

MEDIA RELEASE

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A bright gas future for customers and the environment

Gas is the missing piece in policies for Australia's long-term energy transition, according to a new publication issued by Australia's energy industry.

Three gas industry associations are calling for coherent energy policy frameworks to unlock the benefits of natural gas for Australian households and businesses in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Australia's Bright Gas Future, a publication from the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (APPEA), the Australian Pipelines and Gas Association (APGA) and the Energy Networks Association (ENA) highlights the significant benefits of natural gas and the need for policies that support energy security and carbon abatement ambitions.

"Natural gas is playing a key role in international markets to transition to a cleaner energy economy," ENA CEO John Bradley said.

"Yet even though Australia is about to become one of the world's largest exporters of LNG, outdated policies are preventing this low-emission fuel from meeting our needs here at home."

APPEA Chief Executive Malcolm Roberts said the recently issued COAG Energy Council Gas Supply Strategy recognised the importance of bringing more gas supply to market and encouraging more suppliers.

"However there is a need for a fresh look at how natural gas can assist the Australian community to transition to a clean energy future in balanced policy frameworks that avoid picking winners," Mr Roberts said.

APGA Chief Executive Cheryl Cartwright said Australia has more than 100,000km of distribution pipelines and more than 35,000km of transmission pipelines that efficiently deliver natural gas to over 4.5 million consumers.

"This existing infrastructure supports peak demand in summer and in winter – avoiding the need for additional augmentation of the electricity network to meet extreme peaks," she said

"In Europe, gas is recognised as playing a key role to play in supporting intermittent renewables – with gas storage and transmission pipeline providing flexibility when energy demands can change rapidly."

In many areas natural gas simply cannot be replaced, Dr Roberts said.

"It is an essential feedstock in the production of fertilisers and pharmaceuticals, and electricity simply cannot produce the temperatures or consistency of heat needed in the manufacture of products such as bricks, glass and paper," he said.

"Natural gas is a crucial part of Australian industry and we must ensure its future in our energy mix. It is also one of Australia's most successful exports and Australian gas is allowing many other countries to achieve environmental improvements while providing energy to their communities."

Mr Bradley said Australia was blessed with an abundance of natural gas which is a great advantage.

"Natural gas is a flexible fuel, ideal for use in conjunction with renewable generation sources, and essential for our industry," he said.

"If we want to achieve our emissions reduction targets at least cost, Australia needs a level playing field which makes the best use of our exceptional gas resources," Mr Bradley said.

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Australia's Bright Gas Future is available online at www.appea.com.au, www.apga.org.au and www.ena.asn.au