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ELECTRICITY INDUSTRY UPDATE - SEPTEMBER 2024

VIEW FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Editorial from Peter Berry



Kia ora tatou,

It was fantastic to see so many of you at Conference this month. It was a record-breaking event this year with more exhibitors and delegates than ever, and a bumper programme of technical presentations.

For those who were unable to attend, I have included a short summary of the key takeouts below. And would you believe, we move straight into planning for EEA2025, being held 9-11 September back in Christchurch. Mark your calendars!

Delegates and exhibitors should have received a link to our post-conference survey. Your

Prezzy Card.

A particular area of focus for us at conference was around workforce development and capability. We heard a fantastic presentation from Anthea Middleton of Australia's Powering Skills Organisation. She shared her wealth of knowledge, highlighting Australia's work to reform qualifications, understand the vocational training workforce, focus on energy career pathways and cross-sector collaboration – all matters we need to be considering for our future workforce

The session was timely with the Government's recent consultation on vocational education and training. The EEA shares industry concern around how we will meet the workforce needs of the future and the critical importance of having a steady stream of people in training. We expect many submitted to Government on these issues and we will continue to advocate in this area regardless of the outcome. [You can read our submission here.](#)

This week was Mental Health Awareness Week. Of course, managing your mental wellbeing and supporting those around you is something we need to focus on every week, so I would encourage you to check out all the resources available on the [Mental Health foundation website](#) for use at any time of the year. Resources include tear-off whakawhetai/gratitude posters, flyers, postcard sets, wallet cards, and more.

Organizations like EAP Services are also running free programme – [you can still register for their Friday's focus on Gratitude](#). The programme is presented as a series of emails highlighting the topic with links to learning modules. All you need to do is forward these emails to your team, and they can take as much or as little action as they wish.

Finally, this is my last newsletter as Executive Director. I want to thank all the Membership and industry leaders for the support you have given me and EEA over my tenure. It has been an absolute pleasure to be part of the EEA for 31 years and I wish everyone in the sector the absolute best for the future.

Nga mihi nui,

Peter Berry
Chief Executive

LATEST NEWS



It was February 1986 when I fell into the industry and seven years later in 1993, took over as Secretary of the Electricity Supply Engineers Association (ESEA) which quickly became the EEA.

We had a membership of 200 individuals with 20 associates; revenue of \$180,000 with tenuous reserves. Today, those figures are 75+ companies with more than 740 members, revenues of \$3.1 million - allowing us to deliver a much more comprehensive work programme, and reserves that provide a reliable safety net in challenging times.

Our 1993 conference in Wellington brought together 100 distribution engineers and 28 exhibitors for two days of interaction and learning. Things have certainly changed - having just wrapped up EEA2024 I am proud to say we welcomed 97 exhibitors and over 1000 attendees.

In 1999 EEA became an independent organisation and the rest they say is history.

Today EEA now encompasses all parts of the electricity industry. The breadth and depth of our membership enables a strong collective voice on matters that are important to our engineering, technical, and safety communities. The EEA are more connected with the needs of our stakeholders and government, enabling continual improvement in safety and engineering outcomes, knowledge and lifelong learning opportunities, more standardised and capability growth. It is a great forum for the industry to collectively learn, lead change and solve problems.

We are more inclusive, more diverse and more acutely aware of how important these things are. EEA have focused on recognising excellence and the development of the next generation - awarding hundreds of scholarships and awards and supporting the EPECentre/PEET.

Now it's time to pass the baton and turn the focus to the next 30 years. What has made this job the pleasure it has been, is of course, the people. It has been an absolute pleasure to have led the EEA and to have worked with such amazingly talented, passionate and dedicated group of people. The Association is in great hands with Nicki at the helm and well supported by the Executive Committee, the members and our industry.

Kāhore taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini - we cannot succeed without the support of those around us.

I look forward to seeing EEA continue to thrive and deliver great outcomes for you all.

Key takeouts from Conference

DELIVERING A NET ZERO CARBON ENERGY FUTURE

TE PAE, CHRISTCHURCH
10-12 SEPTEMBER 2024

It was impossible to ignore the message repeated throughout conference: Focus on the consumer – move at pace!

