



**Australian Government**

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**Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner**

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# AEIC Overview

Tony Mahar  
Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner (AEIC)

September 2025

# Acknowledgment of Country

AEIC acknowledges the  
Traditional Owners of  
Country throughout  
Australia and  
recognises their  
continuing connection  
to land, waters, and  
culture. We pay our  
respects to their Elders  
past and present.





# About the AEIC

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Complaints  
Handling

Transparency  
and Best  
Practice

Community  
Engagement  
Review

Stakeholder and  
First Nations  
Engagement

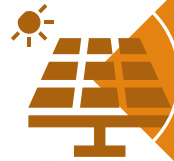
# Complaints Handling

## Who can we help?

Residents who live in  
proximity to a proposed  
or operating...



Wind Farm



Large-Scale Solar Farm

(5 MW or more)



Energy Storage Facility

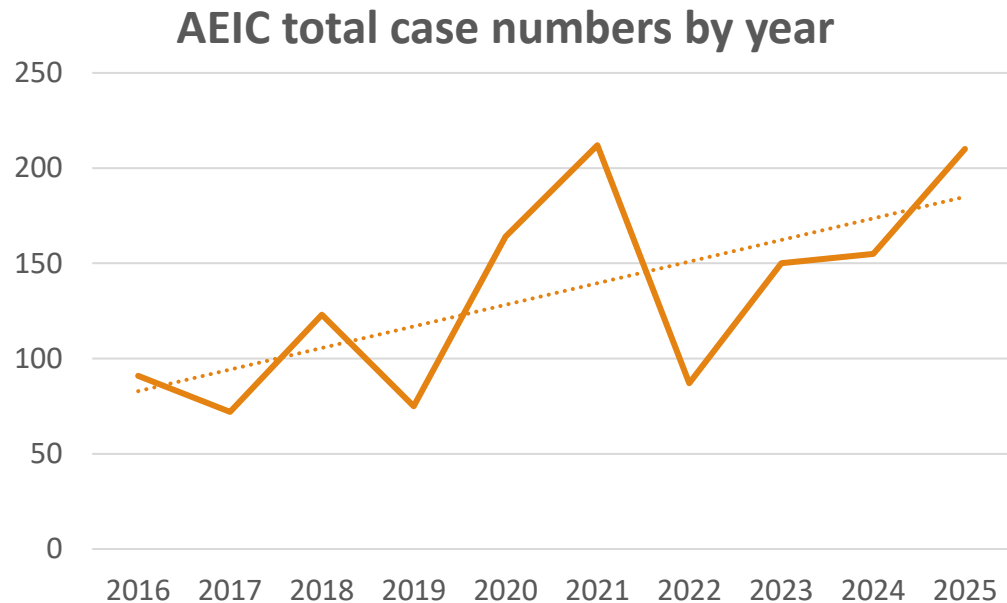
(1 MW or more)



New Major Transmission  
Projects

# Complaint Case Numbers Continue to Rise

From 2015 to 2024 - the Office of the AEIC has managed over 1000 cases. Cases include complaints related to specific projects, cases about broader system issues (eg REZ) and general inquiries.



This year alone we are projecting towards 200+ cases, over and above the concerns we are hearing when out and about talking with people.

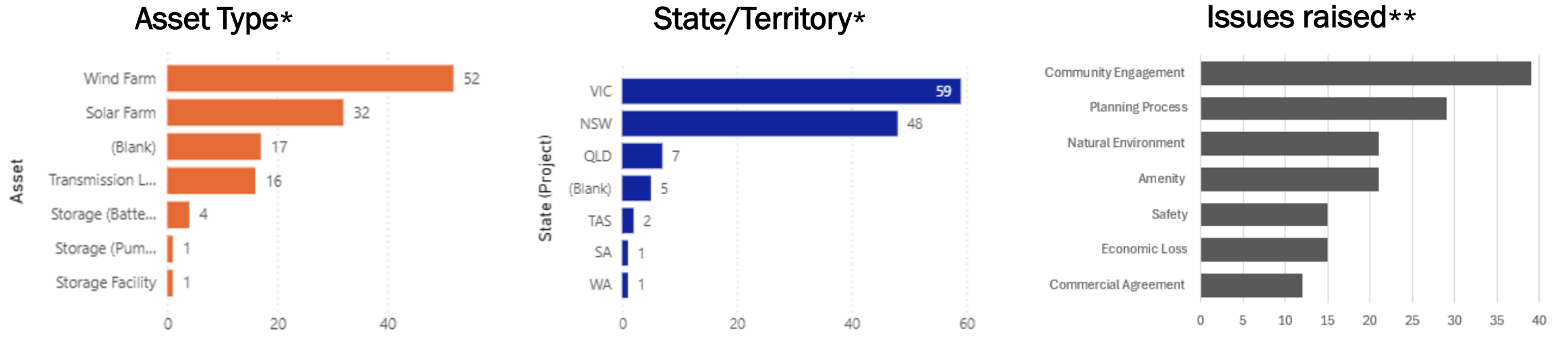
Each case is reviewed by my case team, and the best response is determined. We seek briefings from proponents, ask for written responses/web updates, connect with government departments and ultimately seek to get good communication directly between parties.

We review cases for trends and themes to drive our best practice work.

**\*Data notes**

- 2025 projection from YTD
- 2021 was when transmission was first added to scope

# Complaint Case Themes 1 January – 30 June 2025



Continuation of trends over recent years

- Wind farms remain a key concern, although this can be skewed by specific proposals
- East coast states typically more cases, aligned with where more projects are proposed
- Community Engagement remains the primary issue
- Planning Process is increasing as an issue

\*Blank means a general enquiry

\*\*each case can raise multiple issues

# Stakeholder Engagement

- Over 200 engagements in the first 6 months in role.
- We have been on the ground in every state and territory (Tasmania pending, post election).
- Building on the great foundations set by Andrew Dyer, we continue to build strong connections with:
  - Community members and groups
  - Peak groups
  - Proponents
  - First Nations
  - Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and departments.
- Importantly, meeting community *where they live* where possible.
- Listening and learning, using this to prioritise our actions.

# What we have heard?

- Big difference of perspectives, with huge mistakes still being made.
  - Impacts of the transition are uneven.
  - Knowledge sharing is poor, access is imbalanced.
  - Genuine engagement and listening is lacking.
  - Awareness and communication is way below what is required.
  - Regional benefits and partnerships are not transparent.
  - Coordination and project planning is lacking.
  - Trust has been lost and will be hard to recover.
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- There has been some good examples and progress and we should promote and build on these.
  - We need to keep community updated on the good work being done.



# Community Engagement Review (2023)

The previous Commissioner delivered this report to the Commonwealth Minister in December 2023, outlining what is required to achieve ongoing excellence in community engagement in the execution of the energy transition.

**To do this properly, a focus needs to be placed on 6 key themes:**

- 1) Developer performance and selection
- 2) Selecting the best sites
- 3) Reform environmental and planning approvals
- 4) Complaint management
- 5) Messaging and governance
- 6) Coordinated economic development and community benefits

# AEIC Vision



## AEIC – Helping to make the energy shift smoother and fairer

- This transition is complex, but we must learn from success stories and avoid repeating past mistakes.
- Australia's energy transition must be built with communities, not imposed on them.
- Rural and regional areas deserve real engagement, transparency, and shared benefits—not uncertainty and exclusion.
- It's time to rebuild trust through honest conversations, clear commitments, and real action.
- By prioritizing trust, fairness, and action, we can create a sustainable, equitable energy future—one that works for everyone. Now is the time to make it happen.

# Contact Information and Resources

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