Australian Government
Clean Energy Regulator

Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme inspection program

2025–26 inspection report



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About this report

The Clean Energy Regulator's (CER) inspection program[1] plays a critical role in maintaining the integrity of the Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme (SRES). The CER administers the SRES inspection program under the *Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000* (Act) and the Renewable Energy (Electricity) Regulations 2001 (Regulations).

By inspecting renewable energy systems installed under the scheme, the CER helps ensure installations meet regulatory and technical requirements and identifies emerging safety and compliance risks. The inspection program complements, rather than replaces, the safety and compliance activities and programs led by state and territory electrical safety regulators. Through a coordinated and collaborative approach, SRES inspection results are used to share intelligence and raise awareness of emerging issues to support timely corrective actions.

This report aims to provide transparency about inspection outcomes while highlighting how inspection findings are used to drive continuous improvement and ensure the integrity of the SRES. It provides a summary of inspection activities and outcomes for solar photovoltaic (PV) and solar battery systems installed during the 2025–26 financial year. It also highlights inspection results, common areas of non-compliance and actions taken by the CER to improve installation quality, safety and compliance.

The 2025–26 financial year marks a significant milestone for the inspection program. In addition to the established solar PV inspection program, the solar battery inspections program began on 15 July 2025 after solar batteries[2] became eligible under the SRES on 1 July 2025. By starting inspections shortly after the rollout of the solar battery program, the CER has been able to identify emerging technical, safety and quality issues soon after installation and address them with a targeted response.

Inspection findings inform the CER's engagement with regulators and industry. The CER holds regular briefings with state and territory electrical, safety and consumer regulators responsible for enforcing safety standards. These briefings provide an opportunity share inspection results and discuss emerging issues. The CER also meets regularly with industry representatives through Industry Advisory Implementation Committee meetings to discuss program observations and learnings.

As the solar battery market continues to grow, the CER will continue to use inspection findings to highlight ongoing compliance risks across both solar PV and battery installations. The CER's focus for the 2026–27 financial year will include using inspection findings to drive continuous improvement, targeted education with industry and delivering proportionate compliance responses where needed. Through these efforts, the CER will continue to strengthen the integrity of the SRES and support safe, compliant solar PV and battery installations for Australian households and communities.

2025–26 inspections overview

Across the 2025–26 reporting period, the CER completed inspections on 3,425 solar battery systems and 3,129 of solar PV systems. This is the highest annual inspection volume delivered by the CER to date.

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[1] https://cer.gov.au/schemes/renewable-energy-target/small-scale-renewable-energy-scheme/small-scale-renewable-energy-systems/small-scale-renewable-energy-system-inspections
[2] https://cer.gov.au/schemes/renewable-energy-target/small-scale-renewable-energy-scheme/small-scale-renewable-energy-systems/solar-batteries

The CER used solar PV and solar battery inspection results to support early intervention and regulatory initiatives under the SRES. As battery installation volumes increased throughout the first year, inspection results identified several recurring areas of non-compliance, particularly related to critical labelling. In response, the CER implemented a range of initiatives to improve compliance and support better installation outcomes. This includes:

- taking compliance action against installers with repeated poor inspection results, including advisory warning letters and notices.
- introducing additional photographic evidence requirements for critical solar battery labels from 1 March 2026 after early inspection results identified labelling as the most common cause of substandard outcomes
- delivering targeted education and guidance directly to installers including through resources such as the critical labelling photo guide[3] and inspection checklists[4] for both solar batteries and solar PV installations
- developing guidance and learning materials to industry in partnership with SAA
- establishing regular data-sharing and intelligence briefings with state and territory electrical, safety and consumer regulators – those with the responsibility to enforce Australian standards
- working collaboratively with consumer authorities to continue to support industry integrity confidence and safety.

These activities demonstrate how inspection findings are used not only to identify issues, but to drive measurable improvements and support higher-quality installations. As the solar battery market continues to grow, the inspection program will remain an important tool for identifying emerging risks and supporting the safe deployment of renewable energy technologies across Australia.

The SRES inspection program

The CER is required to inspect a statistically significant random sample of solar PV and solar battery installations across Australia. These inspections provide insight into industry performance and support the identification of emerging compliance and safety risks.

In addition to random inspections, the CER may also choose to inspect solar PV or solar battery installations when it is appropriate or necessary to do so. These inspections are initiated based on compliance and intelligence, risk assessments and broader program priorities. They help to:

- confirm improvements in installer practices or training outcomes
- identify specific trends, risks or areas of concern
- build intelligence or gather evidence for future compliance actions.

The SRES inspection program uses standardised checklists developed with industry experts, technical service providers and other regulators. These checklists reflect the relevant regulations, Australian standards and

[3] https://cer.gov.au/document_page/solar-battery-photo-guide
[4] https://cer.gov.au/schemes/renewable-energy-target/small-scale-renewable-energy-scheme/small-scale-renewable-energy-systems/small-scale-renewable-energy-system-inspections#conducting-an-inspection

