

Australian Pipeline Industry Association Ltd

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MEDIA RELEASE

Natural gas missing yet again from ALP election policy – APIA

Australia's natural gas industry is disappointed at the absence once again of natural gas in the Australian Labor Party's latest energy policy announcement.

The Australian Pipeline Industry Association (APIA), representing the nation's gas transmission industry, said both the ALP and the Coalition were quite open in private discussions on the economic and environmental benefits of natural gas in Australia.

"However, while they both acknowledge privately the crucial importance of natural gas in Australia's future energy generation, natural gas goes missing in their public announcements for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from energy generation," Ms Cheryl Cartwright, APIA's Chief Executive, said today.

"Natural gas is a cleaner burning fuel than is coal; it uses less water than does coal-fired power generation, it's certainly less expensive than clean coal, it doesn't attract government subsidies and is more readily available than renewable energy sources," she said.

"The technology is proven to build gas-fired power stations for Australia's future energy generation, and gas is available now.

"However, unless infrastructure investment is encouraged for such energy generation, then the critical transmission infrastructure simply won't be built in time to meet the expected energy demand.

"We understand there needs to be a focus on developing the renewable energy generation industries and that in the longer term, our energy needs must be addressed by renewable energy sources in order to dramatically reduce or eliminate greenhouse gas emissions.

"But, no matter how much money governments throw at the renewable energy sector, it will not be ready in the short or medium term to generate base-load power for major manufacturing or electricity generation."

Ms Cartwright said the gas industry understood that both sides of politics want to also focus on the coal industry – a major national industry.

"But natural gas is also a major industry in this country, with a value of the exploration, transmission and construction of natural gas valued at more than \$10 billion," she said.

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“The natural gas industry directly employs more than 4,000 workers, and this does not include Australians employed in the construction and service industries associated with gas transmission.

Ms Cartwright said Australia could not progress sensibly towards reducing its greenhouse gas emissions if it did not also have a plan for the medium term.

“The natural gas industry does not need government hand outs, but it certainly also does not need policies that mitigate exploration, development and transmission of natural gas,” she said.

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