

Fed energy minister Josh Frydenberg says government won't rush CET



Minister for Environment and Energy Josh Frydenberg says the Clean Energy target won't be rushed..

AFR, [Ben Potter, 23 June 2017](#)

The Turnbull government won't be rushed into finalising the Clean Energy Target which forms the centrepiece of the Finkel review of energy security, energy minister Josh Frydenberg says. Mr Frydenberg said it was more important to get the Clean Energy Target right, and to take his parliamentary colleagues and key energy sector stakeholders with him, than to get it resolved within a set time frame.

[The government adopted 49 of the Finkel review's 50 recommendations on Tuesday](#) but said the Clean Energy Target - which would extend the Renewable Energy Target to 2050 and widen its scope to include other technologies including "clean coal" if it becomes viable - needed more work.

Mr Frydenberg said energy policy was "the most challenging policy issue to navigate through Canberra" and "a barbecue stopper in the truest sense of the word" because of [soaring power prices](#).



Electricity prices will rise around 20 per cent and gas price rises of 17 per cent from July 1.
AP

"My colleagues are hearing every day from their constituents about people's concern with power prices.

What they want to know is what future government action - be it around a mechanism that integrates climate and energy policy, be it around restrictions on gas exports, be it around the abolition of the limited merits review - will put downward pressure on prices."

Too big to get wrong

"This is too big an issue to rush or to get wrong. I am not going to put a time frame on it," Mr Frydenberg told the Energy Week 2017 conference in Melbourne. He said the Finkel review recommendations and other measures would be discussed by energy ministers at their meeting in July. .

Dr Alan Finkel Australian Chief Scientist addressed the National Press Club in Canberra on Wednesday 21 June 2017. Photo: Andrew Meares Andrew Meares

"But I know the Prime Minister and other ministers within the cabinet and indeed the whole party room is focussed primarily at the moment on how do we drive down the cost of power. "So that is our overwhelming preoccupation," Mr Frydenberg said.

"But I can't give you and I am not going to give you a specific timeframe because I want get this policy right, I want to take all my colleagues with us, and at the end of the day the country needs a comprehensive energy policy that will stand the test of time."

He said one of the obstacles to a swifter outcome is that the Finkel review recommended principles and courses of action but not necessarily final determinations of, for example, the quantity of batteries or other firm capacity that will be required of new renewable generation..

AEMO is doing everything it can to reduce the risk of blackouts next summer. Pictue shows AEMO chief executive Audrey Zibelman Chris Hopkins

Storage

The Finkel review left this up to the Australian Energy Market Operator, and the Australian Energy Markets Commission to determine, for example, whether new wind or solar generation in particular locations would require storage equal to, says, 25 per cent of nameplate capacity for four hours, or 50 per cent for 2 hours."These questions can only be decided upon by AEMO and obviously we will need to engage them in a formal process." "So we would like to advance a number of these recommendations as soon as practicable, but it's not simply a question of ministers agreeing, it is also a question of the market operator and the AEMC doing their required stakeholder due diligence before they arrive at a final position."

Mr Frydenberg said a decade of policy fumbles over the past decade - covers both parties in government - had led to the situation of soaring retail and wholesale prices, a duopoly in gas pipelines and powerful "gentailers" - integrated electricity generators and retailers.

Next summer

In response to concerns about blackouts and brownouts next summer, he said AEMO "is doing everything possible to ensure that we have security of supply through the summer". "That means talking to the generators, ensuring that they have got access to their fuel supply and that their maintenance programs are being kept up to date."

He said the new gas fired power stations coming on line and the guarantee by liquefied natural gas exports that there won't be domestic shortfalls in future should improve the stability of the system."In the short term, we are certainly getting on with it with a sense of urgency," Mr Frydenberg said.

"Unfortunately with a lot of these policies, there are a lot of things you need to take into account and a lot of key stakeholders you need to work with both within the parliamentary process and beyond it as well, and we are getting on with doing that." .