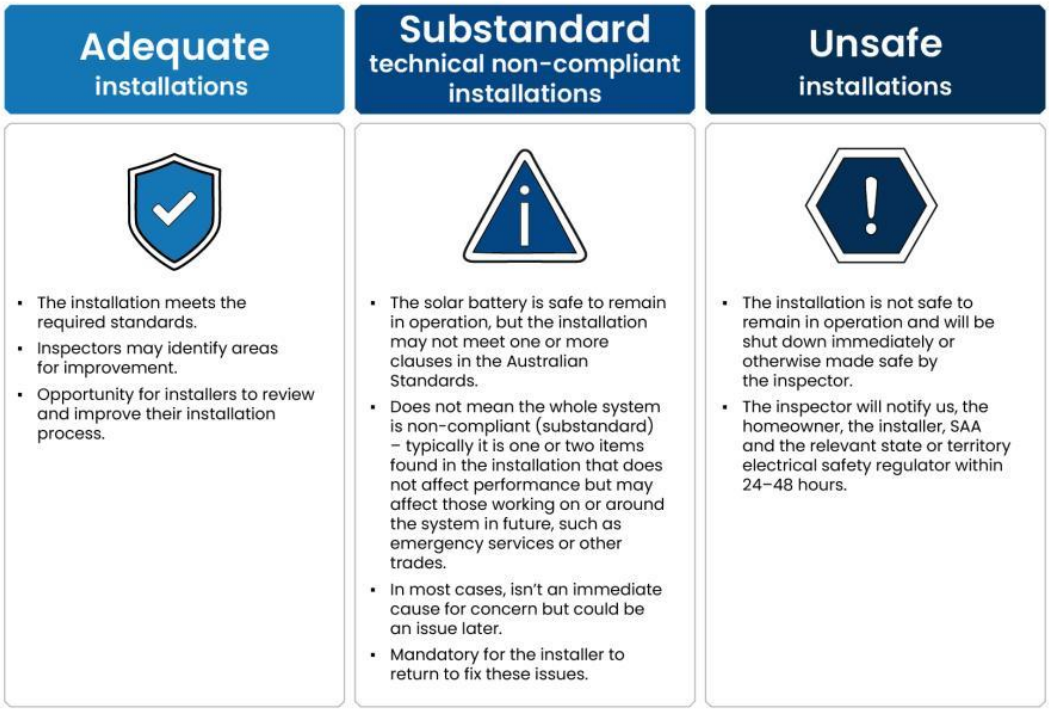
industry best practice requirements. They are published on the CER website to support transparency and installer education:

- Solar PV inspection checklist[5]
- Solar battery inspection checklist[6]

Inspection findings are shared with installers, registered agents, SAA and state and territory electrical authorities to support a coordinated response to emerging issues and drive continuous improvement across the industry.

Inspection ratings

Inspectors assess each solar PV or solar battery installation against the relevant inspection checklist and assign one of three ratings.



These ratings provide a consistent measure of installation quality. Where an inspection is rated substandard or unsafe due to the installation work, the installer must return to site to rectify the identified issues and provide proof to SAA that the issues have been addressed. The CER may conduct additional monitoring to confirm ongoing compliance and improvements in installation practices.

[5] https://cer.gov.au/document_page/solar-pv-inspection-checklist
[6] https://cer.gov.au/document_page/solar-battery-inspection-checklist

Unsafe due to external factors

In some cases, a system may receive a substandard or unsafe rating due to factors outside the installer's control, such as a product recall or third-party incidents. In these cases, the installer will still receive an inspection report with a substandard or unsafe rating. Although the installer may not be responsible for the underlying cause, there may be other items identified from the inspection that require rectification or could assist the installer to support the homeowner to return the system to a safe and compliant system.

Using inspection findings to improve compliance

Inspection findings are a key source of intelligence for the CER's regulatory activities under the SRES. Inspection results are used to identify emerging issues and monitor installer performance over time. This information supports the CER's risk-based approach and helps identify installers that may present higher risk of non-compliance.

Inspection outcomes are considered alongside other sources of intelligence when determining whether further compliance action is warranted. Where repeat adverse inspection outcomes, systemic issues or ongoing non-compliance behaviour is identified, the CER may escalate in accordance with policy and the regulatory powers under the Act and regulations.

The CER can take compliance action under the Regulations. This includes declaring individual's ineligible to participate in the SRES or pursuing civil or criminal enforcement actions. The CER will also refer all relevant matters to state and territory electrical safety authorities, SAA and consumer authorities for further action when required.

Inspection results for the 2025–26 financial year

The SRES inspection program is divided into the solar PV program and the solar battery program. These programs operated concurrently through the financial year.

Table 1: Inspection delivery model for the 2025–26 financial year

Inspection program	Systems covered	Delivery model
Solar PV systems	Systems installed from 1 July 2024 to 30 April 2026	Solar PV systems were inspected under the same process as previous years by inspecting systems from the previous annual period. In 2025–26, systems installed between July 2025 and April 2026 were also inspected concurrently with the solar battery inspections program.
Solar battery systems	Systems installed from 1 July 2025 to 30 April 2026	The solar battery inspections program was established at the commencement of the expansion of the SRES to include solar battery systems. Inspections commenced 15 July 2025.

The CER conducts inspections on a combination of systems:

- **Retrospective –** where a solar battery system has been installed with an existing or older solar PV system, the solar battery and any upgraded components will be inspected (for example, upgraded inverter and cabling).
- **Concurrently –** where both a new or upgraded solar PV system and a solar battery system have been installed together, both systems will be inspected and reported on separately.
- **Solar PV only –** where only a solar PV system has been installed.

While the solar PV inspection program continued to inspect systems installed from July 2024, the introduction of battery inspections enabled solar PV systems installed alongside a solar battery system to be inspected concurrently were practicable. This provided the CER with earlier visibility of emerging installation quality, compliance or safety issues on solar PV or solar battery systems.

Solar battery inspection results

The CER uses a random sampling method that ensures a greater representation of trends for installations around Australia. The CER also conduct inspections outside of this sample where there is a risk identified through compliance processes.

The CER completed 3,425 solar battery inspections in the inspection program's first year, capturing systems installed from 1 July 2025 to 30 April 2026. This includes:

- 3,373 randomly selected inspections
- 52 appropriate or necessary inspections outside of the random sample.

