

Security, reliability and resilience in low-carbon power systems

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IEEE Power and Energy Society Distinguished Lecturer Program

"Vuelta a Espana" 2025

UPV/EHU School of Engineering, Bilbao, 19th June 2025

Melbourne base, global outlook



The City of Melbourne



Consistently ranked
among the world's
most liveable cities
(#1 for many years
in a row)*



Top 5 Student-
friendly city**
(*Walk and bike
everywhere!*)

*The Economist Intelligence Unit

**QS Best Student Cities 2023



Multicultural and
vibrant: unique
mix of
Mediterranean
and Asian culture



Australia's and one
of the world's
greatest sporting
and cultural capital



Source: iStock

The University of Melbourne



1861

15 students enrol in Australia's first Engineering course at the University of Melbourne



1942

First female engineering graduate



1955

CSIRAC: 1st Australian-built computer housed at the University of Melbourne



Top #20-#30
University in the
world



#1 University in
Australia



50,000+ student
population



40% International
students

Power and energy systems at UniMelb



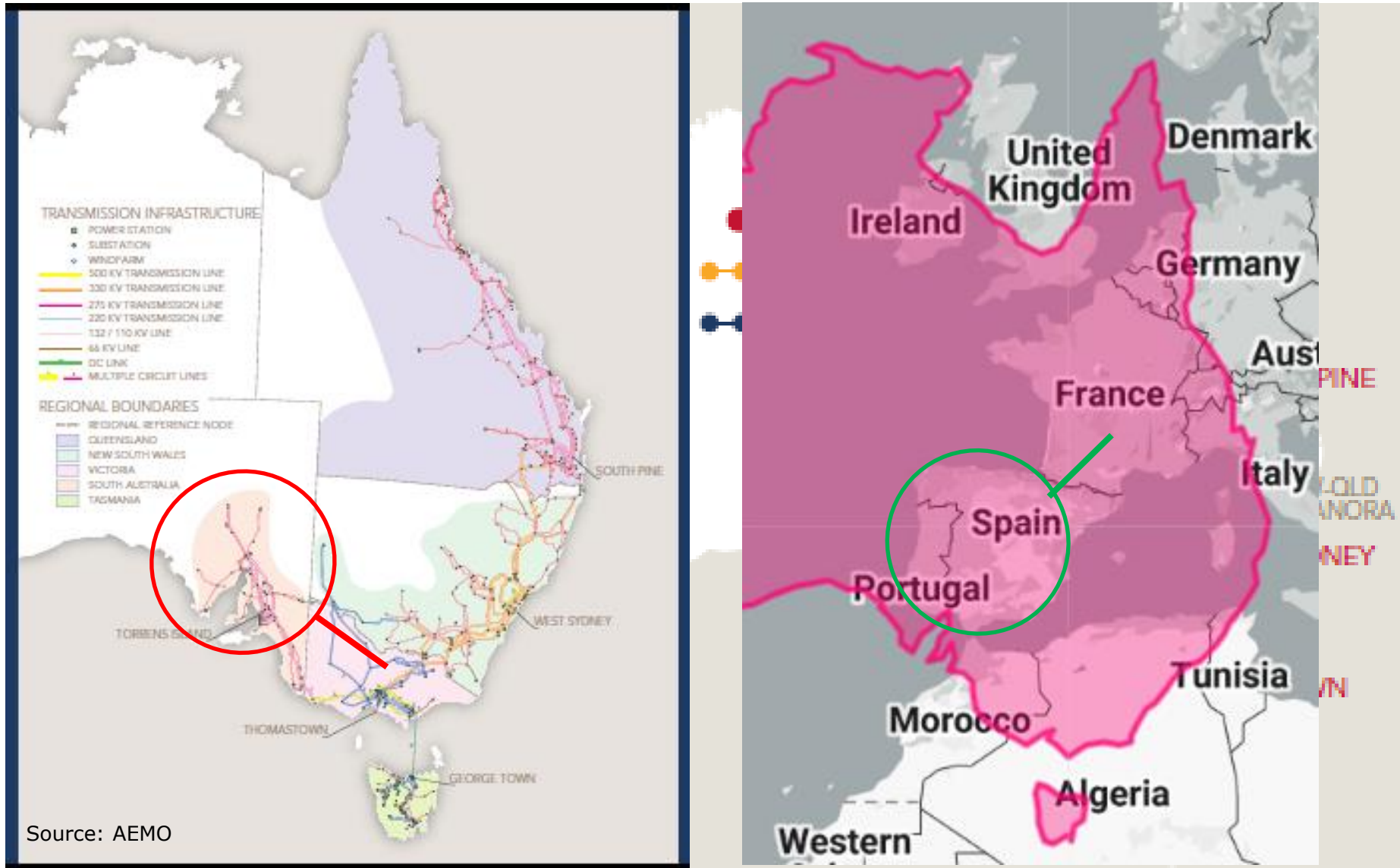
The energy sector is undergoing revolutionary changes to deliver energy that is affordable, reliable and clean. Electrical networks are the backbone of the future energy infrastructure. transition towards low-carbon power and energy systems is being enabled, particularly in Australia, by rapid developments of renewable energy sources (solar and wind) as well as different Smart Grid technologies (different types of energy storage, advanced control of networks and loads). The scale of the changes introduces unprecedented challenges for operating and planning future power and energy systems.

We perform modelling activities, develop tools, and carry out studies to support decision-making across the energy supply and value chains. We work closely with industrial partners and policy makers, and are actively involved in national and international research collaborations and activities with leading institutions. Our research has strong links with different energy-related research groups within the University.



<https://electrical.eng.unimelb.edu.au/power-energy>

The Australian East Coast power system and the National Electricity Market (NEM)



Vision for a new grid

NEM forecast installed generation capacity to 2050, "Step change" scenario



Grid-scale wind and solar

**to increase
6-fold**



Storage capacity

**to increase
significantly**

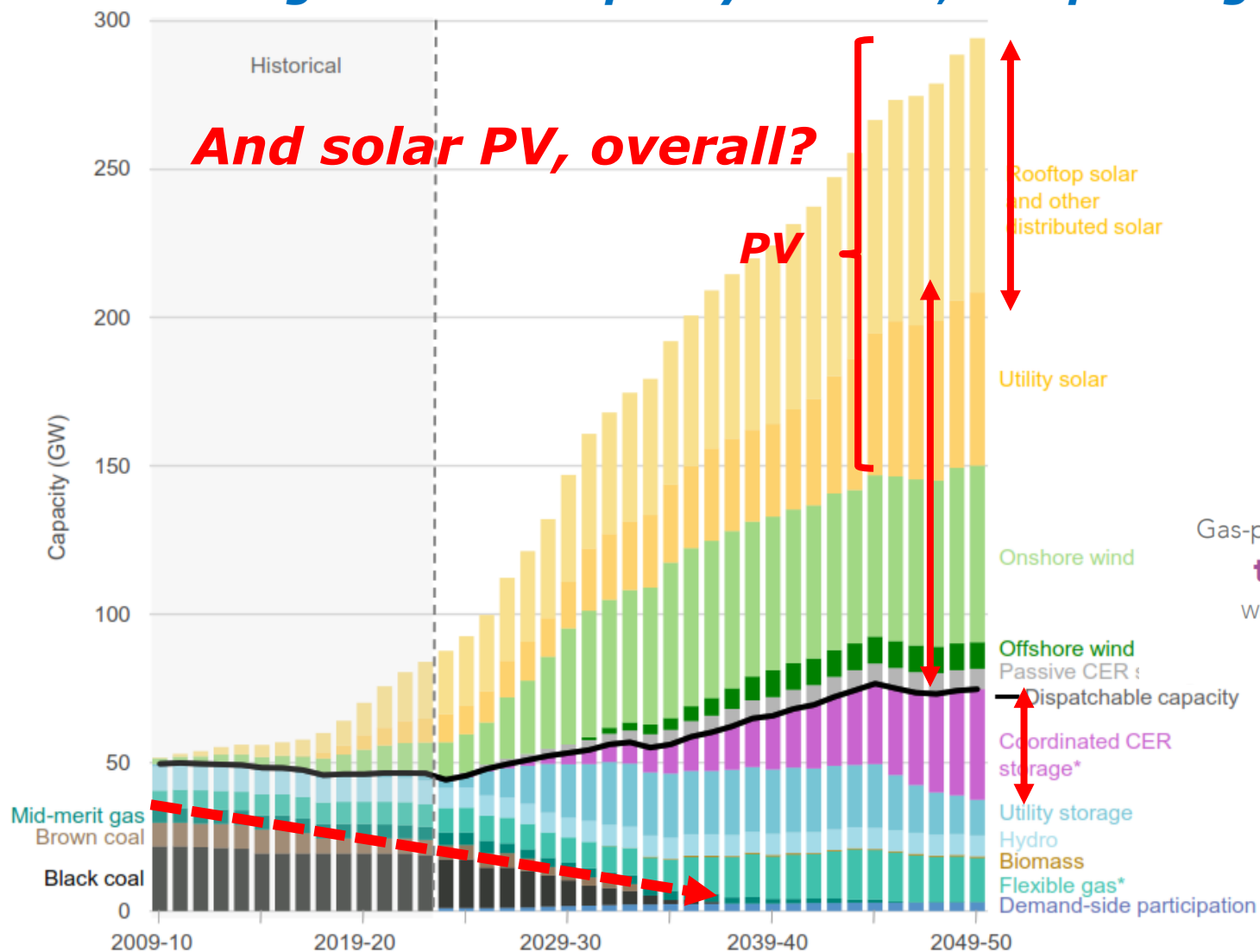
Batteries, virtual power plants,
pumped hydro



Distributed solar PV

**to increase
4-fold**

Rooftop solar,
other distributed solar



Electricity consumption
from the grid

**to nearly
double**



Gas-powered generation

to increase

While current mid-merit
plants will
within the



Coal generation

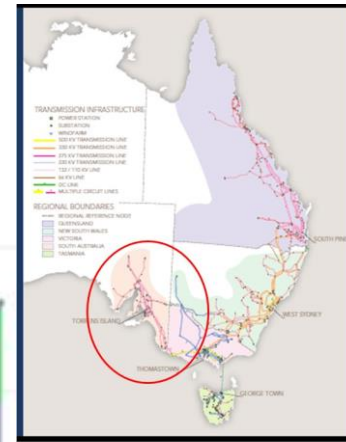
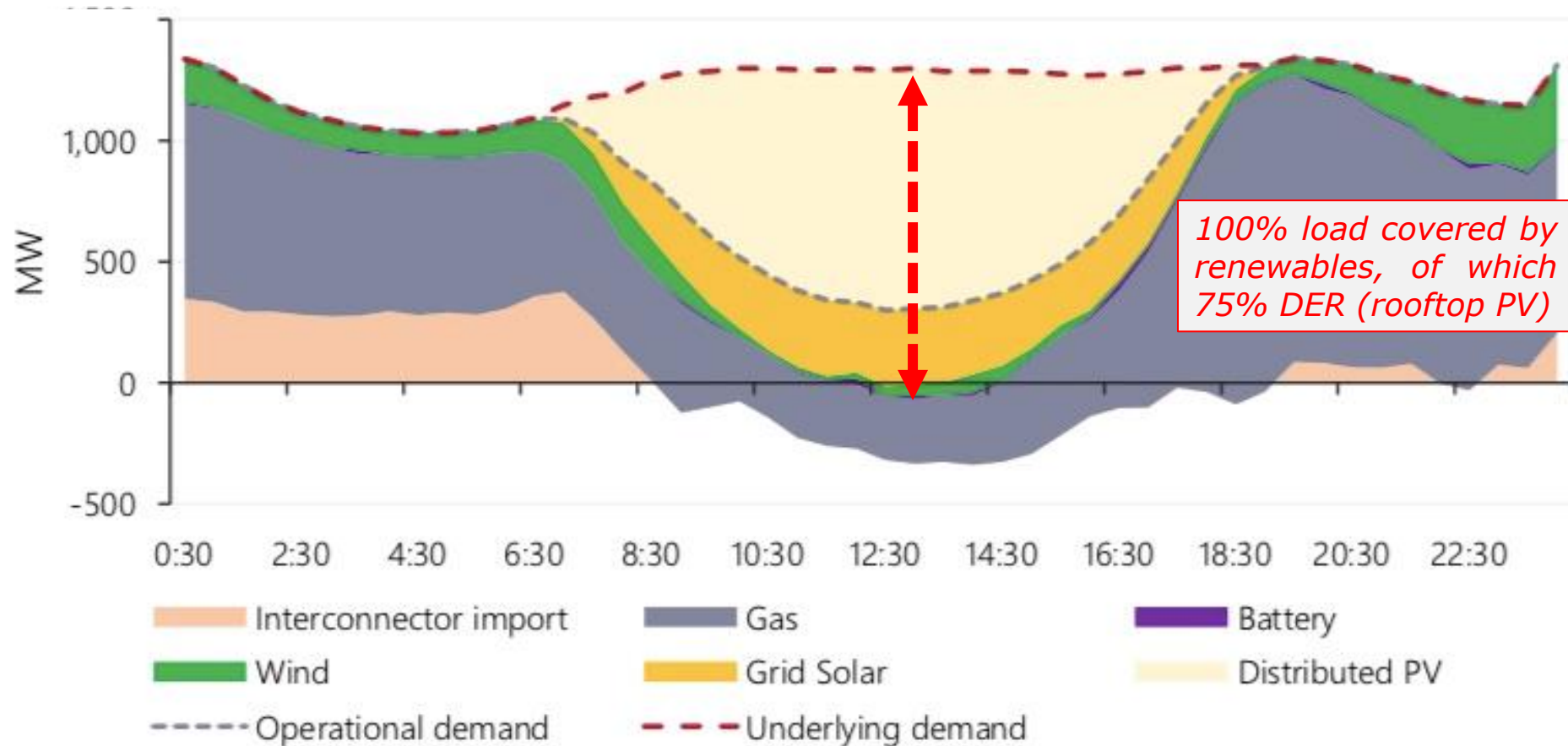
**to be
withdrawn**

Capacity to be retired by:

A postcard from the future: 100% demand supply from solar in South Australia... *Five years ago!*

Figure 7 SA solar (grid and distributed) meets 100% of South Australia's demand for the first time

South Australia operational demand by time of day – 11 October 2020



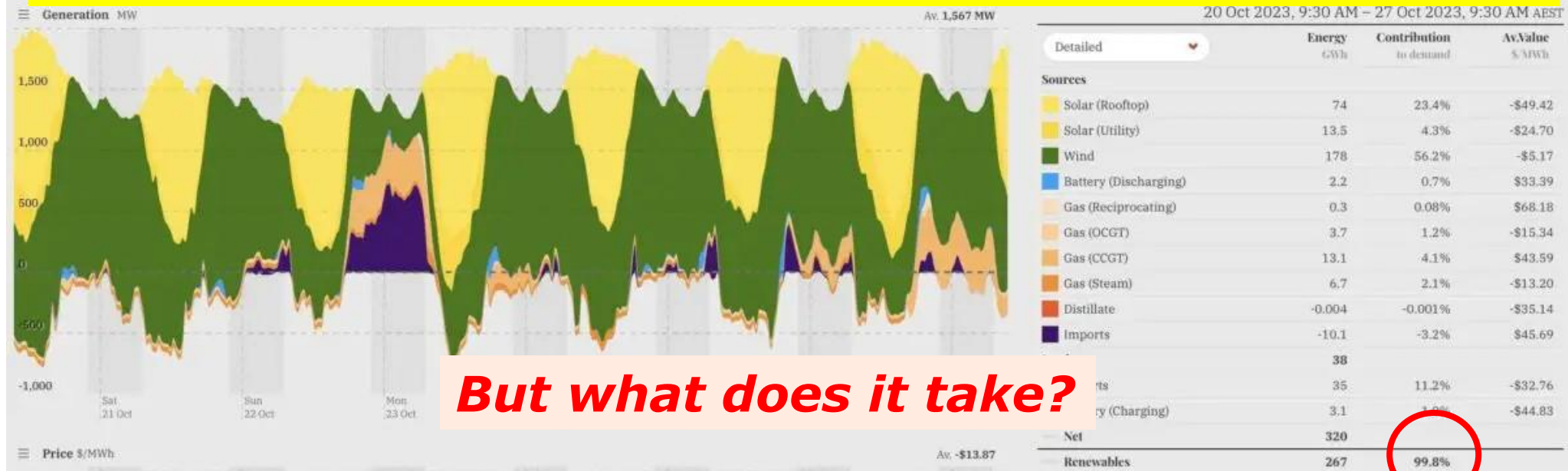
Fast-forward to the future!

BAU *net-zero* operation in South Australia...

“South Australia grid operates at 99.8 per cent wind and solar over past seven days” (Oct 2023)

RenewEconomy, <https://reneweconomy.com.au/south-australia-grid-operates-at-99-8-per-cent-wind-and-solar-over-past-seven-days/>

“Wind dominated and met 56.1 per cent of local demand throughout the 148 hour period, with rooftop solar providing a further 23.4 per cent, and dominating during the day-time hours”

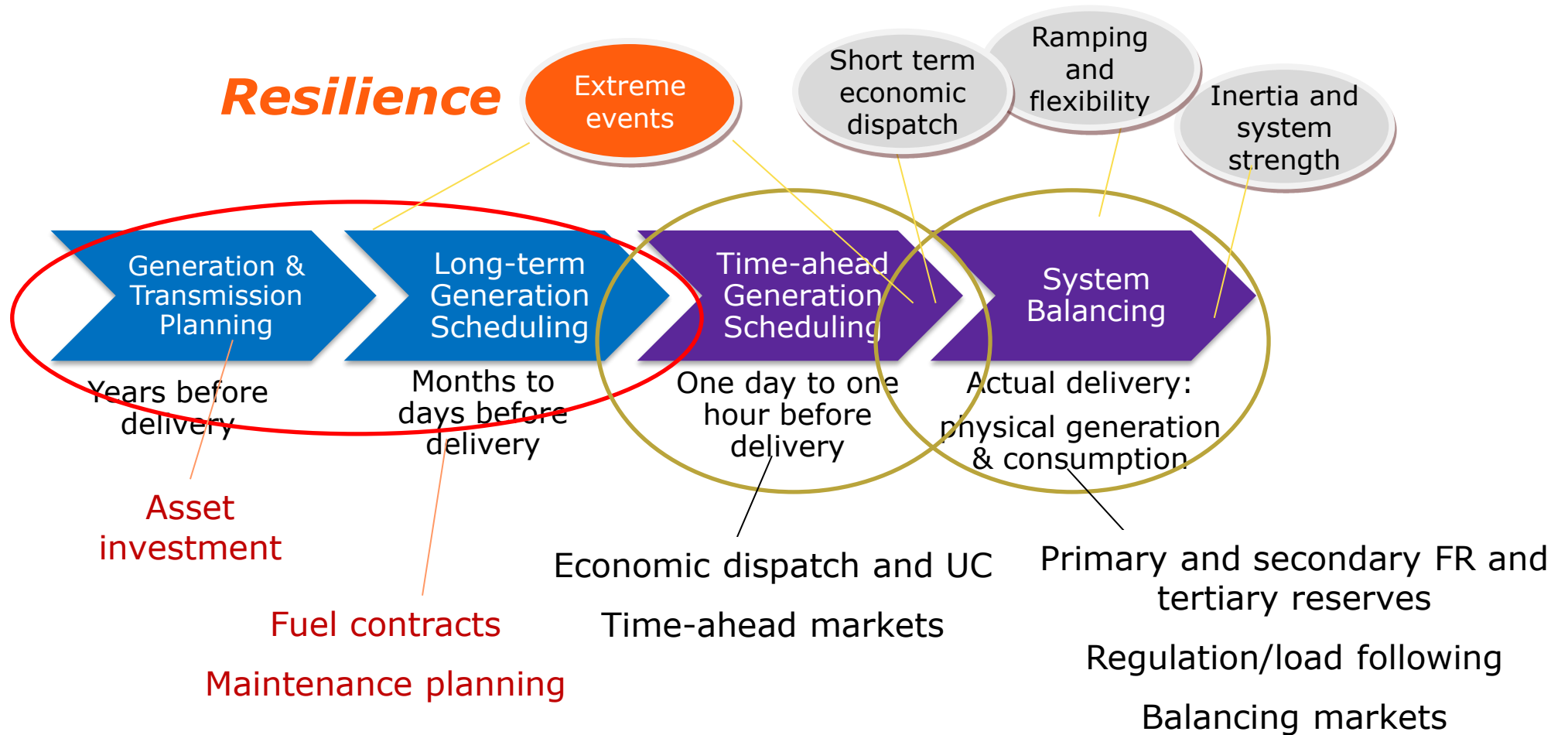


But what does it take?

Source: AEMO and OpenNEM, October 2023

A changing landscape

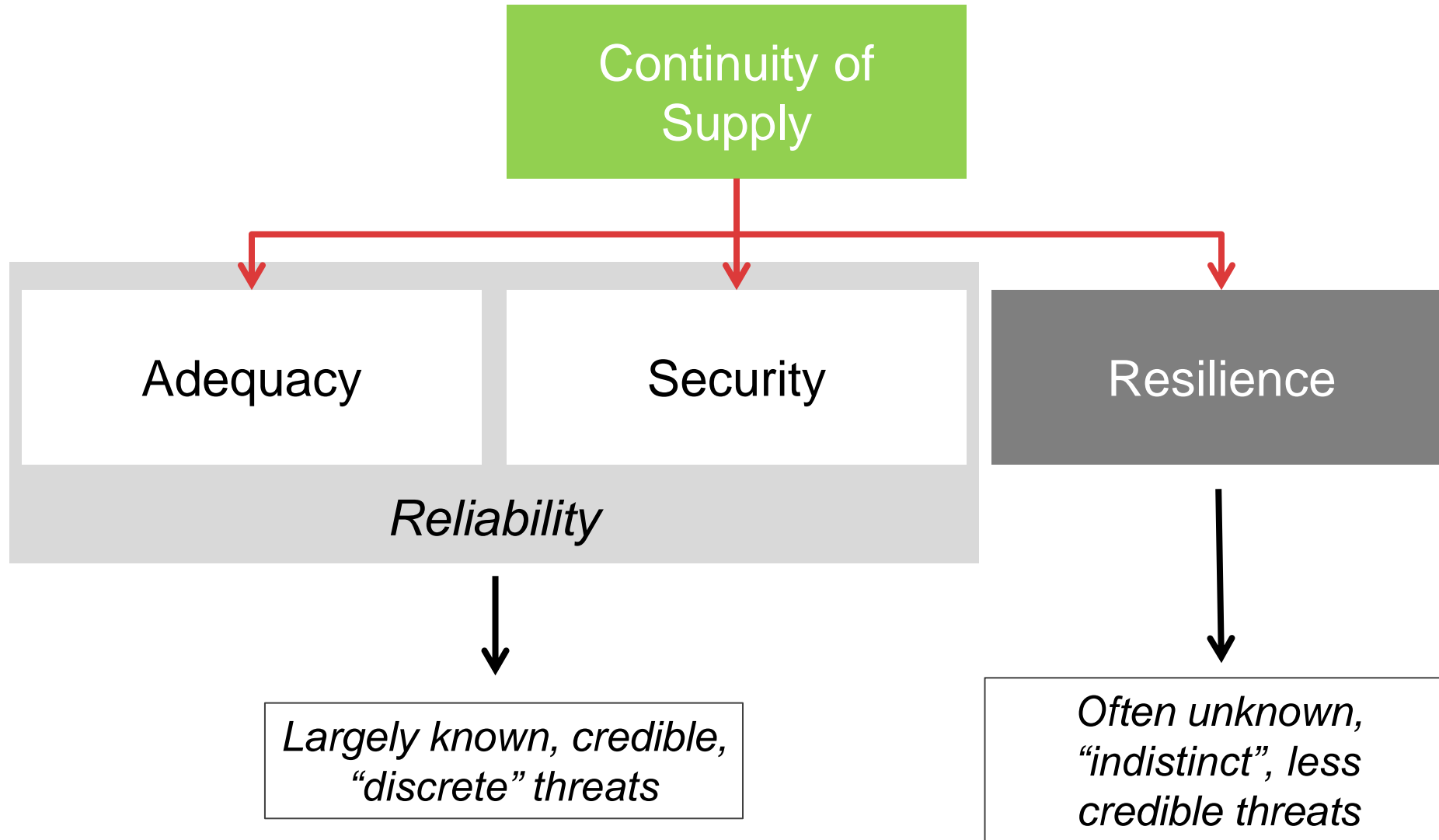
Balancing supply and demand at all times to guarantee system reliability



Planning for adequacy

Operating with security

Reliability, resilience and continuity of supply



Reliability, resilience and continuity of supply

Continuity of
Supply

“Rara avis in terris
nigroque simillima cygno”
Juvenal, 82 AD

Ad



*Largely known, credible,
“discrete” threats*



*Often unknown,
“indistinct”, less
credible threats*



The “new physics”

