

Hotham Ski Association Inc

Solar Scheme Update 8/3/11

Following our presentation at the recent HSA meeting, there has been considerable interest. Many clubs have now been assessed. From this exercise, we have discovered many who have not been offered the best discounts or tariffs from their retailer and in some cases, the tariff time clocks are up to several hours in error. We understand that many retailers (inc TRU Energy, the most common at Hotham) are now offering 66 c per kWh (ex GST) for the Premium Feed In Tariff.

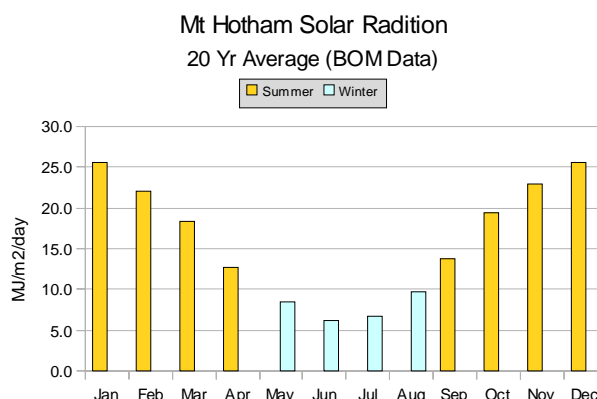
As promised, we have prepared a Step-by-Step guide about the scheme and a form for coming on board. We urge the earliest possible sign up to facilitate the detailed design, approval & procurement phases and earliest possible installation. Register your interest at solar@hsa.asn.au

Now that a carbon tax is firmly on the political agenda, this will likely further stimulate installation demand generally, ahead of the June 30 Solar Credits changes. The Victorian Dept of Primary Industries now anticipate the State cap for the current 60 c Premium Feed In Tariff will be reached sooner – perhaps by later this year, when the scheme will close to new entrants. We strongly urge any clubs considering joining the scheme to take advantage of the current opportunity window, ahead of this year's winter season.

A carbon tax will be profound, impacting Victorian power pricing more heavily than in other states. To put it in perspective, a "starting price of \$20/t" equates to nearly 3 c/kWh, which is close to its wholesale price. To the consumer, the doubling of the base load wholesale power price will dramatically escalate Victorian retail tariffs further. It is, of course, meant to improve the viability of alternatives, such as solar. Under a carbon tax economy, emphasis will shift from the current solar incentive programs such as the installation credits and premium 60c Feed-In-Tariffs (unlikely to be maintained at the same levels for new entrants, but will continue for those already signed on).

Some quick solar facts:-

The average club receives about the same amount of rooftop solar energy during winter as its entire winter energy consumption (power, heating, hot water, cooking etc) – *yes, even during winter!* Assuming 100 % harvesting efficiency (not yet possible). However, over a year, we receive about five times our winter energy hence it makes sense to capture and store, 80 % of which is received between October and May (refer below). Solar PV systems, especially with a 66 c Feed In Tariff, is a highly cost-effective mechanism for alpine clubs, for seasonally storing power (via grid-connect). The 66 c FIT amplifies the storage benefit. The revenue will grow and it will be low maintenance.



And finally, we encourage every club to appoint an "Energy Detective" to their maintenance team. Go through your lodge room-by-room with a fine tooth comb, sniffing out and accounting for all your consumption. You will discover many things that either don't need to be running, can be turned down, run less often or run during off-peak times. You will be staggered by the consumption of some appliances – some may be costing more to run even in a year than replacing with more efficient alternatives. An excellent reference for checking appliance energy ratings is <http://www.energyrating.gov.au/> . To facilitate this, we offer a couple of plug-in power meters for checking individual appliances and a "Watts Clever" standby power override. And don't forget to factor in future power pricing (rising more like a "Purgatory Spur" profile than "Easy Street")!



Multifunction Energy Meter \$20



Deluxe Power Meter \$30



"Watts Clever" Standby Override \$40

The Multifunction Energy Meter (\$20) is the minimum tool for measuring power (watts) and consumption over time - energy (kWh). Maximum appliance rating is 10 Amps. For the technically minded, it will also measure current (A), frequency (Hz), power factor (pf) and can be programmed with tariffs to display energy cost.

The Deluxe Power Meter (\$30) measures power (watts), energy (kWh) and voltage as well as the CO₂ emissions. Maximum appliance rating is 10 Amps or 2400 W.

The "Watts Clever" Standby Override (\$40) will easily turn off all power to all its connected equipment (normally connected via a powerboard). It works with your existing remote control cutting off the wasted standby power. (For example, when you use your remote to turn off your TV, the "Watts Clever" override will cut all power, reinstating when it senses your remote control calling to turn them on again). Although turning off at the power point will achieve the same result, it is particularly handy with hard-to-reach power points behind the TV with the convenience of a remote control.

Above prices inc GST but please add \$5.00 for postage.

Murray Neilson.