



Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen  
Minister for Public Works and Procurement

Our Ref: MN06118-2021  
Your Ref: A758657

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24 SEP 2021

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

*Neil*

Thank you for your letter of 9 September 2021 enclosing Parliamentary Petition No. 3573-21 tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 31 August 2021 titled 'Adjust state and council housing guidelines regarding wood fires and solar panels'.

Firstly, I note that Building work is regulated under the *Building Act 1975* (the Act).

The Queensland Development Code Mandatory Part 4.1 – Sustainable Buildings (QDC MP 4.1) is subordinate legislation under the Act and sets minimum energy efficiency requirements for the design and construction of new houses and buildings. QDC MP 4.1 applies statewide and provides a consistent standard for the construction industry.

Regarding solar systems, Queensland already leads the nation. Nearly 1 in 3 detached homes now have rooftop solar energy systems. This high level of uptake in the residential sector is supporting Queensland's renewable energy target of 50 per cent by 2030. The energy produced by rooftop solar systems is used by householders in their homes and reduces electricity bills. Householders receive financial incentives such as point-of-sale discounts from installers (via the transfer of small-scale renewable energy certificates) and feed-in tariffs where energy retailers offer a payment for the excess energy that is exported to the grid.

For new houses, QDC MP 4.1 provides a credit of 1 star towards achieving the minimum 6-star (out of 10) energy efficiency standard. For rental homes, last year, the Queensland Government's 'Solar for Rentals Trial' offered a rebate of up to \$3,500 to landlords to encourage the installation of solar systems to rental properties in Bundaberg, Gladstone and Townsville. The trial resulted in the installation of 670 solar systems, with tenants saving an average of \$600 per year.

The Queensland Government has also previously supported households and small businesses with the cost of battery storage systems. In 2018–19, grants of \$3,000 and interest-free loans were offered for 1,500 battery storage systems. More recently, Economic Development Queensland has progressed nation leading "100 per cent solar and battery neighbourhoods" in Carseldine and Oxley.

Given the high take up of rooftop solar systems and as it is not always practical to install a system, it is not proposed to mandate these systems at this time. However, I would draw the petitioners' attention to proposed energy efficiency amendments to the National Construction Code 2022 that have recently been released by the Australian Building Codes Board. If adopted, this would support new houses towards 'zero energy (and carbon) ready buildings' under the Trajectory for Low Energy Buildings.

Regarding wood burning fires and stoves, I note that an e-petition (3510-21) was submitted by the Principal Petitioner (Tony Magrathea of Dicky Beach) seeking a ban on all indoor and outdoor wood burning fires. A response to the e-petition from the Honourable Meaghan Scanlon MP, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Youth Affairs was tabled on 11 June 2021. It is considered that the petitioner's concerns regarding wood fire burning fires and stoves are adequately addressed by the previous response to e-petition (3510-2021).

I trust this information is of assistance and I thank the petitioners for their interest in this matter.

Yours sincerely



Mick de Brenni MP  
**Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen**  
**Minister for Public Works and Procurement**