

# Media release

## Launched today: New and innovative training for household solar batteries in Victoria

**10 OCTOBER, 2018:** Australia's boom in solar batteries is about to get safer, with new training set to provide the technical skills required for electricians to specialise and support consumers to understand and install new energy technology systems.

Supported by the Victorian Government and led by Future Energy Skills, the New Energy Technology Systems (NETS) project bridges current skills gaps and supports industry growth through the creation, piloting and evaluation of new training in solar battery assessment, design and installation – that makes learning easy and effective.

"This new level of training and skills has launched at a pivotal time where a rapid growth in solar has called for an urgent increase in skills," said Future Energy Skills Executive Officer, Alex Newman.

"The training sector has not been prepared to meet upcoming demand, until now."

The NETS project was launched today by Minister for Training and Skills, Gayle Tierney, as part of the Victorian Government's Workforce Training Innovation Fund.

Over two million homes have solar panels installed and now many of these households are considering battery storage solutions.

Statistics identify that, nationally, the installation of battery storage systems grew 1300% from 2015 to 2016, from just 500 installations to 6750 in 23 months!

"There are also growing concerns from industry around the potential safety risks new energy technology systems pose to the public and the workforce if they are not properly designed, installed and maintained."

As a result, the industry urgently requires specialist skills, trained educators and a confident workforce, which new training will address.

Some collaborating partners include the Clean Energy Council, Energy Safe Victoria and the Smart Energy Council who will leverage the newly accredited course in New Energy Technology Systems and develop new video-based learning resources and industry updates for students, along with developing a teacher development platform and program for educators.

The project will pilot these new resources and new delivery approach with 120 electricians and 10 teachers at The Gordon TAFE, Holmesglen Institute, Federation Training, The Solar Centre and NECA Education & Careers.

The pilot will also deliver an awareness campaign over 2019 to inform consumers of the importance of seeking out accredited tradespeople for the safe and effective installation of their solar batteries.

"Future Energy Skills will connect these consumers with qualified and accredited battery designers and installers," said Mr Newman.

"Nationally recognised and locally delivered, the NETS course shapes future leaders in solar batteries, pathing the way for new energy technologies, a priority sector for Victoria"



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<sup>1</sup> The Clean Energy Australia Report 2018. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/policy-advocacy/reports/clean-energy-australia-report.html>

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**Future Energy Skills**

Future Energy Skills (previously EPIC Industry Training Board) is a not-for-profit industry led organisation serving and working in partnership with Victoria's electro-technology, electricity generation and supply, gas supply and new energy technology sectors.

**Collaborating partners**

- Clean Energy Council
- Country Fire Authority
- Energy Safe Victoria
- Smart Energy Council
- National Electrical Communications Association (NECA)
- Gippsland Solar
- Electrical Trades Union
- Renew
- Holmesglen Institute
- Solar Training Centre
- The Gordon
- NECA Education & Careers
- Federation Training

