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House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy Inquiry into modernising Australia's electricity grid

Issue date: 5 February 2018

Consensus report of the parliamentary energy committee

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy today released the report of its inquiry into modernising Australia's electricity grid, which is a consensus, cross-party report on a highly contested policy area.

Like many countries around the world, the electricity system in Australia is in a period of rapid transition, driven by changes in the generation mix, new technologies, the development of government policies aimed at reducing emissions, and changes in how consumers interact with the system. This period of transition presents both challenges and opportunities, from improving the security, reliability, and affordability of the electricity supply, to contributing to Australia's emission reduction commitments.

The Committee consisted of:

- Andrew Broad MP (The Nationals, Member for Mallee)
- Pat Conroy MP (ALP, Member for Shortlandand, Shadow Assistant Minister for Climate Change and Energy)
- the Hon. Warren Entsch MP (Liberal Party of Australia, Member for Leichhardt)
- Trevor Evans MP (Liberal Party of Australia, Member for Brisbane)
- Luke Howarth MP (Liberal Party of Australia, Member for Petrie)
- Craig Kelly MP (Liberal Party of Australia, Member for Hughes and Chair of the backbench environment and energy committee)
- Peter Khalil MP (ALP, Member for Wills)
- Anne Stanley MP (ALP, Member for Werriwa)
- Adam Bandt MP (Australian Greens, Member for Melbourne).

The Committee Chair, Andrew Broad MP (The Nationals, Member for Mallee), said that "modernising the electricity grid is a big project for a big country. Whilst there is a plethora of views on what is the best way forward, this Committee took a cross-party approach to the issues and was determined to rise above the political fray and work in the national interest."

Mr Broad said that "the Committee sought to make recommendations that cover a range of concerns including generation, better planning, transmission and distribution networks, updating market rules and resolving policy uncertainty. The report canvasses important issues and makes



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timely recommendations that seek to ensure that Australia is not left behind in the electricity revolution that is occurring all around us.”

The Committee Deputy Chair, Pat Conroy MP (ALP, Member for Shortland), noted that “a clear theme in the evidence to inquiry was that policy uncertainty, particularly regarding emissions reduction, has affected investment in the electricity sector. The Committee considers that resolving policy uncertainty would be of enormous value.”

As part of the inquiry, the Committee had the opportunity to meet with a wide range of stakeholders from each of the mainland states in the National Electricity Market, providing them with the opportunity to learn about the different needs of consumers across the electricity grid. The Committee also witnessed firsthand how other countries are dealing with the challenge of grid modernisation when four of the members of the Committee travelled to Germany and the United States.

Mr Broad was particularly appreciative of the contribution to the inquiry from the organisations and individuals that made submissions to the inquiry, people who met with the Committee and the thousands of people who responded to the Committee’s online questionnaire.

The Committee’s report and further details about the inquiry—including submissions, terms of reference, and the public hearing transcripts—can be obtained from the Committee’s website [here](#).

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