Our keynote presenters and panellists made one thing very clear. Whether the discussion was around demand flexibility, the uptake of consumer energy resources or resilience in the system, the underlying message was consistent from our experts.

The consumer is the reason we do this and if we do not put them at the centre, we will lose them. Change will be consumer driven and social science is going to play a bigger part in industry success.

A second very clear message was that of the need for system-wide change. It isn't about doing more of the same, it's about making fundamental changes to the 'how' we do things. This message came out particularly strongly in the discussion around diversity and workforce challenges. The shift in numbers needed is so significant, that system-wide interventions and a fundamental change in approach is needed.

Finally, collaboration. We cannot do this alone; we must partner across industry and the market to find the solutions. Together, we can be inspirational and motivation, we can make the changes needed and we can deliver for the consumer.

EEA Awards celebrated at Conference



Awards are given in recognition of outstanding contribution to industry and to showcase, reward and celebrate excellence and innovation.

The judges noted how this year, a significant factor in each of the winning entries was the level of stakeholder and staff engagement they included, with each project achieving success by working closely with others.

- Northpower won the Engineering Excellence award for their initiative 'Enabling te ao Māori values to guide construction of a resilient power supply for Whangārei'.
- Powerco's 'Car versus Pole' initiative won the Public Safety Award for its use of extensive data modelling and stakeholder engagement to first identify high risk power poles and then implement change to prevent serious harm incidents and fatalities.
- The Workplace Safety Award was won by WEL Networks' initiative 'Improving workplace safety on low voltage assets for our industry'.
- Northpower's Shaun Brown was selected for the Professional Development Award,

[Read more about our winning projects here.](#)

Industry leaders Alison Andrew and Peter Berry were also honoured for their outstanding contributions to the industry, each receiving an EEA Meritorious Service Award. It is a rare accolade with Alison and Peter the 19th and 20th recipients since the award was first given in 1956.

Despite the introduction of a new award this year, we did not name a winner for the Excellence in Health and Safety Leadership award. We recognise the need to make our criteria for this award clearer, with stronger emphasis on seeking out the inspirational change-makers, those who deliver across industry, and above and beyond. However, we do wish to acknowledge those who were nominated this year and to share our thanks for the positive difference they are making in health and safety of their community.

Electricity Rulings Panel member opportunity

MBIE are seeking an electrical engineer with deep electricity industry knowledge to be appointed to the Electricity Rulings Panel.

The Rulings Panel is a specialist dispute resolution and disciplinary body that determines complaints of breaches of the Electricity Industry Code 2010 by industry participants, as referred to it by the Electricity Authority. It also determines certain disputes between participants and can hear appeals on specific decisions by the System Operator (Transpower).

The Minister for Energy is seeking candidates who are electrical engineers with a detailed understanding of the electricity industry, including the generation and transmission of

If you are interested, please apply through the [MBIE website](#). Applications close on 10 October 2024.

WorkSafe releases priority plans for focussed effort

WorkSafe NZ has released what it calls [priority plans](#) for 2024-26 for the four industry sectors it will focus on - agriculture, forestry, construction, manufacturing – as well as a plan for its permitting function. The plans will be reviewed each quarter to check progress.

WorkSafe will allocate one quarter of its targeted frontline activity to agriculture because the sector accounts for 25% of serious acute harm while compromising only 6% of employed people. It identifies six key risk factors, including a low maturity safety culture and job stressors influenced by factors such as weather and the economy.

The regulator will allocate one third of its frontline activity to construction, reflecting its high rates of acute harm and the large number of workers exposed to serious health risks from silica, asbestos, wood dust, welding and exhaust fumes. Among the list of targets is the management of risk and overlapping duties on complex sites.

[Read more from WorkSafe](#)

New rules on grid protection

The new AS4777.1 solar installation standards were released on August 23 and there is a large impact for grid protection. The new standard AS/NZS 4777.1:2024 supersedes AS/NZS 4777.1:2016. The existing 2016 edition will remain current for the six-month transitional period until February after which AS/NZS 4777.1:2024 must be used. The new standard removes the requirement for network protection under 200kW.

