

EEA Newsletter April/May 2025

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Nicki Sutherland



Kia ora tatou

April has sped by hasn't it and I hope you all got some rest over the various holiday dates. We had a fantastic response to our request for abstracts for the EEA 2025 conference which closed over Easter. Thanks to everyone who took the time to submit and we look forward to confirming which presentations and papers will be part of the conference.

Ahead of the conference we have other events planned (details below) including a webinar on the latest milestone in our FlexTalk programme. Phase 3 is well underway; our biggest trial yet with over 100 households taking part.

The frenetic pace of consultation continues, with some key Government decisions including announcements around the Vocational Training reforms. We're proud to have had a seat at the table and that government listened to our concerns and decided on an independent, industry-led model (Option B) that will ensure the best continuity and skills for our learners and New Zealand businesses. More information about next steps below.

On the topic of seats at the table, the elections for the EEA Executive Committee 2025-2027 are coming up soon. Nominations are open so if you're a full member and interested or know of someone who would be ideal, key information and dates are included below.

Ngā mihi nui.

Nicki

Latest News

Nominations are open for the EEA Executive Committee Election for 2025-2027!

The election of Officers of the Electricity Engineers' Association (EEA) for 2025 - 2027 is open and the nomination form is available to EEA full members through the [members only section of our website](#).

Please note you must be a financial Full Member of the EEA to be eligible and only full members are eligible to nominate and vote.

Nominations close on Tuesday 27 May 2025 and voting opens on Monday 16 June using the online election software, Election Buddy. All Individual Members (full) eligible to vote will be emailed a login to cast their vote. Voting closes end of business Friday 11th July 2025.

Results of the 2025 - 2027 Election for Officers of the Association will be announced on Wednesday 23 July at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and published on our website shortly after.

Key dates

6 May	Nominations open
27 May	Nominations close
16 June	Voting opens
11 July	Voting closes
23 July	Results announced at AGM

Annual General Meeting 2025

The Annual General Meeting of the Electricity Engineers' Association will take place on Wednesday, 23 July 2025 at 1pm. The meeting will be a virtual event using MS Teams.

[More information is available for members on our website](#)

VET reform

On 24 April, Vocational Education Minister announced changes to work-based learning to give industries more control over how they train people. The Minister has heard our concerns and decided to move to Option B - an independent, industry-led model that will ensure the best continuity and skills for our learners and New Zealand businesses and indicated preference to separate infrastructure from construction.

We consider this a great result after advocating hard, together with the other infrastructure peak bodies, for an option that was not universally accepted.

With the decision made, we're moving rapidly into minor decisions including the establishment of the Industry Skills Boards and the advisory groups overseeing the establishment. It will be critical to have industry representation on the infrastructure ISB once confirmed, and we are also advocating for electricity sector representation on the advisory group.

[View more information and the consultation document](#)

FlexTalk update

The Seed Report is now available on our website. The report documents the trial of the installation, connection and control of smart home technologies and provides the preparation ground for the next phase in which we are scaling up the trial to have a bigger reach and impact.

Phase 3 is well underway as we prepare for our biggest in-home trial to date. FlexTalk is delighted to have signed the Lines Company up as a partner and we look forward to working with them to instal home energy management systems to customers across their network. The trial will start in May and we'll keep you updated as progress is made.

[Visit our website for more information](#)

A great turn out at the Trainers Forum in Ōtautahi this week!

Thanks to everyone who attended the forum. Our keynote speaker gave us food for thought about harnessing the strengths of neurodiverse employees and the rest of the day was a great mix of presentations and discussions. We'll see you next year!



Conference update: EEA2025: 9-11 September 2025

Don't miss the EEA annual Conference and Technology Exhibition in Ōtautahi /Christchurch on 9-11 September. We received 125+ quality submissions for the conference and can't wait to share the programme with you once confirmed at the end of May.

We have secured more space for exhibitors after a great initial response. This means there's still time to secure an exhibition space.

