

ESSENTIAL ENERGY PRICE DROP A WIN FOR ENERGY USERS

The peak body representing large energy users, the Energy Users Association of Australia (EUAA), welcomes the decision by Essential Energy to not proceed with proposed increases in regulated network prices.

“Essential Energy’s decision will bring relief to NSW energy consumers and help to ease the pressure on business who are suffering with escalating energy bills after a number of years of price rises,” said EUAA Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Richards.

“Network businesses need customers as much as customers need the networks and we hope that Essential Energy’s decision to prioritise customers and look at improving efficiencies within its business will influence NSW’s other network companies to reconsider their planned price increases as well.”

Energy prices are causing havoc in Australia creating an unsustainable environment for consumers. Businesses across the country have warned of the impact that the energy crisis is having with enormous price hikes in both electricity and gas over the past five years leading to an untenable situation. Without a solution on the horizon, some businesses are reconsidering their ability to continue operating in Australia while others have reduced staff and output in an attempt to reduce costs.

“The EUAA has been working on several fronts to improve the situation for energy users including advocating for changes to network rules. The recent abolition of the Limited Merits Review, which allowed for challenges to Australian Energy Regulator price decisions, was welcomed by the EUAA and will mean that the network charges that have been allowed in recent years will not continue,” said Mr Richards.

But without a national energy policy, the ongoing rise in wholesale energy prices which is largely driven by a lack of investment in generation will continue.

“A national energy policy is critical for Australia’s future prosperity,” added Mr Richards. “While we can and should be adjusting the way our network is managed, and the rules that drive decisions on issues such as price rises, a national energy policy is the only way to bring confidence back to the market and ensure we attract investment in new generation assets that are essential to keeping the lights on a lid on wholesale energy prices.”

Members of the EUAA create and distribute essential items used by Australians every day including food, plastics, raw materials, paper and household goods and appliances. Their combined energy spend per annum is in excess of \$1billion yet they feel let down by Australian energy policy as they struggle to remain competitive in an increasingly global market.

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