

Select Committee on Energy Planning and Regulation in Australia
Answers to questions on notice
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Portfolio

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Senator Canavan asked:

Senator CANAVAN: Just turning to the objective of 82 per cent renewables by 2030, are we on track to hit that?

Mr Duggan: We are becoming more and more encouraged by the pathway to 82 per cent. When it was announced by the government, at the time, it was recognised that we needed to see a significant acceleration in renewable energy investment. That was part of the reason for putting out a target that was achievable but was going to require a fair bit of effort. Since that time, we've observed that the pathway wouldn't be linear. In a sense, what we would see is investors responding to the investment signals as other sources of generation exited the market. That provides a signal for new sources of generation to enter. You've also got a range of government policies that are intended to support new generation capacity, like the Capacity Investment Scheme, supported by things like the Rewiring the Nation program, to get the related transmission infrastructure in place.

What we're actually seeing over the past short period is a significant increase in terms of projects reaching financial closure. To date, in 2024, we've had 9.1 gigawatts of large-scale renewable energy generation and storage projects reach financial closure, which is up from 8.3 gigawatts last year. What we're expecting basically of that 4.5 gigawatts are utility-scale solar and wind. What we need to hit in terms of an average annual is about six gigawatts. Through to October, we're at 4.5 gigawatts. We think, on that basis, that we'll get close to achieving a six.

Senator CANAVAN: But is 4.5 being built this year?

Mr Duggan: Yes, 4.5 gigawatts, having reached financial closure—

Senator CANAVAN: No—yes, okay. That would be built over many years potentially.

Mr Duggan: Yes.

Senator CANAVAN: So you need six gigawatts a year. How much has been built over the last 12 months? How much has actually been installed and come online?

Mr Duggan: Over the last 12 months, it's in the order of about three to four gigawatts worth of new generation capacity—

Senator CANAVAN: Can you take that on notice? We're only going at half of what was—

Mr Duggan: That's utility scale. On top of that, you've got about three gigawatts worth of household solar—

Senator CANAVAN: Maybe you could come back on those, because you obviously don't have the exact figures.

Answer:

The Clean Energy Regulator estimates between 7.2 and 7.5 GW of renewable electricity capacity (wind, utility solar and rooftop solar) will be installed in 2024.