



MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW SYSTEM TO STREAMLINE ENERGY REPORTING

Company reporting on energy use will be easier under a new streamlined system, Minister for Resources, Energy and Tourism, Martin Ferguson AM MP, and Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, announced today.

Regulations governing the Federal Government's Energy Efficiency Opportunities (EEO) program will be amended from 1 July 2008 to enable participating companies to streamline energy use reporting with requirements under the new National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System.

The EEO program is a key component of the Government's push to improve energy use by Australia's largest energy-using businesses. It requires companies using more than 0.5 petajoules of energy a year to undertake energy efficiency opportunity assessments and report publicly on the results of those assessments and measures planned to reduce energy use.

The EEO program covers around 60 per cent of Australia's total business energy use.

The National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System will collect energy use data which will form the basis for a future emissions trading scheme. Streamlining the EEO with this system is designed to address concerns expressed by some businesses that energy use reporting would be duplicated under the two systems.

"The Government is committed to reducing red tape and compliance costs for business wherever possible. That is why we have acted to streamline energy use reporting requirements," Minister Ferguson said.

"Aligning energy use reporting requirements under the EEO program with the Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System will enable companies to collect one set of energy use data, and report the data once, in order to meet government reporting requirements," he said.

Transitional provisions will allow companies already operating under the existing rules to avoid having to re-do any assessment or reporting work they have committed to.

"This is an important step to help make reporting systems more efficient, and to allow companies to focus on managing their energy use," Senator Wong said.

The Australian Government is working cooperatively with the States and Territories through the Council of Australian Governments to minimise or eliminate reporting duplication by the 2009-10 reporting year.

Mr Ferguson also confirmed that the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism is developing an Energy Efficiency Opportunities reporting module in the Online System for Comprehensive Activity Reporting (OSCAR).

“OSCAR, proposed for the Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System, will enable 'one stop' reporting to Government for participants in both programs,” he said.

The EEO module will be in place for companies to report on their first assessments by the EEO reporting deadline of 31 December this year.

The Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism will consult with interested stakeholders on the proposed amendments to the regulations over the coming weeks. Interested parties will be encouraged to provide feedback on the proposal. Industry workshops in May and June will also focus on streamlining of reporting including information on National Greenhouse Energy Reporting System requirements.

Further information about the Energy Efficiency Opportunities program is available at www.energyefficiencyopportunities.gov.au.

Further information about the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting program is available at www.climatechange.gov.au/reporting/index.html.