

Proposed Motion 1: Modernising electrical infrastructure to enable renewables transition

ALGA CATEGORY	Climate change and renewable energy;
MOTION SUBJECT <i>Short summary of the specific topic, or issue.</i>	Provide funding for electrical infrastructure upgrades to ensure compatibility with renewable energy and emissions reduction initiatives for high-energy-use facilities, supporting local governments in achieving emissions reductions aligned with national net-zero goals.
MOTION	This National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to create dedicated funding programs (full funding or 80:20) to support local governments to upgrade critical electrical infrastructure to ensure compatibility with renewable energy and carbon neutral technologies so renewable energy and emission reduction targets can be achieved.
GRC STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT	<p>2021-26 Corporate Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accountable Council We are providing good stewardship built on a foundation of trust <p>2024/25 Strategic Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renewable Energy and the Transitioning Economy Advocating for funding to enable local governments to lead the way in their communities.
NATIONAL OBJECTIVE <i>Why is this a national issue and why should this be debated at the NGA?</i> <i>(maximum 200 words)</i>	<p>The Australian Government's introduction of the Climate Change Bill in 2022 legislates the nation's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 43 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030, and net zero by 2050.</p> <p>Modernising electrical infrastructure is a national issue because the transition to renewable energy and emissions reduction targets set by the Australian Government requires coordinated action at all levels of government, including local councils. However, outdated electrical infrastructure is a widespread barrier preventing local governments from integrating renewable energy technologies, limiting their ability to contribute effectively to national climate goals.</p>
SUMMARY OF KEY ARGUMENTS <i>Background information and supporting arguments.</i> <i>(maximum 500 words)</i>	<p>Local government is facing significant challenges due to ageing electrical infrastructure, which is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incompatible with modern renewable energy technologies – limiting the ability to construct, upgrade and integrate clean energy solutions. 2. Lacking the capacity to support solar, wind, energy storage and decentralised generation – creating barriers to emissions reduction. <p>At the same time, community expectations for sustainable services are rising, yet outdated infrastructure prevents local governments from meeting these demands in a timely manner.</p> <p>Funding is required not only for new and upgraded infrastructure but also for condition assessments before renewable energy solutions can be identified and implemented. Without these investments, progress towards emissions reduction targets will be delayed, operational costs will rise, and local communities and the environment will bear the burden.</p>

Federal funding and local action are essential to driving meaningful change, supporting emissions reductions and ensuring lasting benefits for Australia's environment and communities. Local governments play a critical role in transitioning to renewable energy and sustainable infrastructure but face substantial challenges due to **ageing electrical systems originally designed for centralised, fossil-fuel-based power grids.**

This motion calls on the Australian Government to provide funding for:

- **Comprehensive condition assessments and upgrade recommendations** to modernise electrical infrastructure.
- **Delivery of essential upgrades** to power grids, substations, transformers, distribution networks, streetlights and switchboards.

These upgrades will:

- **Enhance flexibility, reliability and capacity** of electrical infrastructure, enabling local governments to integrate emerging renewable energy technologies.
- **Support energy use reductions at high-energy-use facilities** such as water and wastewater treatment plants and aquatic centres.
- **Strengthen energy security**, particularly in remote and vulnerable communities.

As renewable energy technologies continue to evolve, **modern electrical infrastructure is essential to managing growing demand and enabling a clean energy future.** Investing in these upgrades will empower local governments to be active participants in Australia's energy transition, equipping them with the tools and resources to meet federal and state emissions targets while improving local energy resilience and sustainability.