Random inspections

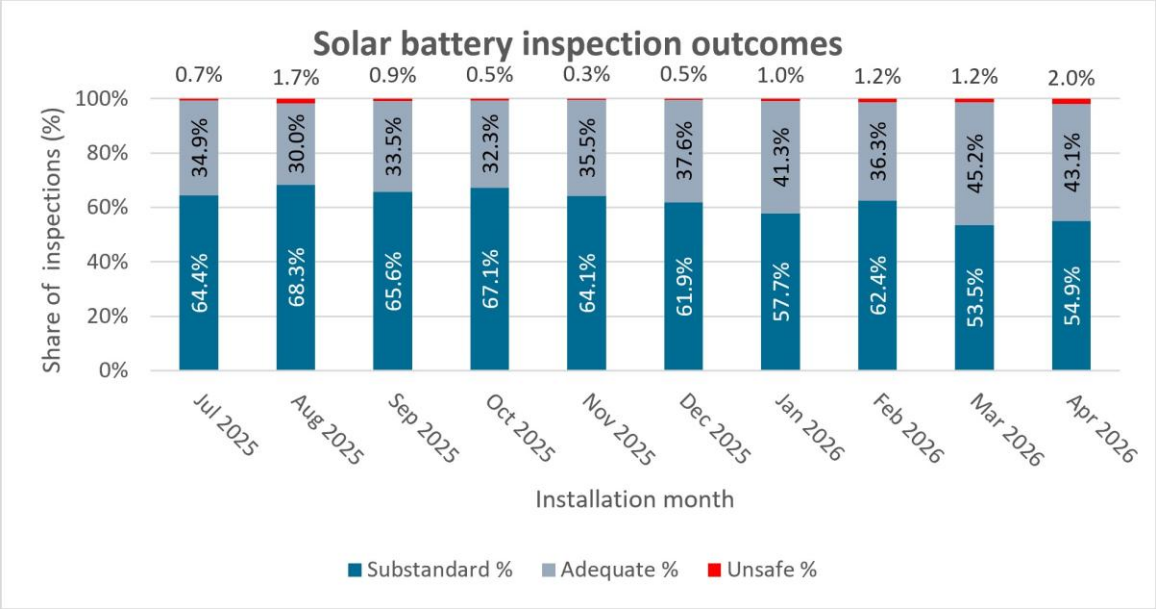
Of the 3,373 randomly selected inspections:

- 37.86% were adequate
- 61.19% were substandard
- 0.95% were unsafe

The rate of unsafe solar battery systems was consistent with the rate observed for solar PV system inspections under the SRES inspection program.

The number of random inspections and their ratings by each state and territory can be found in **Appendix A**.

Figure 1: Solar battery inspection outcomes by installation month



Unsafe solar battery installations from the random sample of inspections

For the 2025–26 solar battery inspection program, 32 systems were rated unsafe:

- 23 related to unsafe installation work
- 8 related to a product recall
- 1 related to a third-party incident.

The main causes for unsafe solar battery inspection outcomes related to:

- neutral continuity not being maintained for all circuits operating on an alternative supply
- loose connections in associated wiring showing signs of heat
- the electrical work on a solar battery system was not in line with the Australian standards and presented an imminent hazard.

Figure 2: Solar battery unsafe checklist items identified in 2025–26



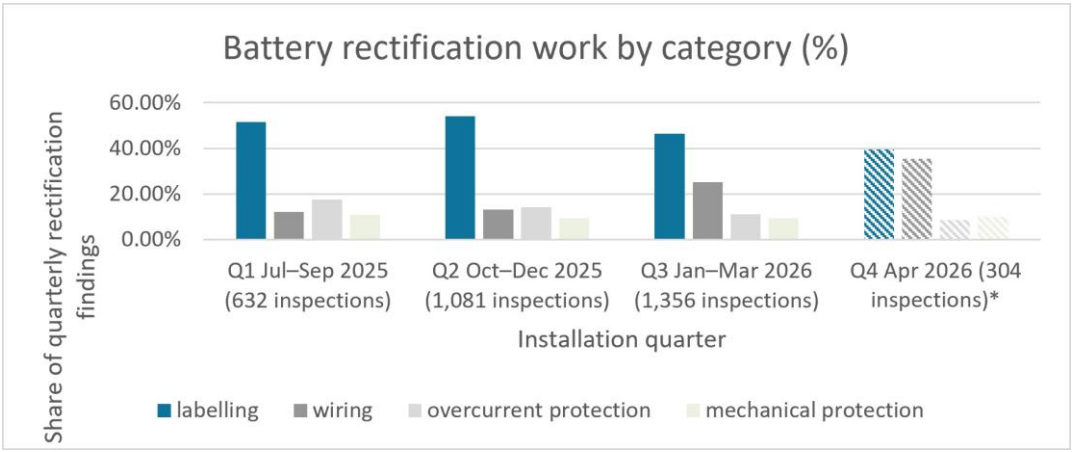
Note: The total number of categories in Figure 4 may be greater than the total unsafe outcomes as an unsafe report may have more than one rectification category in an inspection report.

Substandard solar battery installations from the random sample of inspections

During the 2025–26 inspection program, the most common issues leading to systems being rated substandard include **(Figure 3)**:

- labelling – missing or incorrect critical warning labels and insufficient identification of backup circuits
- wiring – incorrectly configured or missing residual current device when systems have alternate supply
- overcurrent protection – insufficient rated circuit protection
- mechanical protection – insufficient physical protection for cables and the solar battery.

