



**Hon Peter Collier MLC
Minister for Education; Energy; Indigenous Affairs**

Our Ref: 34-21200

Ms Sophie Dunstone
Committee Secretary
Senate Select Committee on Electricity Prices
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Ms Dunstone

SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY ON ELECTRICITY PRICES

I refer to the recent call for written submissions by the Senate Select Committee on Electricity Prices in relation to the above inquiry.

The Government of Western Australia did not make a substantive submission as the timeframe was insufficient for due consideration to be given to the terms of the Committee's inquiry.

Notwithstanding this, the Government of Western Australia remains committed to engaging in processes already underway within Western Australia and across jurisdictions that are addressing electricity costs and prices.

At a national level, the Council of Australian Governments' Standing Council on Energy and Resources manages a comprehensive energy market reform program. The next phase of this program is likely to focus on strengthening regulation, empowering consumers, enhancing competition and ensuring balanced network investment. Jurisdictional Energy Ministers will be meeting in October and November 2012 to consider a set of market reforms to ensure that market outcomes, particularly prices, serve the long-term interests of consumers.

On 28 August 2012, I announced the establishment of a working group to review the causes of rising costs for supply of electricity services in Western Australia and identify measures to address these causes and minimise electricity prices into the future. While some causes of cost and price increases are likely to be consistent across Australia, a State-level review is justified by the market and regulatory arrangements that apply in Western Australia are different from the National Electricity Market.

I understand that the Government of Western Australia has been invited to appear before the Senate Committee on Tuesday, 2 October 2012. I am advised that Ms Anne Nolan, Director General of the Department of Finance, will be representing the Government in this regard.

I look forward to engaging with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions at upcoming meetings of jurisdictional Energy Ministers with respect to energy market reforms.

Kind regards

Hon Peter Collier MLC
MINISTER FOR ENERGY
27 SEP 2012