

Strengthening **social licence** in our communities.

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11 September 2026



Today's **Presentation:**

- Understanding what the grid means to the people on the ground
- Fighting today's disinformation with the right playbook
- Real world examples of building energy literacy



What is 'Social Licence'?



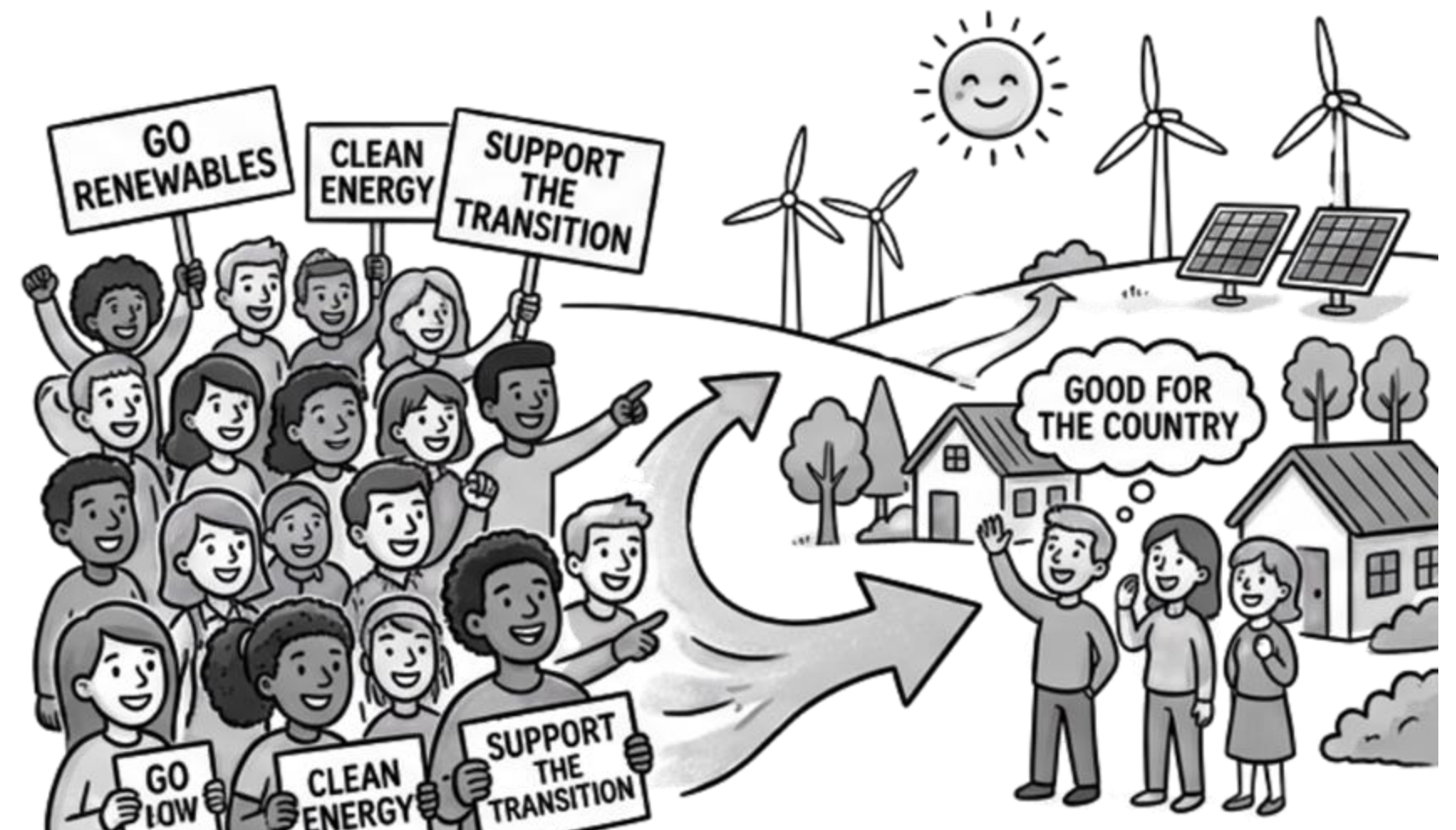
1. THE 'NARROW' VIEW

- 📍 LOCAL FOCUS: SECURING SPECIFIC PROJECTS
- 📋 PROJECT-BY-PROJECT APPROVALS
- 🔒 RISK MANAGEMENT & COMPLIANCE



2. THE 'BROAD' VIEW

- 👥 REGIONAL/NATIONAL SUPPORT: ENERGY TRANSITION
- 🤝 PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE & POSITIVE PERCEPTION
- 🤝 BUILDING TRUST & REPUTATION