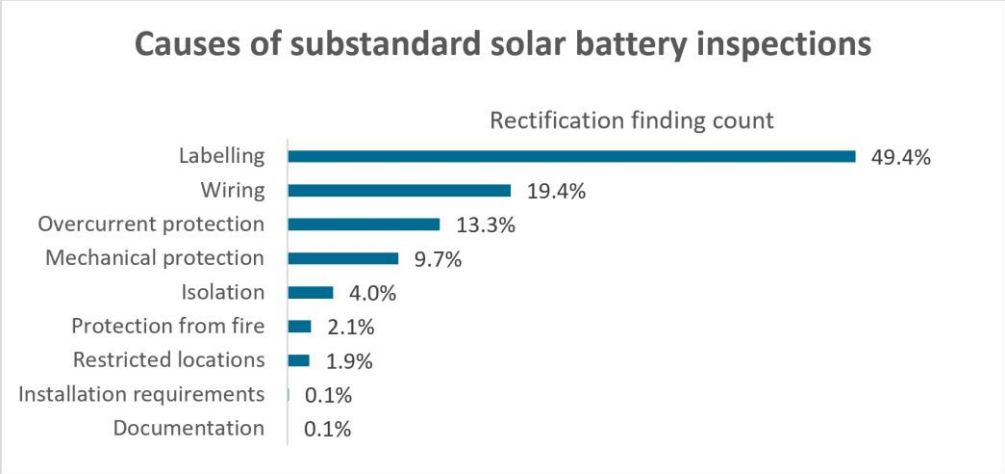
Figure 3: Substandard outcomes – Solar battery rectification work required by category



Note: This table provides inspection results for comparison by category of each quarter of the 2025–26 financial year up to 30 April 2026. The total number of categories in Figure 1 may be greater than the total substandard outcomes as a substandard report may have more than one rectification category in an inspection report.

*Data for Q4 April is incomplete. The remaining months for the 2025–26 financial year will be captured in the 2026–27 inspection program.

Figure 4: Causes of substandard solar battery inspections in 2025–26



In response to the increased rate of installations and substandard results, the CER strengthened its education and compliance approach through the following activities:

- **Increased inspection capacity** by engaging additional inspection service providers, enabling ongoing compliance monitoring and maintaining a statistically significant inspection sample amid rapid growth in solar battery installations.
- **Implemented more direct installer engagement**, through communication on the CER website, SAA newsletters and direct emails to installers the CER provided clear information of emerging issues and risks and their responsibilities.
- **Strengthened evidence requirements** by introducing mandatory photographs of critical solar battery labels from 1 March 2026 as part of the small-scale technology certificate (STC) creation process including timestamp and geolocation metadata, supported by artificial intelligence image identification, to improve verification activities.
- **Delivered industry education and guidance** by working with SAA to provide regular updates on common non-compliance issues and the delivery of a free solar battery labelling course for accredited installers.

Early in the solar battery inspections program there was a 68.3% substandard rate for systems installed in August 2025. Substandard results have since dropped to 54.9% for systems installed in April 2026 since the CER has implemented additional activities **(Figure 1)**.

Solar PV inspection results

We use a random sampling method that ensures we get a greater representation of trends for installations around Australia. We also conduct inspections outside of this sample where there is a risk identified through our compliance process.

A total of 3,129 solar PV systems were inspected within the 2025–26 financial year. All inspections were randomly selected from systems installed between 1 July 2024 and 30 April 2026 **(Figure 5)**.

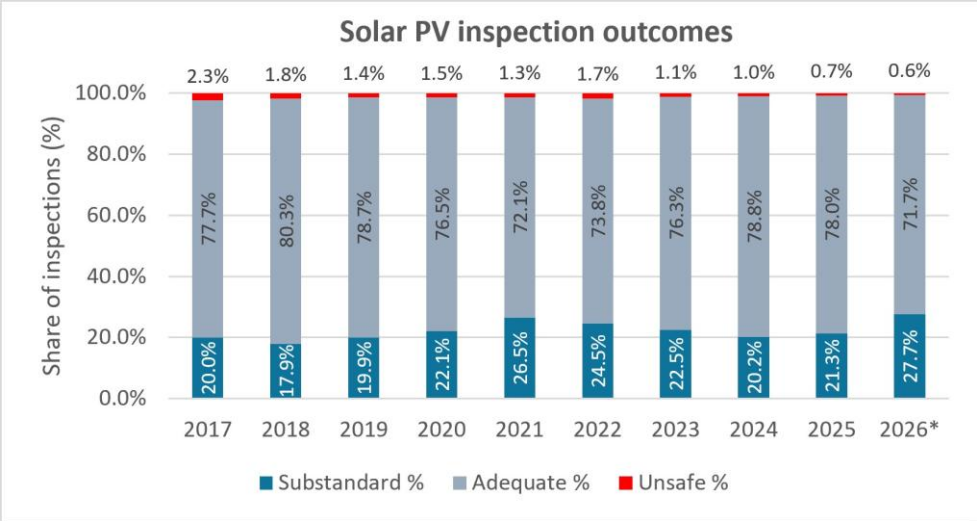
Out of the 3,129 randomly selected inspections:

- 75.97% were adequate

- 23.11% were substandard
- 0.93% were unsafe.

The number of random inspections and their ratings by each state and territory can be found in **Appendix B**.

Figure 5: Solar PV inspections outcomes by installation year



Note: *Data for 2026 is incomplete. The remaining months for the 2025–26 financial year will be captured in the 2026–27 inspection program.

