity in the ITMM. Without that coordinated national action we very likely miss our net zero targets in transportation.

2. **Create transparent, efficient connection processes**

Establish connection service standards requiring one-week initial responses to applications and target eight-week average approval times for low-voltage connections. Implement quarterly public reporting of performance against these standards.

Require connection cost transparency including itemised cost breakdowns for major components, clear explanation of cost drivers and opportunities to reduce costs through alternative technical approaches, and caps on preliminary assessment fees.

Develop flexible connection options recognising load controllability characteristics, enabling efficient use of latent network capacity through arrangements specifying maximum demand during peak windows, real-time curtailment capability, and load response to network signals during stress events.

Publish street-level network capacity information enabling infrastructure operators to select sites efficiently and reduce wasted effort on capacity-constrained locations.

3. **Support local government capability and coordination**

Establish a Local Government EV Infrastructure Capability Program allocating funding to local government capability development. This should fund dedicated staff positions for

councils to develop and implement EV infrastructure strategies, provide access to shared technical resources and planning tools, and create coordination mechanisms enabling councils to share effective practices.

Develop standardised frameworks for local government engagement with infrastructure operators including clear processes for parking allocation, streamlined planning approvals for charging infrastructure, and alignment of infrastructure deployment with local transport and parking strategies.

Establish state-level coordination forums bringing together networks, infrastructure operators, local government representatives and state agencies to share deployment plans, identify process improvements, and coordinate information sharing.

4. **Target strategic co-investment where needed**

Establish a Victorian EV Infrastructure Acceleration Program with clear, data-driven targets by region and charging type, broken down to local government areas and informed by EV adoption projections, international benchmarking, and local factors including housing density and off-street parking availability.

Direct public funding to areas where commercial deployment faces barriers including regional corridors where early-stage utilisation is insufficient for commercial viability, remote areas where usage may never justify full commercial investment but connectivity is essential, and locations serving transport-disadvantaged communities.

Use competitive procurement including reverse auctions to ensure efficient use of public resources, avoiding distortion of competitive markets where commercial deployment is viable.

5. **Maintain and strengthen competitive market protections**

Preserve ring-fencing protections that prevent cross-subsidisation of competitive services by monopoly network customers, protect competition by preventing structural advantages monopolies can leverage, and ensure networks focus on efficient delivery of monopoly services.

Support competitive infrastructure markets through regulatory frameworks that enable rather than obstruct private investment, maintain diversity of operators and technology approaches, and create conditions for sustainable commercial models serving diverse driver needs.

Conclusion

These recommendations provide a framework for Victoria to lead national transport electrification while protecting consumer interests and maintaining competitive markets that drive innovation and efficiency.

Evie Networks would welcome the opportunity to further assist the Committee with its inquiry and in its goal of helping Victoria achieve its transport and emissions targets.