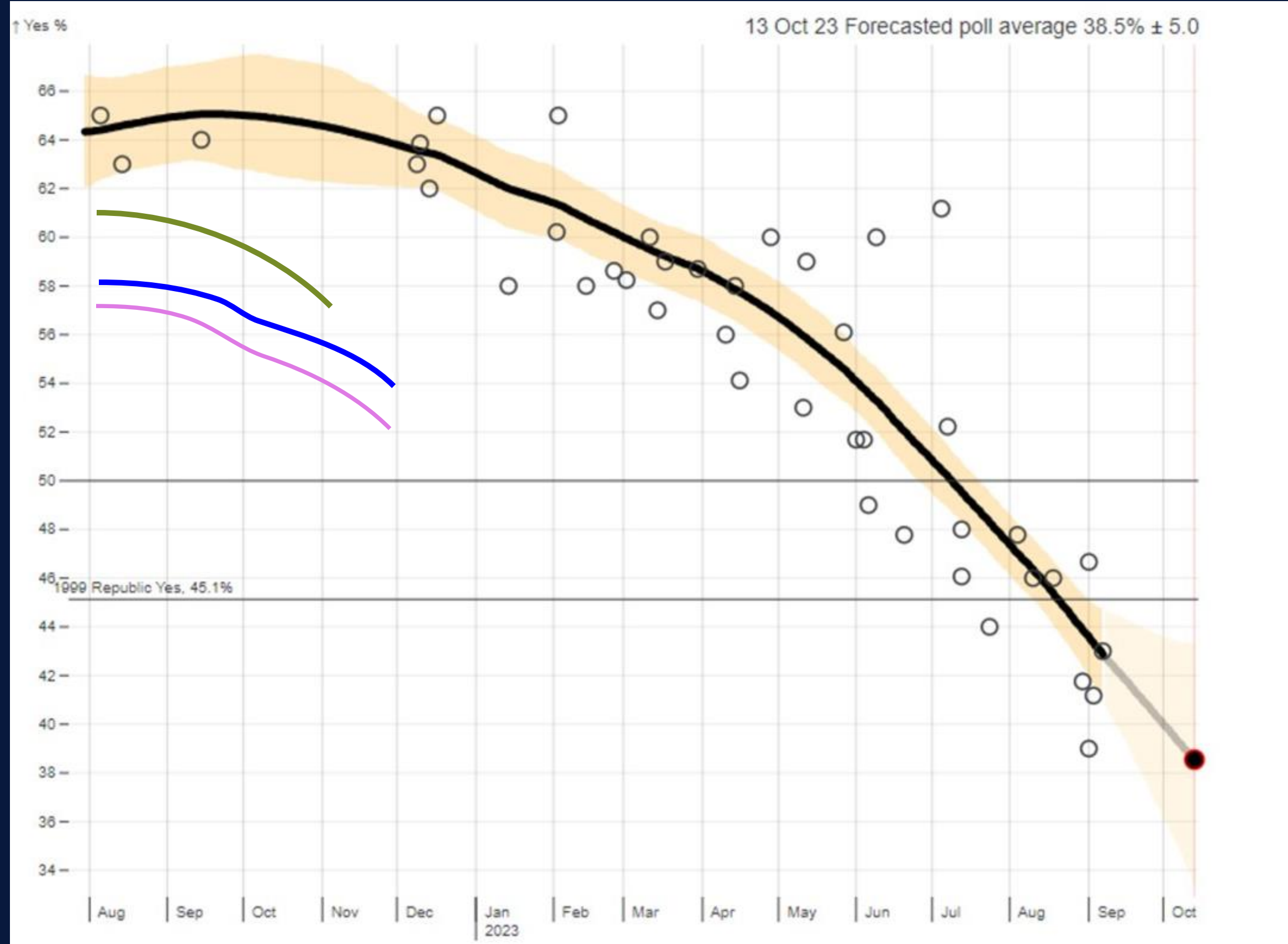
Colliding crises.

Information resilience declines in the 'perfect storm' of overlapping crises driven by **our new information ecosystem**.

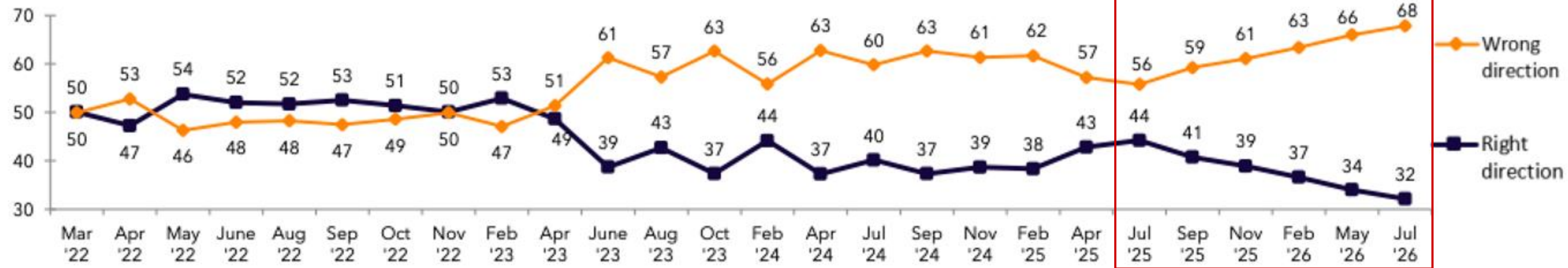
1. A crisis of **attention** → preferences the extreme
2. A crisis of **trust** → faulty sources are accepted
3. A crisis of **connection** → no mitigating exposure
4. A crisis of **news** → low quality information
5. A crisis of **outrage** → incentives for division



