



Queensland  
Decarbonisation  
Hub

Centre for Policy Futures

# A Nation Powered by Participation

*How Households and Businesses Are Driving the Energy Transition*

Robert Potter | Head of Policy and Advocacy, Smart Energy Council

29 September 2026

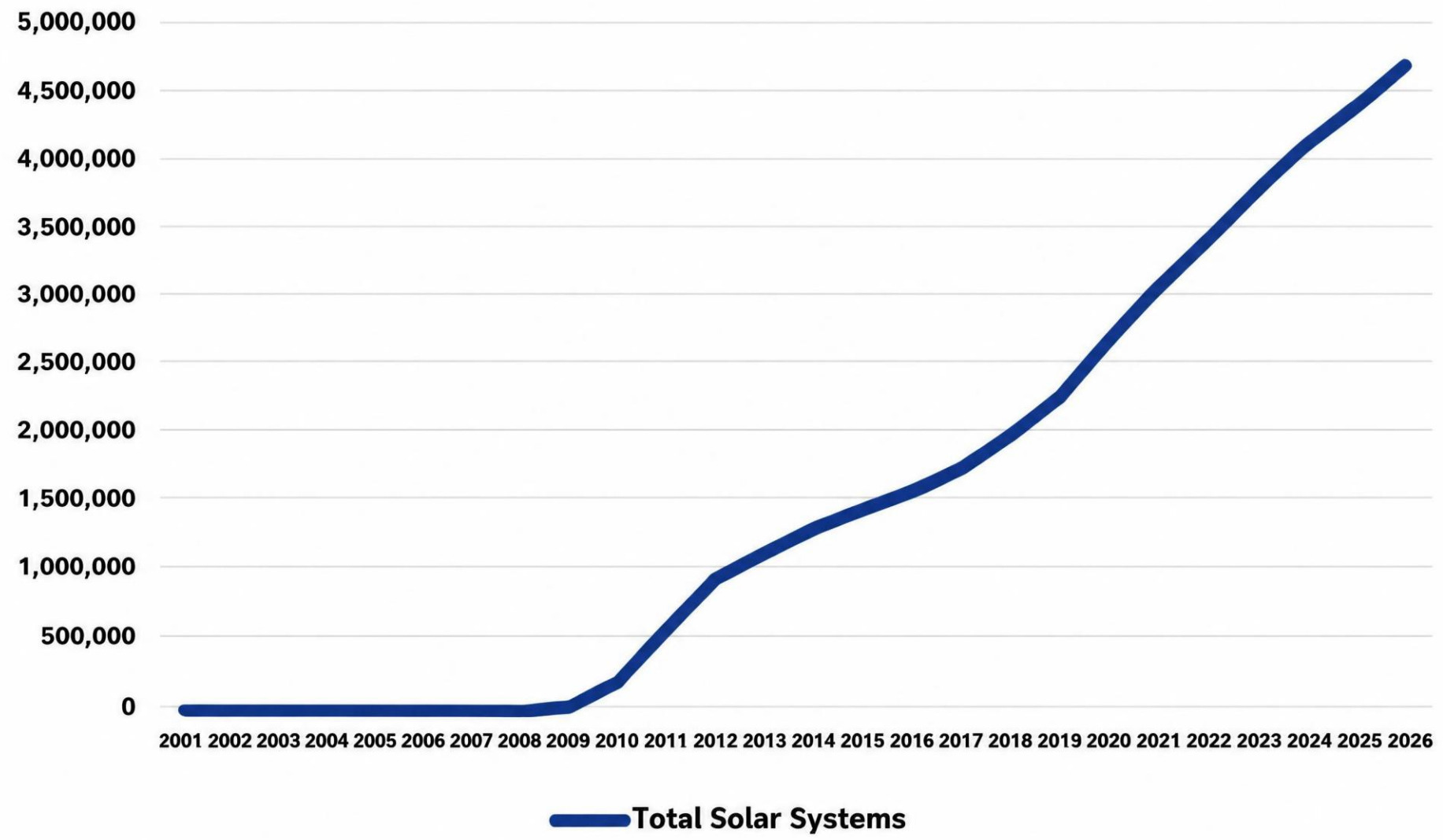




# **NOT IF. WHEN AND HOW.**

Eight stories about participation.

## Solar Systems installed (cumulative)





# The Household Revolution

500,000

HOME BATTERIES INSTALLED: 13 MONTHS

4.4M

ROOFTOP SOLAR SYSTEMS, NATIONALLY

Plus: 1 in 3 Queensland homes now generate their own power.

*Households didn't wait for permission. They just started.*



## The “Missing Middle”

≤30MW

THE OVERLOOKED MIDDLE: SHOPPING CENTRES,  
COLD STORAGE, LOGISTICS, FARMS

5MW

SOLAR + BATTERIES — ONE LOGISTICS SITE, 20  
LOADING BAYS

|         | Current Capacity | Potential Capacity |
|---------|------------------|--------------------|
| Solar   | 5.6 GW           | 85.6 GW            |
| Storage | 276 MWh          | 21 GWh             |

Source: IEEFA, Unlocking the clean energy potential of Australian business rooftops

SEC's own “missing middle” report — Minister Bowen adopted two recommendations within three days of publication.



# The Elephant in the Server Room

700,000

AUSTRALIAN HOMES' WORTH OF POWER — TODAY

×7

AEMO-FORECAST DEMAND GROWTH BY 2035–36

*A partner to be regulated well, not a problem to be regulated away.*



## The Unsung Hero

*“There are limits to what any audience should be asked to endure.”*

*Regulators: Not the villain of the transition. The enabler.*



# The Neighbourhood Grid

**“A group chat for batteries.”**

*Except, unlike most group chats, it actually achieves something.*

*The barrier left isn't technical. It's trust.*





## The Recycling Story

~25,000

PANELS RECOVERED: AUSTRALIA'S FIRST  
RECYCLING PILOT

60

ORGANISATIONS BACKING A NATIONAL  
STEWARDSHIP SCHEME

*The receipt that proves we meant it.*



SECTION 07

## Leadership Through Partnership

**\$50M**

AUSTRALIA–PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP FOR ENERGY  
TRANSITION

**\$150M**

OCTOBER PACIFIC CLIMATE SUMMIT PACKAGE —  
FIJI & TUVALU

*Partnership, investment, respect..... not speeches.*

What Ties These Stories Together

# Participation, not permission.

A Household

A logistics operator

A regulator

A Pacific nation



## When and How

*The focus is on when and how, rather than the why.”*

*Stories people understand. Systems people join. A future people see themselves in.*



# My Ask of This Room

## **POLICYMAKERS**

Keep writing the rules that let participation happen faster.

## **RESEARCHERS**

Keep finding us the evidence before the headlines do.

## **INDUSTRY**

Keep building the bankable, unglamorous missing-middle projects.

## **STUDENTS**

There has never been a better decade to find out.

*Households didn't wait for permission. Businesses didn't wait. Queensland isn't planning to either.*



Queensland  
Decarbonisation  
Hub

# We'll lead it.

## Contact

Rob Potter, Head of Policy and Advocacy, Smart Energy Council

Email: [rob.potter@smartenergy.org.au](mailto:rob.potter@smartenergy.org.au)

Website: [smartenergy.org.au](http://smartenergy.org.au)

