

CPU Ring-Fencing Waiver for EV Charging Infrastructure

VIC

Georgia Holmes

June 2025



MASTER
ELECTRICIANS
AUSTRALIA

Master Electricians Australia (MEA) is a peak industry association representing electrical contractors and is recognised by industry, government and the community as a leading business partner, knowledge source and advocate. You can visit our website at www.masterelectricians.com.au

Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers will play an important role in facilitating increased adoption of EVs, particularly in areas where older buildings cannot support private charging options.

We are concerned that the proposed ring-fencing waiver may negatively impact private businesses in areas where a competitive market exists, particularly suburban and metropolitan areas. However, where a competitive market is not so viable, such as remote areas, ring-fencing arrangements are sensible.

For the locations identified in [Figure 3](#), the sizeable populations and proximity to Melbourne's CBD and key regional centres suggests there is likely to be sufficient private market competition for the installation of EV kerbside chargers. It is difficult to ascertain the appropriateness of a waiver for the 20 undisclosed locations.

Where installation activity is currently limited, it may be due to barriers such as:

- High upfront installation costs, which could be mitigated through targeted government support until investment confidence in EV infrastructure increases;
- Regulatory burdens, such as lengthy or inconsistent council approval processes;
- Costs associated with accessing infrastructure, such as fees for using CPU-owned poles.

Small electrical contractors typically perform kerbside charger installations as subcontractors to larger private firms or local councils. While this waiver is proposed as a trial and explicitly intends to maintain private competition in the same areas, MEA is concerned that it may nonetheless discourage other large contractors from

pursuing installation work in these locations. This could lead to a concentration of activity among fewer entities and, in turn, reduce subcontracting opportunities for small businesses.

If the waiver is granted, MEA seeks the following:

- CPU's selection of installation partners should include local small business procurement targets. Additionally, MEA would like to see EV charger installations require accreditation via Solar Accreditation Australia (SAA).
- Full and timely transparency of findings must be ensured.
- Private market for installation to remain viable in the same areas (as proposed).
- MEA supports CPU's user-pay model. Where a government-owned entity is installing charging facilities, these should be linked to solar panels where feasible to enable affordable daytime charging.

MEA supports a practical and balanced approach to the waiver application, with the view that it should only be granted where there is no viable private market competition for kerbside EV charger installations. While CPU has stated that its intention is not to act as a supplier of last resort but to conduct a trial that builds confidence in the EV charging market and overcome installation gaps, MEA remains concerned about the potential precedent such a waiver may establish.

We look forward to the outcome of this application and remain available for further consultation.