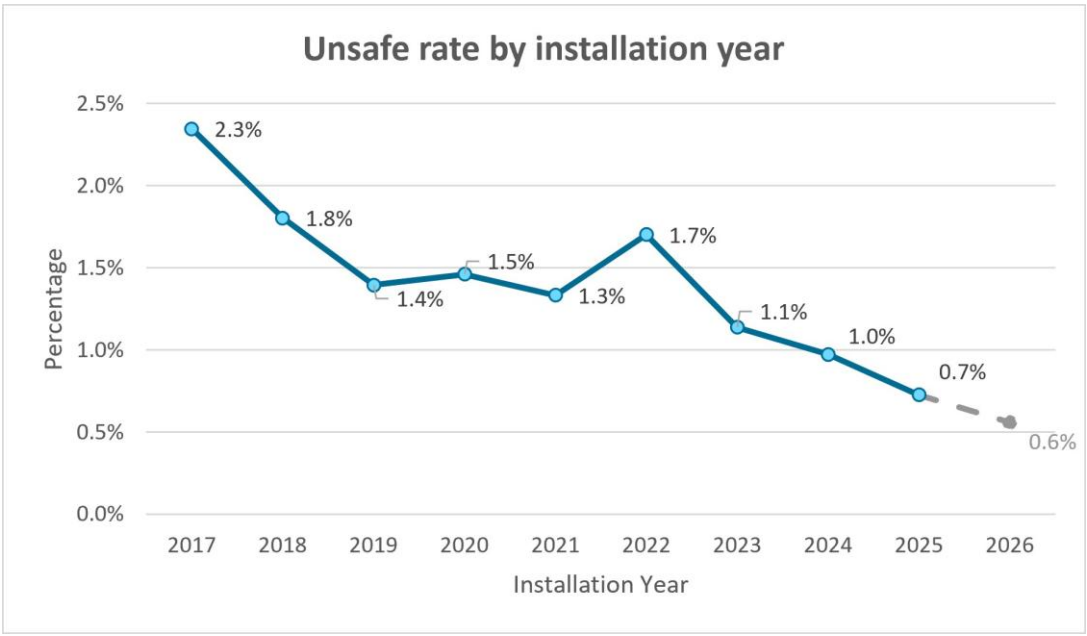
The number of annual solar PV inspections per year can be found in **Appendix C**.

Unsafe Solar PV inspection from random sample of inspections

For the 2025–26 inspection program, a total of 29 solar PV systems were rated unsafe out of the 3,129 inspected **(Figure 6)**:

- 14 installations representing 0.66% of systems installed in 2024
- 11 installations representing 0.7% of systems installed in 2025
- 4 installations representing 0.6% of systems installed in 2026.

Figure 6: Rate of unsafe solar PV inspections between 2017-2026

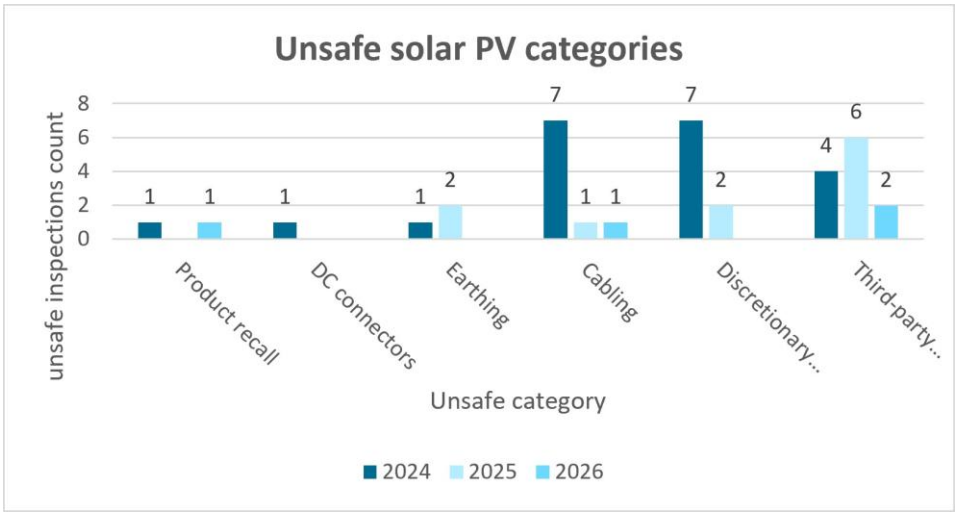


Note: Inspection results are based on systems installed up to 30 April 2026. The 2026-2027 inspection program results will update the 2026 results.

Common causes for unsafe installations

During the 2025–26 inspection program, the most common issues leading to systems being rated unsafe are detailed in **Figure 7**.

Figure 7: Causes of unsafe solar PV systems installed during 2024–2026



Note: total number of causes for unsafe solar PV installations in Figure 7 may be greater than the unsafe totals because one or more compliance checklist items may be selected in an inspection to make a single system unsafe.

Out of the 29 unsafe inspections:

- 16 were due to unsafe installation work

- 12 were unsafe due to a third-party incident such as weather damaging the system, third party system configurations or structural changes to the building or area the system has been installed on
- 1 unsafe due to a product recall.

Common unsafe inspection results were caused by:

- **Cabling** – where exposed live parts are present on the installed equipment.
- **Earthing** – where earthing lugs have not been correctly installed, penetrating solar panel cell backing sheets, showing a low impedance fault down to earth.

