

REMOTE AREAS ENERGY SUPPLIES (RAES) CONNECTING CUSTOMER OWNED SOLAR PV SYSTEMS

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Under the Remote Areas Energy Supplies (RAES) scheme the South Australian Government is committed to providing cost effective, safe, reliable and sustainable power supply to consumers in towns and communities included in the scheme.

In order to maintain the cost effectiveness of the RAES scheme for residential and commercial customers, a significant subsidy is provided to enable RAES tariffs to be aligned with the average on-grid National Electricity Market equivalent tariff in South Australia. The considerable gap between the cost of supply and average tariffs is borne by the South Australian Government, with only government customers paying the full cost of electricity supply under the RAES scheme.

Connecting distributed solar PV systems to RAES micro-grids could potentially lead to both technical and financial risks for the RAES scheme including:

- Large swings in solar photovoltaic (PV) generation associated with changes in cloud cover can result in generator surges, leading to generator damage or failure. This could leave locations without RAES generated power supply for extended periods.
- Allowing distributed solar PV systems to feed into the RAES micro-grids can lead to increased voltages across the grid, which would pose a risk to distribution equipment and could lead to distribution system outages or shutdown.

Consequently, customer generated electricity cannot be permitted to feed back in to the RAES grids, and as such no feed in tariffs or offsets will be available to customers.

Due to these risks, the South Australian Government does not allow the connection of customer solar PV systems in RAES micro-grid locations without prior written approval from the Department for Energy and Mining.

RAES customers may submit a proposal regarding solar PV connection, however connection will not be considered unless the customer can demonstrate that the proposal will not impact on the stability of the existing grid or the security of electricity supply to all customers.

RAES Solar PV enquiries should be directed to dem.raes@sa.gov.au in the first instance.

RAES customers may choose to completely disconnect from the RAES grid and install a stand-alone energy system to supply their home or business.

Customers wishing to disconnect from the RAES grid can obtain the necessary form at www.energymining.sa.gov.au/raes or www.cowellelectric.com.au