

Agenda & Minutes

Innovation Advisory Committee | Meeting #14

27 February 2026

Attendees:

Dean Lombard, *Energesis*
 Emma Chessell, *Independent*
 Jo Witters, *Independent*
 Lara Kruk, *Independent*
 David Bryant, *BSL*
 Isabella Powell, *Jemena*
 Lauren Fetherston, *CitiPower/Powercor*

Apologies:

Nando Ochoa Pizzali, *University of Melbourne*
 Theodora Karastergiou, *Jemena*

Observers:

Hiroe Terao, *SA Power Networks*

AusNet representatives:

Charlotte Eddy, *General Manager Strategy and Regulation (Distribution)*
 Ana Erceg, *Manager, Grid Evolution*
 Vince Frandina, *Lead Electrification Engineer*
 Shuyi Li, *Lead Engineer Future Networks*
 Kenneth Chew, *Lead CER Integration Engineer*
 Jade Park, *Senior Research Specialist*
 Kyle Olsen, *Senior Engagement Specialist*
 Fin Crantock, *Resilience Project Engineer*
 Lachlan Webb, *LV Network Engineer*
 Nanditha Sirigiri, *Network Planning Engineer*
 Rafi Muneer, *CER Integration Engineer*

Item	Time	Topic	Presenter
	10:30am (5 mins)	Welcome Incl. responding to actions from meeting #13	Charlotte Eddy
1	10:35am (5 mins)	Innovation and DMIA pipeline Overview and update for each project	Ana Erceg
2	10:40am (25 mins)	GridGuard	Fin Crantock
3	11:05am (20 mins)	Low-Voltage Battery Project	Shuyi Li
4	11:25am (10 mins)	Customer Sentiment: Vehicle-to-X	Jade Park
5	11:35am (20 mins)	Vehicle-to-X Project Update	Lachlan Webb
	11:55am (5 mins)	Other business and close	Charlotte Eddy

Welcome & open

AusNet's Charlotte Eddy opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country, welcomed participants then outlined the meeting purpose and agenda. Charlotte asked for suggestions for new members to join the IAC.

Item 1 | Innovation and DMIA pipeline – Overview and update of pipeline

AusNet's Ana Erceg updated members on the innovation pipeline, and projects funded by the Demand Management Innovation Allowance (DMIA). Ana noted that we are now coming to the end of the EDPR 2021-26 period and most projects have been completed or soon to be completed, with formal learnings and recommendations being brought together to influence future projects.

Discussion included:

- General discussion on the projects pipeline, including the dual-purpose nature and funding arrangements of particular projects.

Item 2 | GridGuard

AusNet's Fin Crantock provided an overview of the GridGuard project, which included the installation of voltage sensors on Rapid Earth Fault Current Limiter (REFCLs) feeders, to help identify fault locations. This overview included the timeline of the project, what the trial tested and key learnings. Fin noted that installing the sensors was inexpensive and did not disrupt customers using the trial feeders. One sensor failed during the trial, so its results were excluded.

Discussion included:

- The IAC highlighted that the solutions and outcomes provided by this product can enhance network reliability and should be prioritised.
- It was confirmed that this project received funding from the innovation program funding as the sensor is not an 'off-the-shelf' product and the development of supporting algorithms along with the live product trial were innovative. Now this research and development has been complete, and the feasibility of the product is confirmed, additional trials and a product roll-out would be funded through other means.
- The IAC expressed some confusion on where projects such as this are funded under a specific innovation fund or under other funding mechanisms.
- AusNet confirmed that REFCLs have a high sensitivity and for safety reasons a physical inspection of the line must be done before power can be switched back on and that technology doesn't have the ability to identify exactly where the fault has occurred.
- AusNet confirmed it had only recently finalised the results of this project and wishes to share its findings more broadly to help develop this solution for the industry.
- AusNet confirmed that the trial was conducted on a specific feeder because time constraints prevented a comprehensive evaluation to determine the best feeder for testing. Collaboration with Monash University on this project led to software updates enabling pinpoint fault locations along a feeder within a 300-meter range.

Actions:

- AusNet took an action to develop a decision tree to clarify project eligibility for various innovation funding avenues.

Item 3 | Low-Voltage Battery Project

AusNet's Shuyi Li provided an update on the pole mounted battery project, including on the timeline and key learnings. This project installed 10 battery units on AusNet's low-voltage network. Shuyi noted that fire risk management was a strong consideration for this project and that technical analysis for site selection and the physical placement of the battery on the network is important. The purpose of these batteries is to supply local residents with power that has been generated and stored during the middle of the day and then released during later periods of peak demand.

Discussion included:

- AusNet confirmed that if batteries are disconnected, a field crew must physically attend the site to assess the potential fault and then reconnect the battery.
- It was clarified that the location of these batteries was a targeted selection, with areas of the network that typically have high solar excess and/or peak demand issues.
- AusNet noted that the batteries behaved exactly how they wanted to absorb excess solar and reduce peak demand, with customers seeing less fluctuations in supply. These batteries were installed as alternatives to costly network upgrades.
- The IAC expressed some disappointment that the batteries can be disconnected and there is no option to remotely restore. AusNet confirmed that when a battery does disconnect the approach to physically inspect the fault is important from a safety perspective.
- It was confirmed that during periods of high heat/peak demand AusNet has exclusive use of the batteries to support the network. Retailers who partner with AusNet are able to participate in the energy market and make additional energy available outside of these times.

Item 4 | Vehicle-to-X customer sentiment

AusNet's Jade Park provided an overview of AusNet's energy sentiment tracker and the recent introduction of specific questions related to customer sentiment towards vehicle-to-X. Jade also shared the results from this survey.

Discussion included:

- It was confirmed that the energy sentiment tracker has been running since 2021, but this was the first time questions regarding the use of EV's to supply energy to the home and/or grid were included.
- The IAC suggested also reviewing other research in this space. Suggestions included other networks, EV Council and the Clean Energy Council.

Item 5 | Vehicle-to-X project update

AusNet's Lachlan Webb provided an update on the vehicle-to-X project, with stage 1 – data analysis – now being complete. This analysis included an overview of the global and Australia EV market trends, and the forecast numbers of EV entering the Australian network.

Discussion included:

- It was confirmed that the source of the data in the analysis of EVs on the network was based on the postcode in which the EV was registered.
- General discussion on the future of EVs and battery technology, and how customers will interact with this technology.
- AusNet noted that it plans to work with councils and stakeholders that already have EV fleets, to trial the use of these vehicles supplying power back to the grid.

Other business & close

Charlotte Eddy provided a short overview of the updates made to the IAC Terms of Reference. Charlotte then closed the meeting.

Action items			
Agreed action	Assigned to	Status	Due date
Create a decision tree to highlight where projects would fall under specific innovation funding.	AusNet	In progress	20 May 2026