Risk	Emerging issues	Possible Mitigations
Frequency control and inertia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustained frequency excursions (regulation) - High ROCOF following contingency - Insufficient regional inertia - Insufficient PFR - Risk of low-inertia and insufficient PFR after separation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum inertia levels - Compulsory droop response - Additional amount of PFR - Co-optimization of energy, frequency response, and (regional and system-level) inertia - Regional allocation of reserves - New sources of fast frequency response (e.g., batteries, electrolyzers) - Management of largest contingency and interconnector flows (system at risk of regional separation)
Variability, uncertainty and visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large variation in net demand - Insufficient short- and medium-term and ramping reserves - Visibility of Distributed Energy Resources (DER) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better forecasting - Artificial intelligence to assess reserves (e.g., dynamic Bayesian belief network tools) - Use of more flexible resources including energy storage (e.g., pumped hydro)
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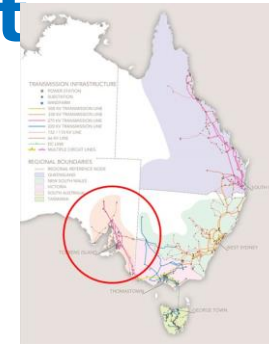
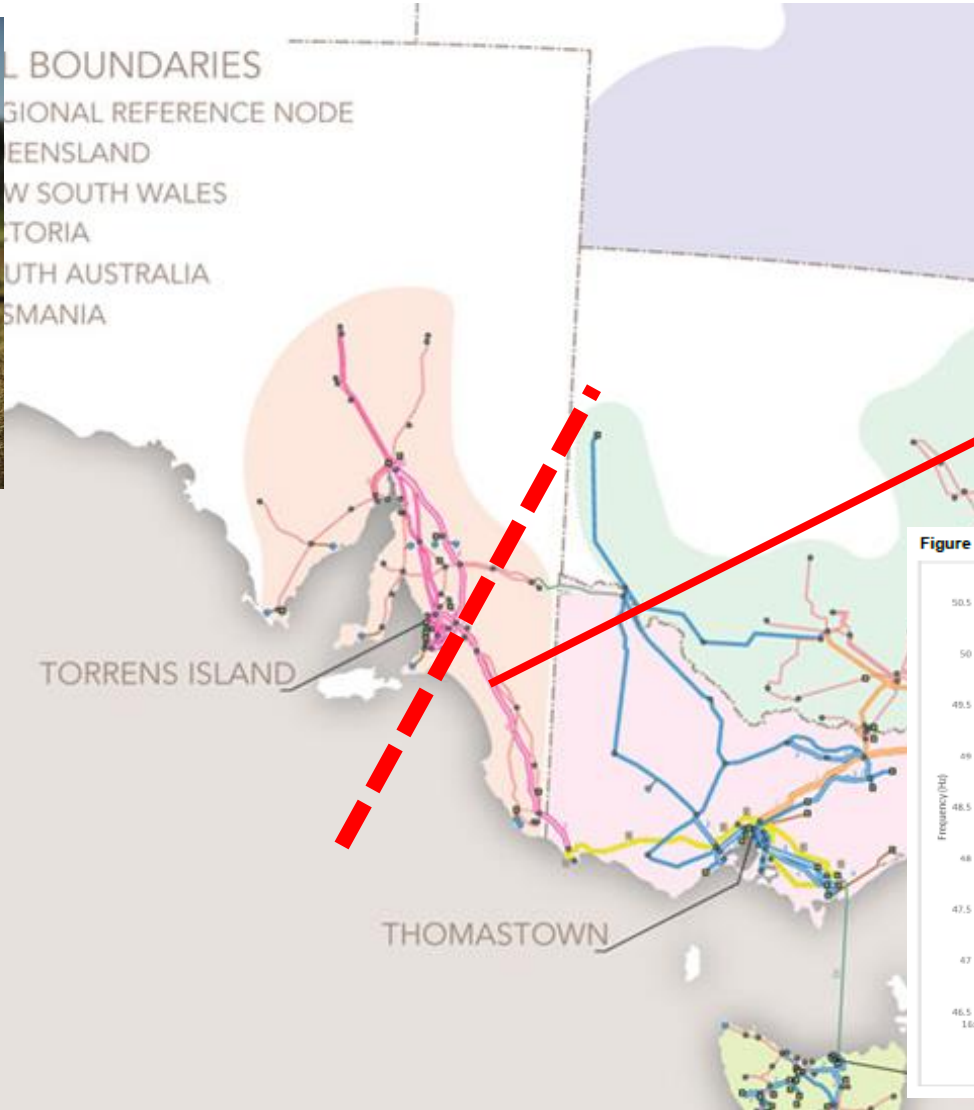
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A textbook example: The 2016 “black system” event



Source: ABC



**Heywood AC
Interconnector**

Source: AEMO

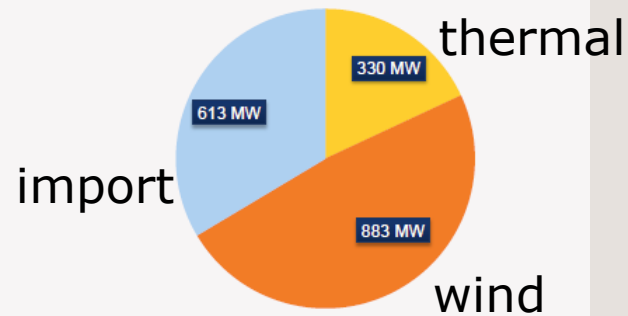
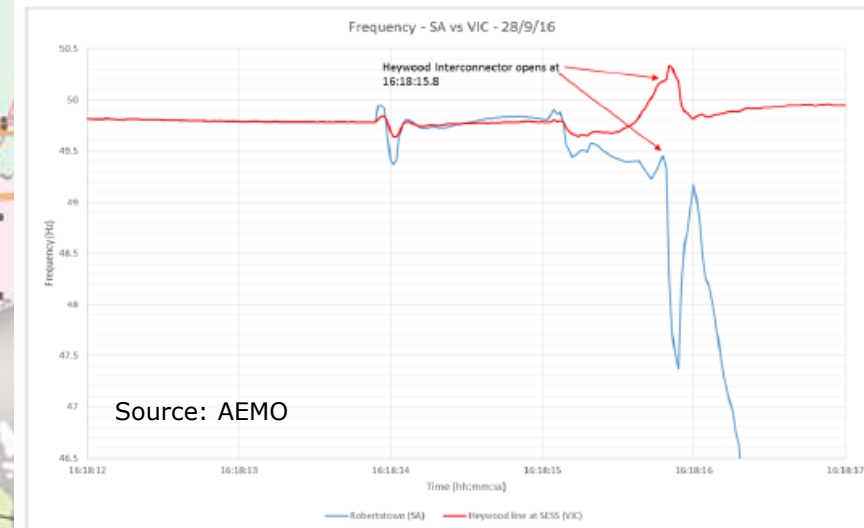
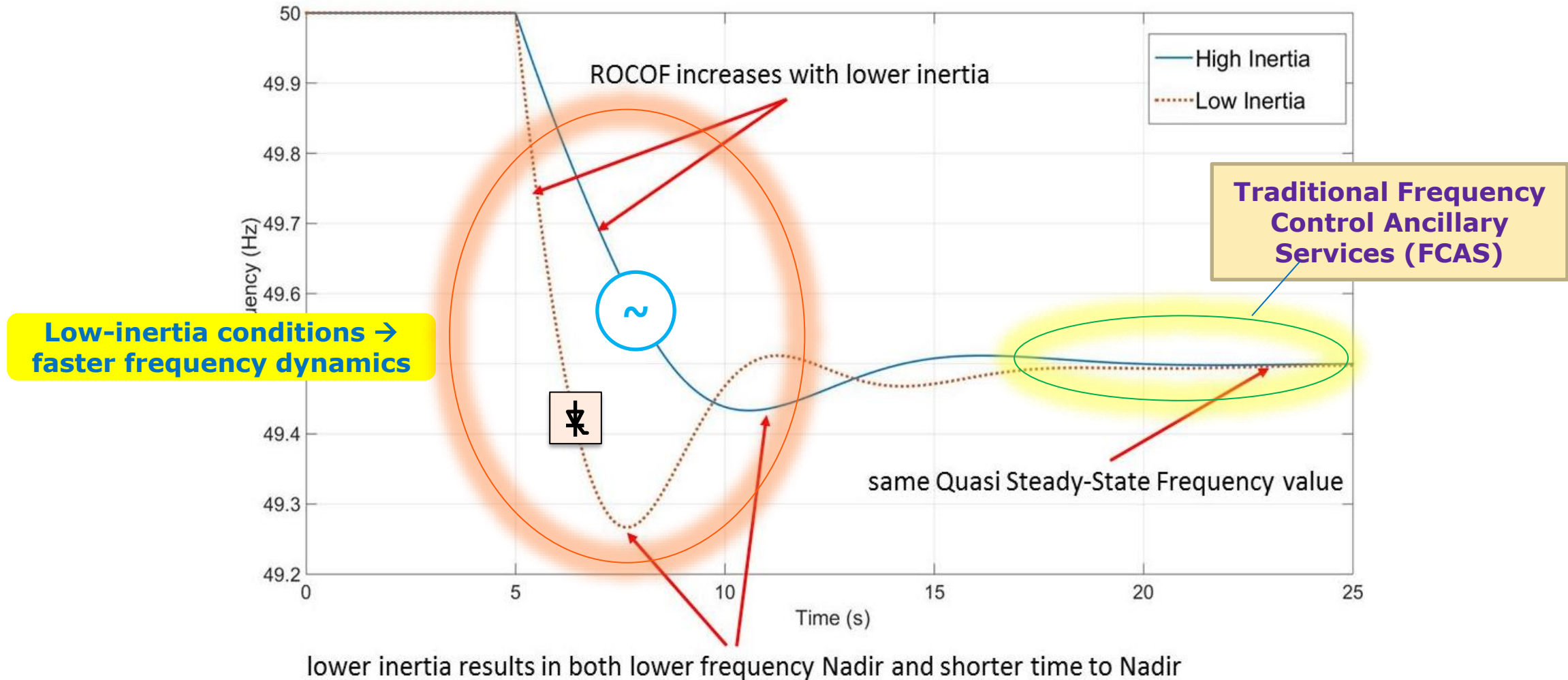


Figure 5 SA frequency compared to Victoria during event

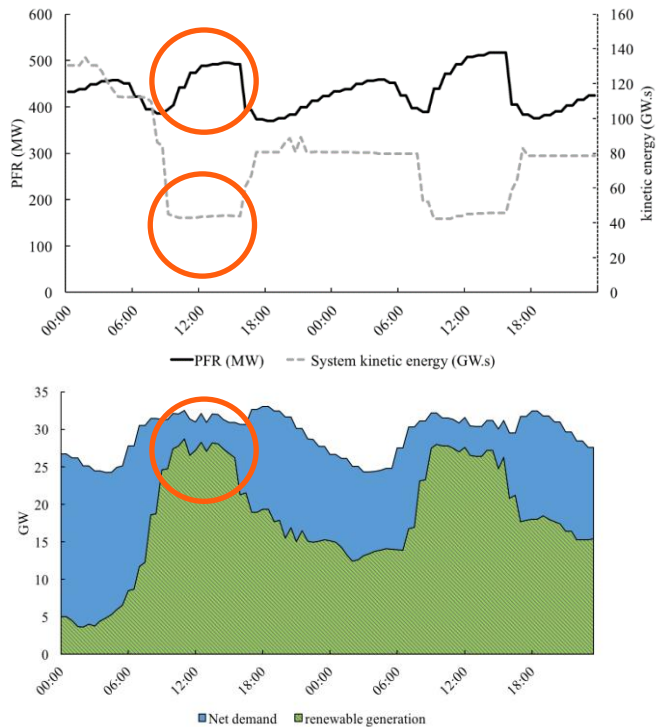


Frequency control challenges in renewables-rich systems



The dawn of new frequency control and inertia services and markets

Co-optimization of energy, frequency control ancillary services, and inertia



Power system security assessment of the future National Electricity Market

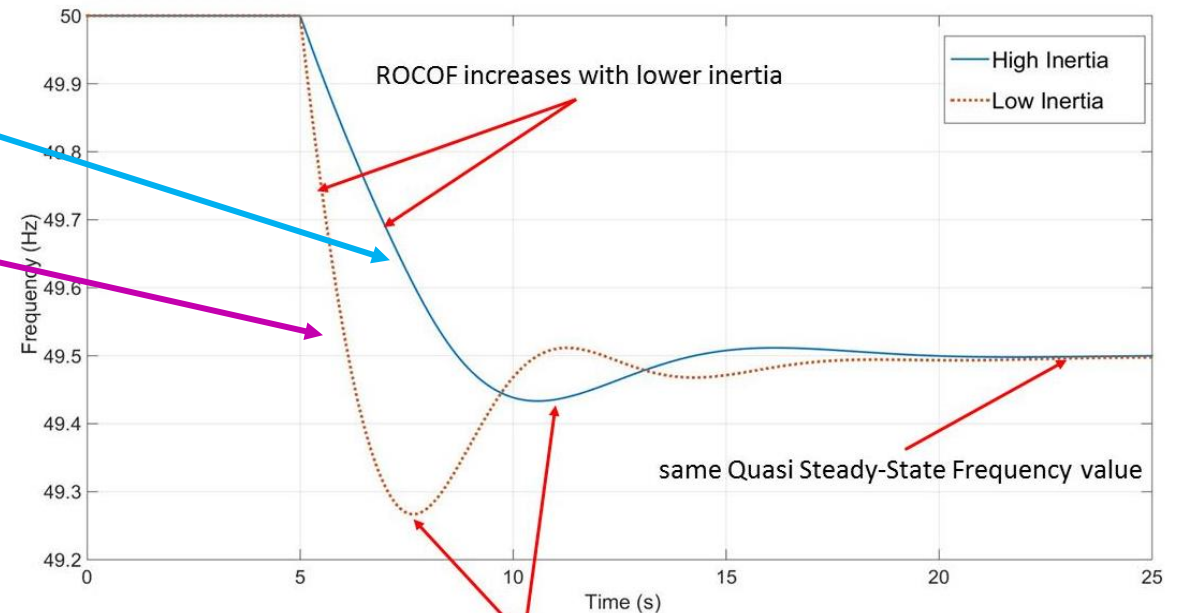
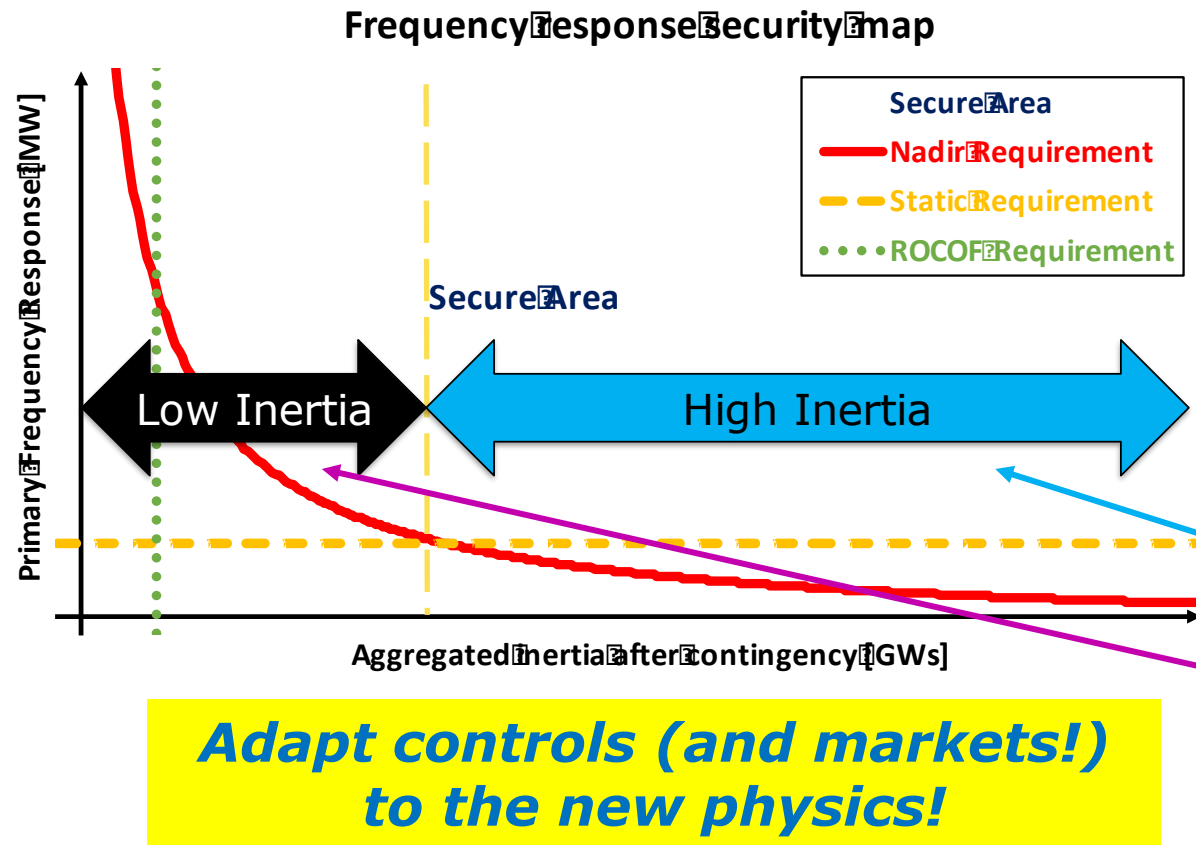
A report by the
Melbourne Energy Institute
at the
University of Melbourne
in support of the

'Independent Review into the
Future Security of the National Electricity Market'

June 2017

Dr Alan Finkel AO, Chief Scientist, Chair of the Expert Panel
Ms Karen Moses FAICD | Ms Chloe Munro | Mr Terry Efferny | Professor Mary O'Kane AC

Frequency response security maps

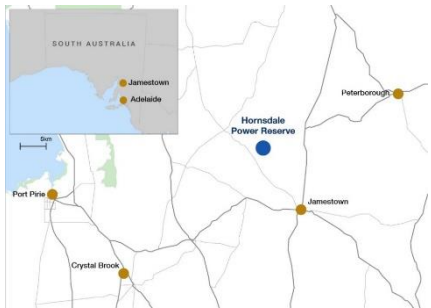
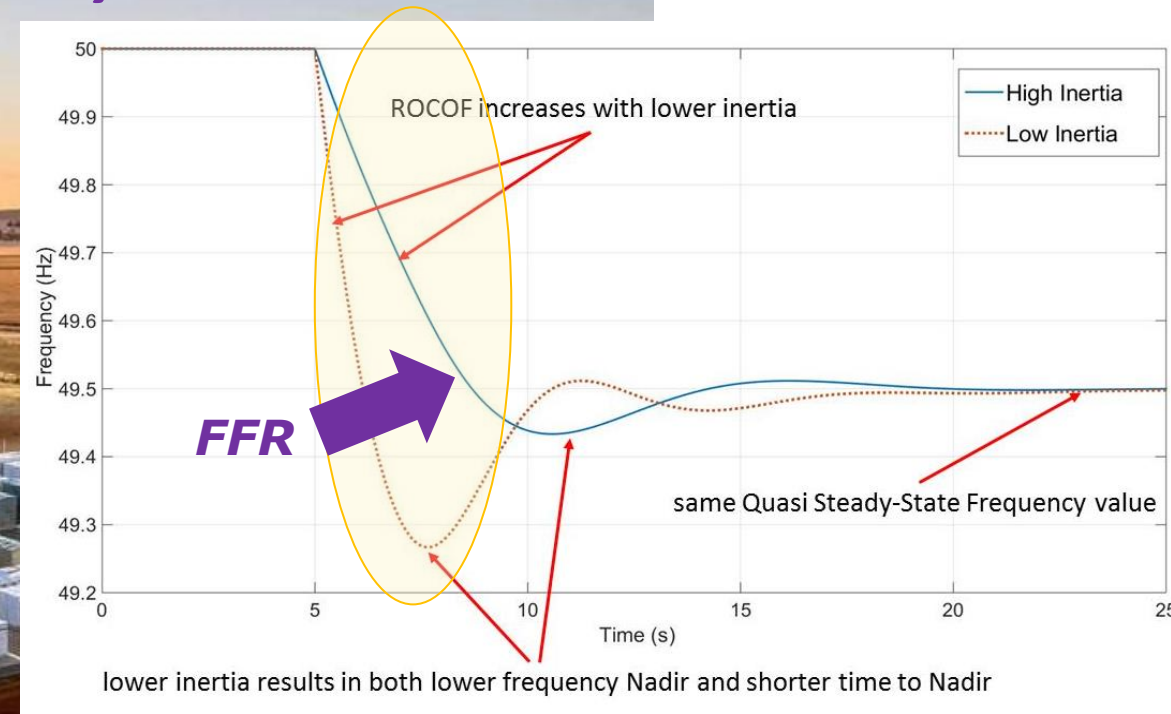
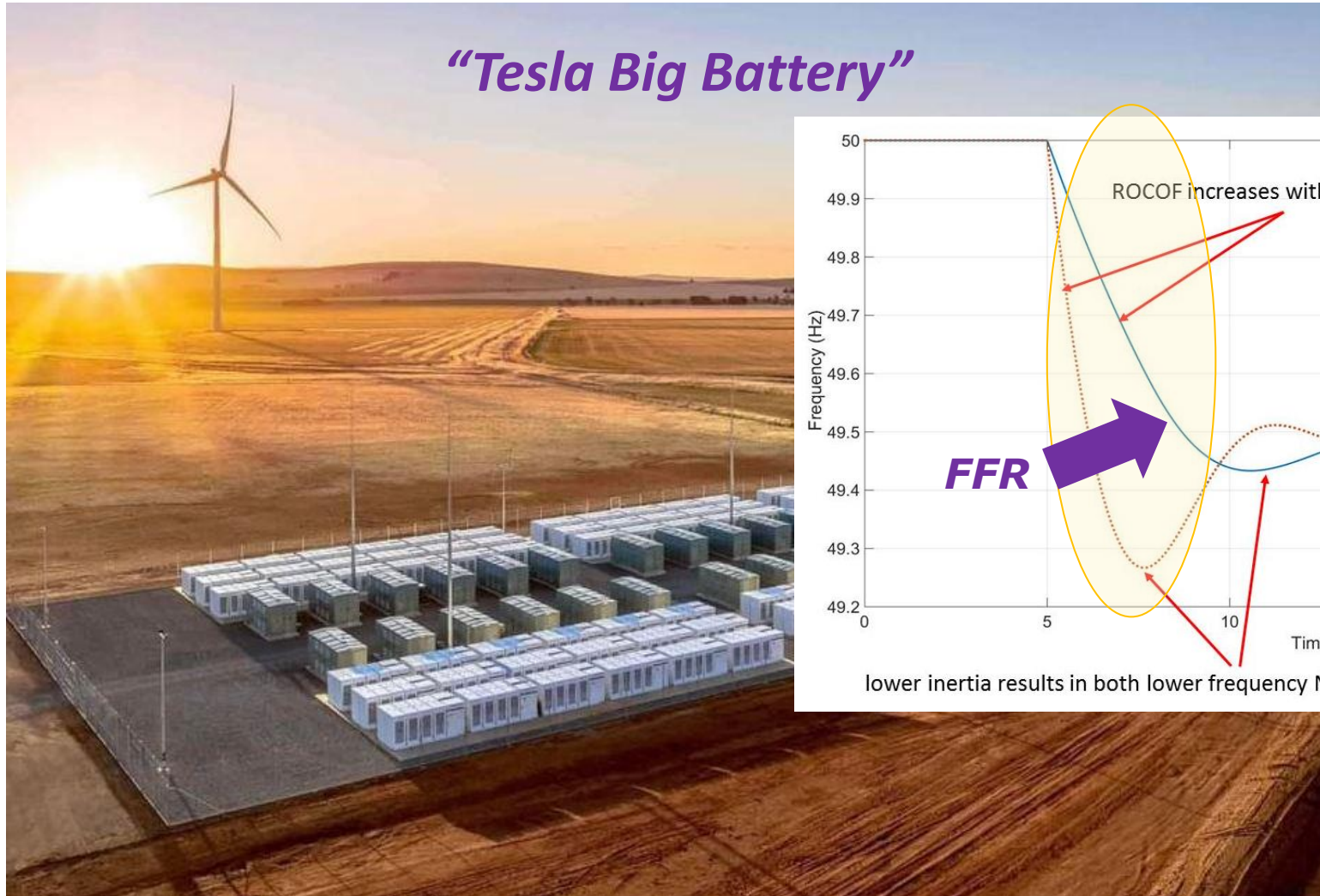


lower inertia results in both lower frequency Nadir and shorter time to Nadir

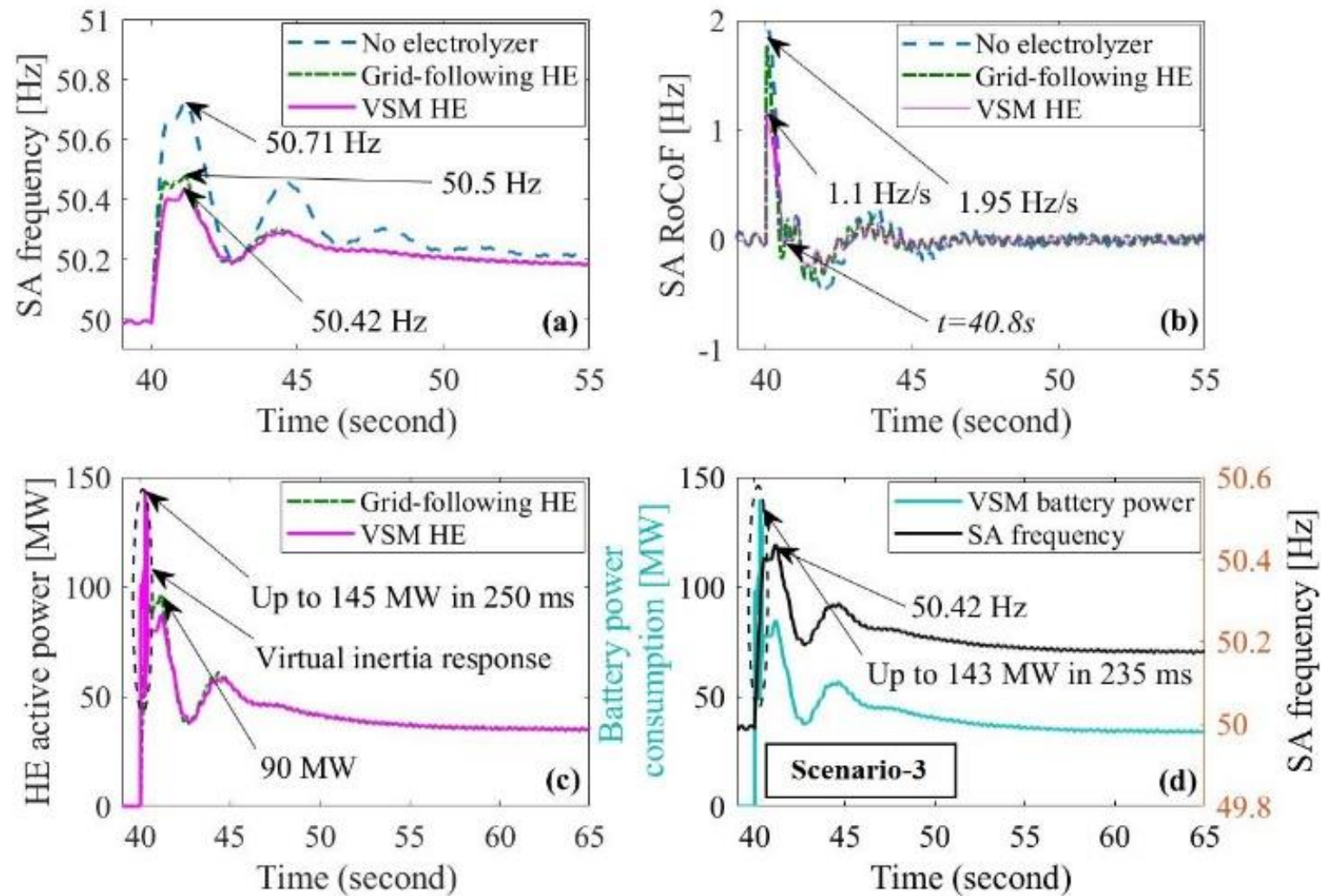
Making history: Engineering the grid of the future

Hornsedale Power Reserve, Jamestown, South Australia

“Tesla Big Battery”



Not only batteries!



