

Reflecting on key outcomes of Energy 21C

The recent Energy 21C conference at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre attracted more than 2,000 delegates providing a forum for industry leaders to address the challenges of energy transmission and distribution into the 21st century.

“The relevance of the conference program, along with the diversity and quality of the industry exhibition area, combined to create a highly successful conference that will allow the industry to make more informed decisions about the future,” Conference Chairman, Bob Smith, said.

“Without doubt, the over-riding theme of Energy 21C was the energy industry’s response to the climate change challenge with the focus set from the opening session with a keynote address by internationally acclaimed scientist, author and Australian of the Year, Professor Tim Flannery.

“This was the springboard for stimulating presentations, debate and professional networking about the challenges and responsibilities of energy providers and consumers in the transition to a national regulatory regime.

“It is clear that the industry and our customers will need to make more environmentally sustainable power choices.

“Energy 21C provided unique insights into bold new technologies, including smart metering and intelligent systems, that will help achieve unprecedented levels of operational effectiveness while addressing environmental demands.”

Mike Griffin, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Power Institute, said energy networks needed to take a leading role in leveraging the full benefits of demand management and energy efficiency.

“It will require a proactive approach to communication with customers with knowledge and incentives to enable them to make considered choices,” Mr Griffin said. “It needs to be simple and strategically targeted information.

“We also need to define the role and construction of the networks of the future. They will be a combination of energy and communication networks with standardised system products and solutions.”

Mr Griffin said Energy 21C had highlighted the critical shortage of human resources for the emerging energy industry.

“We need more promotion at primary and secondary school levels to demonstrate the innovation and technological changes in our industry, and to encourage young people to consider exciting and challenging energy engineering careers,” he said.

The next Energy 21C meeting will be held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre in late 2009.

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