[Visit the Conference website for more information.](#)

Early bird registrations are open until 24 June. [Beat the rush and get your ticket now!](#)

EEA submissions

Recently completed submissions

Electricity Authority – Time-Varying Retail Pricing for Electricity Consumption and Supply

We submitted a response to the Electricity Authority's consultation on Task Force Initiatives 2B and 2C, which propose mandatory time-varying retail pricing for both electricity consumption and supply. Our submission supports the direction of the proposals and emphasises the importance of a principle-based, staged implementation that prioritises consumer trust, system efficiency, and innovation. We also highlight the need for enabling measures such as data access, consumer education, and alignment with distribution pricing.

Electricity Authority – Distributed Generation Pricing Principles

We submitted a response to the Electricity Authority's consultation on reforming the pricing principles for distributed generation (DG). Our submission supports replacing the outdated incremental cost limit with a more adaptive, principles-based framework that better reflects the costs and benefits DG imposes on distribution networks. We advocate for codifying revised pricing principles in the Code to promote efficiency, support innovation, and ensure long-term value for consumers.

We have also finalised submissions on the **Electricity Authority – Level playing field measures** and the **EECA consultation – Residential Solar PV and Battery Storage Guidelines** – both of which are due today, 7 May 2025. We will publish these submissions on our website soon.

[Read these and other submissions on our website.](#)

Have your say in our current submissions

NEMA consultation – Strengthening emergency management legislation

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is consulting on proposed reforms to New Zealand's emergency management legislation, aiming to replace the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 with a new Emergency Management Bill.

The discussion document outlines options to improve community participation, clarify responsibilities across national, regional and local levels, and enhance the resilience of essential services. We are preparing a submission and welcome member input—please send any comments or suggestions to Dr Stuart Johnston (stuart@eea.co.nz) by 9 May 2025 so we can finalise our response before the 13 May 2025 deadline.

[Read more information in the consultation document on the NEMA website.](#)

Electricity Authority Green Paper: Working together to ensure our electricity system meets the future needs of all New Zealanders

The Electricity Authority has released a green paper on Working together to ensure our electricity system meets the future needs of all New Zealanders, with a particular focus on the opportunities presented by greater decentralisation and the role of distributed energy resources (DER). It's a short, high-level paper with just five broad questions, mostly along the lines of "do you agree?" and

“what else should we consider?”

Please send any comments or suggestions to Dr Stuart Johnston (stuart@eea.co.nz) by 30 May 2025
The EEA intends to submit a response by the 4th of June.

[Read the green paper on the Authority's website](#)

Events

Webinar: FlexTalk's Journey to 100+ Connected Homes 14 May

Join us for a webinar detailing the journey and key learnings from the FlexTalk Seed project, which is now scaling up to connect over 100 homes with smart technology.

[Find out more about the webinar and how to register.](#)

Overhead Line Designers 20-22 May Auckland

Forum, Pre-Forum event and site visits

This annual forum supports industry Overhead Line Designers and improve industry knowledge, capability and safety in line design by sharing learnings and good standards/practices, discussing common issues, understanding changing technology, and supporting designers in growing their professional contacts and industry relationships.

[Read more and register](#)

Asset Management Forum and Information Managers Forum 25-26 June Wellington

We are pleased to invite you to two cornerstone industry events, bringing together asset managers, engineers, analysts and practitioners from across the electricity sector to share knowledge, discuss challenges, and explore best practices.

[Read more and register for one or both forums](#)

Introduction to learning teams 15 July 2025 Auckland

At the Jet Park Hotel in Auckland, this is useful for anyone interested in learning a different approach to review and improve on safety incidents in the workplace.

[Read more and register](#)

Health and Safety Workshop 16-17 July 2025 Auckland

This year's event will be held at Jet Park Hotel, in Auckland conveniently placed near the airport.

[Read more and register](#)

OpenADR Webinar: Introduction to OpenADR 3.0 13 May 8AM PST

Beaming in from the US, a webinar by OpenADR Alliance on OpenADR 3 will cover why there was

a market need for OpenADR 3, the differences between OpenADR 2.0 and 3, how it's working at present and what's planned going forward.