Onshore wind farms
Support for Net Zero
Positive towards transition

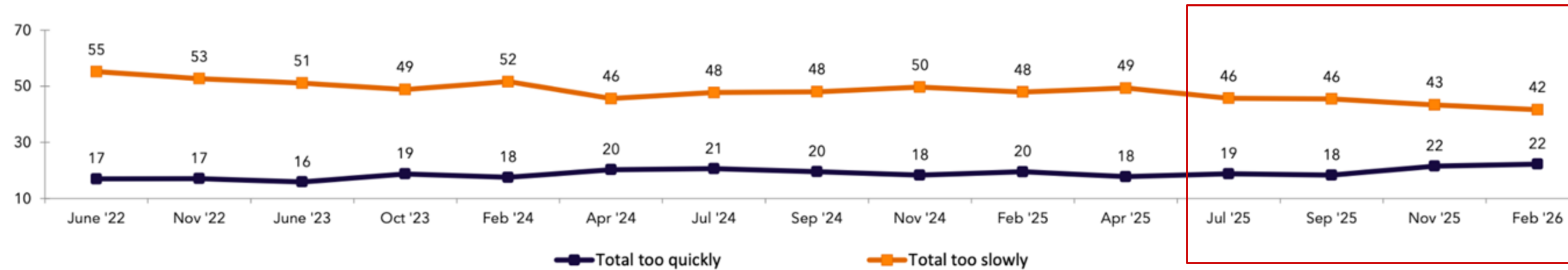


Perceived direction of Australia (%)



The speed of the renewable energy transition

Attitudes to the pace of Australia's transition to renewables (% over time)



There is a **global playbook** mobilised against the energy transition.



Bianca Aschenbach

16 January · 🌐

HÖRT AUF MIT Klima Hysterie,
CO2 Schwindel, Ice-Cat., Clouds



Anti-renewables
group killed \$1bn
Qld wind farm
using fake news



Perception is no longer **yours to control.**

What people believe about your project is increasingly determined by forces outside your communications strategy.

Emotionally charged commentary and social pile-ons

Counter narratives and coordinated misinformation

Community frustration amplified to viral scale

Algorithmic systems that reward conflict over clarity

Traditional comms assumes a rational audience reading your message. That audience no longer exists at scale.



Energy Transition.

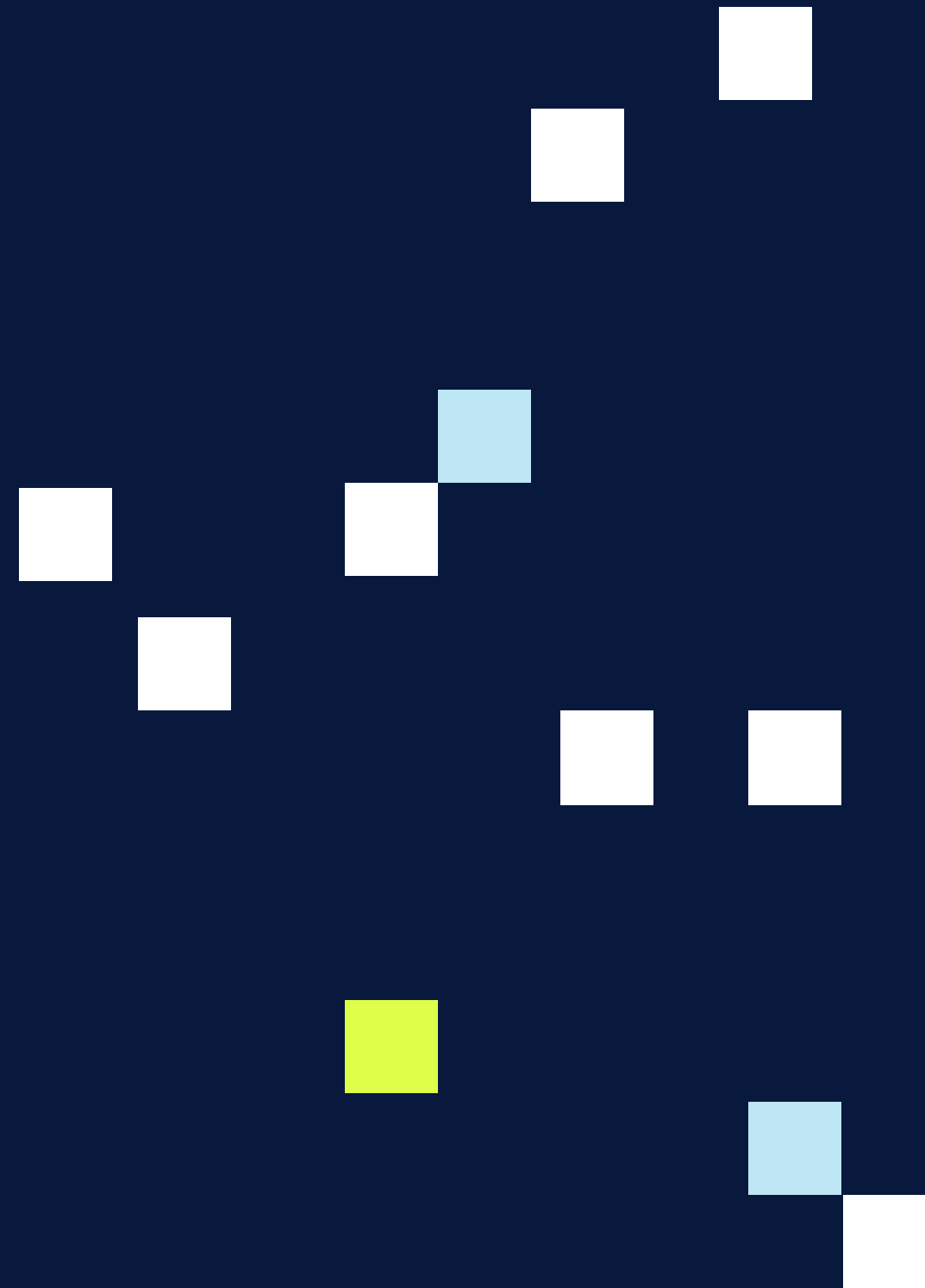
Support exists, but it is **fragile**.

