



To QPC

I would like to register my interest in providing a submission to the review of the Queensland government policy which restricts consumers who have switched from the government energy supplier Ergon Energy to a private supplier, to be able to return to the government supplier.

While on the face of this policy, it does make sense when there are multiple private suppliers in the one area and hence would attain the government's intention of not creating an unfair market advantage to the government supplier.

I would like to point out that in those areas of the state, such as ourselves, that have only two energy suppliers, one being the government supplier and the other a private supplier, can and has led to a situation where an unscrupulous private supplier can manipulate the market to deceptively acquire customers from the government supplier knowing that as the sole private supplier they will be unable to go elsewhere when treated unfairly.

We do not believe this was the intent of the policy the government has created, but would like it acknowledged that this is a reality in the northern Bundaberg region with a large number of dissatisfied customers with Sanctuary Energy who are now unable to return to Ergon Energy or find an alternative energy supplier. This can be verified by the number complaints taken to the energy Ombudsman in respect to Sanctuary Energy.

Further to this it should be considered that with emerging technology, private consumers like us who have the capacity to provide energy to the power grid could enhance the value of our systems for the benefit of all by utilising battery storage that would automatically release energy to the grid when there is a demand shortfall (1) this has the added 'green' initiative advantage of less reliance on the power grid for those that can self-support which in turn reduces the reliance on fossil fuel power generation. This can only be viable where there is healthy and honest competition that consumers can trust with the knowledge that they have the full support and endorsement of Queensland government in protection of the end consumer's rights.

In closing I would like to reiterate that I endorse the government's policy to reduce monopolisation and establishment of a fair market environment, but this policy needs to be balanced in that it does not create an unfair market advantage to a single private supplier. Therefore I would propose that the policy remains with an amendment that it is only sanctioned when there is more than one private energy supplier in the region, otherwise, private consumers retain the right to return to the government supplier.

Kindest Regards,  
Neil Jeffs.

(1) This would also require a change or amendment to the current legislation which states that in order to be eligible for the feed in tariff the solar PV must be directly connected to the electricity grid. My understanding is that generation via battery would be ineligible under current legislation.