This topic is very relevant to our FlexTalk programme of work, specifically interoperability in flexibility programmes. You will hear about the structure of the new standard, testing, certification, and many other aspects.

The start time of 8AM Pacific Standard Time on 13 May translates to 3AM 14 May in New Zealand! For those who would rather sleep, we understand registration gives you access to a recording.

[Register here.](#)

Health and safety

Government announces first tranche of H&S reforms

Workplace Relations and Safety Minister Brooke van Velden has announced a set of changes to the health and safety system. The changes are part of the wider health and safety system reform and deliver on the ACT-National Coalition Agreement commitment to reform New Zealand's health and safety laws and regulations.

This initial set of changes aim to help reduce compliance burden and clarify health and safety duties, including by:

- limiting the health and safety obligations of small, low-risk businesses to providing basic workplace facilities and only managing critical risk,
- sharpening the primary purpose of the Health and Safety at Work Act to focus on critical risk,
- addressing overcompliance due to overlapping health and safety duties by clarifying the boundaries between the Act and regulatory systems that already manage the same risk,
- cutting compliance costs by reducing notification requirements to the regulator to only significant workplace events,
- providing a hotline for the public to report excessive road cone use, and for WorkSafe to confirm and provide guidance on instances of overcompliance,
- freeing up private and public land for recreational use and ensure health and safety duties for landowners and land managers are reasonable and proportionate,
- clarifying the distinction between governance and operational management health and safety responsibilities to reduce directors' fear and risks of overcompliance, and
- changing the Approved Codes of Practice model to increase business and worker certainty about what they need to do to comply with their health and safety duties.

There will be further announcements this year on other changes as part of the reform.

Read the Minister's announcements:

- [Going for growth: cutting health and safety red tape](#)
- [Health and safety governance and management change coming](#)
- [Reducing ambiguity about what is reasonably practicable for health and safety compliance](#)

EWRD update

The EWRB website was recently updated with a clear process for issuing the new classes of registration. Automatic grandparenting has been completed for Registered Electrical Workers who currently hold an active license and meet the below criteria. The EWRB has contacted these workers directly to let them know what class(es) of registration they intend to grant. Electrical workers were contacted if they have submitted (or are the responsible Electrical Worker for) at least three entries in the WorkSafe Electricity and Gas High-risk Database in the last 6 years (between 1 Jan 2018 and now) and, the entries are in the following areas:

- Hazardous areas
- Medical Cardiac Protected Areas
- Mains Parallel Generation Systems
- Mining Operations

Registered and Licensed Electrical Workers who have not been granted endorsed registration class(es) automatically through phase 1, can apply manually to be grand parented into the new endorsed registration classes. Electrical Workers must apply for manual transfer before 31 July 2025.

See the [EWRB website](#) to learn more about the requirements

EWRB will be hosting meet and greet regional events across the motu. These meetings are an opportunity to meet the Board and will include a presentation, an opportunity to ask the Board questions and enjoy light refreshments. EWRB will email invitations to registered electrical workers in or near the region about 2 weeks before each event. If the planned dates do not suit, you can contact the Board and request a visit to your business if you have 20 or more people.

WorkSafe is growing its inspectorate

WorkSafe Mahi Haumaru Aotearoa is investing an extra \$2.7 million annually into growing its inspectorate. The aim is to add up to 60 new inspectors this year with every new inspector receiving full training and development. WorkSafe inspectors play a key role influencing work health and safety in Aotearoa New Zealand. This investment is part of WorkSafe's new strategy to target the sectors with highest work-related harm – construction, manufacturing, forestry, and agriculture. Find out more information on the [WorkSafe website](#).

Increased access to the EEA Health and Safety Newsletter

A key EEA role is to provide informative, up to date, and relevant health and safety information to all our members. The EEA health and safety newsletter is a valuable channel for health and safety information which some members have been paying for in addition to their other publications. We've decided to make it available to all EEA publications licence holders. This means more people get it and we can keep investing in gathering and sharing information that keeps you up to date.

Connect with the EEA

- Staff within your organisation can now directly subscribe to our newsletters! Email us [here](#).
- Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) for timely updates about our work and people.