



Information Bulletin

13th COAG Energy Council Meeting

25 August 2017

Energy Consumers Australia attends, as an observer, the meetings of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Energy Council. The three market institutions – the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC), the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) and the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) – also attend as observers.

This Information Bulletin draws on the short [media release](#) made following the meeting, which was conducted via telepresence. Extracts from the media release are provided in *italicised* text boxes below.

The focus of the meeting was to agree on advice from the Energy Council to COAG Leaders about the implementations contained in the final report of the Independent Review into the Future Security of the National Electricity Market, as well as amendments to the Gas Supply Strategy.

1. Progression of Finkel Review recommendations

“Energy Ministers today agreed their advice to the Council of Australian Governments on the implementation of the 49 of 50 recommendations agreed by the Energy Council at its meeting of 14 July 2017. The report forms the first annual report to COAG Leaders, due by the end of August, on the Energy Council’s priorities”.

“The Australian Energy Market Operator is implementing a comprehensive plan for the National Electricity Market ahead of summer 2017/18, which is currently being independently audited and complements the Finkel implementation plan”.

“The Energy Security Board, newly established by the Energy Council and responsible for whole-of-system oversight, will coordinate the implementation of the reform blueprint”.

As outlined in the [Energy Council’s Communique](#) for its 14 July meeting and the associated [Energy Consumers Australia Information Bulletin](#), the Energy Council agreed to progress all recommendations in the Finkel review, except for the introduction of a Clean Energy Target. At its 25 August meeting, the Energy Council agreed to a detailed implementation plan for the 49 recommendations, which will be provided to COAG Leaders.

The recommendations will be implemented by the Energy Council, jurisdictional governments and the three energy market institutions.

On 8 August, the Energy Council announced the establishment of the Energy Security Board (ESB). Dr Kerry Schott AO was appointed the independent Chair and Clare Savage the Deputy Chair of the ESB, joining the heads of the AER, AEMC and AEMO as members. More information about Dr Schott and Ms Savage is provided in the [Energy Council’s media release](#).

2. Resources measures

Ministers also agreed to amend the Gas Supply Strategy by including:

- Investigations of onshore conventional gas resources as well as the development of offshore gas and underground storage*
- the western and northern gas markets*
- the provision of better information for landholders and communities.*

As outlined in Energy Consumers Australia's last [Energy Council Information Bulletin](#) (page 8), the Gas Supply Strategy was agreed in [December 2015](#). It contains work programs in the key areas of:

- increased sharing of geoscience and other information about potential resources to improve certainty around gas supply data
- strengthening scientific rigour and the sharing of information to improve baseline and monitoring data of unconventional gas resources across the community
- harmonising regulatory frameworks to manage risk and address issues
- improving collaboration to promote industry best practice.

3. Media comments and coverage

Given the Energy Council issued a media release, rather than the usual communique, Ministers did not make their own media statements about the meeting. On the day of the meeting, the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP, Commonwealth Minister for Environment and Energy, [made a media statement](#) in response to the Victorian Government's [announcement of a state-based renewable energy target](#) two days earlier.