Grid connection of energy systems via inverters, Part 1: Installation requirements

Standard specifies safety and installation requirements for inverter energy systems (IES) intended for the injection of electric power through an electrical installation to the grid. IES are distributed energy resources when connecting to the grid and need to ensure overall safe operation of the installation and interaction with the broader grid.

[For more information visit Standards NZ site.](#)

New website launching soon!!

Knowledge Network – the EEA’s online platform through which industry and members collaborate through discussion forums, purchase courses, register for events and access EEA publications.

In the coming weeks, the two sites will come together as eea.co.nz, making it easier for users to access discussion forums, register for courses and events and access all the news and information that is available via the EEA.

Anyone with a current licence to the online Safety Manual-Electricity Industry (SM-EI), currently accessed through the Knowledge Network, will find they now have unlimited access to all EEA online and digitised publications regardless of what has been purchased in the past.

Once the new site is launched, anyone wanting to renew their SM-EI licence, or purchase an EEA online or digital publication will be able to do so via a single publications licence, which will give them access to all EEA online and digital publications, including the SM-EI. This replaces the previous approach where publications were purchased as individual products.

We believe this approach of a single licence for all EEA publications will make it easier for industry to access the information they need and better enable a pan-industry approach to electricity engineering, technical and safety practices.

If you have any questions, please email admin@eea.co.nz.



Connexis Annual Connection 22 - 24 October

Come and visit members of the Safety Standards and Procedures Group at our stand at Annual Connection 2024 in Te Awamutu. There will be freshly cooked pancakes with cream and jam!

Annual Connection is a unique three-day event, bringing together cable jointers, line mechanics and industry stakeholders from across New Zealand. The event consists of competitions, a suppliers expo, and closes with an Awards dinner.

Annual Power Exchange APEX, Wellington 26 & 27 November



The EEA's Annual Power Exchange for Young Engineers is back in November, bigger than before. This year's APEX spans two days, with the standard paper presentation session on Tuesday 26 and a site visit being scheduled for Wednesday 27.

APEX is a fantastic opportunity for young engineers of any discipline in the power engineering industry to network and share experiences.

This year, APEX will be hosted in Wellington giving participants the opportunity to visit Transpower's Haywards' Substation.

This year's theme is Powering the Future. We want you to share your collective knowledge and experience on how you are working to deliver more sustainable, customer-centric energy solutions, and resilient infrastructure while all the while delivering a safe, reliable, and secure electricity supply to our communities and businesses.

[Register your attendance here and submit your paper for consideration](#)



Reminder: Safety statistics survey 2024

October 2024.

This survey provides us with critical information showing where safety progress is being made, identifying any trends, and highlighting common issues that we can work on together.

This year we have redesigned the layout of the survey so that it is easier to complete and will provide us with more meaningful information on safety. As a result, we expect our final report to be a bit different as well.

Please support this process by providing your data. If you have any questions please contact hayley@eea.co.nz.

Changes to temporary traffic management

Waka Kotahi NZTA are making changes to the Temporary Traffic Management Warrant System.

From 1 November 2024 it intends to cease administration and registration of TTM warrants where there is an identical unit standard offering. This change will see TMO-NP, TMO, STMS Universal, STMS (A/B/C) -NP and STMS (A/B/C) warrants turned off and unit standards 31958, 31959, 31960, 31961, 31962, and 31963 delivered through Connexis using current TTM trainers and assessors and existing training material that NZTA has shared with Connexis.

The EEA will be working closely with Connexis and Waka Kotahi to make sure industry is kept up to date with these changes.

Waka Kotahi will be hosting a webinar explaining the changes to the Code of Practice TTM training model on October 3, [click here to register](#). For more information visit [Changes to TTM Training](#)

MBIE Health and Safety at Work reforms

The EEA would like to hear about your experiences with the work health and safety system. The MBIE consultation document and a feedback form are now available on the EEA website. For simplification, the questions in the feedback form are the same questions being asked by MBIE, although sometimes the layout is different to get better clarity.