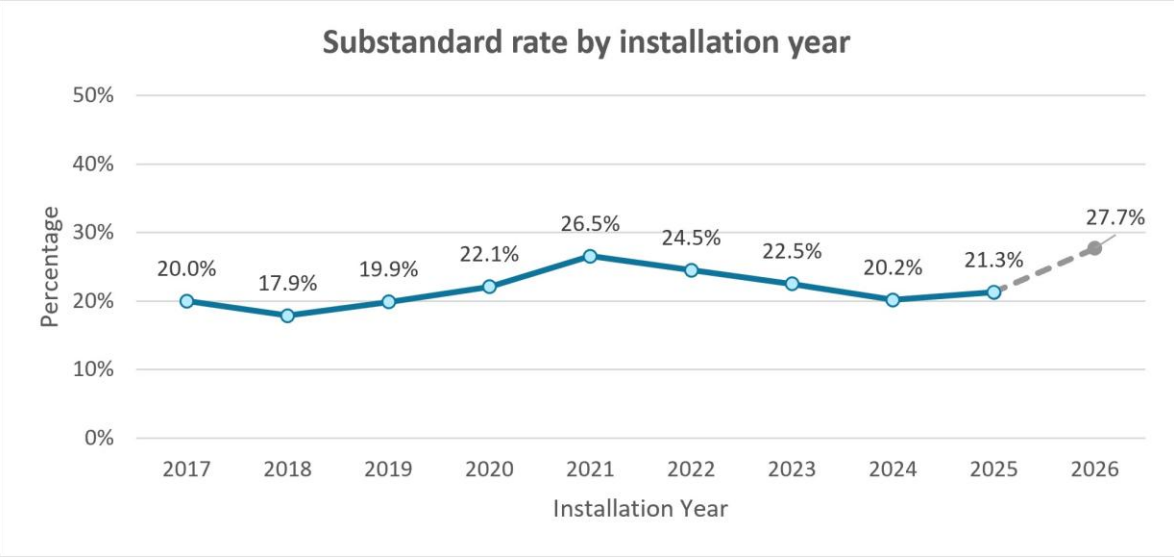
Substandard solar PV installations from random sample of inspections

For the 2025–26 inspection program, the following were rated substandard **(Figure 8)**:

- 202 from 908 inspections representing 22.3% of systems installed in 2024 (Jul – Dec)
- 318 from 1,506 inspections representing 21.1% of systems installed in 2025
- 198 from 715 inspections representing 27.7% of systems installed in 2026

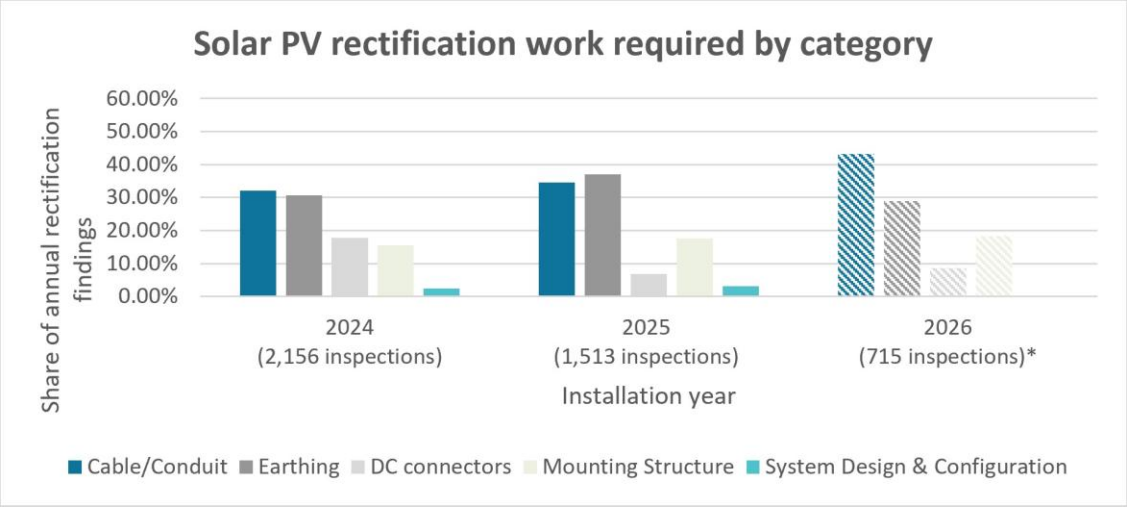
The 2026 outcomes occurred between 1 January to 30 April 2026, a period of significant activity and growth in the rooftop solar and battery market. This includes changes to the solar battery STC setting from 1 May 2026 which encouraged increased installation activity prior to the commencement. Further inspection activity will provide more accurate assessment of the 2026 installations.

Figure 8: Rate of substandard inspections by year



The inspection program generally focuses on systems installed within the previous financial year. The introduction of the solar battery inspections program has led to solar PV systems installed in the 2025–26 financial year to also be inspected. As such, results for 2026 will change upon the completion of inspections in the 2026-27 period **(Figure 9)**.

Figure 9: Solar PV rectification work required by category



Note: Table provides inspection results for comparison by category of each year between 2023–2026 with inspections conducted up to 30 April 2026. The total numbers of causes for substandard installations are not equal to substandard totals provided, as more than one non-compliance checklist items may be selected in an inspection to make a single systems substandard.

*Data for 2026 is incomplete. The remaining months for the 2025–26 financial year will be captured in the 2026–27 inspection program.

The common cause of substandard rated systems under the 2025–26 inspection program related to:

- **Cables and conduits** – where cables may not meet the relevant size, output or mechanical protection requirements under the relevant standards. This includes where wiring is not sufficiently protected, cables are incorrectly fixed onto the system or where conduits are not correctly routed or enclosing the cables.
- **Earthing** – improper bonding or earthing of solar panel frames and associated equipment.
- **DC connectors** – where solar connectors are not compatible, secure and/or correctly installed.
- **Mounting structures** – where the railing, clamps and other frameworks are not sufficiently installed.
- **System design and configuration** – where the system layout, sizing and equipment configurations are not compliant with the relevant Australian standards.