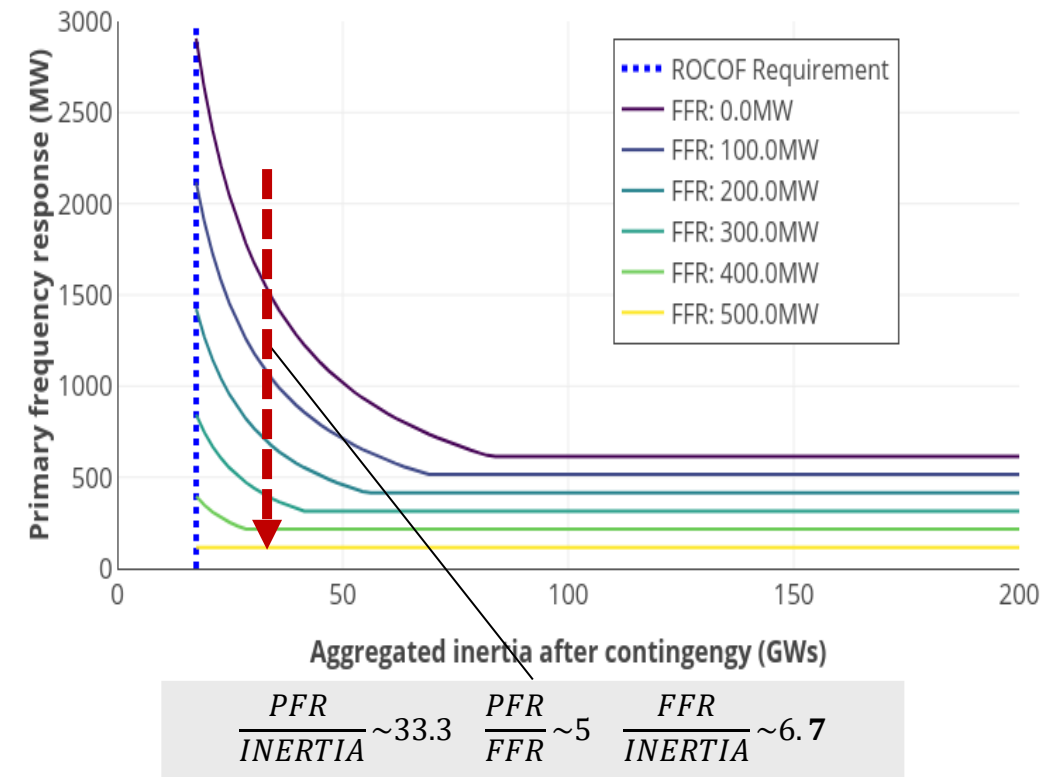
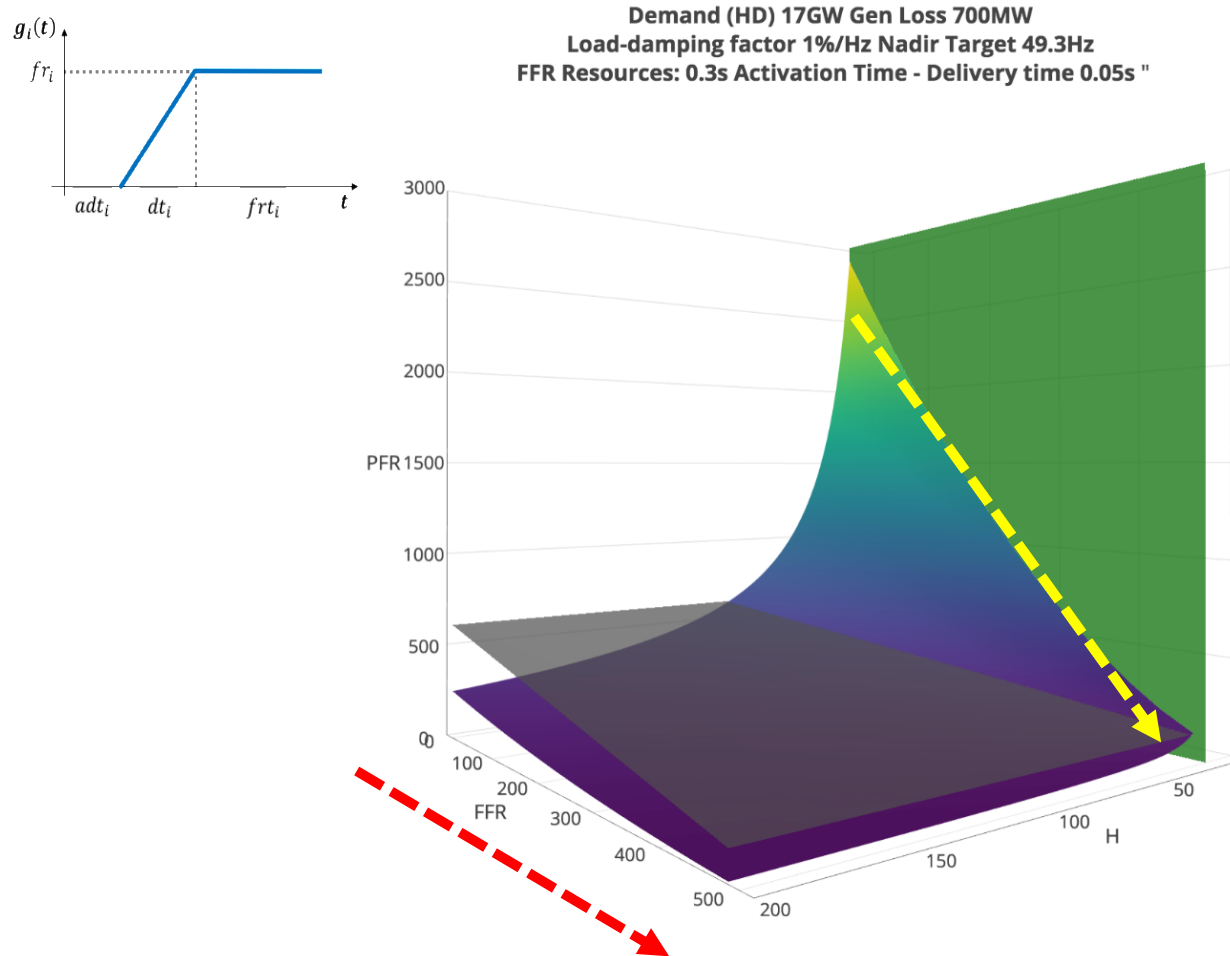
M. Ghazavi Dozein, *et al.*, "Fast frequency response from utility scale hydrogen electrolyzers", *IEEE Trans. Sustainable Energy*, 2021

M. Ghazavi Dozein, *et al.*, "Virtual Inertia Response and Frequency Control Ancillary Services from Hydrogen Electrolyzers", *IEEE Tran. on Pow. Syst*, 2022

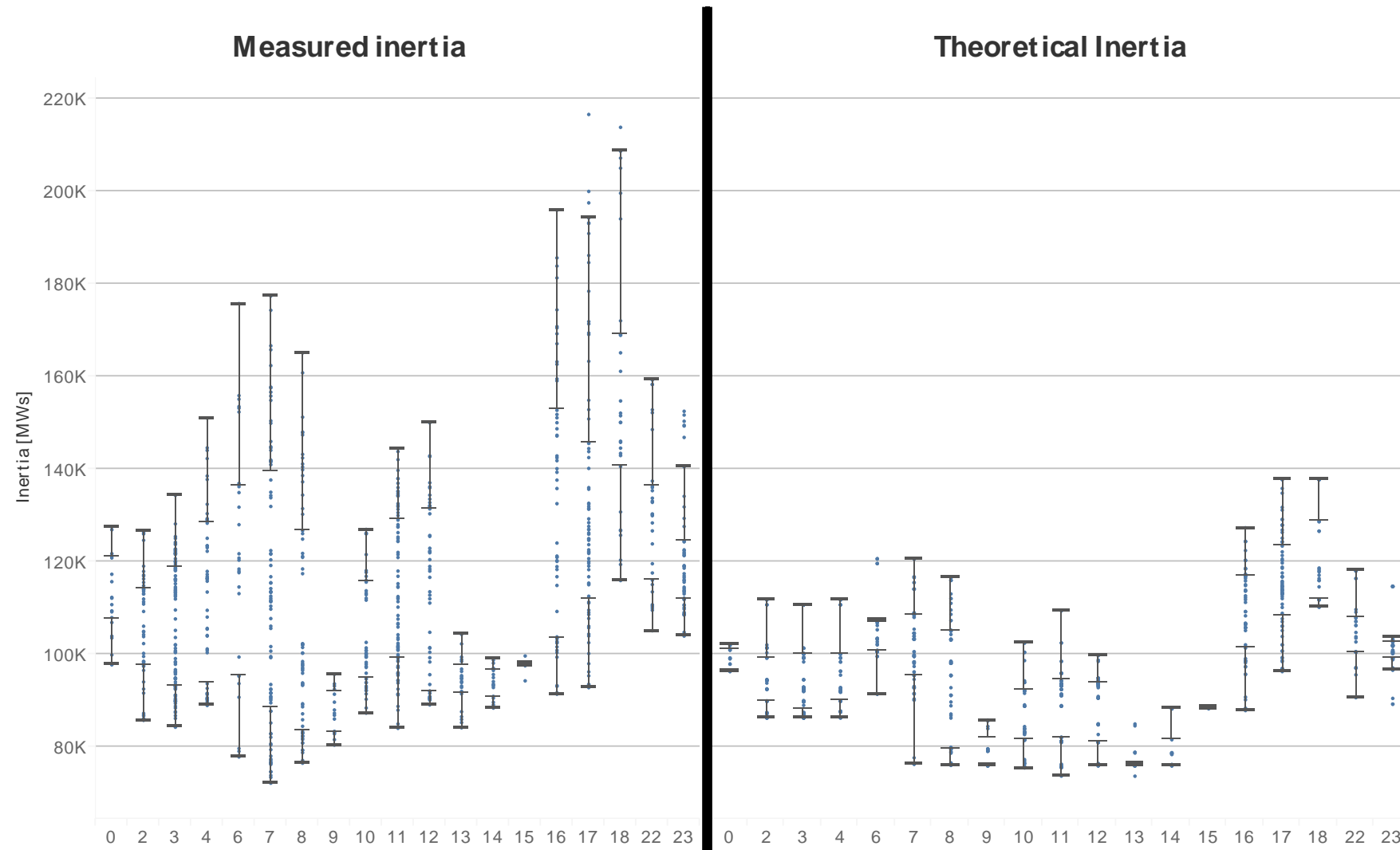
S. D. Tavakoli, *et al.*, "Grid-Forming Services From Hydrogen Electrolyzers", *IEEE Transactions on Sustainable Energy*, 2023

"Synchronous" vs "controlled" response

battery, electrolyser

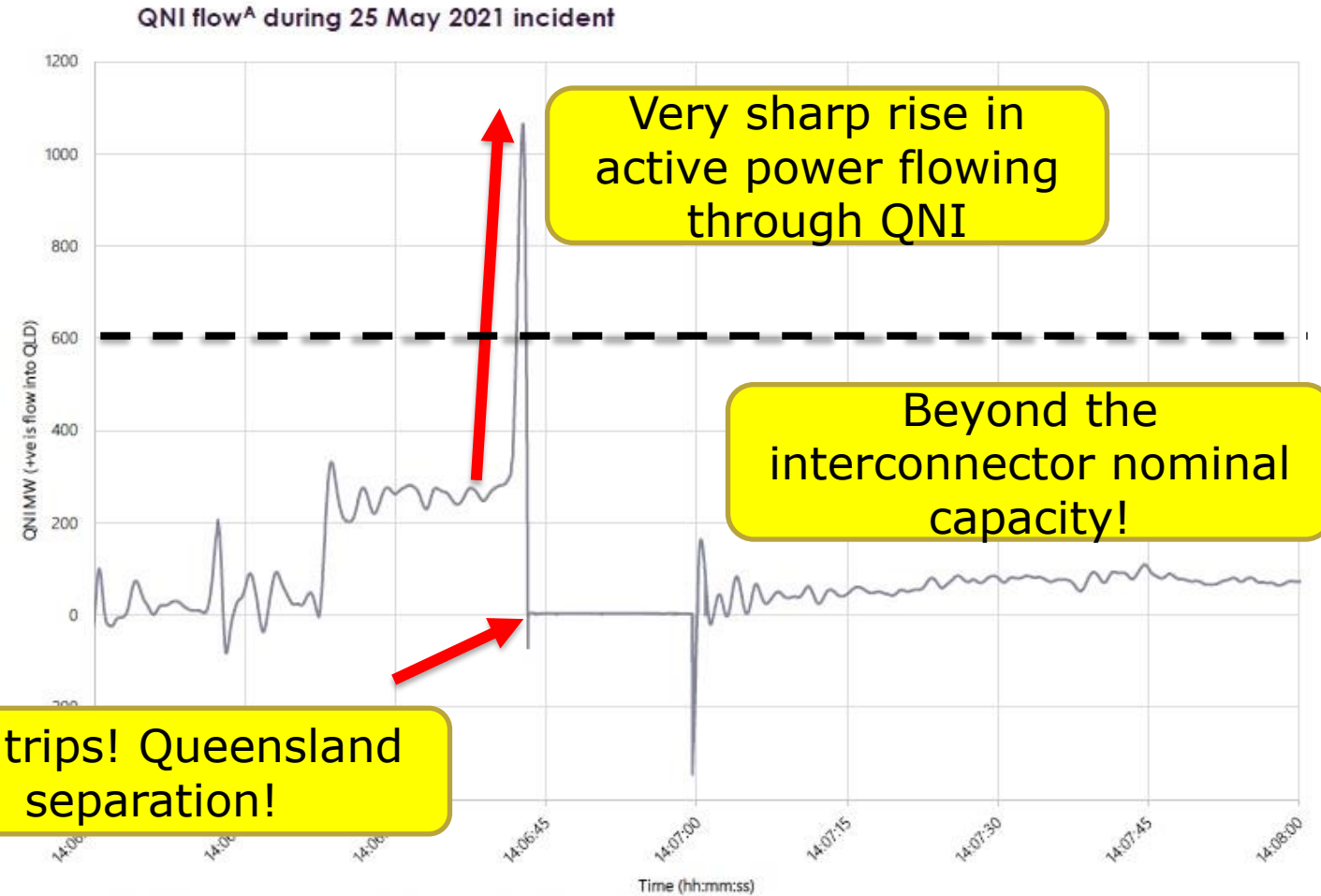
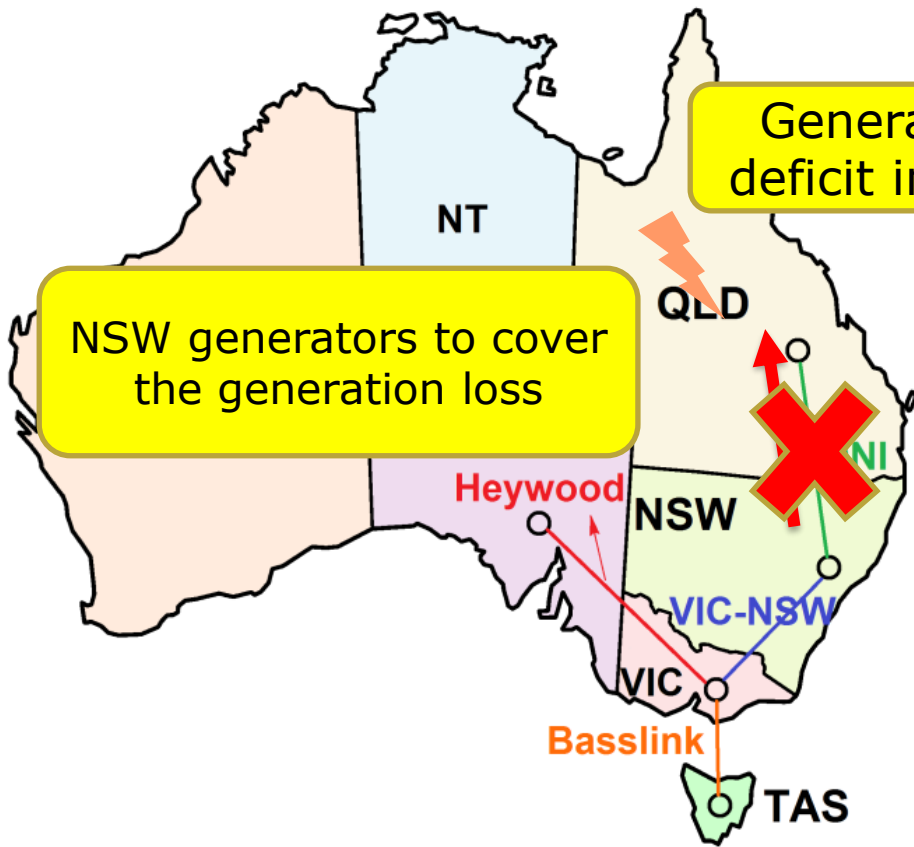


Is inertia hiding?



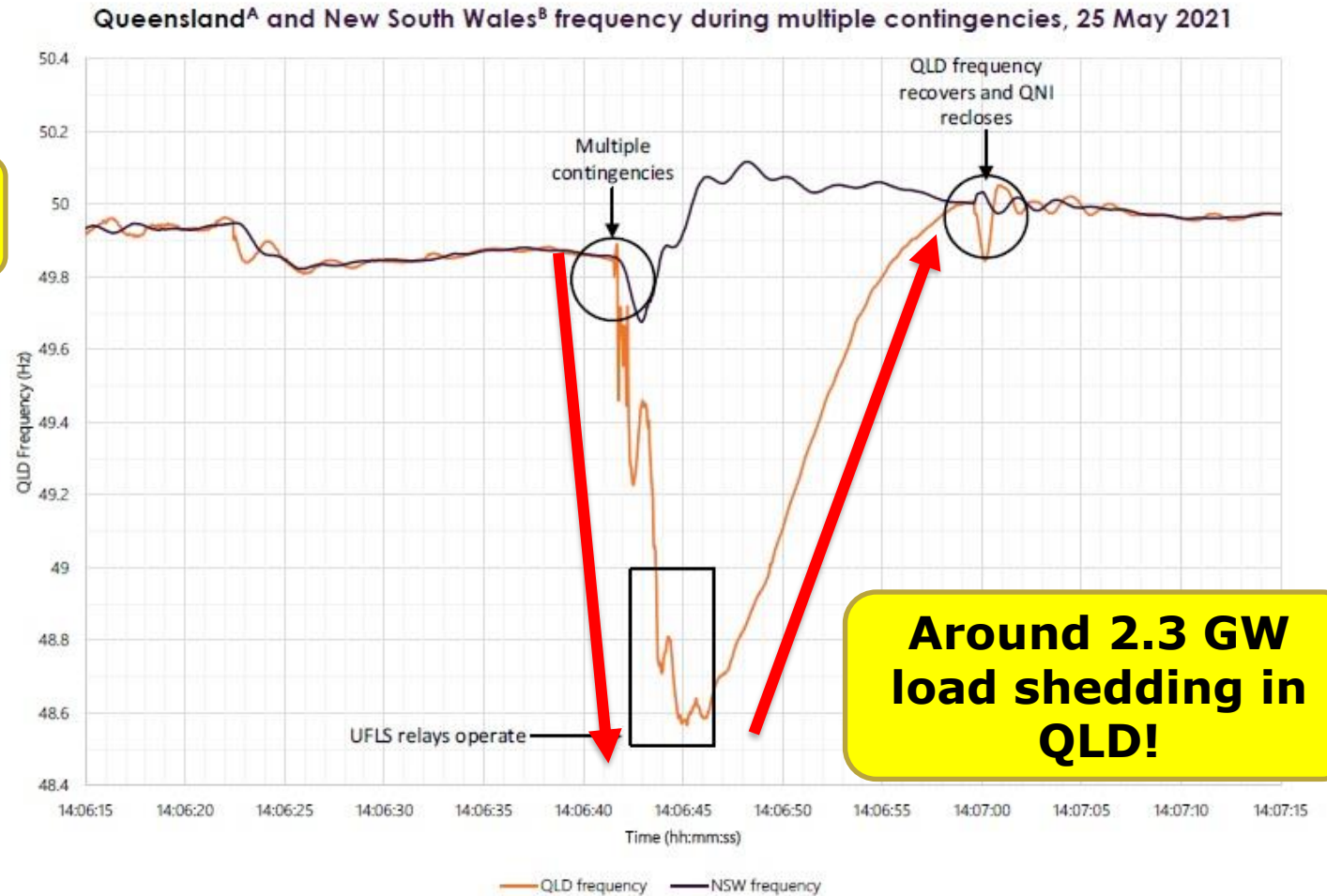
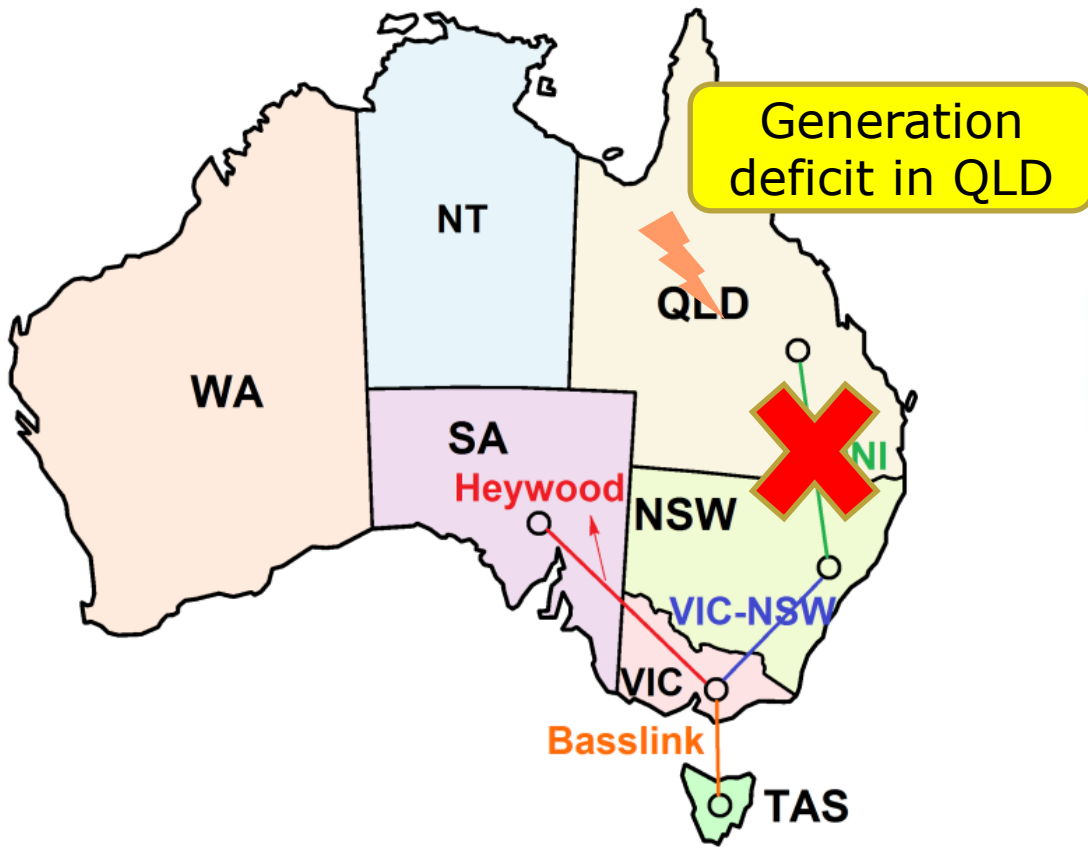
B. Moya, *et al.*, "Techno-Economic Assessment of Inertia Measurements: A Case Study for the Australian National Electricity Market", *IREP 2025*

