

Media Release

Consumers want energy policy settled with focus on affordability

Energy Consumers Australia CEO Rosemary Sinclair said today that households and small businesses are eager to see energy policy settled with a clear focus on affordability.

“The COAG Energy Council made further progress today toward adopting a scheme that integrates emissions and energy policy and brings bills down over time,” Ms Sinclair said.

“The progress today must continue, with affordability front of mind – as a *constraint* – for the Energy Security Board and stakeholders in the detailed design work that will now follow.

Ms Sinclair explained that applying an affordability constraint requires a focus on competitive market outcomes and optimising new and existing investments in the electricity system.

“In the future, not one more dollar should be spent on generation or the poles and wires than required, and not one day earlier than necessary.

“We must avoid the mistakes of the past and resist policies that incentivise unwarranted or premature investment in new generation.”

“We need better risk management to guard against what the ACCC called out as an ‘overinvestment’ in the poles and wires in the past ten years.

Ms Sinclair urged continued consultation and collaboration to work through the detail and make sure we get the rules and settings to deliver the right outcomes for consumers.

“In the coming weeks and months, engagement with consumers will be crucial to build confidence in the community.

“The final policy design must also support greater competition in the market and dovetail with the work being carried out by the ACCC.

“Ultimately, households and small businesses want comfortable homes, competitive businesses and bills that don’t make them so anxious that they put off opening them.”

Media Contact: Tim O’Halloran 0409 059 617