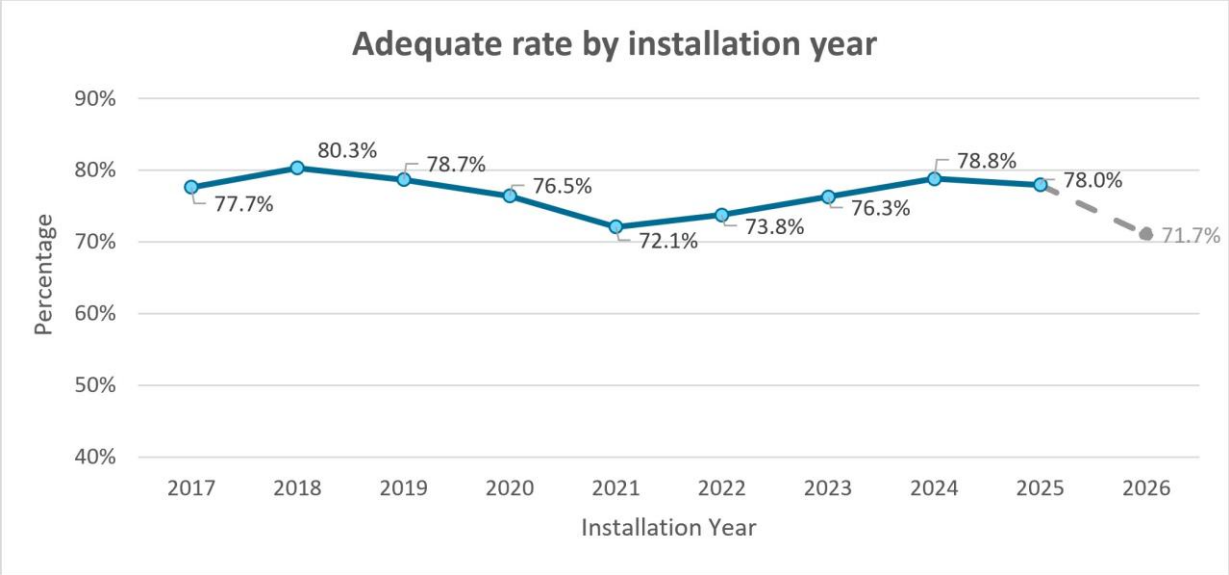
Compliant or adequate solar PV installations from random sample of inspections

From the 2025–26 inspection program the following systems installed from 1 July 2024 through to 30 April 2026 were compliant **(Figure 10)**:

- 692 from 908 inspections representing 76.3% of systems installed in 2024 (July – December)
- 1,177 from 1,506 inspections representing 78.2% of systems installed in 2025
- 513 from 715 inspections representing 71.7% of systems installed in 2026.

Preliminary inspection results for solar PV systems installed up to 30 April 2026 indicate a lower proportion of adequate outcomes. However, the current sample size is not yet representative of the 2026 installations. Further inspections during 2026–27 will enable a more reliable assessment of installation quality for systems installed in 2026.

Figure 10: Rate of compliant/adequate inspections by year



Appropriate or necessary inspections

The CER may undertake additional inspections where appropriate or necessary based on compliance and intelligence, risk assessments and broader program priorities. As system selected for appropriate or necessary inspections are informed by identified risks or compliance intelligence, theses inspection results are not representative of border of industry performance.

A total of 52 appropriate or necessary inspections were completed in the 2025–26 financial year. All systems inspected were solar battery installations. Out of the 52 inspections **(Figure 11)**:

- 16 were assessed as adequate
- 36 were assessed as substandard.

Figure 11: Appropriate or necessary inspection results on solar battery systems

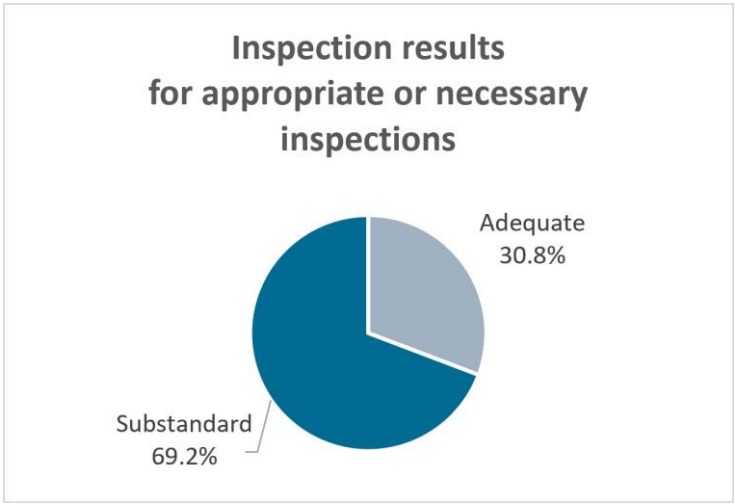
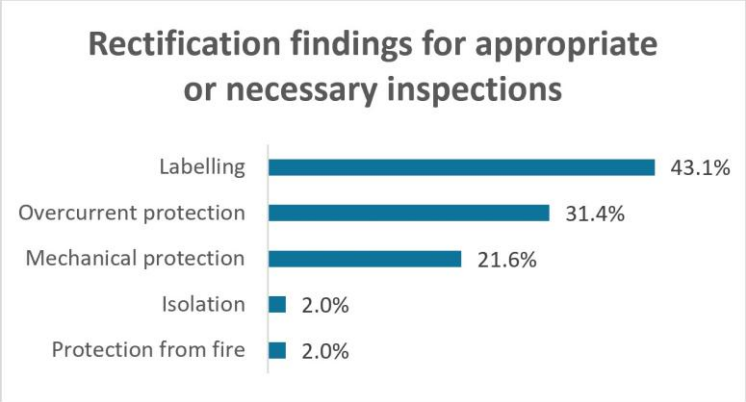


Figure 12: Causes of substandard systems installed during 2025–26 appropriate or necessary inspections



These inspections aimed to assess improvements made through education, retraining and adjustments to installation practices. This approach supports ongoing efforts to promote safe and compliant installations across the industry.

