

Submission re: Development of alternate or supplementary power supply for Kalbarri by Western Power.

To The Economic Regulation Authority (ERA)

Re: Development of alternate or supplementary power supply for Kalbarri by Western Power.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I live and work in Kalbarri. I work as a Health Practitioner and also operate holiday accommodation. My husband is a sustainable building expert and project manager. We are reliant on a reliable supply of electricity for our income and family life.

I moved to Kalbarri in January, 2014. Over the past four years, I have personally experienced numerous power outages due to the various reasons outlined in the Western Power report: Study into the feasibility of a microgrid in Kalbarri. Power outages have cost me hundreds of dollars in lost income and spoiled food, but I am one of the lucky ones who has not lost thousands of dollars of food stock with every blackout. Additionally, power 'brown-outs' (dips and irregularities in power) have caused damage to sensitive equipment in my home such as reticulation controllers, computers, a modem and a television.

In such a remote region, our Emergency services and our health centre, cannot afford to be at the whim of sea mists and humidity causing blackouts.

I live on an entry/exit road to Kalbarri townsite and, during outages in peak tourist times, have witnessed convoys of caravaners leaving Kalbarri. As a traveller, I understand that many travellers have supplies and battery sufficient for a number of days off the grid, but then need to 'plug in' to recharge and restock. Being roughly 400km away from the nearest town to the north, Kalbarri is a gateway for travellers and the revenue they bring funds the livelihoods of many locals.

This letter is my way of showing public support for Western Power to investigate and invest in microgrids or non-traditional power supplies in order to support and stabilise the power supply at Kalbarri, promptly.

This town has suffered significant economic hardship over the past 10 years due to dips in the economy, changed fishing regulations and failed regional projects. Power supply issues, along with internet issues and medical supply issues continue to restrict development of this significant tourism location. With a new multi-million dollar development at the Kalbarri National Park and the possibility to enjoy some remarkable growth, we need reliable power more than ever.

Sincerely,
Peta Crogan.