

3 June 2026

S9(2)(a)

By email: S9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe S9(2)(a)

Your request

Thank you for your request, received on 5 May 2026, under the Official Information Act 1982 (Act) for the following information:

1. *All briefings, scoping papers, other documentation concerning plug-in / balcony solar and batteries.*
2. *What regulatory changes that would be required to enable plug-in solar / balcony solar and batteries.*
3. *Any work the EA is currently progressing on plug-in / balcony solar and batteries and the scope and timeline for this.*

I will respond to each of your questions separately.

Our response

1. *All briefings, scoping papers, other documentation concerning plug-in / balcony solar and batteries.*

The Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko (Authority) has identified six documents within scope of part one of your request. Note that the Authority emails have not been included within the scope of your request which seeks 'briefings, scoping papers or other documentation'.

Of the six documents identified as within scope the Authority is:

- Releasing two documents with some material withheld as it is out of scope attached in Appendix 1.
- Withholding three internal documents in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act, namely an early commissioning document, an early draft issues paper and a staff PowerPoint.
 - These documents reflect staff thinking at an early stage of policy development.
 - Release of this information would likely inhibit the exchange of free and frank opinions in the future, where this exchange is necessary for the robust and effective conduct of the public policy making process.
- Withholding a slide pack provided to the Network Services Technical Group (NSTG) under 9(2)(ba)(i) and 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act.
 - This information was shared with the members of the NSTG under an obligation of confidence and subject to the confidentiality requirements in the NSTG Terms of Reference.
 - We note that this early policy thinking would not be shared by staff with the NSTG group without the confidentiality obligations.

- Releasing the information above would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information in the future and it is in the public interest that such information should be able to be supplied.

Note that the Authority published minutes of the NSTG meetings which provide a high-level summary of the matters discussed. The first NSTG meeting was held on 11 May 2026. The link to the minutes can be found here [NSTG meeting minutes - 11 May 2026](#). Additional information on the NSTG can be found here: [Network Services Technical Group | Electricity Authority](#)

2. What regulatory changes that would be required to enable plug-in solar / balcony solar and batteries.

Currently plug-in solar is prohibited by a WorkSafe prohibition notice issued under section 87 of the Electricity Act. We would recommend you approach WorkSafe and EECA for any further information on proposals to remove the prohibition.

The Authority is initiating a workstream on residential solar which will include plug-in / balcony solar (noting it is necessarily based on an assumption the prohibition will be lifted). The extent to which any Code amendments are considered appropriate will be considered as part of this policy process.

3. Any work the EA is currently progressing on plug-in / balcony solar and batteries and the scope and timeline for this.

The Authority has recently completed the first part of stage two of the Authority's broader [Network connections project](#). Future work on this project will consider issues such as application processes for residential solar, rules to enable plug-in solar ('balcony solar') and the fees paid for processing applications to connect to the network. As noted above, this work is in its early development stage. The Authority expects to proceed with an issues paper later this year.

I am satisfied, in terms of section 9(1) of the Act, that the need to withhold the information referred to above is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, the Authority may proactively release a copy of this response on our website. All personal data, including your name and contact details, will be removed before publication.

If you'd like to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact us by emailing oia@ea.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā,



Airihī Mahuika
GM Legal, Monitoring and Compliance

OIA-26-0035 Documents in scope

Item No	Date	Document Type	Title	Release decision
1	2025	Word document	<i>Draft Balcony solar memo to Chair</i>	<i>Release in part – some material is out of scope.</i>
2	Feb 2026	Word document	<i>AD review of SEANZ framework</i>	<i>Release in part – some material out of scope</i>
3	Feb 2026	Word document	<i>Balcony solar commissioning document</i>	<i>Withhold in full under section 9(2)(g)(i)</i>
4	April 2026	Word document	<i>Balcony solar issues paper</i>	<i>Withhold in full under section 9(2)(g)(i)</i>
5	24 April 2026	Powerpoint presentation	<i>PIDGEON options</i>	<i>Withhold in full under section 9(2)(g)(i)</i>
6	1 May 2026	Powerpoint presentation	<i>NSTG Material for first meeting 11 May 2026</i>	<i>Withhold in full under section 9(2)(g)(i) and section 9(2)(ba)(i).</i>