Inspections, engagement and monitoring

Individual inspection outcomes are used as part of the CER's risk-based approach to identify installers that may present a higher risk of non-compliance. During the 2025–26 inspection program, the CER communicated with 183 installers regarding their adverse inspection outcomes and their obligations under the SRES. This engagement supports early intervention and industry education, while repeated adverse inspection results or ongoing non-compliant behaviour may lead to further compliance or regulatory actions.

Priorities for 2026–27

The growth of the solar battery market is becoming a larger part of the small-scale renewable energy market. By the end of the 2025–26 financial year, over 470,000 applications were received by the CER seeking certificates for solar battery systems installed within the eligible period. This indicates continued participation by households to install solar battery and solar PV systems.

Additionally, while the rate of substandard systems continues to improve, inspection findings indicate that the risk of non-compliant solar PV and solar battery systems remain.

In response, the CER is committed to ensuring the inspections program prioritises the following for the upcoming 2026–27 financial year:

- Continue to collaborate with SAA and the local state or territory regulators on a regular basis, with a focus of ongoing education and guidance to solar PV and solar battery installers to promote compliant installations under the scheme.
- Continue to present inspection results at bi-monthly meetings with state and territory regulators and monthly at Industry Advisory Implementation Committee meetings with industry representatives.
- Deliver proportionate regulatory responses for installers who show a pattern of non-compliance under the scheme.
- Monitor inspection results and findings to ensure accurate and independent assessments of systems under the inspections program.

- Deliver more current inspection results by reducing the time between when the installation is completed and the inspection is conducted.
- Continue to work collaboratively with consumer authorities to support industry integrity confidence and safety.
- Continue to confirm and improve installer compliance through ongoing and follow up inspections.

By focusing on these priorities, the CER will continue to strengthen the integrity of the scheme and support the safety of households, industry professionals and other persons who may operate a solar PV or solar battery system now and in the future.

Appendices

Appendix A

Battery inspection results by location

Number of randomly selected inspections, substandard findings and unsafe findings for state and territories from the 2025–26 inspection program up to 30 April 2026.

Geographical Area	Total battery system inspections	Total Substandard	Total Unsafe
NSW	917	520	13
QLD	703	541	6
VIC	678	385	4
SA	462	274	3
WA	381	231	2
ACT	154	62	2
TAS	44	26	1
NT	34	25	1
Total	**3,373**	**2,064**	**32**

Battery inspection results by location (appropriate or necessary)

Geographical Area	Total battery system inspections	Total Substandard	Total Unsafe
QLD	15	12	0
VIC	12	8	0
WA	11	6	0
NSW	9	8	0
SA	5	2	0
Total	**52**	**36**	**0**

Appendix B

Solar PV inspection results by location

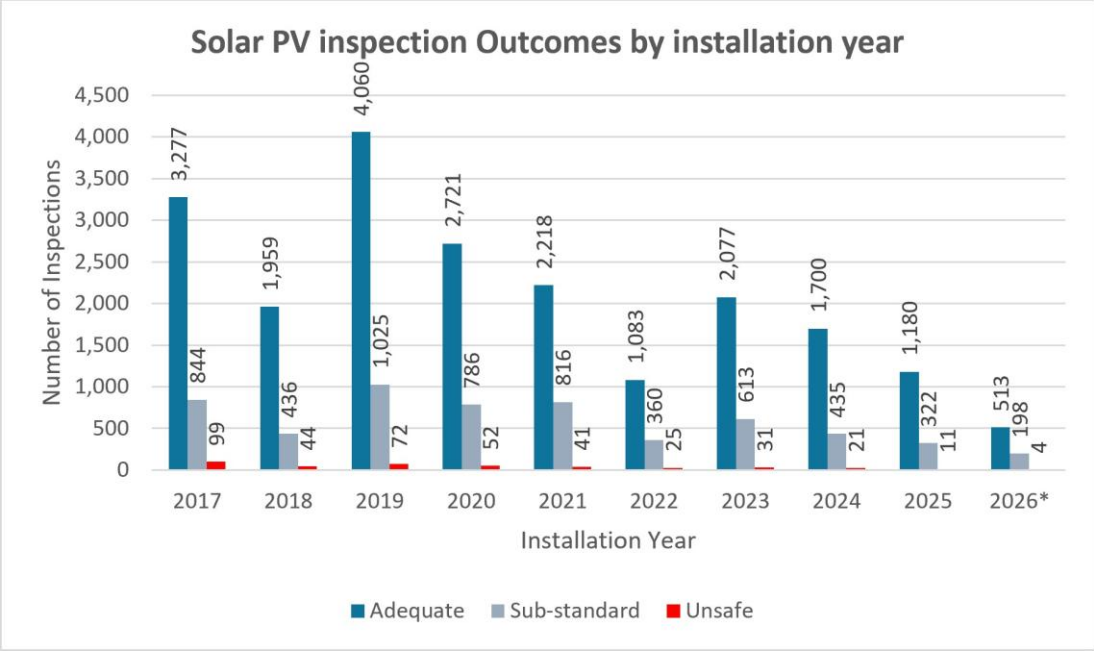
Number of randomly selected inspections, and the substandard and unsafe findings for state and territories from the 2025-2026 inspection program up to 30 April 2026.

Geographical Area	Total solar PV inspections	Substandard	Unsafe
NT	4	1	0
TAS	54	32	0
ACT	90	28	0
WA	397	74	1
SA	314	64	3
VIC	666	65	3
QLD	657	147	11
NSW	947	307	11
Total	**3,129**	**718**	**29**

Appendix C

Solar PV inspection results by year

Number of Solar PV inspections results from the 2017–2026 by system installation year.



Note: *Data for 2026 is incomplete. The remaining months for the 2025–26 financial year will be captured in the 2026–27 inspection program.