

GAS PIPELINE REFORMS CONTINUE A POSITIVE TREND

A draft package of gas pipeline reforms announced today are an important step towards improved transparency in gas markets and fairer outcomes for gas users and are welcomed by leading advocate for commercial and industrial energy users, The Energy Users' Association of Australia (EUAA).

"This draft package continues the positive trend of recent pipeline reforms and is another important step in a process that will benefit customers. Not only will they improve transparency but also reduce costs through actions such as streamlining regulation across jurisdictions," said EUAA Chief Executive Officer, Mr Andrew Richards.

A leading voice for large energy users in Australia, the EUAA has been calling for improvements in gas pipeline regulation for some time, supporting a number of initiatives and inquiries that have taken place including the ongoing ACCC gas market inquiry. The draft reforms now require agreement by state and federal governments.

"We appreciate the level of complexity to gain agreement across all State and Commonwealth governments to create this package of draft reforms. We congratulate all parties involved and look forward to participating in the consultation that will follow," added Mr Richards.

Gas pipeline reform considerations have been taking place for a number of years. The EUAA has been actively supporting actions to improve transparency, streamline regulation and improve outcomes for customers. In its Dec 2019 submission, the EUAA also encouraged all parties to consider 'fairness' as per the principles defined in the Energy Charter, of which many gas market participants are signatories.

The Charter is: *'...focused on embedding customer-centric culture and conduct in energy businesses to create real improvements in price and service delivery, through commitment to the Five Principles.'* The first being, *'We will put customers at the centre of our energy business and the energy system.'*

"The EUAA recognises the gas pipeline industry is working closely with gas users to find common ground and is encouraged by their willingness to engage with stakeholders on key issues through initiatives such as the Energy Charter. We encourage other elements of the gas supply chain to follow this example."

The EUAA is the peak national body representing major Australian electricity and gas users. Membership covers a broad cross-section of the Australian economy including significant retail, mining, manufacturing, healthcare, raw materials and food processing industries producing many essential items used by the Australian community every day.

Combined, EUAA members employ over 1 million Australians, pay billions in energy bills every year and are desperate to see a national energy and climate change plan that puts downward pressure on electricity and gas costs.

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