



MEDIA RELEASE

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Timing of legislation a threat to investment in infrastructure: APIA

The Australian Pipeline Industry Association has warned Federal and State energy ministers that they risk future investment in long-distance gas pipelines by reducing the time for full consultation with industry on proposed legislation.

“Legislation to establish the new energy market regime is complex, but it is also critical to energy industries,” APIA Chief Executive, Cheryl Cartwright, said today.

“It therefore needs to be well-considered and appropriate for the gas transmission industry,” she said.

Ms Cartwright’s comments followed a Ministerial Council on Energy meeting in Darwin today that decided to delay release of draft legislation for consultation, and also to remove a regulatory right currently held by the gas industry.

“While industry accepts that complex legislation does take time to prepare, such a delay should not mean less time for consultation with industry in order to meet a pre-arranged timetable,” Ms Cartwright said.

“It is critical that this legislation introduce less intrusive regulation for energy industries and also allow for the significant and important differences between gas transmission and the other energy sectors.

“If the government gets this legislation wrong by both removing the regulatory model that is in the current Gas Code and failing to allow enough time to fully consult and consider industry issues, it will put at risk investment in future gas transmission infrastructure.

“While the Ministerial Council might want to focus on reducing costs to consumers – as it should – these same consumers will not thank governments that fail to ensure the supply of energy into the future.

“As the peak industry body with a focus on the gas industry, APIA calls on the Government to accept the current approach in the Gas Code regarding the regulatory model which defines the role of the regulator, maintain the current right to appeal regulatory decisions and allow reasonable time for consultation with industry.

“It is only fair, when introducing legislation that will impact on industry and future investment, that Ministers instruct their officials to get that legislation right.”

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