Real-life example: Cascading failures in May 2021



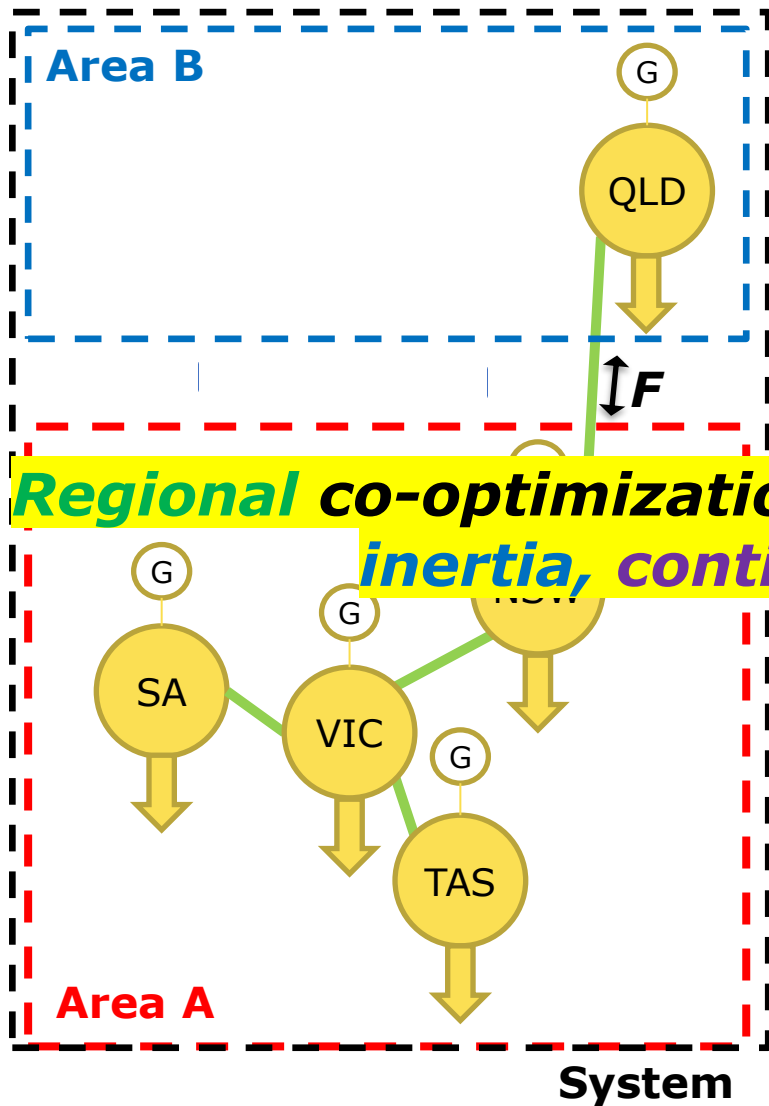
A. Measured at Bulli Creek substation High Speed Monitoring (HSM).

Real-life example: Cascading failures in May 2021

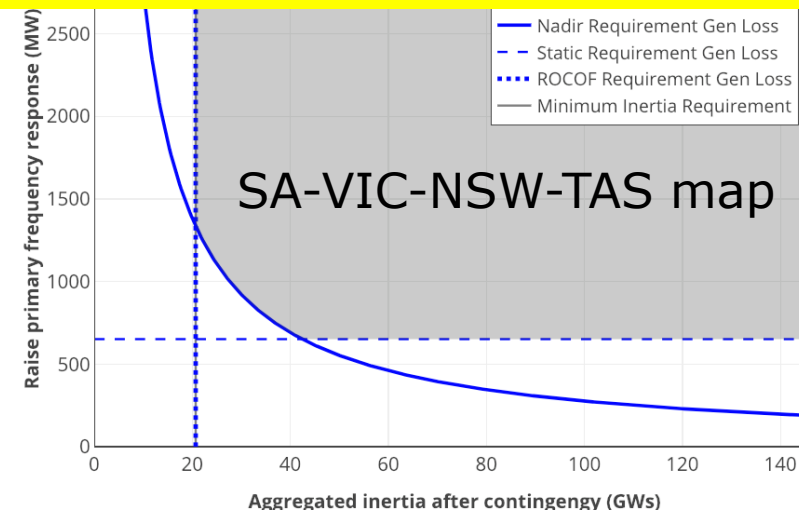
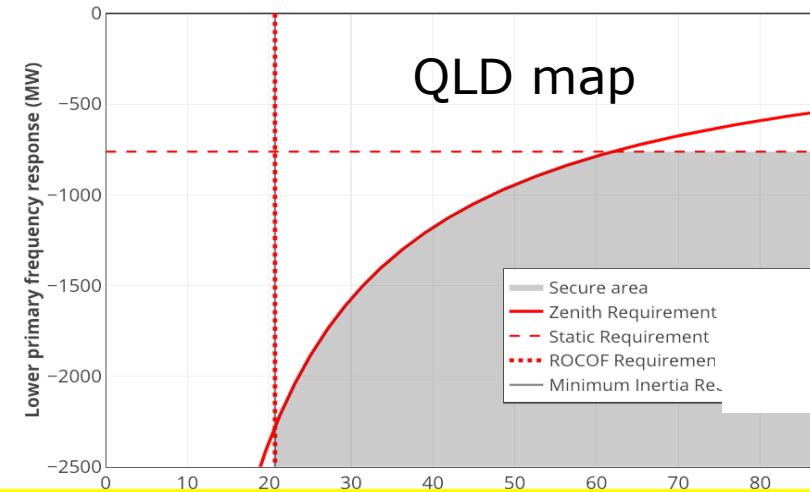


Need to protect the system against islanding: co-optimization of contingency size

Separation-constrained UC/OPF



Regional co-optimization of energy, frequency control ancillary services, inertia, contingency level, and interconnector flows



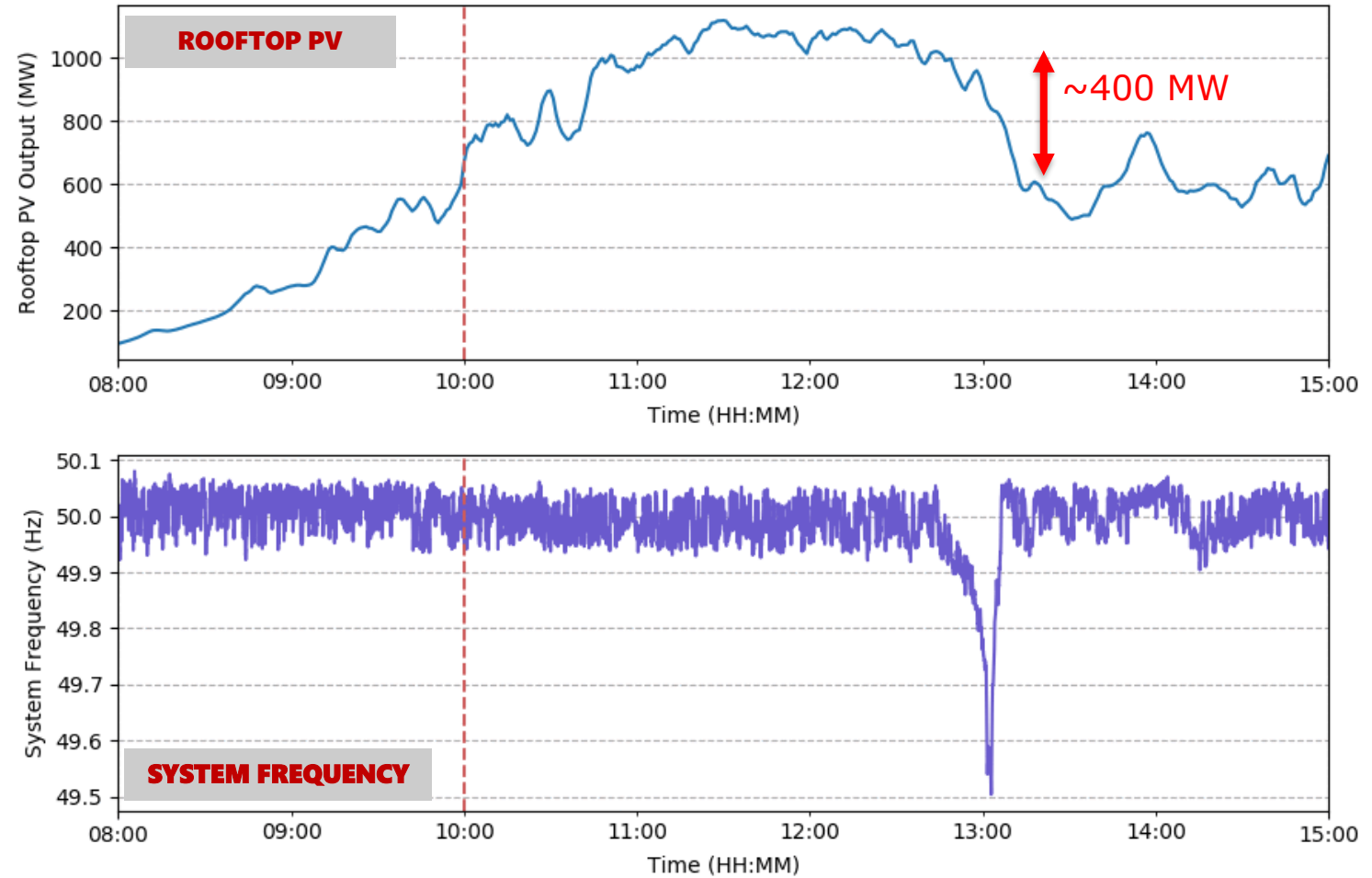
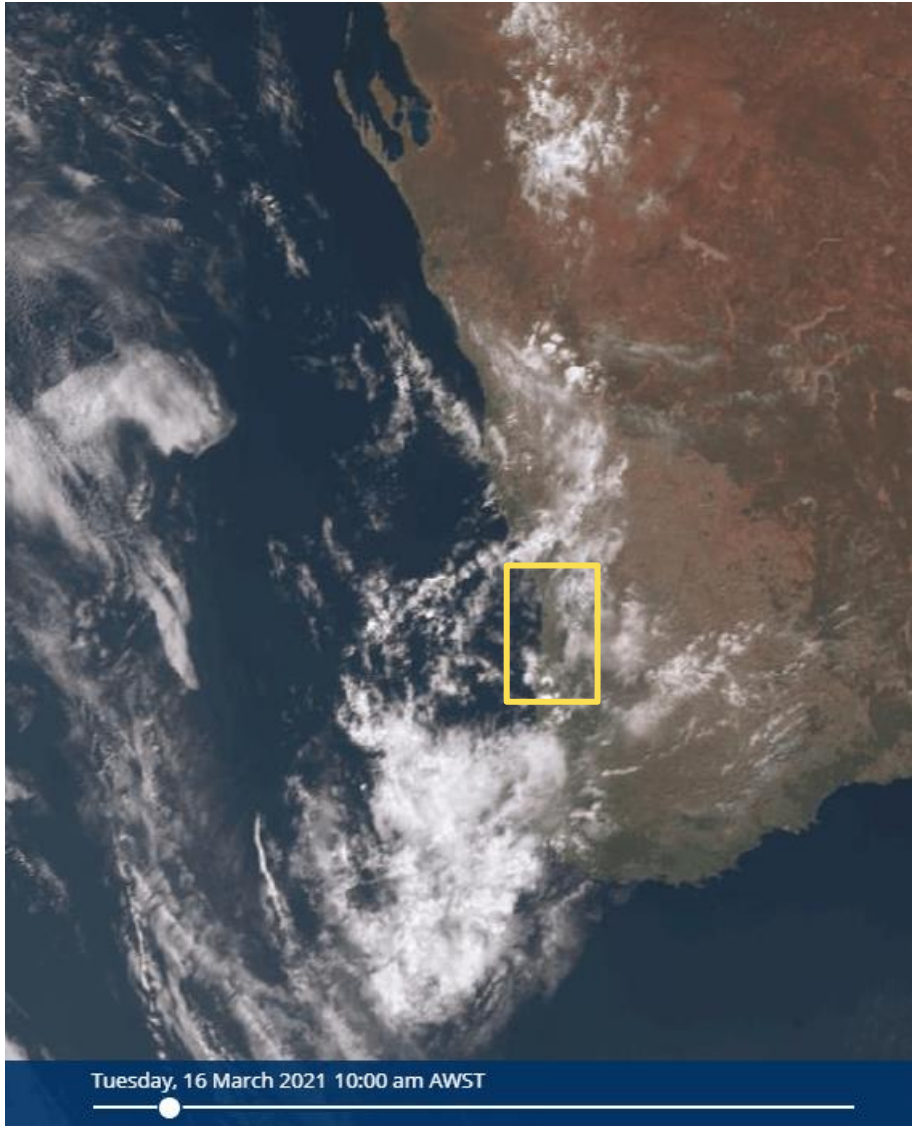


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Challenges with weather-driven DER:

Rapid cloud formation in Perth, 16 March 2021



Slide courtesy of Julius Susanto, AEMO

Security in a weather-fuelled system: DER impact on reserves



"Electricity provider authorised to switch off rooftop solar in SA in emergencies"

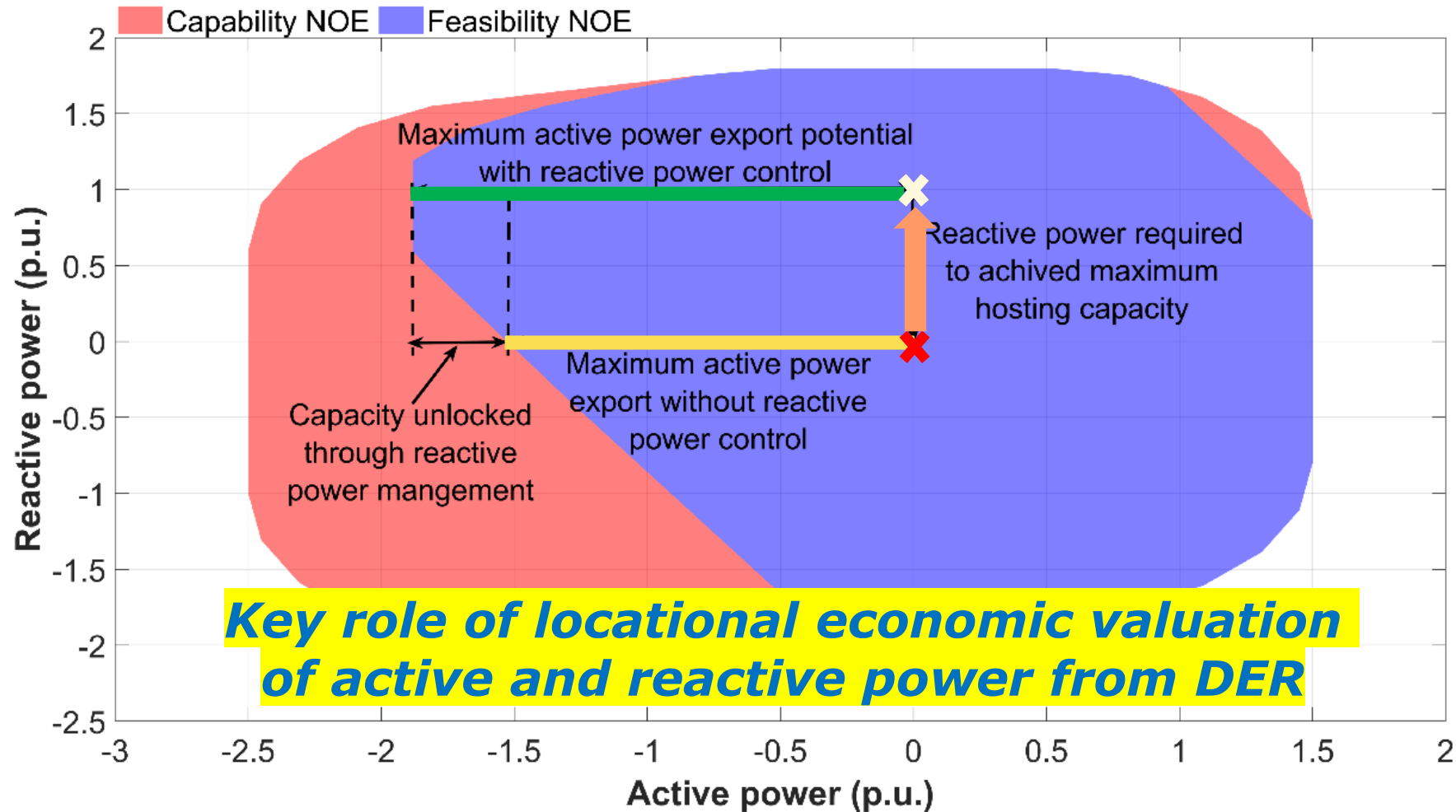


How would you disconnect DER for security reasons?

Source: ABC News, 27 August 2020

***This is the consequence of DER not being
visible/dispatchable/controllable!***

Integrated provision of system and local services from DER



M. Liu *et al.*, "Grid and market services from the edge", *IEEE Power and Energy Magazine*, July/August 2021

S. Riaz *et al.*, "Modelling and characterisation of flexibility from distributed energy resources", *IEEE Transactions on Power Systems*, July 2021

C. Bas Domenech, *et al.*, "Towards Distributed Energy Markets: Accurate and Intuitive DLMP Decomposition", *IEEE Trans. Energy Mark., Policy and Reg.*, Jan 2024

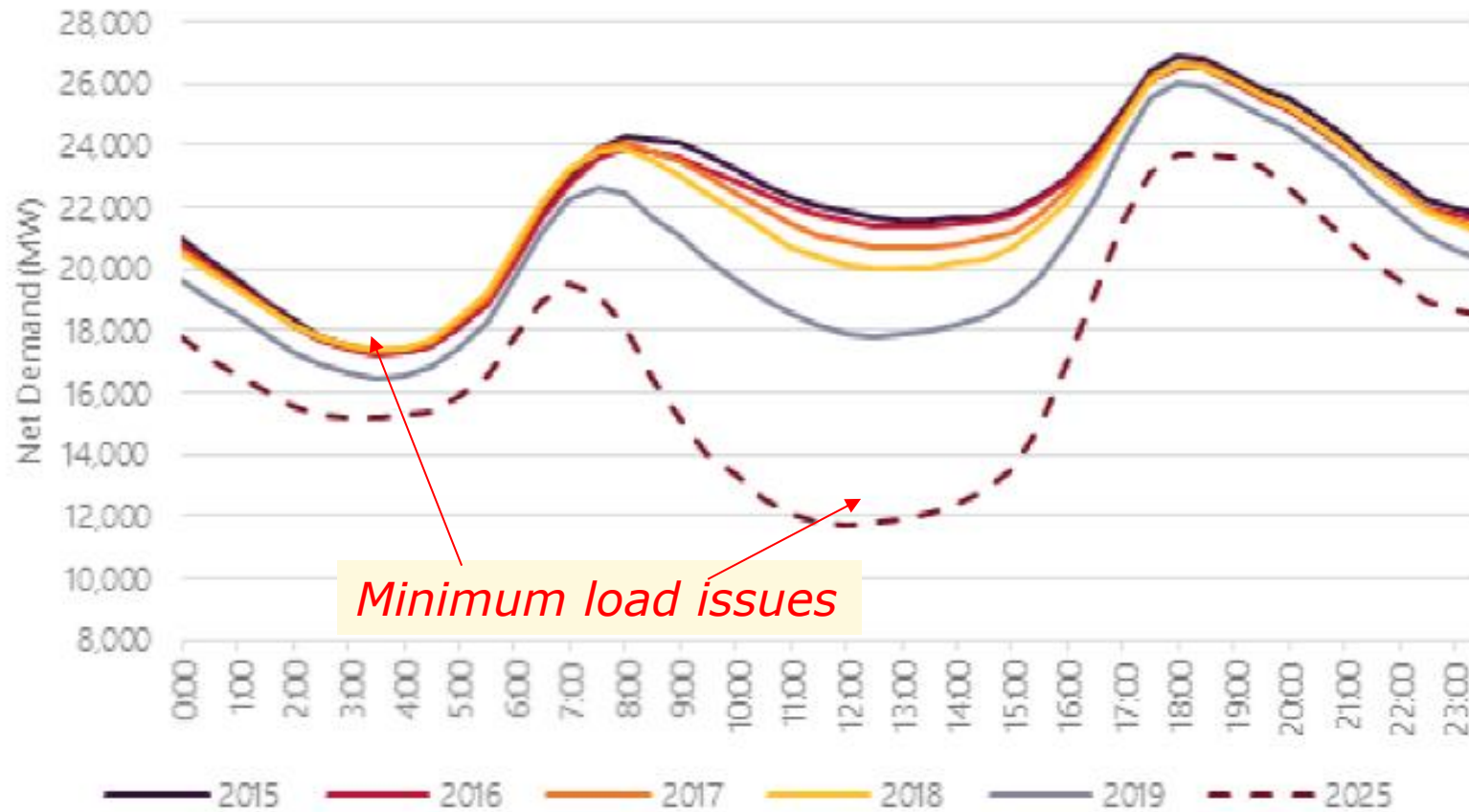


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Increasing ramping requirements: The Australian duck

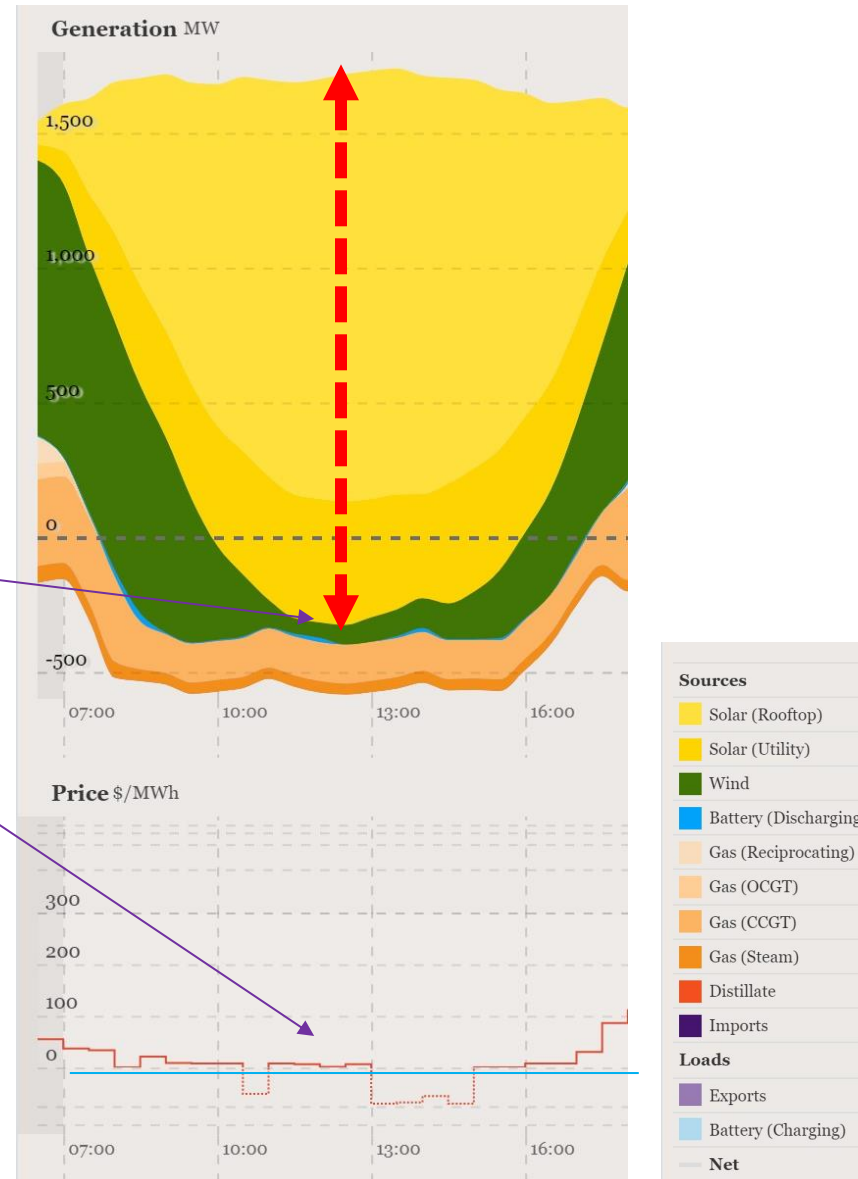
Figure 15 NEM average winter net demand curves