Across Australia:

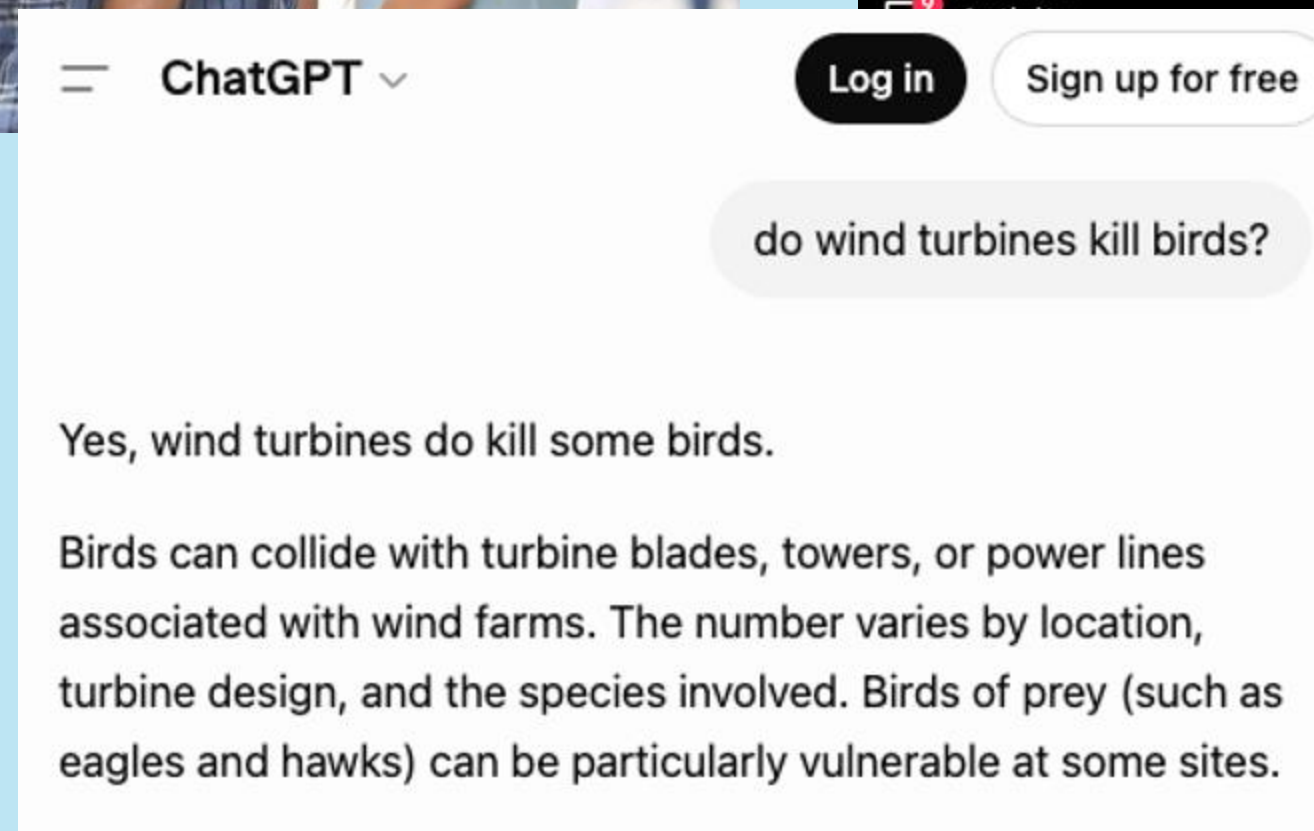
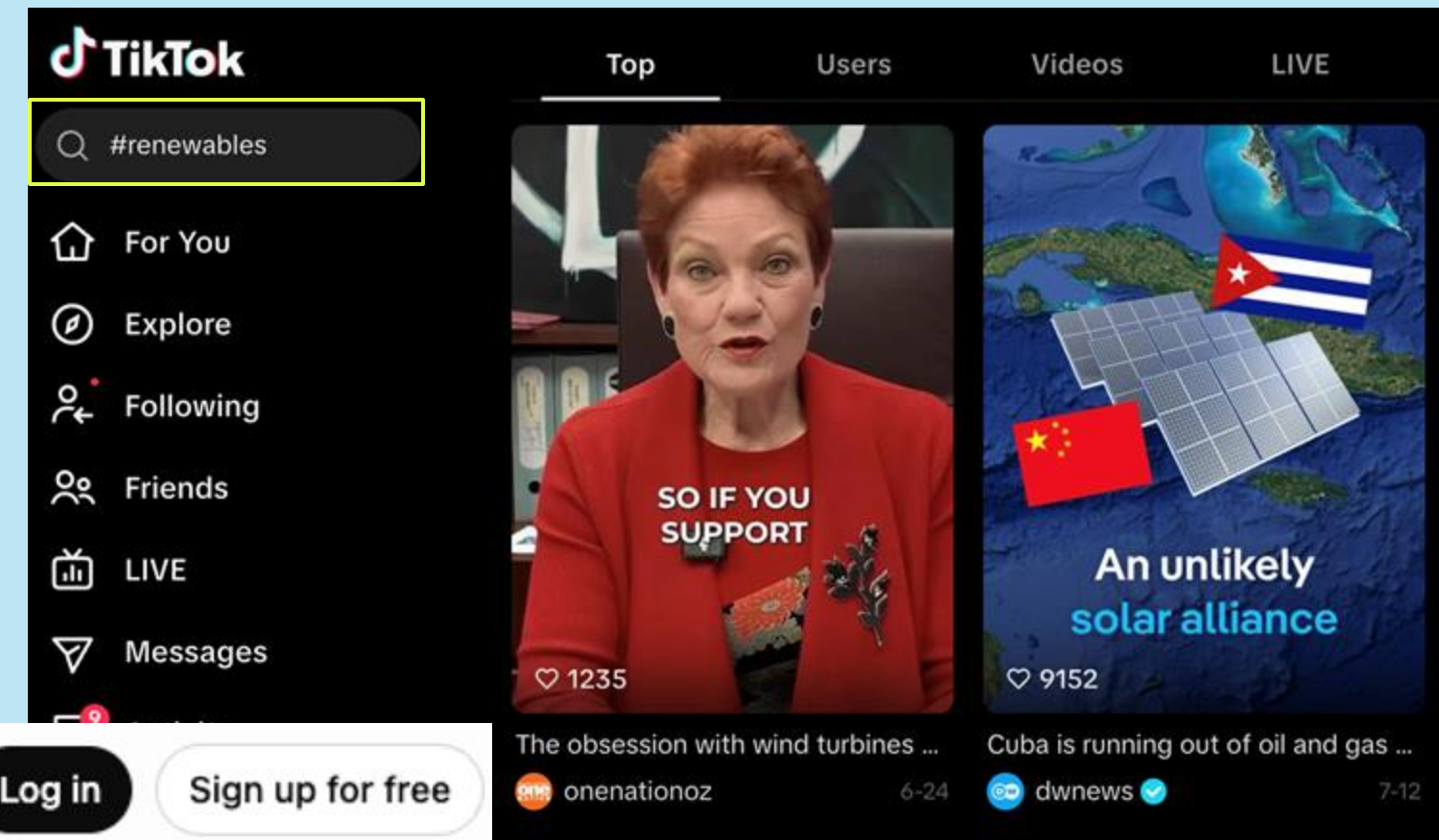
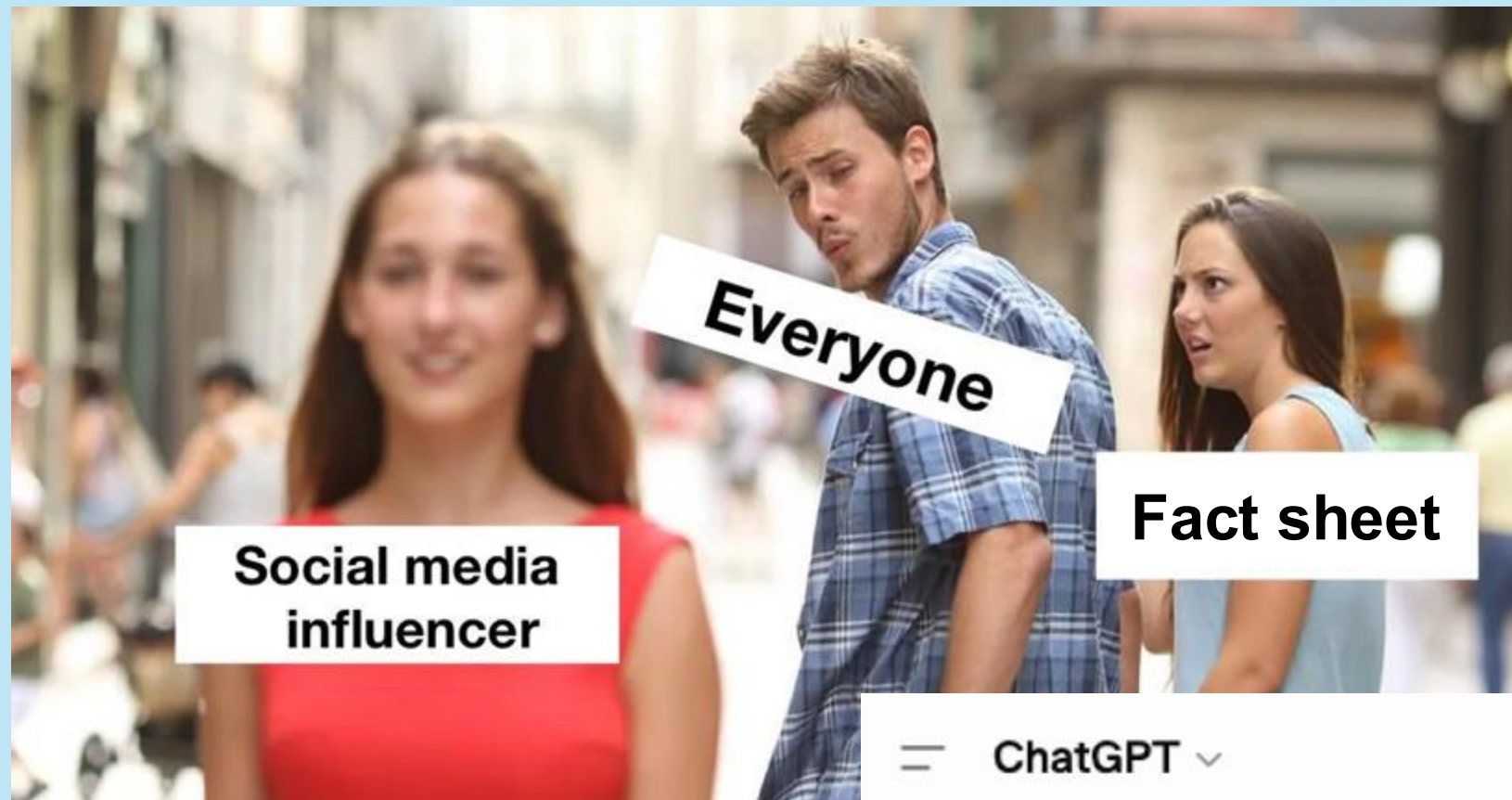
- Community support for renewable energy is **strong but easily disrupted**
- **Perceptions of community support** are lower than they actually are:
 - “62% of regional Australians support Australia’s shift to renewable energy. But only 37% believe their neighbours do (a perception gap of 25 points).”
- Complex infrastructure projects are often **poorly understood**
- Opposition groups are **organised, persistent and highly visible**
- Infrastructure projects increasingly succeed or fail on **community confidence**.
- **Misinformation spreads quickly** in local communities.
- **Social licence is not static** — it must be actively built and maintained.



