

# Senate Select Committee on Energy planning and regulation in Australia

## Question on notice: Energy Advisory Panel

### 1. Advice on closure of diesel generators by Engie

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**Senator CANAVAN:** Alright. That seems very strange. Again, the same sort of advice was made publicly available by the ESB under the former government, but this government obviously has taken a different position on transparency. I note, though, that, despite the Commonwealth mechanism, there seems to be a fraying of the approach here among the states. I believe South Australia recently applied to restart two diesel generators to provide more capacity. Has anybody got insights on that?

**Ms Savage:** I think Ms Collyer might have an answer to that under the AEMC's evidence later this morning.

**Senator CANAVAN:** Is that something that the EAP has provided advice to South Australia on?

**Ms Savage:** No, the EAP has not been asked for advice on that.

**Senator CANAVAN:** I believe that the operators of those diesel generators had cited, earlier this year, the lack of technologically neutral aspects of the CIS, the Capacity Investment Scheme, as a reason they had to shut. Now they're looking at being reopened, apparently. Did you provide any advice back then to the government on Engie's complaints about the design of the Capacity Investment Scheme?

**Ms Savage:** I don't think I can tell you the nature of the advice we provided at the time.

**Senator CANAVAN:** Did you?

**Ms Savage:** We have provided advice under the National Energy Transformation Partnership on a range of government initiatives, including the Capacity Investment Scheme.

**Senator CANAVAN:** But did you provide, in particular, advice about Engie's issues around the diesel generators in South Australia?

**Ms Savage:** I can't tell you the nature of the advice we gave, Senator, because it's—

**Senator CANAVAN:** You surely can tell me whether you provided advice on that matter? That's not a question that would typically be refused.

**Ms Savage:** We provided advice on the Capacity Investment Scheme.

**Senator CANAVAN:** But I'm specifically asking: did you provide advice about Engie's generators in South Australia—the two diesel generators?

**Ms Savage:** I think that question goes to the nature of the advice.

**Senator CANAVAN:** It does not. It clearly does not, Chair. This is a very strange situation we have, where we've got state and Commonwealth bodies. We've got a serious issue here. In a Senate estimates situation, if I asked, 'Did you provide advice on this issue?' I'd get a yes or no answer. Did you provide advice on Engie's closure of these two diesel generators earlier this year?

**Ms Savage:** As the EAP?

**Senator CANAVAN:** Yes.

**Ms Savage:** As the EAP, I don't believe we did, but I'd have to take it on notice and go and ask—

**Senator CANAVAN:** Okay. Take that on notice. Thank you. I'm not asking for the nature of the advice, even though I think it's very strange that we can't have access to that. I'll come back to that later.

### **Answer:**

The Energy Advisory Panel has not provided advice to Energy Ministers on Engie's closure of its two diesel generators in South Australia.