Source: AEMO, "Renewable Integration Study, Stage 1 - Appendix C: Managing Variability and Uncertainty", April 2020

Impact of DER on reactive power reserves

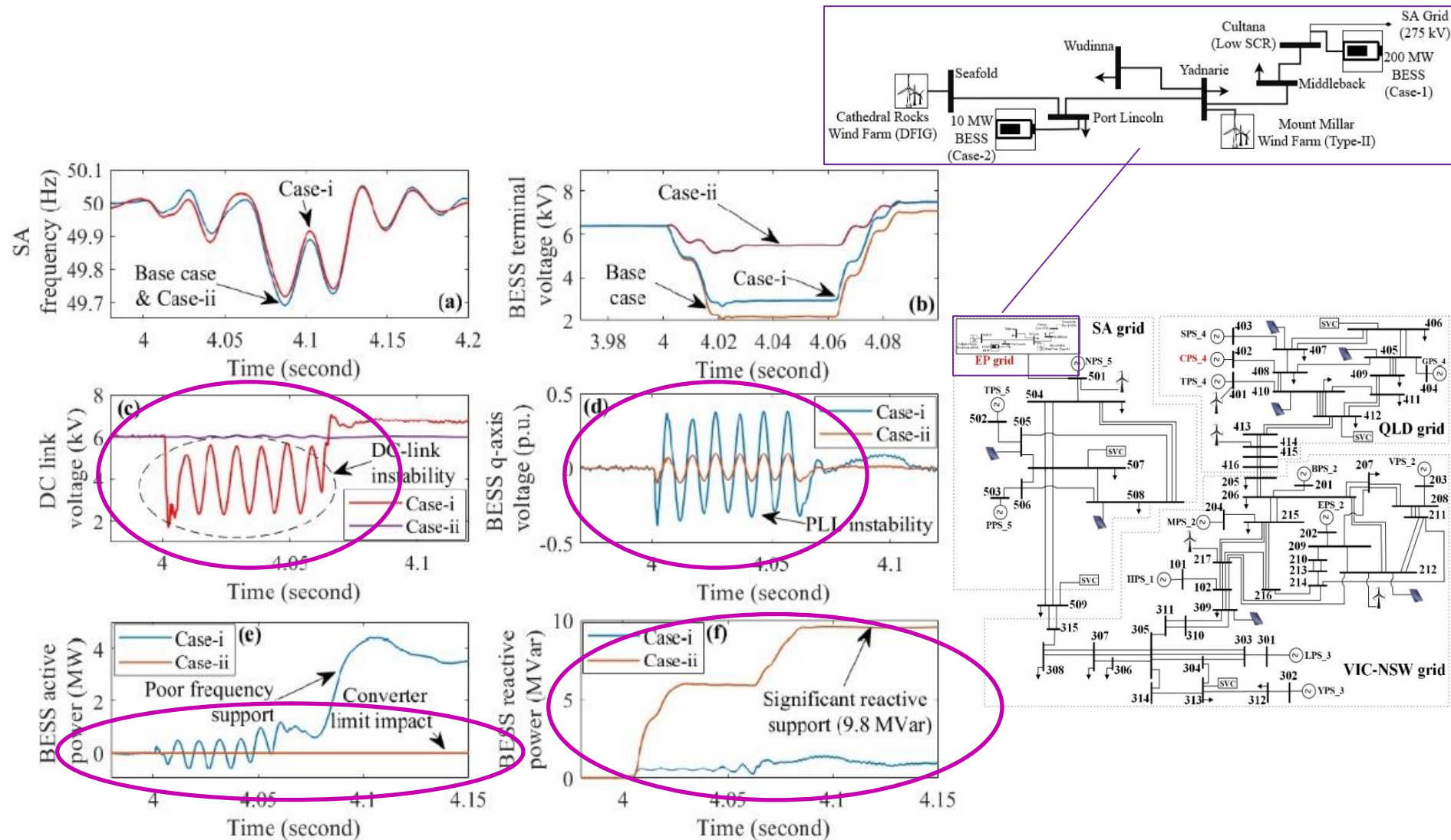
Why are these gas generators operating with these market prices?



What is the risk of operating with high voltages?

Source: AEMO and OpenNEM

Active-reactive power interaction in weak grids



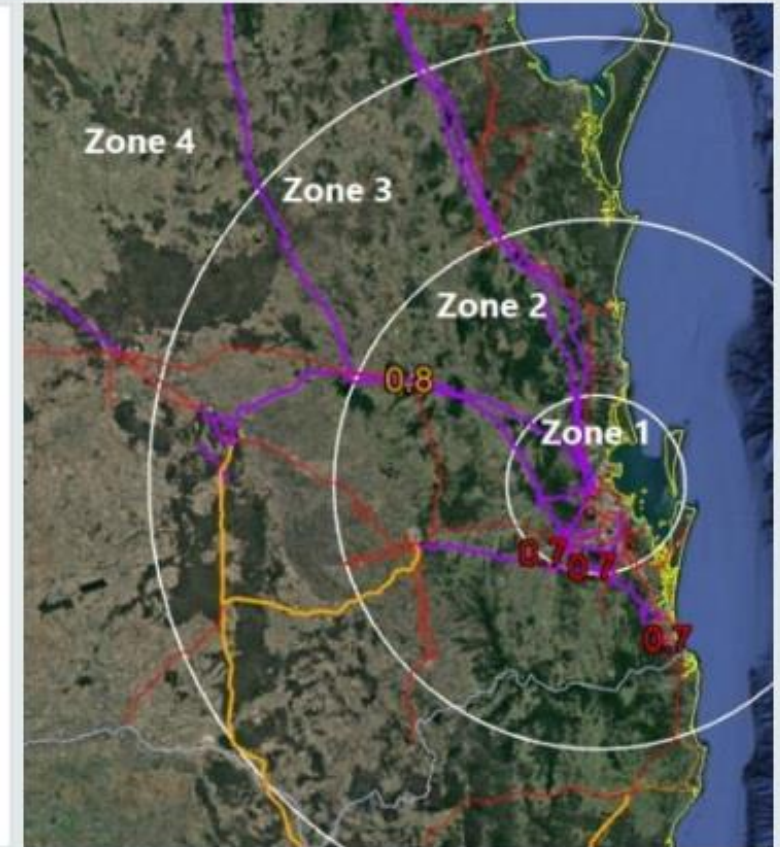
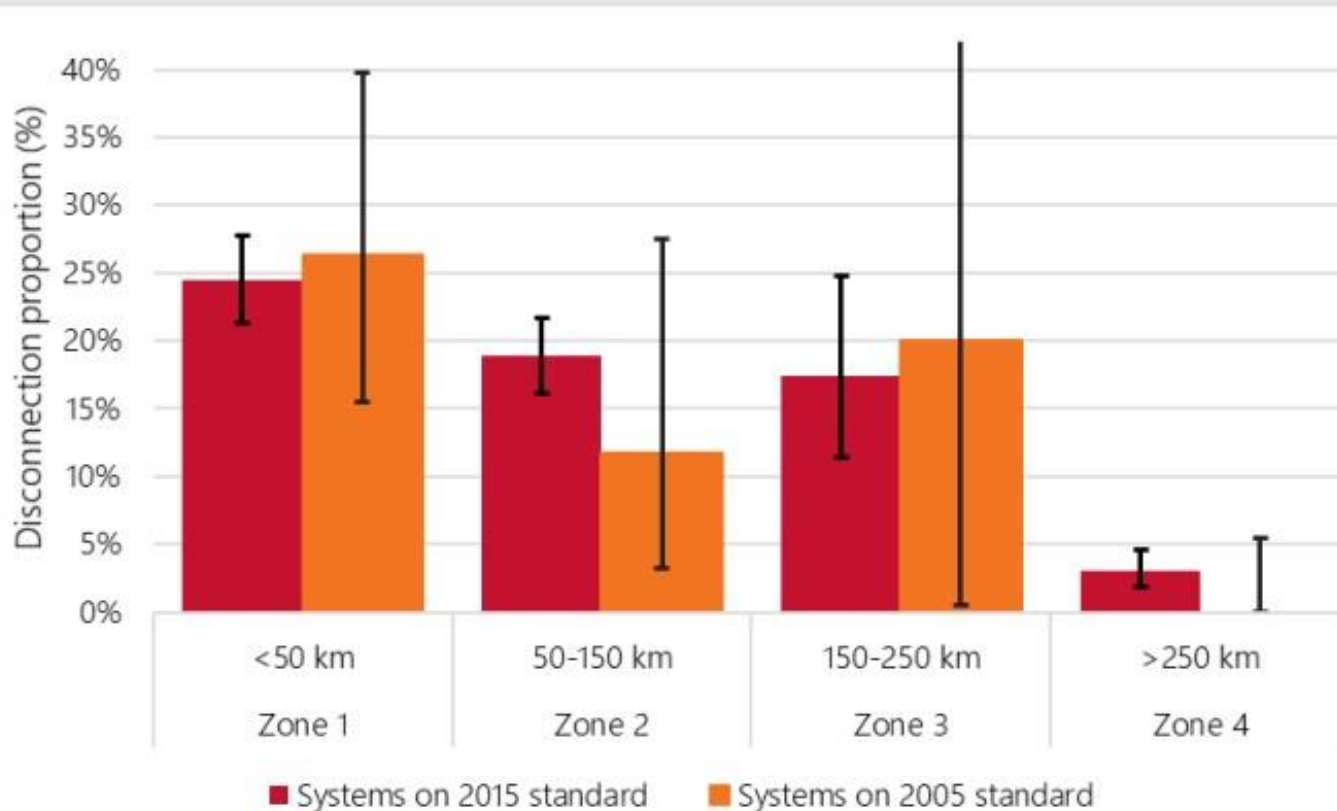
M. Ghazavi, O Gomis-Bellmunt, P. Mancarella, "Simultaneous Provision of Dynamic Active and Reactive Power Response from Utility-scale Battery Energy Storage Systems in Weak Grids", *IEEE Transactions on Power Systems*, 2021

M. Ghazavi Dozein, B. Pal, P. Mancarella, "Dynamics of Inverter-Based Resources in Weak Distribution Grids", *IEEE Transactions on Power Systems*, 2022

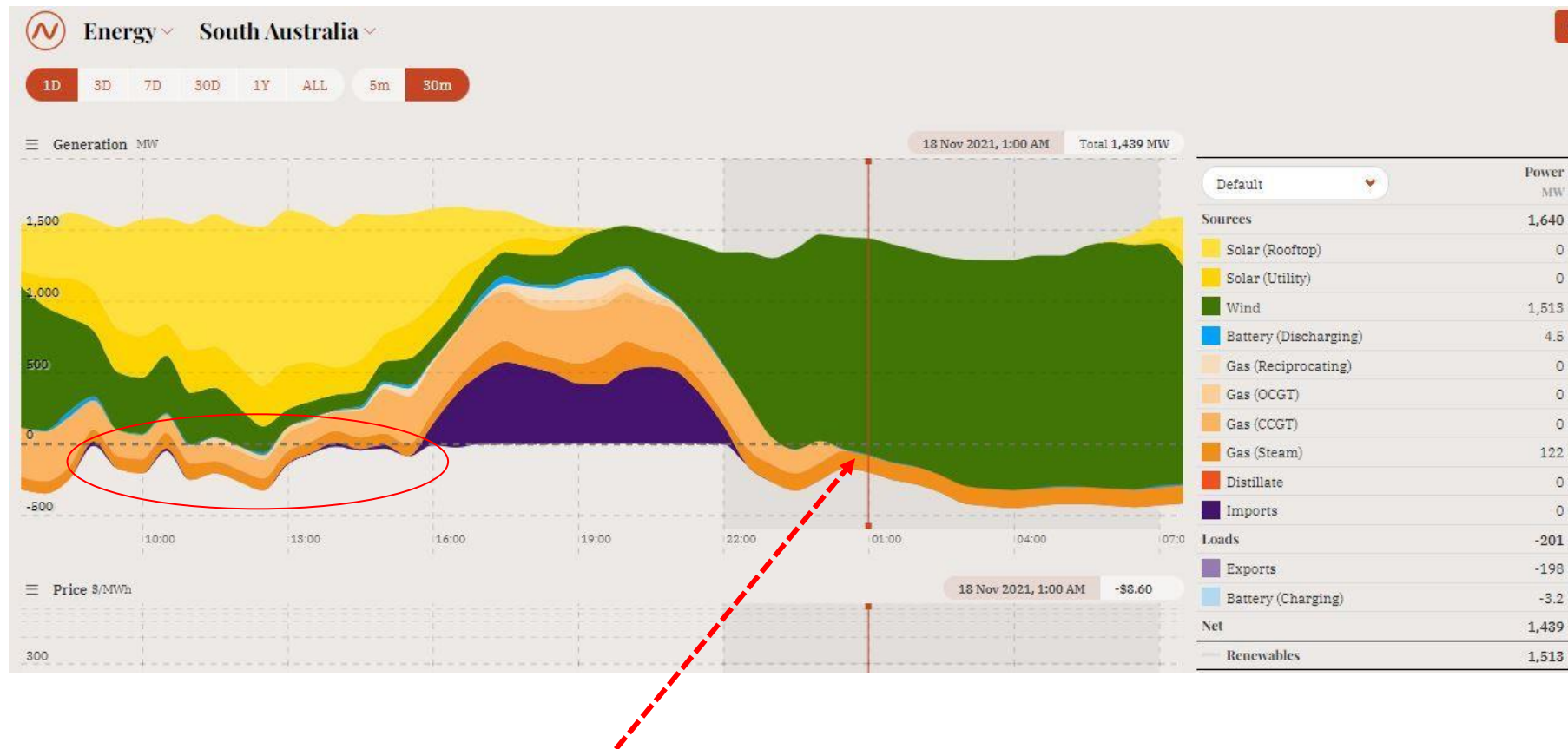
Sympathetic DER tripping: November 2019 event in Queensland

180 MW-310 MW PV disconnection following a fault

disconnections by distance from fault location in Queensland



Resorting to old school technologies: Effect of synchronous compensators



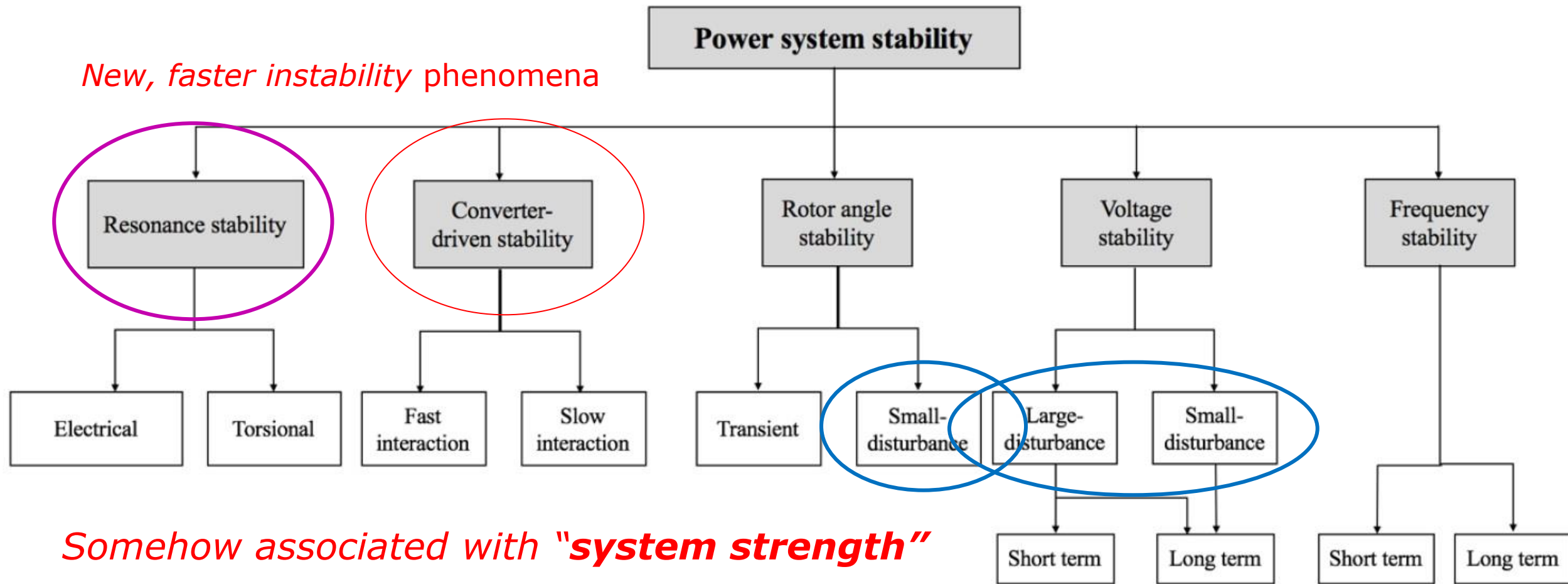
Source: <https://reneweconomy.com.au/south-australia-sets-stunning-new-benchmark-as-gas-output-halved-and-wind-at-record-highs/>

Henry Ford with his “horseless CAR-riage”



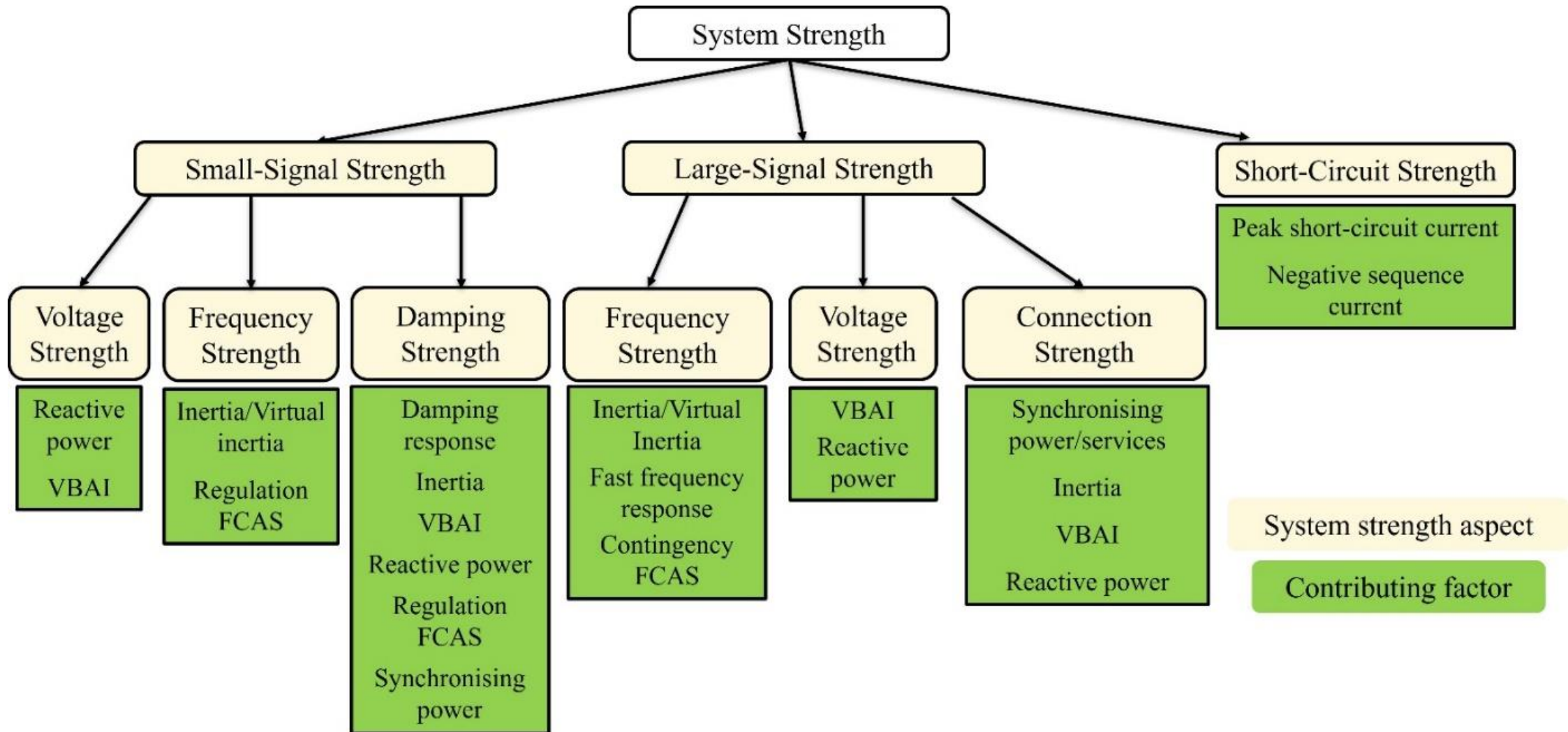
Pic sourced from the internet

Power system stability classification



IEEE Power System Dynamic Performance Committee, "Task Force on stability definitions and characterization of dynamic behaviour in systems with high penetration of power electronic interfaced technologies," 2020.

But what is system strength?