Is there a **Solution?**



Reaching the moments where relevance and persuasion matter most is harder.



A new playbook is needed.

RESILIENCE:
Fortifying your
narrative

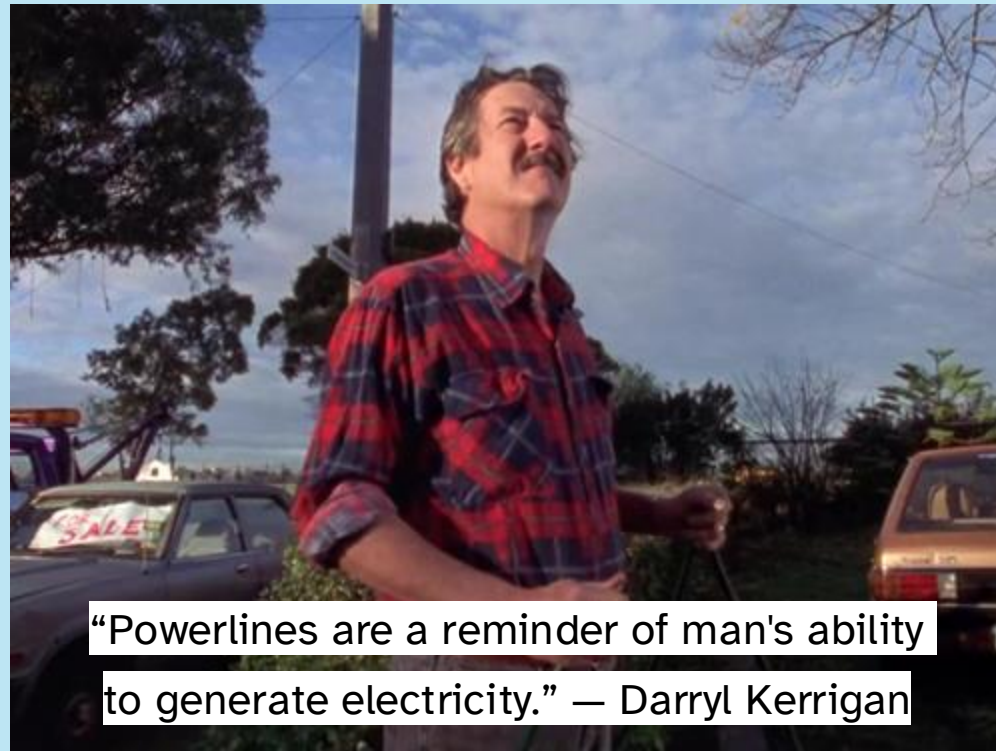
INFLUENCE:
Meaningful
engagements

INFERENCE:
Locating your
information

An aligned approach across community engagement,
marketing, PR and comms to control the narrative



Resilience: Join the dots



Influence: Stick Around

The BETOOTTA ADVOCATE

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Bloke Who Wants Reliable And Affordable Energy Weirdly Thinks That Will Just Magically Happen

A local father of 3 has today made some rather interesting claims.

