

Australia needs concrete action to meet APEC efficiency targets

17 November, 2011, MELBOURNE. Large-scale energy efficiency could work a like a giant power station in reverse, an industry gathering heard today.

On Monday, APEC leader announced targets to reduce the energy intensity of the member economies by 45% by 2035.

“Energy intensity targets are a positive step,” said Richard Cowart, a leading international energy advisor, “Businesses, governments and households have huge opportunities to save money by reducing their energy use. However, we’ll need targeted policies and programs to help people save energy and meet the APEC target.”

An advocate of expanded cost-effective investments in efficiency, former US Energy Regulator, Cowart is visiting Australia to give first-hand experience in national schemes to cut energy bills and carbon at a major conference. Cowart heads a team working on these policies in Europe, and also serves as Chair of the Electricity Advisory Committee of the US Department of Energy

Rob-Murray Leach, CEO of the Energy Efficiency Council, says “There are huge opportunities to save energy and money through energy efficiency. Australian homes and businesses currently waste a lot of energy – reducing this waste could save the economy \$5 billion a year.”

“In California, the regulators have invested over \$1 billion a year in managing the demand on their power networks and in return they reap \$10 billion back in savings,” says Murray-Leach.

The Australian Government’s Clean Energy Future package includes a carbon price, and \$10 billion in finance for clean energy and energy efficiency and \$1.5 billion in grants for energy efficiency. With these policies, the Energy Efficiency Council’s members are going to deliver a substantial part of Australia’s carbon reduction target and APEC’s energy intensity target.

Cowart also shared his direct experience in how efficiency fits with a carbon price in Europe and North America, saying “**Savings to consumers under a carbon trading scheme can be enormous.**” “Energy efficiency lowers the clearing price for every megawatt-hour of energy sold – this doesn’t just benefit people with energy-saving devices, it lowers prices and improves power system reliability for everyone.”

As Australia moves from a fixed price to a carbon market, a strong roll-out of efficiency can in fact soften the carbon price, which is good news for households.

Examples to be showcased tomorrow include city-sponsored programs for office buildings to boost their efficiency (Melbourne 1200 Buildings program) and district-scale trigeneration plans in the City of Sydney (where gas is used in local generators to create both heat and power).

Silicon Valley innovations on show include in-home displays and smart power bills that show how your *neighbours* are doing in their energy use to trigger a community effort for savings.

CONTACT to book interviews.

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MEDIA Release



In the City of Yarra a new foundation will roll out a large scale energy efficiency makeover of households and business in their local areas.

“With a carbon price approaching, a business or a household can turn to efficiency to cut the impact of a carbon price on their energy bill. Most businesses can save 20-30% of their total energy use,” Murray-Leach explains.

Something many people don’t realise is that there is a much bigger impact on their electricity bills from network expansion to meet electricity peaks which happen at only a couple of times a year.

The pool of potential large-scale efficiency in Australia is a bit like sitting on an untapped power resource that will help to halt unnecessary network costs.

These industry experts currently in Australia are demonstrating how we get to it, for example through obligations for energy suppliers to spend on efficiency, compulsory standards on devices and a whole raft of clever solutions that will come from increased research and development.

CONFERENCE DETAILS

Location: Hilton on the Park , 192 Wellington Parade

Date: Tuesday November 17

Time: Keynotes 9.45 AM

**** INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST****

International policy solutions: Richard Cowart USA & Europe: *European Director, Regulatory Assistance Project and Chair, **US Department of Energy Electricity Advisory Committee*** - international policy solutions.

Interactive energy bills: Nadeem Sheikh, *Director, Client Solutions, **Opower**, San Francisco*

/ENDS/

Conference Topics:

9 am The impact of the Clean Energy Future package (carbon price)

10 am Global perspectives from USA and Europe

11 am Managing energy use to save money on the electricity grid

1:30 pm Transforming Australia’s cities – the good, the bad and the ugly

2:30 pm Low carbon communities and government operations

4:20 pm Unleashing cogeneration

For a full program go to: http://www.eec.org.au/events/National_Conference_2011

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