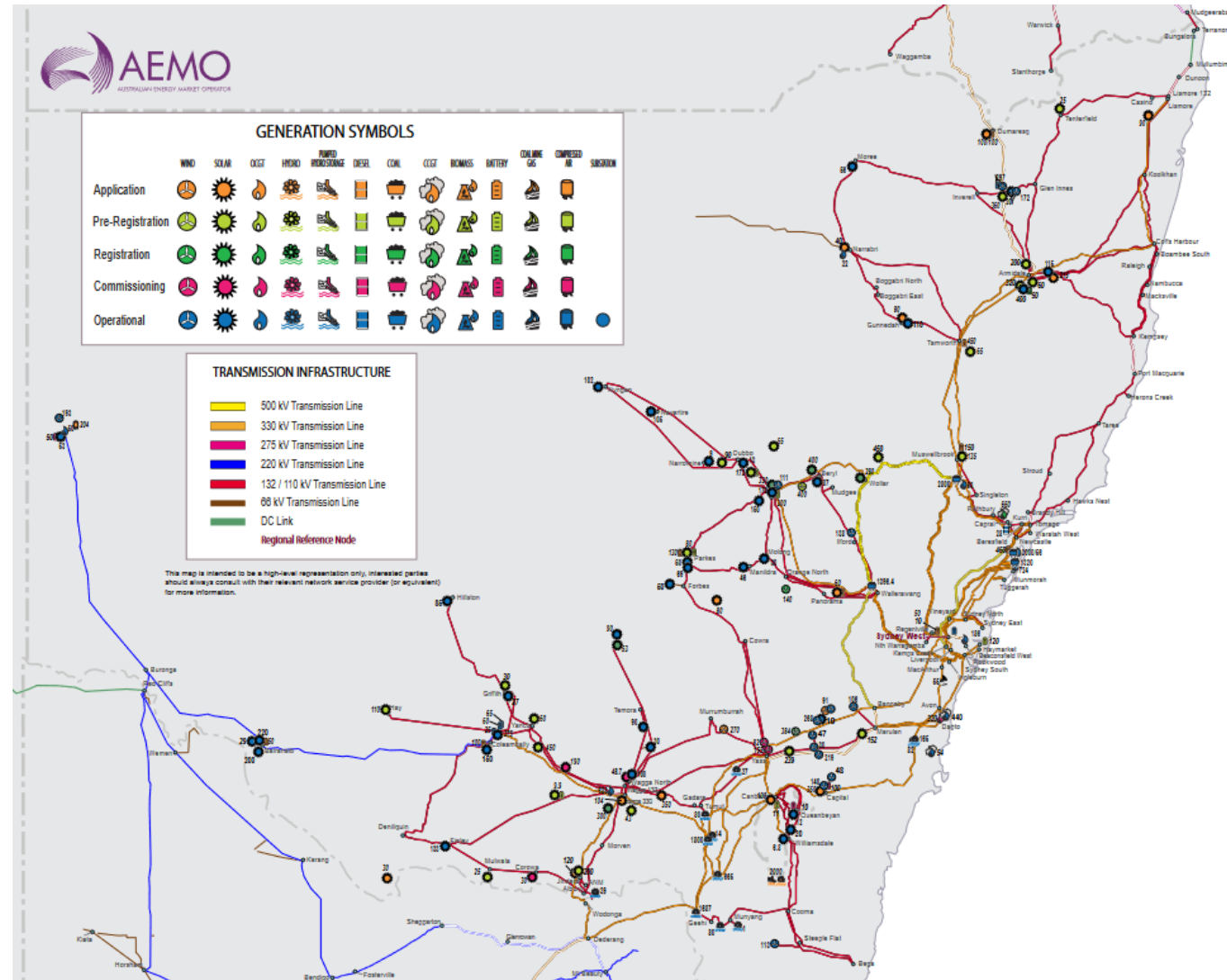
New technology options to deliver system strength products

IBR Type		Contributing Factors to System Strength								
		Reactive power	VBAI	Virtual inertia	FFR	Cont. FCAS	Regulation FCAS	Peak current/negative component current	Damping	Synchronizing power/services
Grid following	Legacy									
	Enhanced									
Grid forming	Type 1									
	Type 2									
	Type 3									
	Type 4									

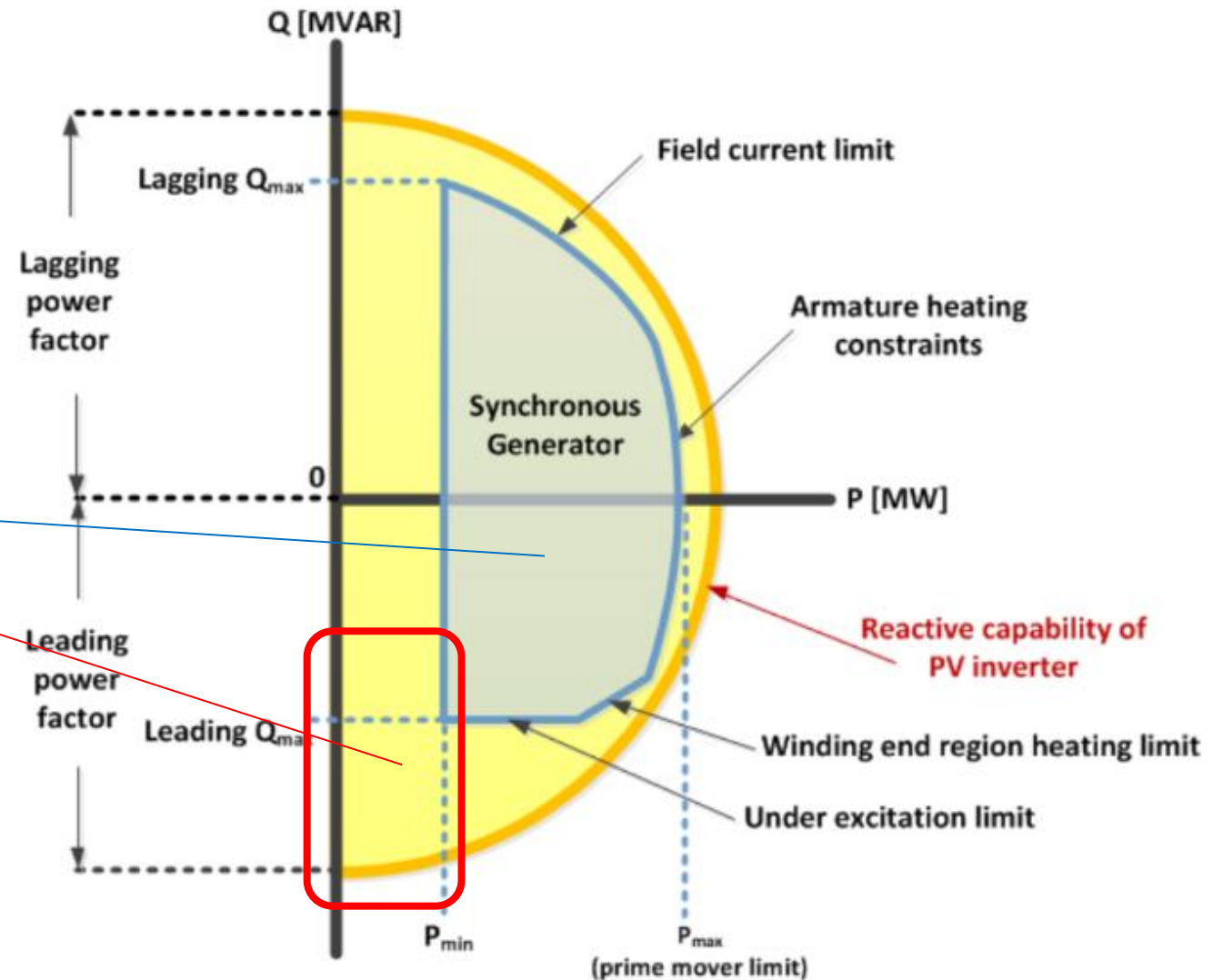
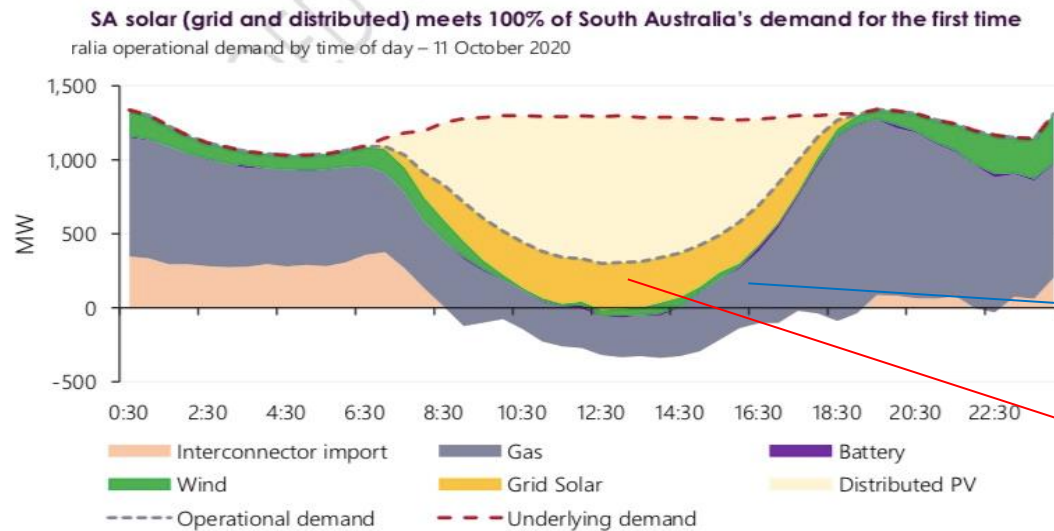
*And **network reinforcement** can enhance several forms of system strength too!*

So, it's not only about synchronous machines...

Can renewables provide voltage support?



Do we *really* need those gas plants on?

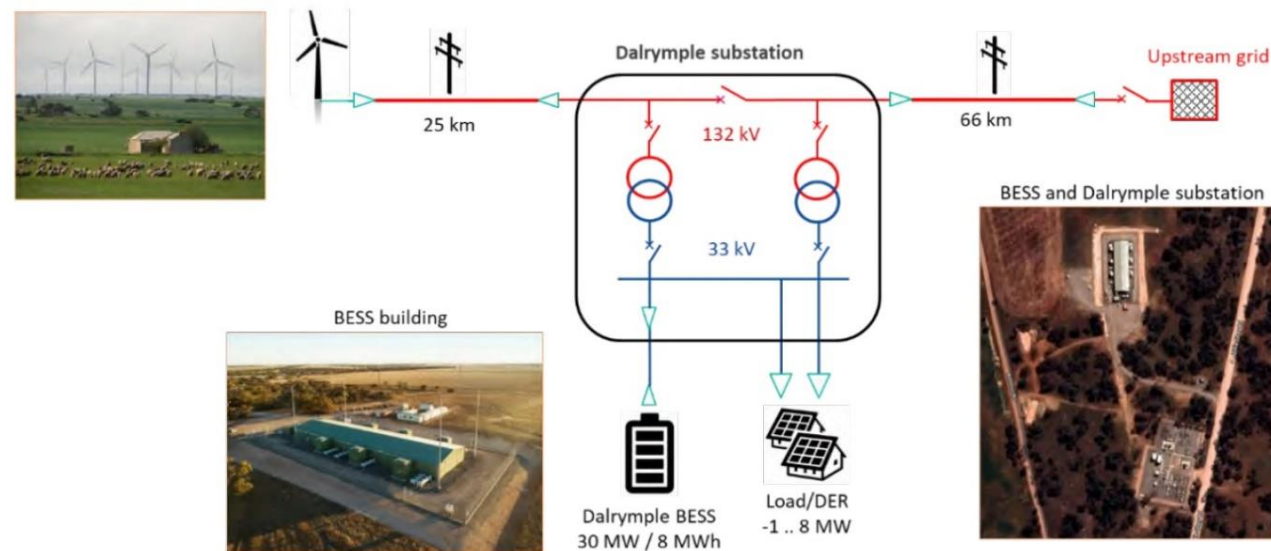


How about batteries?

Example: Dalrymple battery

- **30 MW/8 MWh** BESS
- Lithium-ion technology
- Connected to the SA grid via a 33 kV/132 kV transformer
- Supplies average local demand of 3 MW, 8 MW peak
- Equipped with **virtual synchronous machine** control with converter overloading capability of 2 pu for 2 seconds

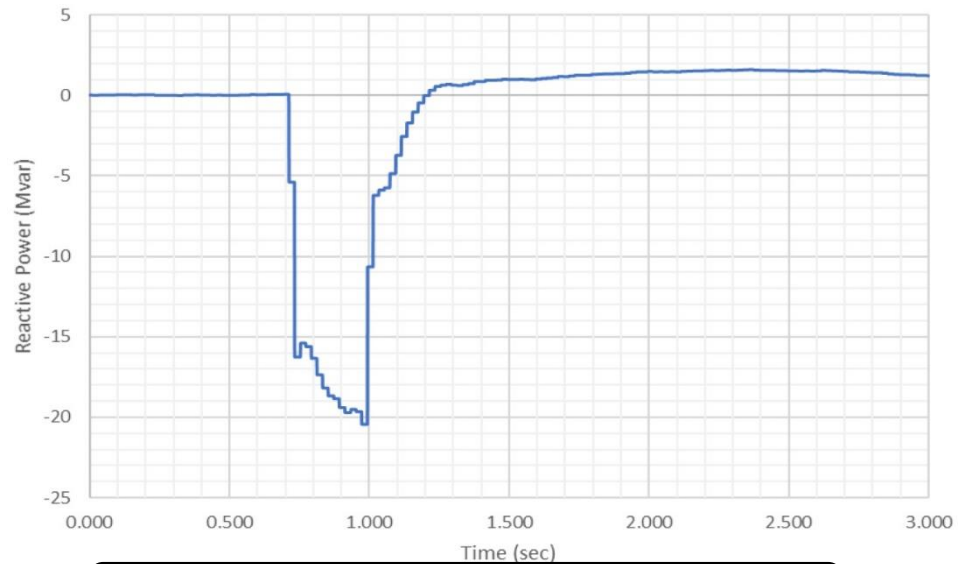
Simplified single-line diagram of the York Peninsula in South Australia



ElectraNet, "ESCRI-SA battery storage project operational report#3, August 2020.

From “grid following” to “grid forming”

Dalrymple battery

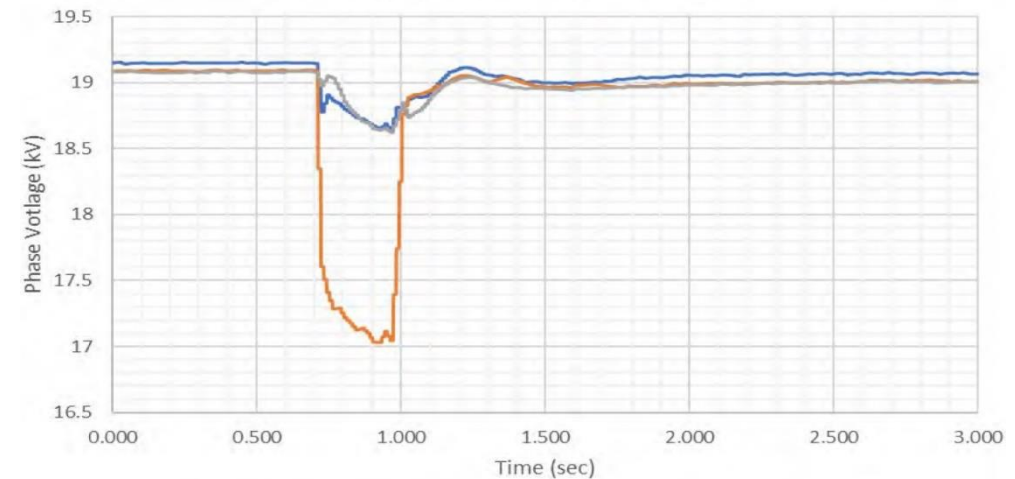


Battery reactive power response

Single-phase-to-ground
fault on January 13, 2020

Battery terminal voltage dynamics

Dalrymple 33 kV Phase Voltage

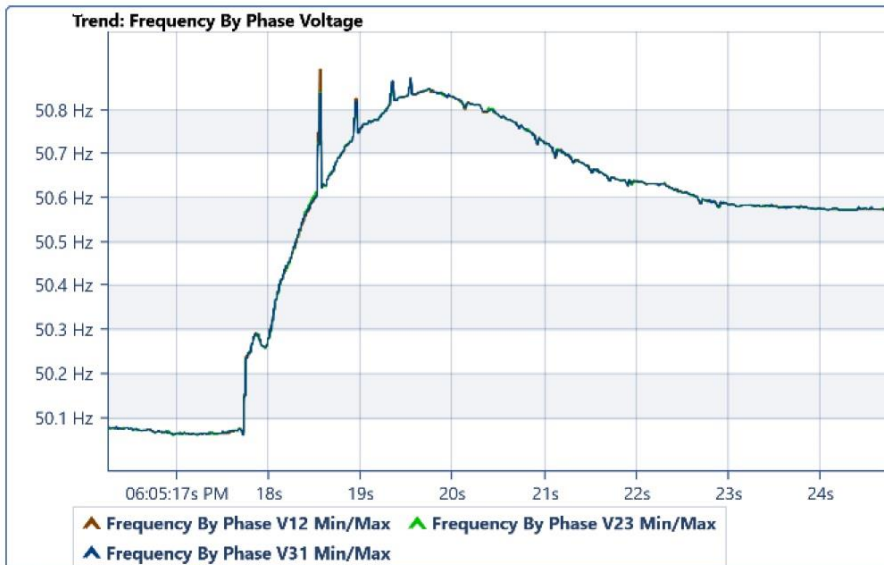


ElectraNet,“ ESCRI-SA battery storage project operational report#3, August 2020.

The future emulates the past: "Virtual synchronous machine"

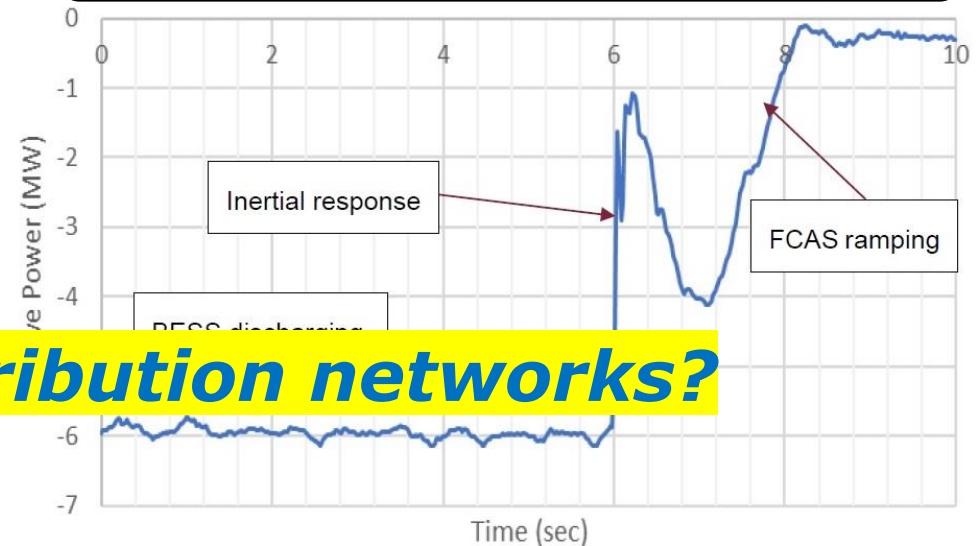
The 30 MW Dalrymple battery

SA frequency dynamics following the separation event



Virtual inertia response following the SA separation, November 16, 2019

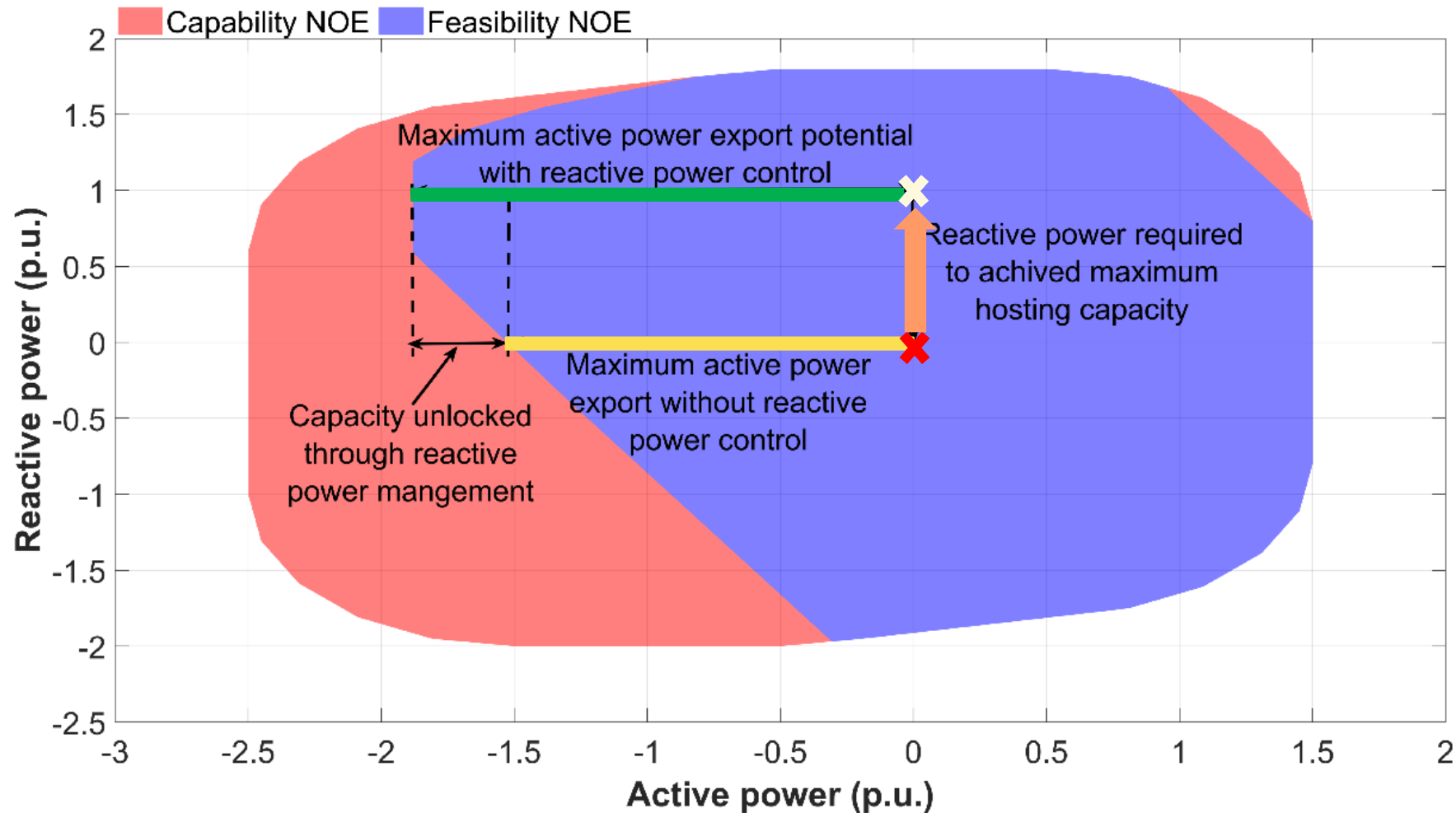
Dynamic behaviour of the Dalrymple battery during the event



How about distribution networks?

S. Cherevatsky *et. al.*, "Grid forming energy storage system addresses challenges of grids with high penetration of renewables (A case study)," 2020 CIGRE Paris session, pp. 1-13, 2020

Integrated provision of system and local services from DER



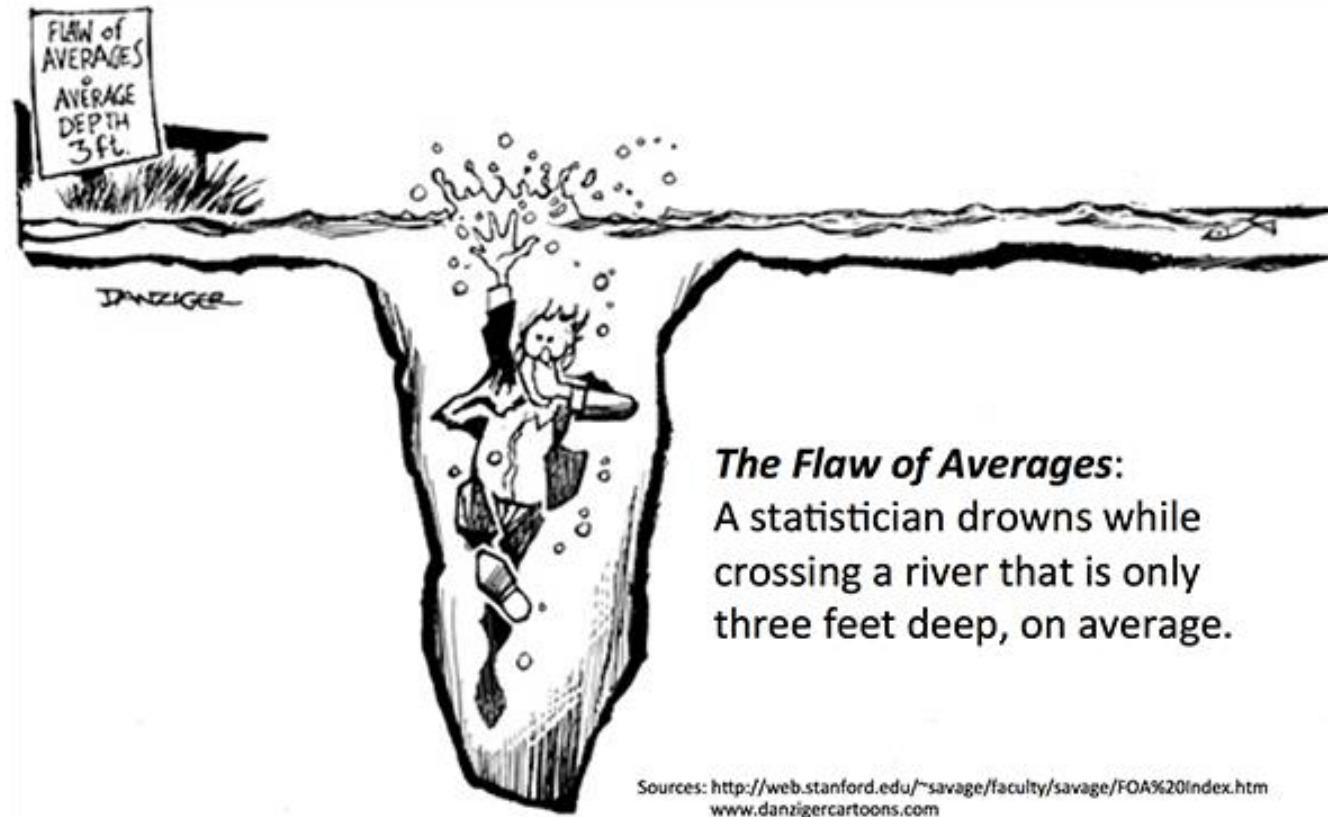
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Power system resilience and grid fragility

What is an extreme event in a fragile grid?