After what was roundly described as a lovely BBQ with a few members of his immediate and extended family, Grahame Hurst (71), decided to offer up some rather questionable opinions.

Who is telling your story?



Attention lasts longer than one moment



Inference: Be everywhere, all the time

Then I can tell you which 2–3 batteries I'd actually get quotes for, what capacity I'd choose, and roughly what you should expect to pay in Victoria after the current rebate.

     Sources



 Carbon Savers

Ad ...

VIC Heat Pump Hot Water Rebate

Upgrade To A Heat Pump Hot Water System
& Get Up To \$2,380 In Government Rebates.

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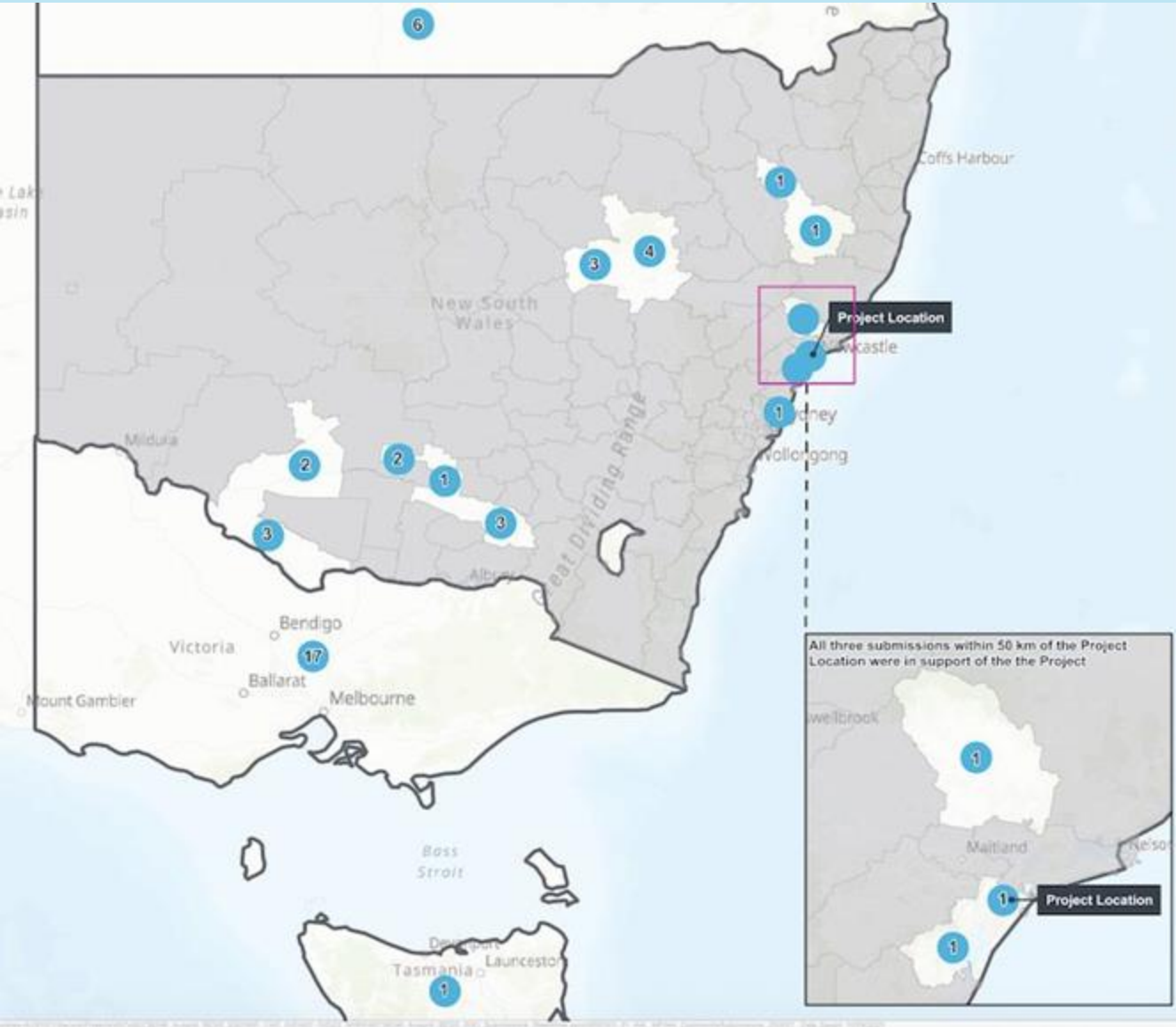
Your half-time pie. An everyday wonder of the energy grid worth celebrating. Towers and turbines and lines doing the work. The whole grid humming just so this can happen. Everyday magic, mostly unseen. The energy grid powering our communities.



