

Energy 21C, Sydney  
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**(Andrew Blyth is available for interview on 0408 977758)**

## **Peak industry body calls for political action to help customers change energy demand**

An energy industry leader has called on major political parties to commit to funding community awareness programs to ensure consumers can make informed decisions about power use and its impact on the environment.

Andrew Blyth, Chief Executive of the Energy Networks Association, said in the lead-up to the Federal election, all political parties had the opportunity to “step up to real options to transform Australia’s energy consumption.”

Speaking on the opening day of the Energy 21C conference at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Mr Blyth said: “For too long the focus has been on the supply side of the energy market in finding solutions to Australia’s climate change challenge.

“It is time that customers were front and centre in the energy and greenhouse gas emissions debate.

“More emphasis should be placed on helping customers – homeowners and businesses – to understand the principles of energy demand management and the environmental benefits of energy efficiency choices.

“Customers literally have the power in their hands to manage their electricity demand and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through their energy use decisions.

“Governments must recognise this enormous potential and provide consumers with the right tools and information for immediate action and positive results.”

The Energy Networks Association is the peak national body representing gas and electricity distribution businesses throughout Australia. Electricity network businesses have direct links to 12 million Australian households and businesses.

“Demand management is aimed at changing the pattern of energy use by customers, with a particular focus on reducing peak demand, gaining better control of energy costs and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

“Recognising Australia’s climate change challenge, we must now move to a smarter energy future where customers have the right information and incentives to reduce the environmental impact of their energy use.

“This will involve a mix of smart metering and clear information on strategies to ensure energy efficiency.

“Australia’s political leaders have a real opportunity to make a genuine difference by delivering a policy commitment to demand management and energy efficiency that seeks to balance the needs of our technology-driven society and our response to the spectre of climate change.

“By doing so, it will deliver real savings in energy prices and in the amount of greenhouse gas entering the atmosphere.”

The theme of the Energy 21C conference is energy delivery solutions for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The three-day conference has attracted world leaders in the energy transmission and distribution sector to explore new frontiers in the reliable and environmentally sustainable supply of gas and electricity.

**Interview:**

**Andrew Blyth is available for interview on 0408 977758**

**Further information, please call Trevor Gill on 0418 821948**