



ENERGY EFFICIENCY ROUNDTABLE COMMUNIQUE

Thursday 15 April 2010

Energy efficiency is Australia's greatest opportunity to immediately reduce greenhouse gas pollution while saving money and improving national productivity.

Energy efficiency saves money:

Energy efficiency can reward every enterprise, organisation and household in the nation through direct cost savings and other benefits.¹ These savings come from reducing energy consumption in real terms, lowering the energy intensity of demand growth and improving energy network security. With electricity and gas prices rising rapidly, even without a price on carbon, the benefits of energy efficiency will increase for all energy consumers.

Energy efficiency is vital to a timely and orderly transition to a low-carbon economy:

Energy efficiency is one of the largest and cheapest ways to cut emissions. The International Energy Agency estimates 65 per cent of global emission cuts by 2020 will come from energy efficiency. Australia will need dedicated energy efficiency policies irrespective of what happens in other key climate change policy areas. Energy efficiency complements, and does not replace

- a carbon price;
- increased renewable, alternative and low carbon pollution energy generation;
- ongoing international negotiations for a global agreement on emissions reduction.

Energy Efficiency has reached a tipping point of policy development:

We will actively engage with stakeholders in relevant policy-making arenas, including the new Prime Minister's Task Group on Energy Efficiency. We welcome the appointment of Australia's first Minister for Energy Efficiency and inclusion of energy efficiency as a portfolio responsibility within the Department of Climate Change in Canberra.

We call for bipartisan political support for making energy efficiency and putting a price on greenhouse pollution core to any comprehensive strategy for enhancing Australia's economic productivity and environmental well-being. In order for the Federal Government to deliver on its 2007 election commitment to be at the forefront of OECD energy efficiency improvement, the Prime Minister's Task Group on Energy Efficiency must make recommendations in the following action areas.

Energy efficiency key action areas should include:

- Set mandatory national energy efficiency goals for 2020 and beyond with clear annual targets
- Create incentives in the National Electricity Market (NEM) to foster energy efficiency and distributed energy
- Strengthen institutional support for the 'smart grid'
- Build energy efficiency trade skills and workforce capabilities through national training programs
- Create strong incentives and regulatory drivers for energy efficiency in industry, commercial buildings and households
- Mandate stringent vehicle fuel consumption standards and recognise the contribution from recycling and materials resource efficiency
- Require best-practice energy efficiency in government operations

Further information contact:

Rob Murray-Leach, CEO, Energy Efficiency Council - 0414 065 556

Mark Lister, Interim CEO, Australian Alliance to Save Energy – 0402 320 906

Jeff Angel, Executive Director, Total Environment Centre – 02 9261 3437

Nicole Ikenberg, Policy Manager - Climate Change WWF-Australia - 0400 324 107

¹ On average every kWh of electricity consumed in Australia costs about 15 cents at retail prices and creates about 1kg of CO₂-e pollution.