



Electricity procurement and Supplementary Capacity (SC)

The amount of electricity capacity required to meet forecast demand in Western Australia's power system the South West Interconnected System is set via the state's Reserve Capacity Requirement (RCR) mechanism.

AEMO models generation availability against forecast demand to set the RCR two years ahead in its Wholesale Electricity Market Electricity Statement of Opportunities (WEM ES00) report. For example, the RCR for 2025-26 was determined in the 2023 WEM ES00.

If supply risks are identified within this two-year period, AEMO can use the Supplementary Capacity (SC) mechanism. SC allows AEMO to procure additional electricity capacity from six months prior to it being required.



About SC

As part of the SC procurement process, AEMO enters into contracts with providers to either use less energy or generate electricity (collectively known as capacity) when electricity reserves are low.

This extra capacity acts as an additional "reserve buffer" for the contracted period, which is during the high demand summer months.

Once a contract has been signed with AEMO, these SC providers are on standby to deliver their respective capacity service when called upon over the agreed period – providing an extra reserve buffer to maintain power system security and reliability in WA.



When SC contracts may be called upon



Unplanned or extreme events can impact available electricity supplies. These may include a combination of high demand, extreme weather, natural disasters, generation or transmission outages or critical maintenance.



When there is a risk of a supply and demand imbalance, AEMO takes proactive steps to manage forecast reserve shortfalls (when electricity supply reserves are encroached).



If AEMO is unable to improve reserve levels through its usual channels, then SC may be activated.



If SC is required, then AEMO will call on these back-up reserve contracts to improve the supply and demand balance.

The Reserve Capacity Mechanism (RCM)

The RCM ensures there is sufficient generation and demand side capacity to meet peak demand periods (roughly two years into the future).



About us: AEMO is the independent energy market and system operator and system planner for the National Electricity Market (NEM) and Western Australia's Wholesale Electricity Market (WEM). We are a not-for-profit company, with a membership of state and federal governments (60%) and energy industry members (40%).

More info: aemo.com.au/about/who-we-are