We would like to have your **feedback back by 30 September**.

For more information, please [click here](#) to see the consultation page on MBIE's website

Relevant MBIE documents

- [Consultation document](#)
- [Pamphlet](#)
- [Submission form](#)



FlexTalk update

Earlier this month, we hosted a FlexTalk workshop, updating participants on the work we have underway. This included a project by EA Technology to map out flexibility projects across Aotearoa and identify collaboration opportunities. Our plan is to digitise and maintain this information as an invaluable learning resource available via the EEA's website.

We also crowd-sourced insights on the technologies, processes, and systems that should be included and tested in our next major project, FlexTalk EMPOWER, set to launch in 2025.

Then we heard from our Australian counterparts at RACE for 2030, with whom we will collaborate closely. By learning from their successes and challenges, we aim to apply those lessons to our New Zealand context.

Missed the conference workshop? [You can watch the recording or view the slides here](#), and we will be in touch to share our progress again soon.

Outcomes from the Streamlining Connections Workshop

The Streamlining Connections Workshop at EEA2024 brought together over 120 industry participants to discuss critical challenges and opportunities in the connection process of distributed generation and large loads into New Zealand's EDB networks.

A key highlight was the public launch and outline of the project partnership, a collaborative effort between the EEA, the Electricity Authority and Electricity Networks Aotearoa (ENA):

- **Electricity Authority:** Focused on updating Part 6 of the Electricity Industry Participation Code to reflect current and future needs and address inefficiencies.
- **ENA/Future Networks Forum:** Concentrated on customer journey mapping, capturing, and co-designing customer service and commercial improvements for connections applicable to all EDBs.
- **EEA:** Developing nationally consistent guidelines for EDB network connections, detailing technical requirements to streamline the integration of distributed energy resources.

We are currently reviewing the outcomes and will share more in the coming weeks. The insights gathered will be instrumental in shaping future efforts and integrating these improvements into connection processes across the country.

The slide pack from the event [can be found on our website](#). For more information please contact Dr. Stuart Johnston at stuart@eea.co.nz.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Newly available: PSD-040 Protection Systems for Electricity Supply

The EEA and ElectroNet are proud to announce the delivery of PSD-040 Protection Systems for Electricity Supply course, the fourth in the Professional Certificate in Power System Design.

This course has been designed for recent engineering graduates, or those wanting to understand protection systems design in the New Zealand context.

The aim of this course is to ensure that learners are able to participate in protection system design and contribute to protection design decision-making processes with more confidence and a future focus.

It takes approximately 20 hours to complete, and learners will be guided through a programme of activities via the EEA's Knowledge Network.

To find out more visit our website [PSD-040: Protection Systems for Electricity Supply](#).

Recent submission: vocational Education and Training Consultation

The Government is consulting on proposed changes to vocational education and training, providing three options for change: 1) returning to an ITO-like system with ITO-like entity (ITBs) responsible for arranging training, 2) establishing more focused, industry-specific standards-setting bodies, with providers responsible for arranging training, and 3) a proposed funding model.

The EEA has submitted on these proposals, supported by various stakeholders, including Genesis, Northpower, Transpower, Unison and the Electricity Supply Industry Strategic Reference Group.

[Visit our website to read the EEA submission.](#)



Looking ahead

To keep up to date with all of the EEA's activities and projects or to register for an event please visit the [Upcoming EEA Events page](#) on the EEA website.

30 September	EEA Consultation closes on Health and Safety at Work Reform
3 October	Waka Kotahi webinar: Changes to the Code of Practice TTM training model
17 October	FlexForum: Flex Day
22-24 October	Annual Connection; Castletown Park, Te Awamutu
31 October	Consultation closes MBIE Health and Safety at Work consultation
26-27 November	Annual Power Exchange - APEX

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- Staff within your organisation can now directly subscribe to our newsletters! Email us [here](#).
- Follow our [LinkedIn](#) page to see more of our outreach and comment on our work and activities.

Level 6, 138 The Terrace, Wellington 6011 [P](#) +64 4 473 8600 [E](#) admin@eea.co.nz

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