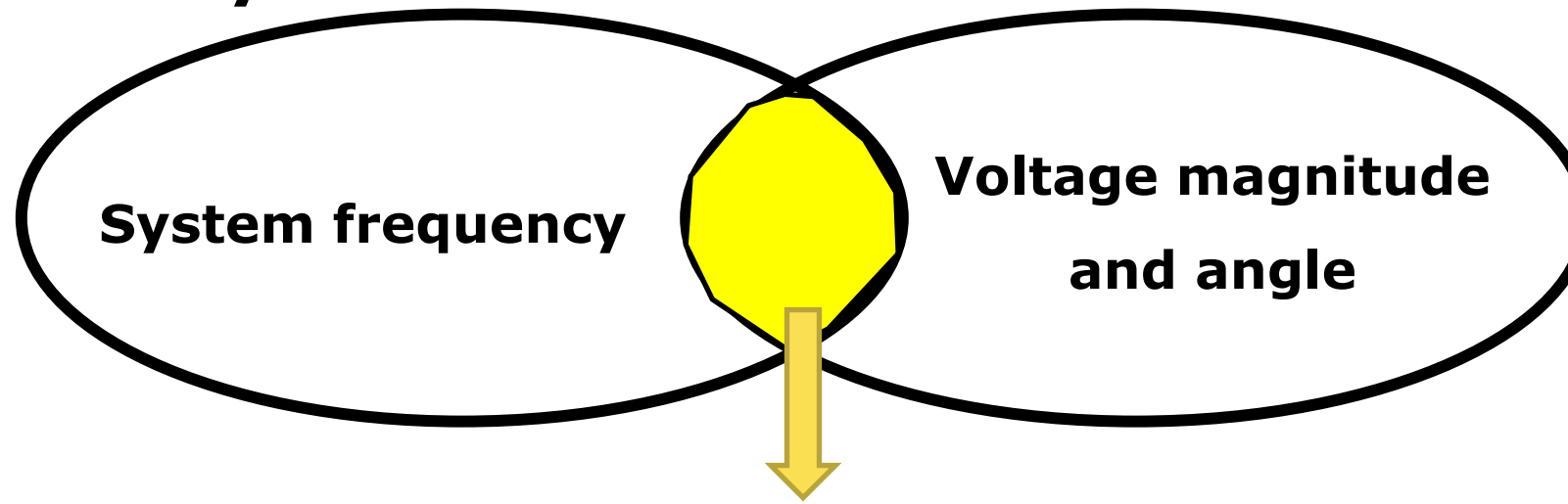
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J. Eggleston, C. Zuur, P. Mancarella, "From security to resilience: technical and regulatory options to manage extreme events in low-carbon grids", *IEEE Power & Energy Magazine*, Sept/Oct 2021

Fragility challenges in weak grids

Frequency Stability

System strength

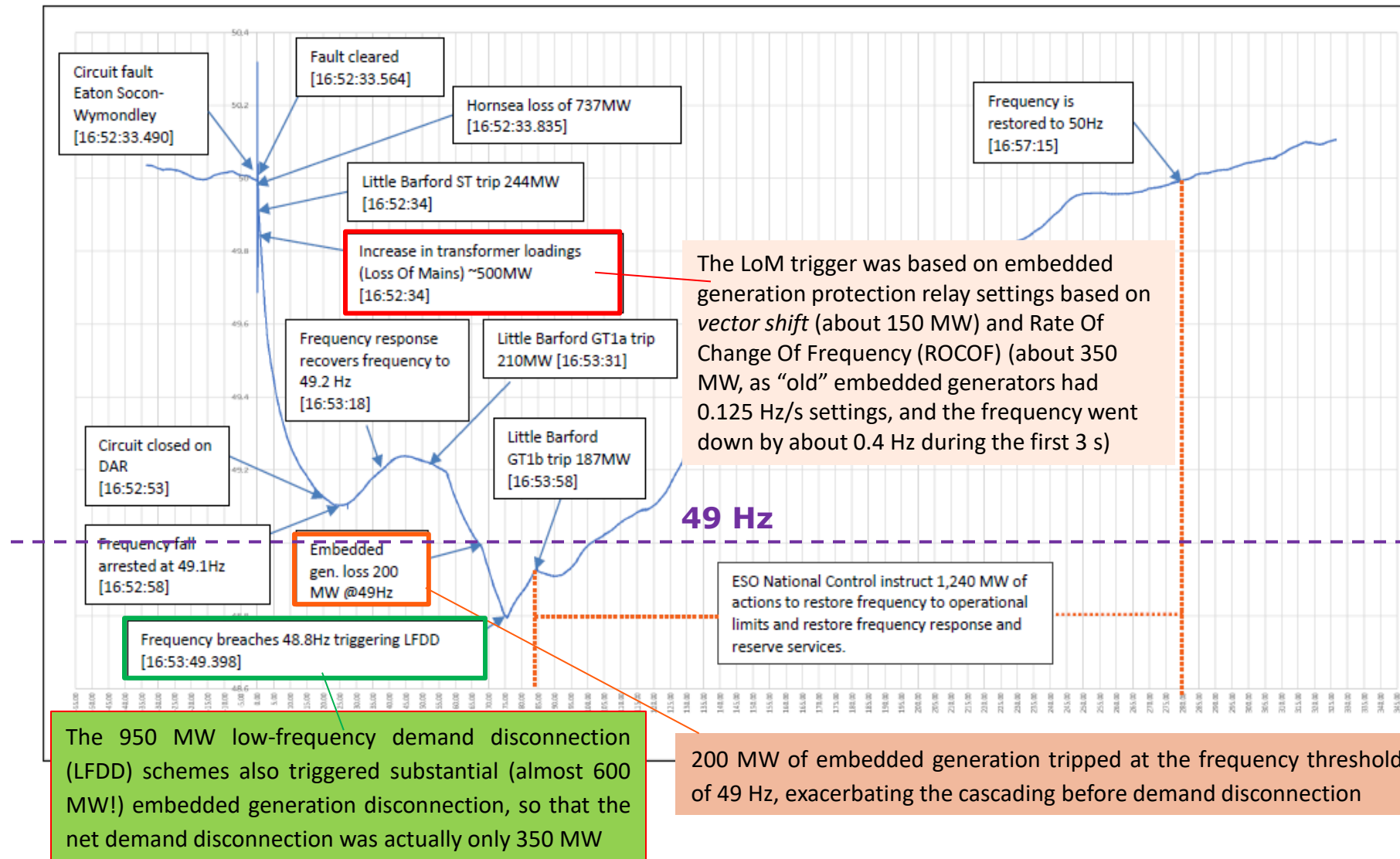


IBR control instability, small-signal instability

Lack of reactive power control, voltage instability

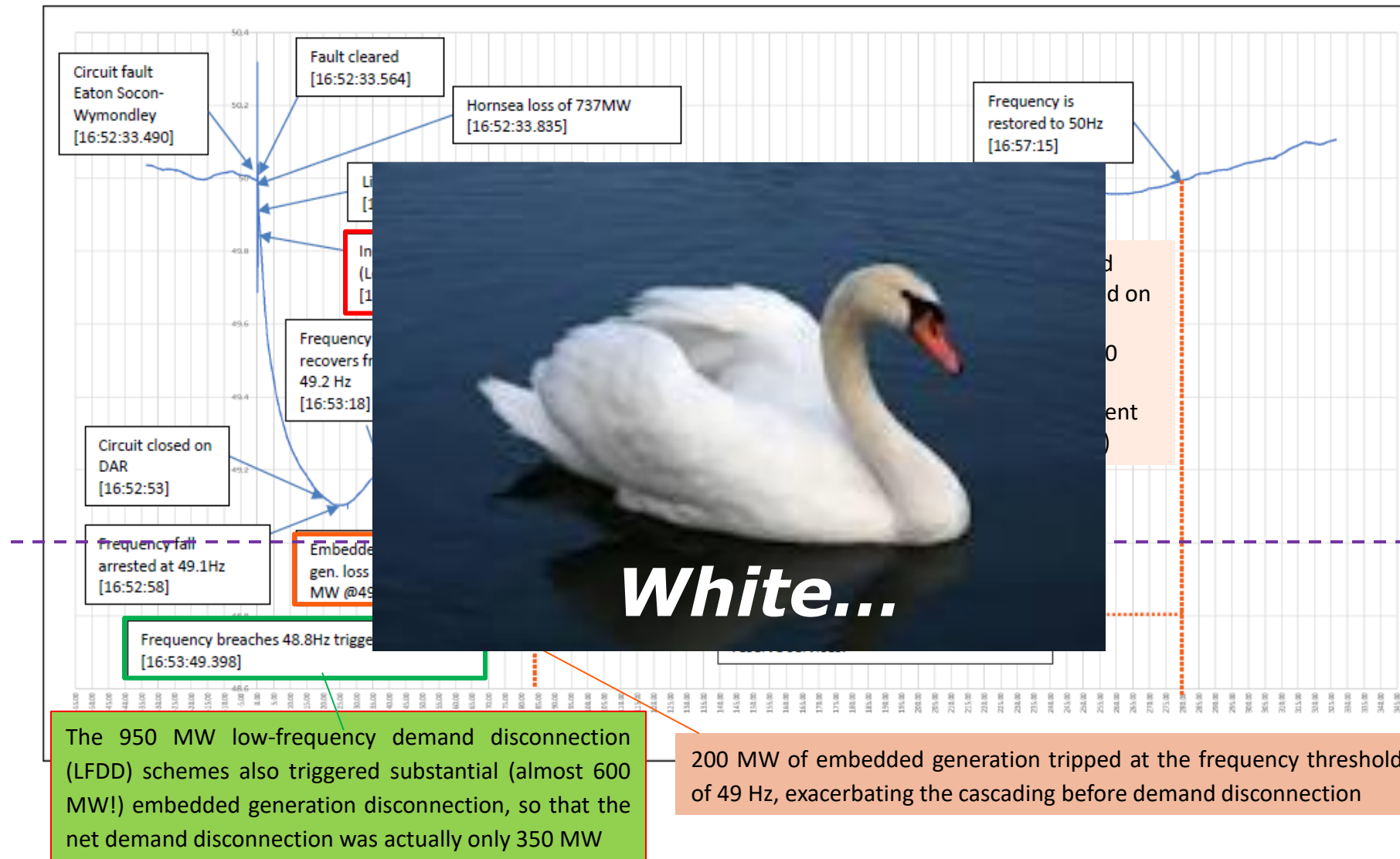
Cascading events (frequency and angle instability)

Grid fragility example: demand disconnection event, UK, 09/08/19



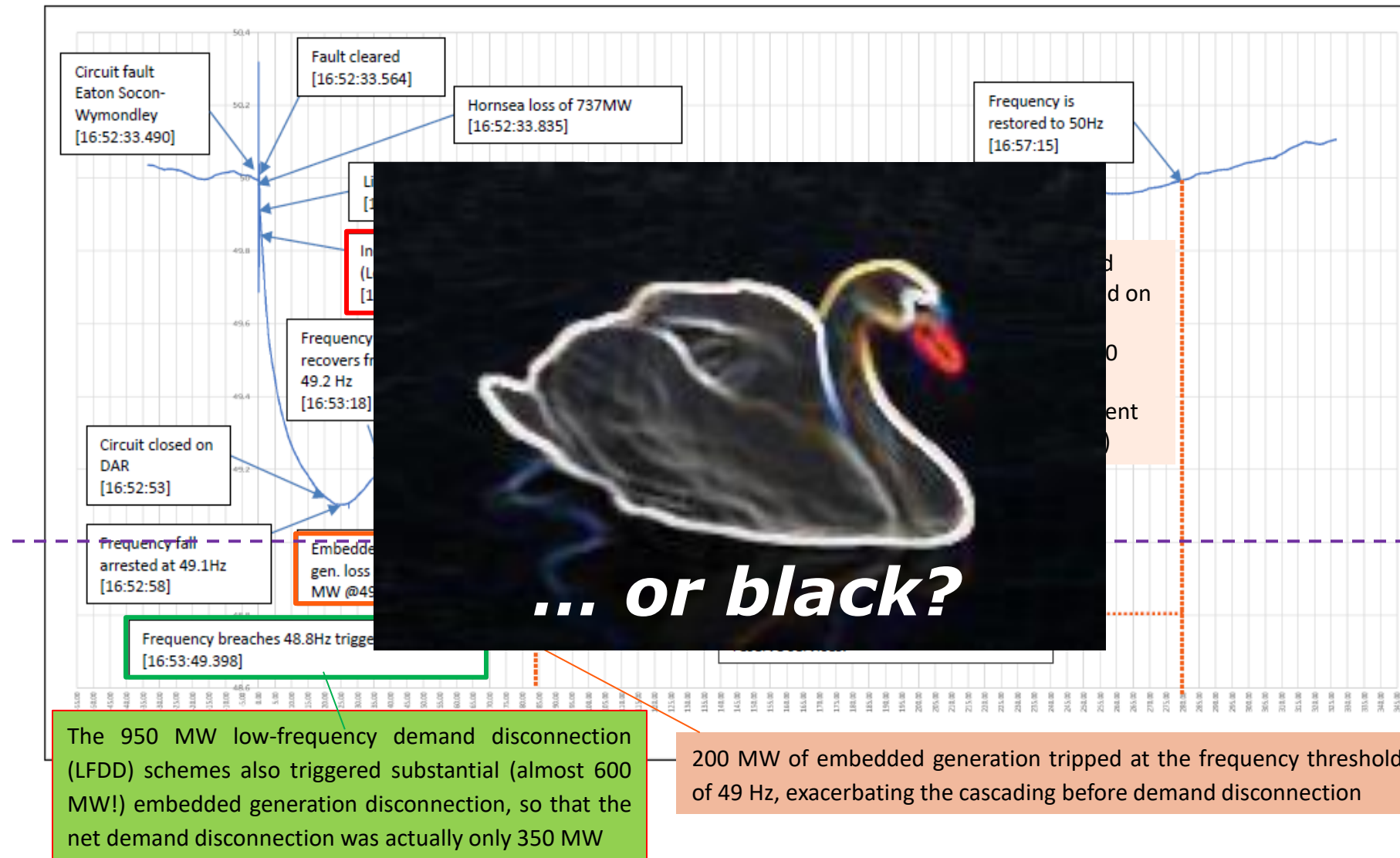
Source: UK National Grid ESO, “Technical report on the events of 9 August 2019”, https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/system/files/docs/2019/09/eso_technical_report_-_final.pdf

Grid fragility example: demand disconnection event, UK, 09/08/19



Source: UK National Grid ESO, "Technical report on the events of 9 August 2019", https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/system/files/docs/2019/09/eso_technical_report_-_final.pdf

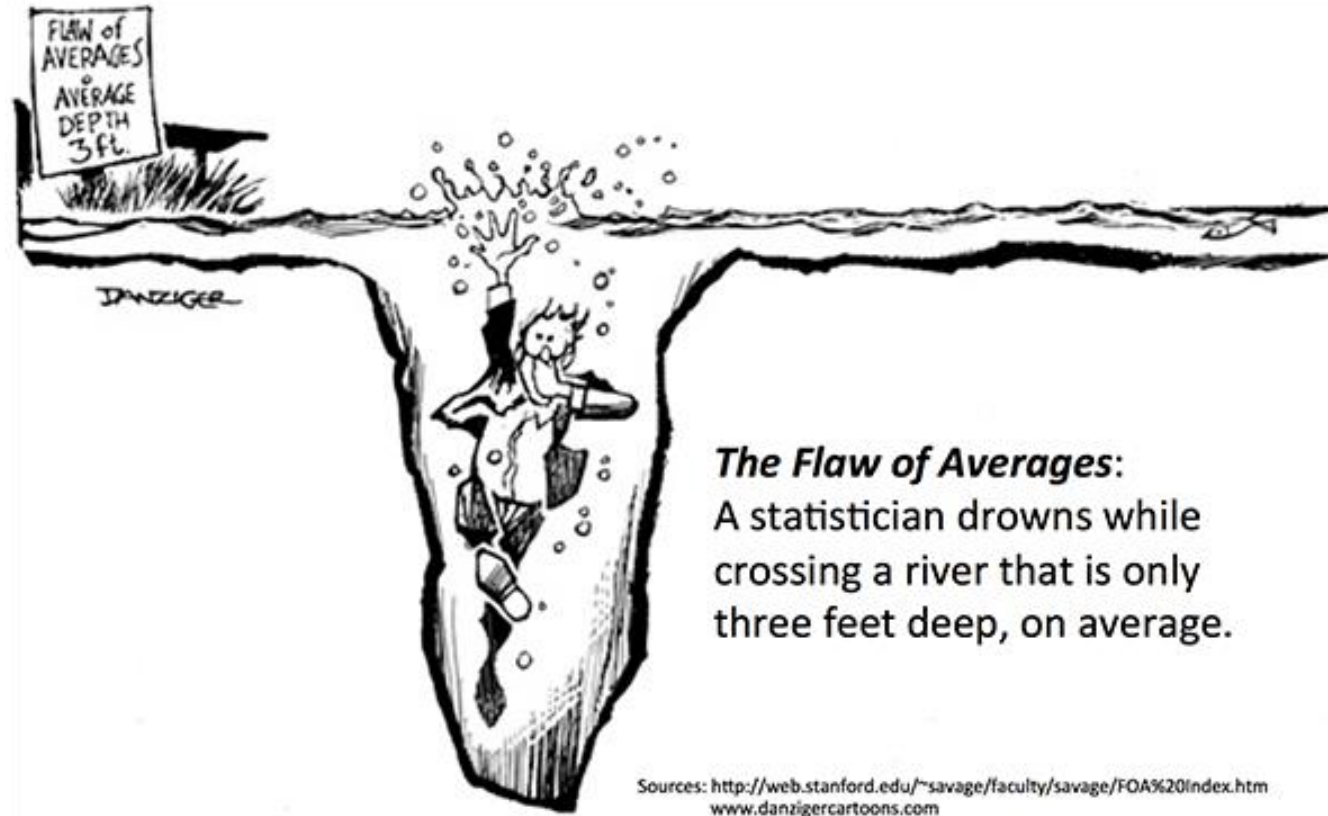
Grid fragility example: demand disconnection event, UK, 09/08/19



Source: UK National Grid ESO, "Technical report on the events of 9 August 2019", https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/system/files/docs/2019/09/eso_technical_report_-_final.pdf

Power system resilience and grid fragility

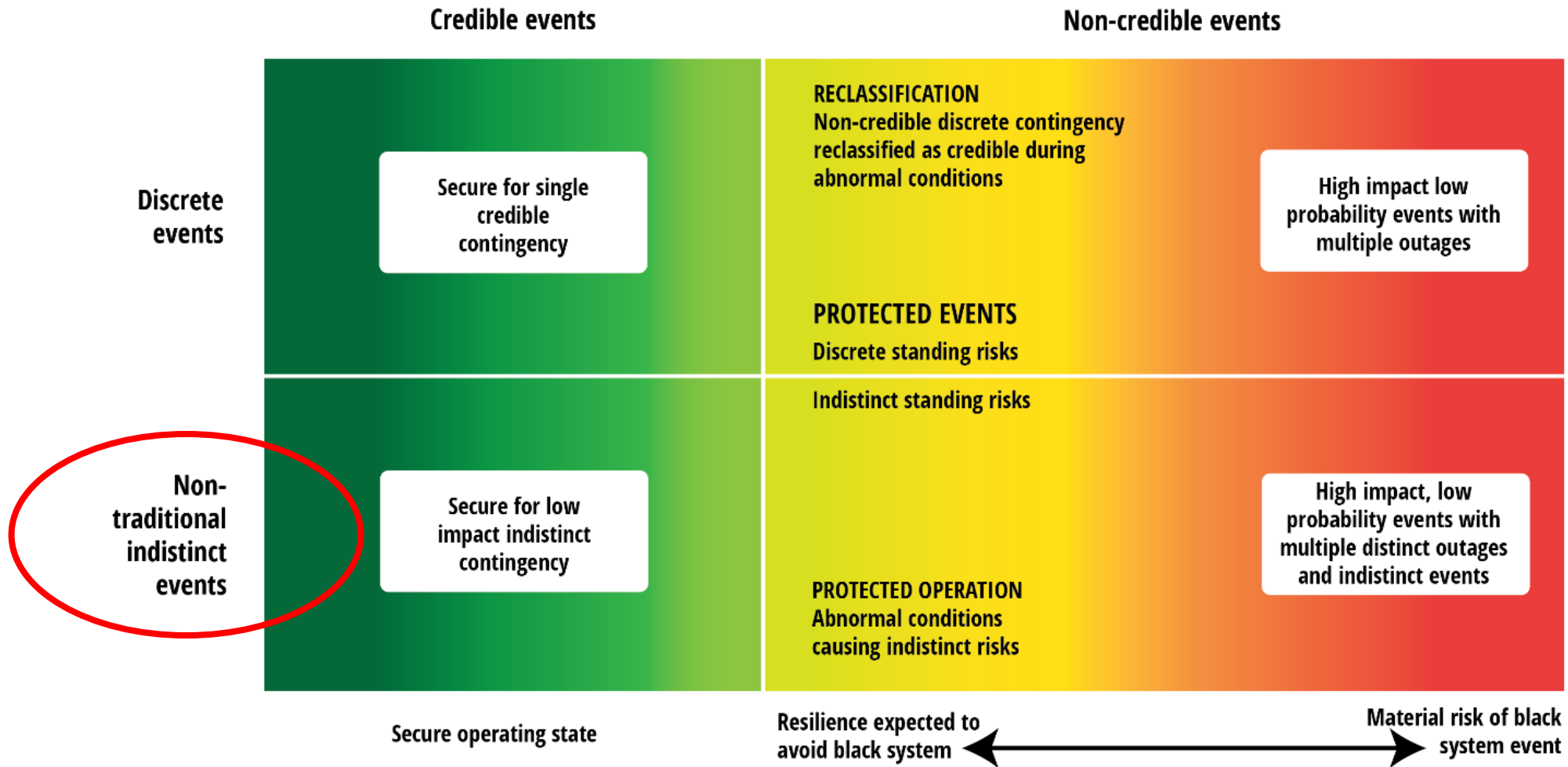
In a fragile grid, security and resilience merge!



P. Mancarella, "Electricity grid fragility and resilience in a future net-zero carbon economy", *Oxford Energy Forum – Electricity Networks in a Net-Zero-Carbon Economy*, 124, pages 41-45, Sept 2020

J. Eggleston, C. Zuur, P. Mancarella, "From security to resilience: technical and regulatory options to manage extreme events in low-carbon grids", *IEEE Power & Energy Magazine*, Sept/Oct 2021

Categorisation of new, “resilience” events: moving beyond *security*



Grid fragility example: **Iberian peninsula blackout, 28 April 2025**



What should be done moving forward?

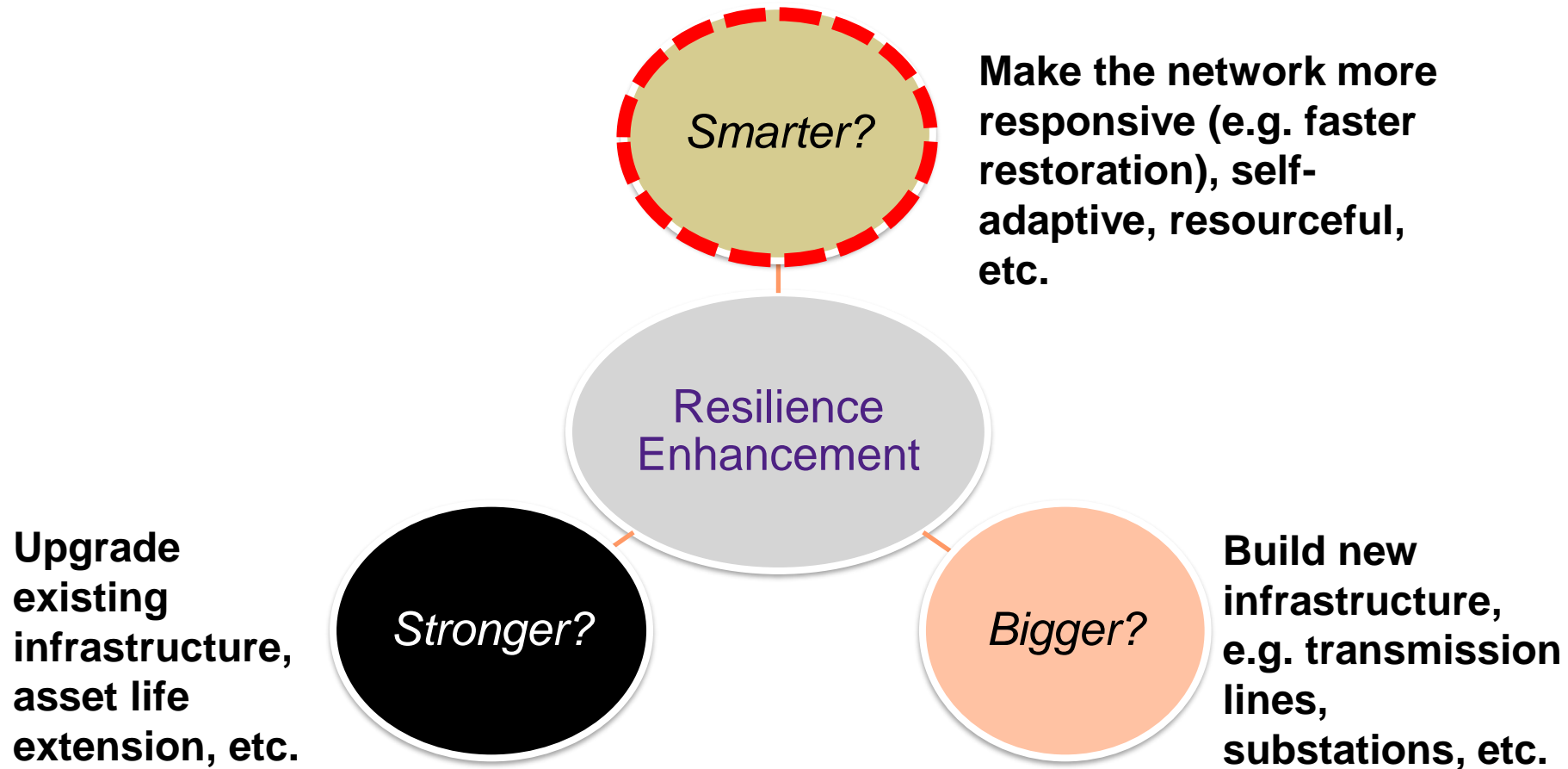
Will more *redundancy* enhance reliability (and resilience)?

