

Labor states 'won't compromise' on renewable targets as energy fight looms

The Guardian Thursday 19 April 2018

The Labor states will seek a watertight undertaking that their renewable energy schemes and targets will remain undisturbed by the Turnbull government's proposed national energy guarantee at a critical meeting on Friday.

The Victorian energy minister, Lily D'Ambrosio, told Guardian Australia she would work constructively towards achieving a national consensus on energy policy "but we've got thresholds – red line issues – that we are not going to compromise on".

State and territory energy ministers will meet this Friday with their federal counterpart, Josh Frydenberg, to determine whether the national energy guarantee proceeds to the next stage of work. The expectation from stakeholders is the proposal will proceed to the next hurdle, which is detailed design.

But Victoria is making it clear Canberra will not achieve a final sign-off later this year in the absence of a guarantee that state targets and renewable energy schemes will continue under the new arrangements.

D'Ambrosio said "We are not going to sign up to anything sight unseen."

The Victorian minister objected to the fact the Turnbull government was insisting it would determine the emissions reduction framework for electricity, both the target for emissions reduction, and the trajectory – without reference to the states and territories.

Frydenberg, she said, had telegraphed in advance of Friday's meeting that the commonwealth would determine emissions reduction and whether or not energy companies would be able to buy offsets to reduce pollution "but we haven't had the conversation about whether or not that is workable".

D'Ambrosio said it was possible the commonwealth would move independently to legislate its proposed 26% cut – a target she characterised as "pathetic and weak" – and then seek to back-end load the emissions reductions to the final couple of years of the decade between 2020 and 2030, without reference to other participants in the national electricity market.

.....Environment groups and the ACTU declined to participate in Wednesday's joint statement. Green groups are urging the Labor states to insist on increasing the level of ambition in the emissions reduction target, because as it stands, the national target will drive no new abatement.....Read full article [here](#)

COAG progress on ending energy uncertainty

Ai Group media release 20 April 2018

"Today the COAG Energy Council has listened to the clear message from industry and the community and agreed to continue working towards settling on an approach to long-term climate and energy policy. A policy settlement will help unlock investment in electricity supply and demand side resources, putting downward pressure on electricity prices that remain intolerably high for industry and households alike," Ai Group Chief Executive, Innes Willox, said today.

"The draft design directions released after the meeting provide reassurance that the National Energy Guarantee can be designed efficiently and avoid the risks to competition that have concerned Ai Group and our members. We thank all governments and the Energy Security Board for their consultation thus far.

"However, months of hard work and detailed design are now required to have a fleshed-out scheme for adoption in August. Among the outstanding issues to be resolved, it will be particularly important to forge compromise between the Commonwealth and the States, and both sides of Federal politics, over emissions reduction ambition.

"It is clear that the scope of ambition will continue to evolve, and that all sides are committed to their approaches. The challenge will be to find ways to accommodate these clear differences without perpetuating the current deep uncertainty or preventing the badly needed fall in energy costs.

"Ai Group will be working with all sides and all stakeholders to achieve an outcome that works – and sticks – to maintain Australia's industrial competitiveness," Mr Willox said.



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