**Empowering Rural and Regional Energy Consumer Advocates to engage in policy through support to attend National Energy Efficiency Conference 2023**

**Selected post-conference attendee observations and reports**

“I was really pleased to be able to attend the Energy Efficiency Council’s annual conference in Sydney on 24 & 25 May 2023 (and was disappointed that due to existing commitments, I couldn’t attend the Energy Efficiency Schemes Summit on 23 May 2023).  I wouldn’t have been able to attend with sponsorship.

It was my first time at the conference in person (I attended some on-line sessions at the conference in 2021) and I was impressed and inspired by the depth and breadth of discussion about energy efficiency and its benefits.

I was keen to hear about the benefits of energy efficiency as an essential tool on the path to zero carbon and eradicating energy poverty, and also about how we get there – whether that be households, states and territories, or whole countries.  It was great to listen to speakers talk about the various policy, regulatory and budgetary settings that can support progress towards improved energy efficiency.

The conference also provided a great opportunity for networking, and I was pleased to connect with other policy advocates from around Australia as well as people from government and the private sector.

I heard many things that will inform my ongoing advocacy for improved energy efficiency standards in the Northern Territory, though sadly the main thing was that it confirmed my view that the NT is way behind in energy efficiency – we have lower standards than any other jurisdiction in Australia, and political leaders talk about energy efficiency as a cost.

I’m looking forward to ongoing contact with some of the people I met at the conference and hope to attend, and have renewed enthusiasm for advocacy for improved energy efficiency standards in the NT.

I’d love to attend the conference again in the future, and would also love to see a session focussing on energy efficiency in tropical and other hot climate zones.

I’ll finish off by noting that at the conference, I realised that apart from a love of beer, the NT  is the direct opposite of Germany:  we have light tough (or non-existent) regulation, thin markets, widely disperse population, bad roads and limited transport options, high level of poverty and disadvantage, low level of consumer knowledge, and no serious investment in demand management.”

**Caitlin Perry**, Northern Territory Council of Social Service

“I found attending the National Energy Efficiency Conference an extremely valuable opportunity as a community advocate.

The presentations and speaker list were excellent and provided a I was particularly interested in the keynote presentation of Dr Jan Rosenow on the role of energy efficiency in broader decarbonisation, and the broad range of industry and community speakers in the residential stream. Several sessions effectively brought together people with different perspectives and experiences on the same issue in a way I found valuable: for example, residential energy efficiency conversations bringing together policy workers, appliance manufacturers, designers and installers.

I think it is important that the issues facing renters, low-income households and social housing residents are central in the focus of the energy efficiency sector and I was pleased that these were highlighted by many speakers, as well as in the informal conversations I had at the conference.

I also valued the opportunity to build new connections with government and industry representatives. I have subsequently been in contact with several people I spoke with at the conference and have confirmed the participation of two industry practitioners in an upcoming analysis project on insulation for rental homes, as a result of the connections made at this conference.

The organisation of the conference was outstanding, with all practical elements of attending smooth and clear to understand.”

**Rob Mcleod, Renew**

“I learnt heaps about efficiency, electrification, and decarbonisation!   
Some figures that stood out to me were:

* energy efficiency could account for almost 20% of our emissions reduction by 2023
* advanced retrofitting of the building envelope of all types of houses will produce both energy and cost savings, and
* without proper insulation, the indoor temperature of a home can drop by 5°C within a few hours!

I feel much more informed about how energy efficiency works, how important is it and how to advocate for energy efficiency and electrification measures to benefit small energy consumers in the ACT.

**Lyndsay Bassett, ACTCOSS**

– ENDS –

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