

Media Release

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Batteries Included

New report identifies the progress of electricity storage technologies, which have become highly competitive on price as well as being popular with the public.

“The combination of batteries paired with variable renewable energy such as solar and wind can now provide security of electricity supply, with zero emissions,” Australia Institute strategist and report author, Dan Cass said.

“According to *The Economist* ‘the lithium-ion battery is the technology of our time’, and Australia is well placed to take advantage of this job-creating, emissions-reducing innovation.

The Australia Institute’s report into battery storage includes new polling showing that 71% of voters say they would consider voting for a party that supported distributed small-scale solar and storage and 1 in 4 Australians want to create and store power so they can unplug from the grid.

“1.5 million Australian households have invested in rooftop solar on their homes and our research shows that over 80% of those households are considering buying batteries to boost their array. Overall interest in owning battery storage has leapt from 49% to 63% in 12 months.

“Lithium battery prices have fallen by 93% between 1995 and 2014, which threatens coal and gas generators with competition and Australian networks are already testing large-scale battery storage.

“Energy has been an election issue in Australia in the past, and the massive popularity of this technology makes it an opportunity for savvy politicians to gain support.

“Solar households are paid so much less for the power they export than the power they are sold by retailers that they may be driven off-grid and this is a major policy and political problem. Akin to a supermarket chain charging families for growing their own vegetables, the power industry continues to seek compensation for independent power production.

“The federal government needs to work with the clean energy sector to quickly to unleash competition from storage while also ensuring safety standards for all battery technologies, to protect consumers and give the industry confidence to invest,” Dan Cass said.

Media Inquiries: Tom Burmester 0468 926 833