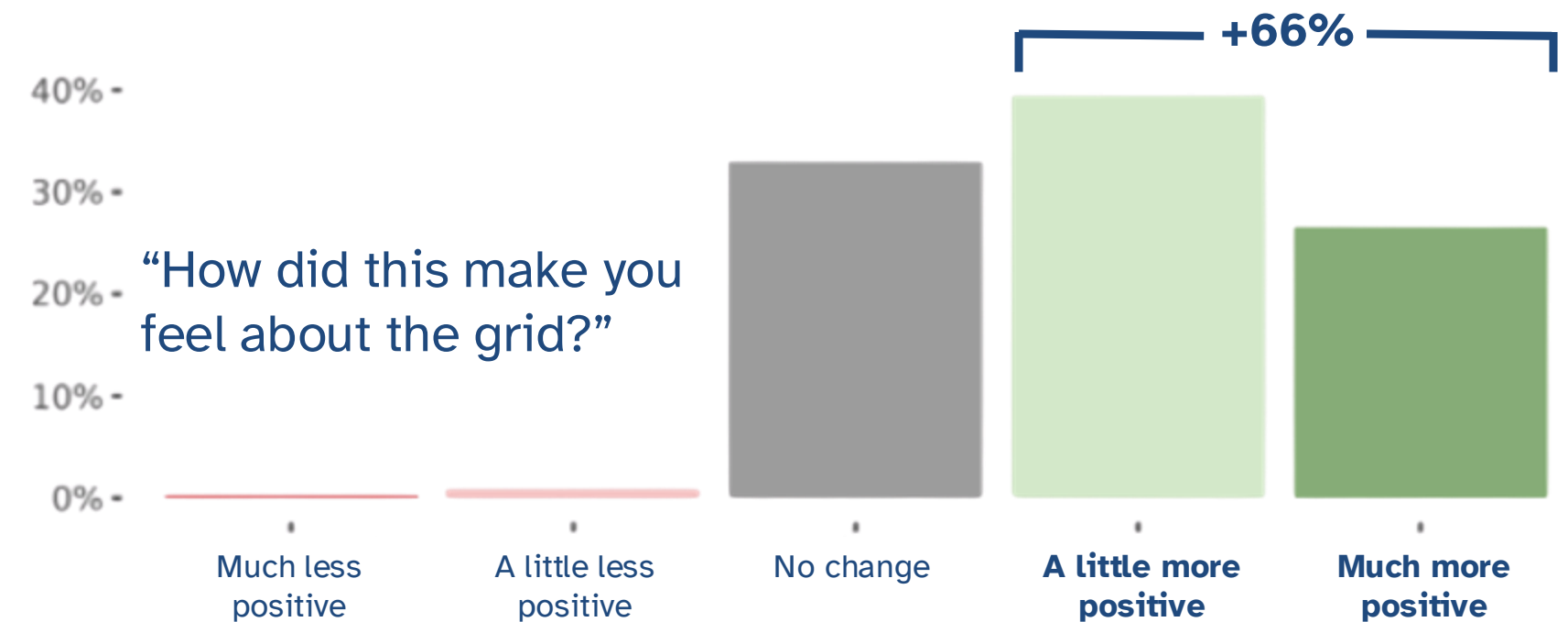
poweringourcommunities.com.au

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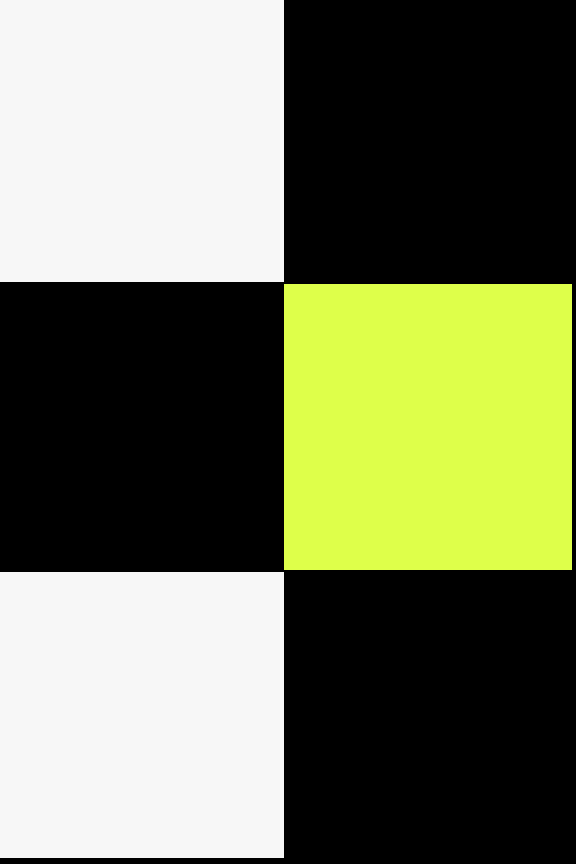


It works.



VIC REZs: +13% increase in people who “feel positive” vs control (63% vs 52%)

“It makes me appreciate the energy grid more. I usually just expect the power to be there, so this reminds me of the complex network required to make that happen reliably.”



Take Home Message

1. Social licence is broad, and not set in stone. Make it a **forethought** not an afterthought.
2. The energy transition is not a technology story it is a **human story**
3. The opposition is organised, **always on**, and everywhere. So should you be.
4. We have tested this, *and it works*.



Thank You.

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