Why Investments Do Not Prevent Blackouts

The idea that increasing the capacity of the transmission network should improve the security of the system and reduce the probability of blackouts is intuitively appealing. However, this intuition does not withstand scrutiny.

Daniel Kirschen and Goran Strbac

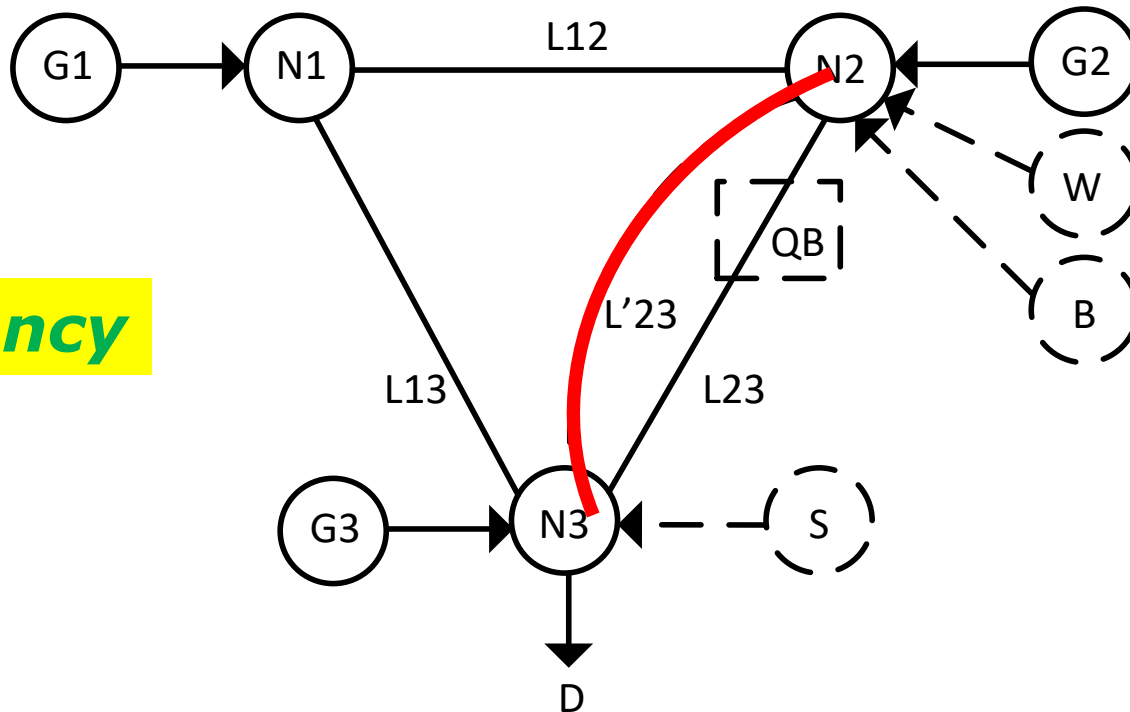
Planning for resilience: The *Resilience Trilemma*



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Planning for the new grid

Redundancy

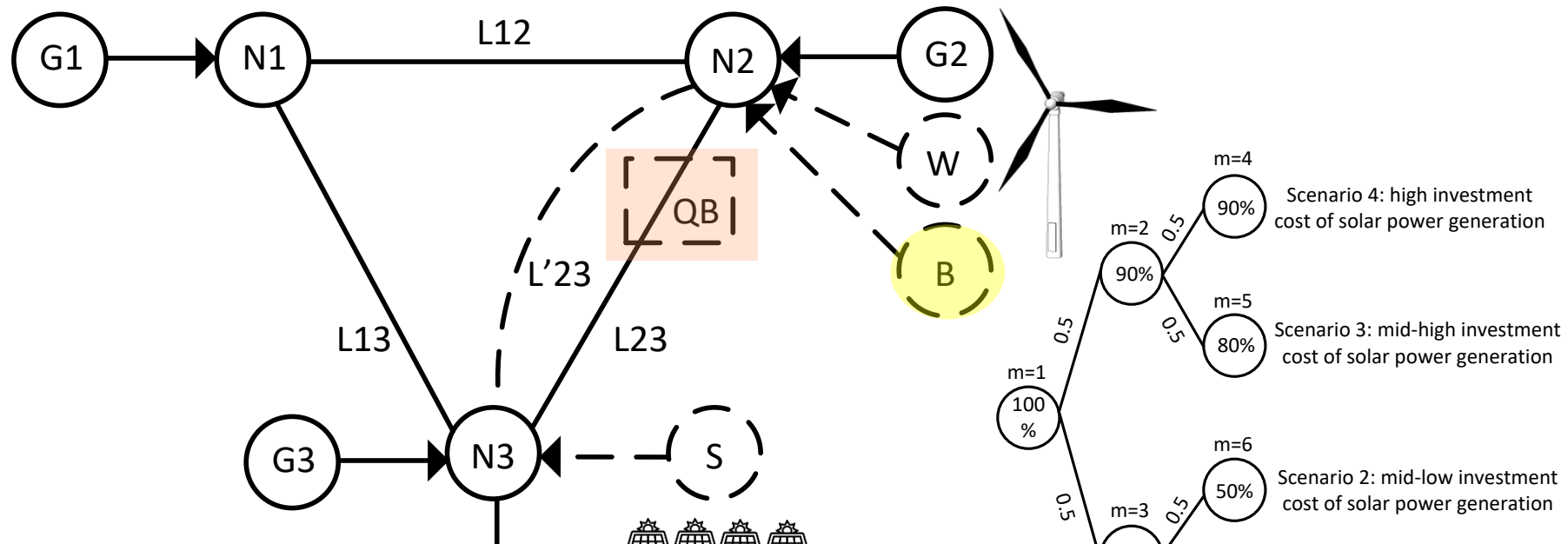


R. Moreno, A. Street, J.M. Arroyo, and P. Mancarella, "Planning Low-Carbon Electricity Systems under Uncertainty Considering Operational Flexibility and Smart Grid Technologies", *Philosophical Trans. Royal Society A*, June 2017

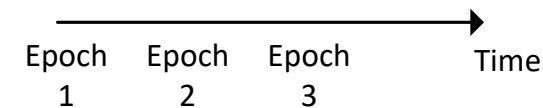
B. Moya, *et al.*, "Uncertainty representation in investment planning of low-carbon power systems", *Electric Power Systems Research*, Volume 212, Nov. 2022, 108470

Planning for the new grid

*Need to think in terms of **cost-value-risk analysis!***



*Need to **plan for "expected" cascading!***

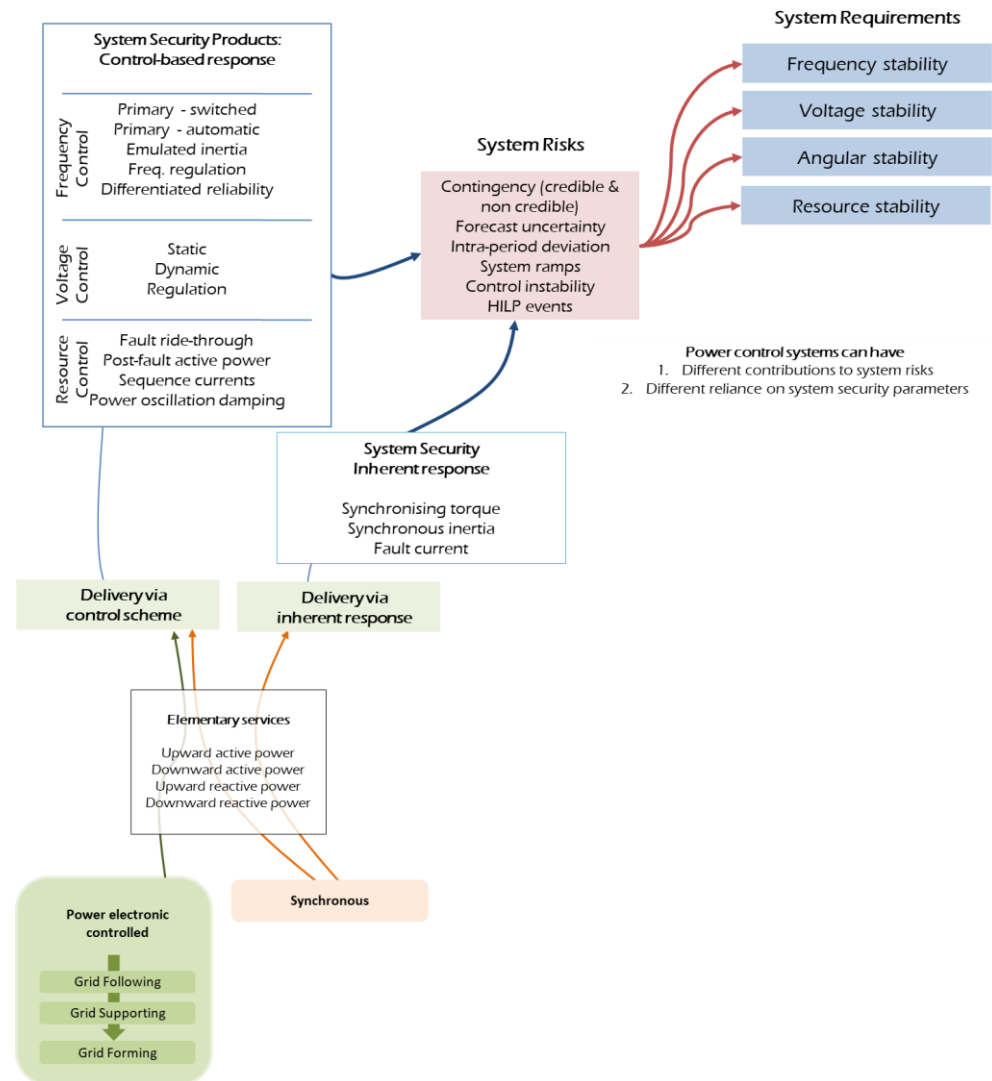


B.V. Venkatasubramanian, *et al.*, "Investment planning framework for mitigating cascading failures", *Electric Power Systems Research*, Volume 234, September 2024

R. Moreno, A. Street, J.M. Arroyo, and P. Mancarella, "Planning Low-Carbon Electricity Systems under Uncertainty Considering Operational Flexibility and Smart Grid Technologies", *Philosophical Trans. Royal Society A*, June 2017

B. Moya, *et al.*, "Uncertainty representation in investment planning of low-carbon power systems", *Electric Power Systems Research*, Volume 212, Nov. 2022, 108470

Key starting point: designing new markets for the new physics...



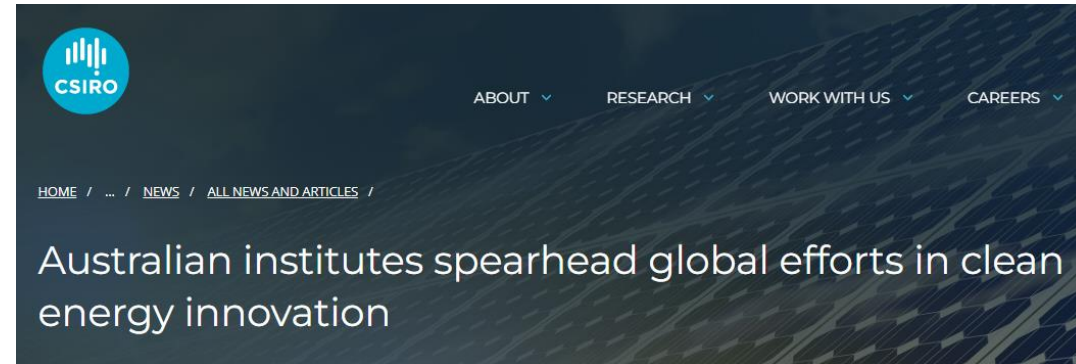
US-UK-Australia NSF Global Centre on Climate Change and Clean Energy

Electric Power Innovation for a Carbon-free Society (EPICS)

New Global Research Centre to provide EPIC
clean energy boost



The new Electric Power Innovation for a Carbon-Free Society (EPICS) Centre will address challenges in clean energy production and storage.



Interested in joining?

We are hiring! 😊

My “Vuelta a Espana”

- Barcelona (UPC), Wednesday 28th May
 - **Security, Reliability and Resilience in Low-carbon Power Systems**
- Madrid (Comillas), Tuesday 3rd June
 - **Economics, markets and regulation for new essential system services: first principles and practical experiences**
- Ciudad Real (UCLM), Thursday 5th June
 - **Integrated planning of transmission and distribution systems**
- Sevilla (USE), Monday 9th June
 - **Running a net-zero grid in 2025: experiences from the Australian “real-world lab”**
- Malaga (UM), Thursday 12th June
 - **Utility-scale and distributed batteries in renewables-dominated power systems: experiences and lessons learnt from Australia**
- Bilbao (UPV/EHU) Thursday 19th June
 - **Security, Reliability and Resilience in Low-carbon Power Systems**

Acknowledgements

- C4NET for the "*ESP-V*" project
- CSIRO and AEMO for the "*Planning*" topic as part of the GPST project stream
- My research team!

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Thank you!
Any question?



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Security, reliability and resilience in low-carbon power systems

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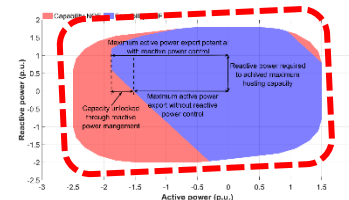
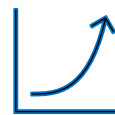
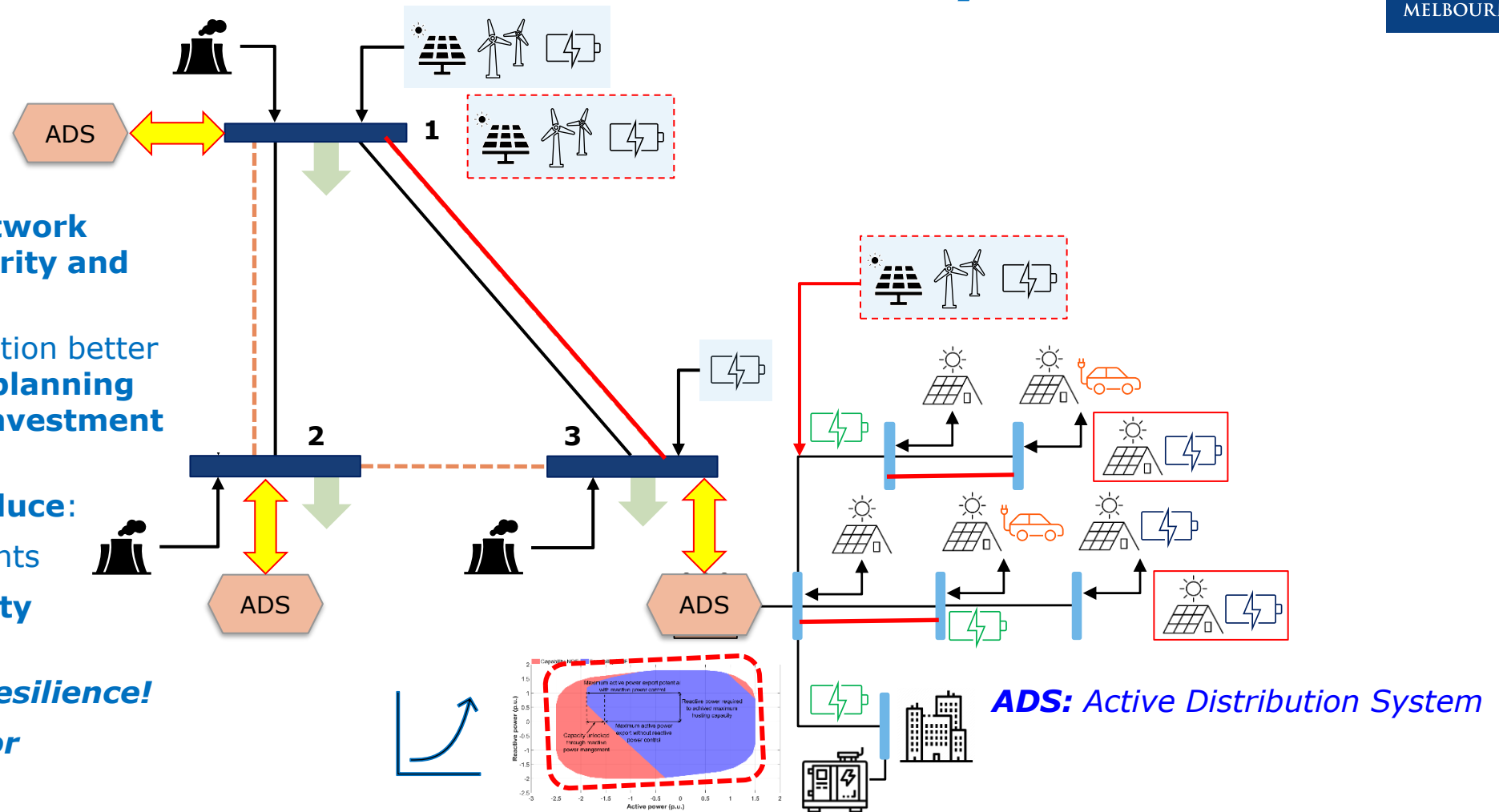
IEEE Power and Energy Society Distinguished Lecturer Program

“Vuelta a Espana” 2025

UPV/EHU School of Engineering, Bilbao, 19th June 2025

DER benefits across the whole system

- Orchestrated DER and network investment complementarity and synergy
- Benefits from DER orchestration better captured when considering **planning uncertainty** and network **investment risk**
- DER may systematically **reduce**:
 - investment requirements
 - investment uncertainty
→ *risk-hedge value*
- Greatly enhanced **system resilience**!
- Consistent with **planning for "expected" cascading**



B.V. Venkatasubramanian, et al., "Investment planning framework for mitigating cascading failures", *Electric Power Systems Research*, Volume 234, September 2024

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Optimal integrated system-DER design

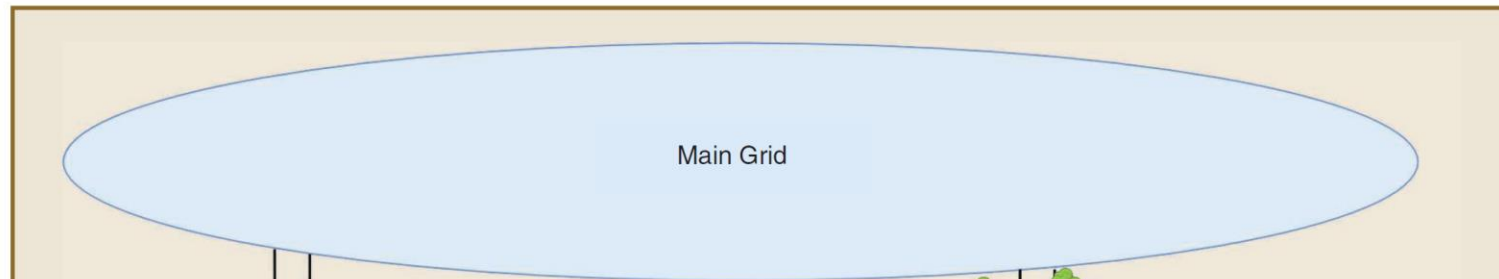


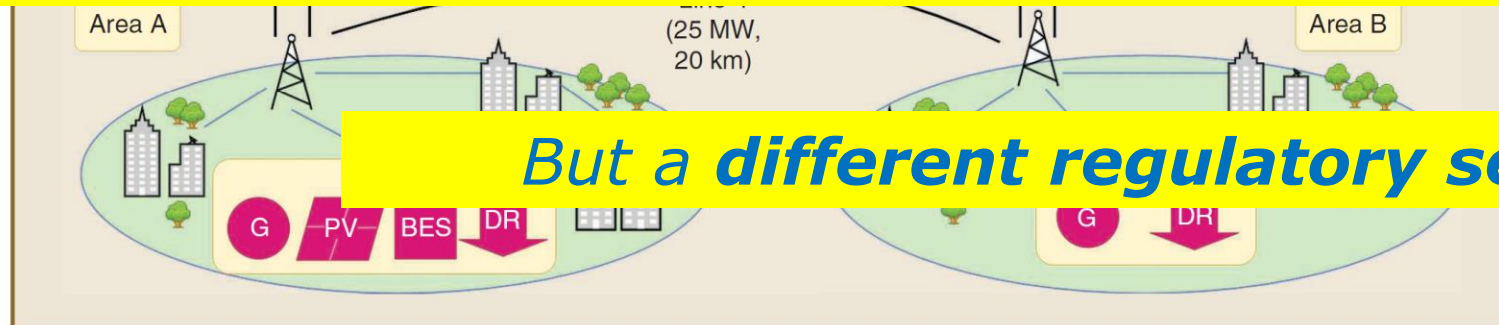
table 2. Results with costs in thousand U.S. dollars (kUS\$) per year.

	Case A	Case A (Reevaluated)	Case B
Assets and measures	L1, L2, L5, L6, MG,	L1, L2, L5, L6, MG, DR	L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, PV, BES,

DER provide **insurance policy** against extreme events!

Can also provide value from day-by-day market operation

Change completely the network investment profile -> **less redundancy, smarter grid!**



Operational cost	32,850	33,115	21,901
cost			
Total cost	32,990	52,893	33,558

L: line; MG: mobile generator.

figure 8. The electricity network and DER candidates along with areas exposed to wildfires. BES: battery energy storage.

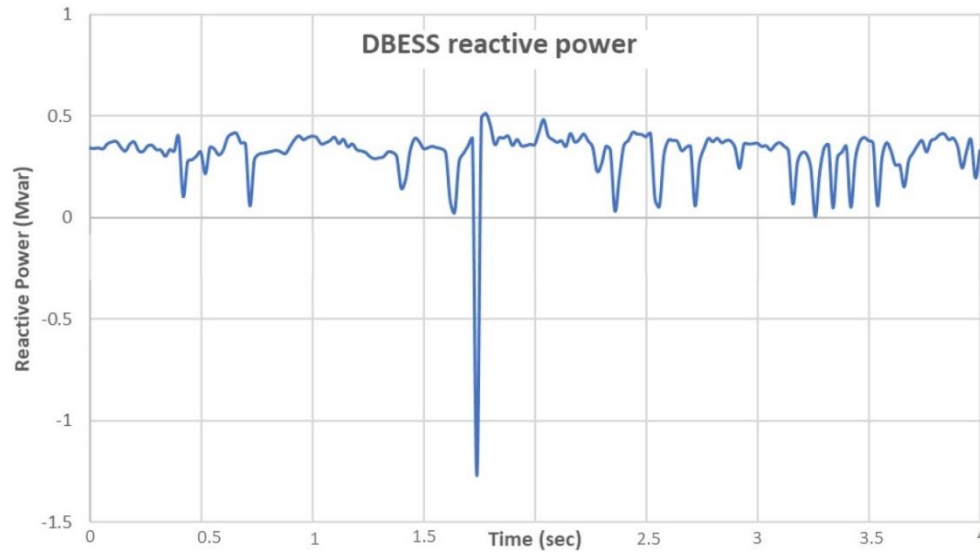
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From “grid following” to “grid forming”

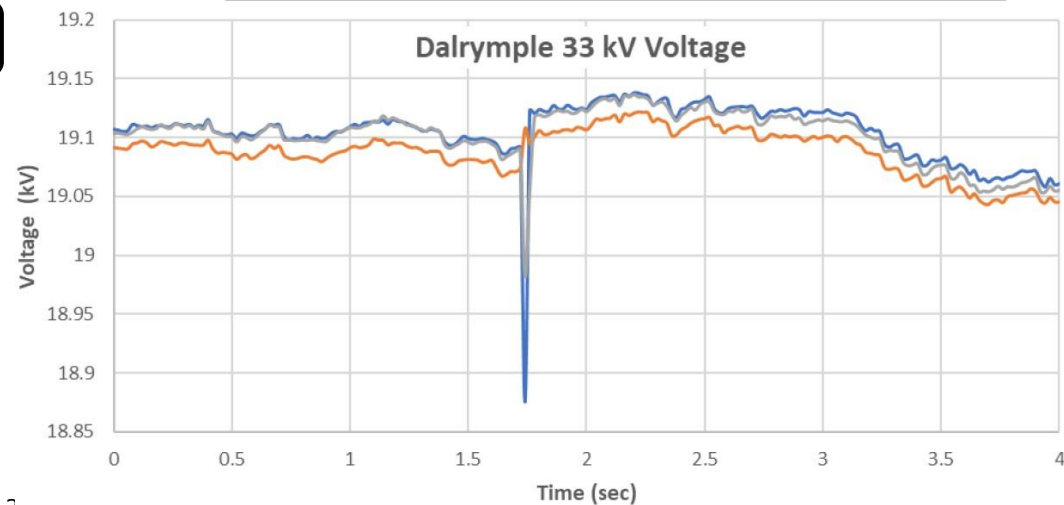
Dalrymple battery



**Single-phase-to-ground
fault on January 13, 2020**

Battery reactive power response

Battery terminal voltage dynamics



ElectraNet,” ESCRI-SA battery storage project operational report#3, August 2020.