

## GAMAA Technical Committee Meeting - 21 April 2020

The next GAMAA Technical meeting will be held on Tuesday 21 April.

Technical Committee meeting details:

Where: Ai Group - L2, 441 St Kilda Road Melbourne (Boardrooms 1 & 2)

Time: 10am to 3pm - Light lunch provided

Please email [jon.onley@aigroup.com.au](mailto:jon.onley@aigroup.com.au) if you would like to attend.

## The ACT Government's move away from gas

Energy Networks Australia 5 March 2020

The Australian Capital Territory Government policy to move away from gas either partially or entirely are concerning as they limit options to decarbonise the Territory.

Last year, the ACT Government flagged plans to move away from gas entirely, shutting off gas to the Territory and replacing it with electricity.

The Government's plans are reflected in Evoenergy's recent draft-plan...Read [here](#)

It said it wanted to "Copenhagenise" the city. The Government may have missed the memo that Copenhagen has done the opposite of phasing out gas; in fact, it has a strong gas focus.

Copenhagen is going through a transition to upgrade its gas to carbon-neutral biogas to achieve 100 per cent biogas by 2025. In June 2019, 44 per cent of Copenhagen's gas supply was already carbon-neutral gas.

In its draft five-year plan for 2021 to 2026, Evoenergy has assumed no new suburbs will be connected with gas.

This move would present a challenge for the electricity infrastructure that will now need to take on the considerable extra load, especially during cold Canberra winters.

Currently, 85 per cent of ACT households are on the gas network. Canberra gas connections have grown at about two per cent per year. Most Canberrans rely on gas for heating and cooking. During winter, natural gas provides more energy than electricity.

To meet this extra demand with electricity, power infrastructure will need to more than double its current supply. That means more generation and more poles and wires.

Pursuing this policy of complete electrification would be prohibitively expensive for customers and wouldn't make the best use of existing investments. It would also not necessarily make energy more sustainable in the ACT.

Transferring residential customer load to electricity for all their energy needs would significantly increase the demand on the electricity network. This would require substantial investment to upgrade capacity of the electricity network and would leave our relatively young gas network and customers' appliances unused. This would come at a high cost to consumers. In addition, this pathway would leave a large proportion of Evoenergy's existing gas network investment unrecovered."

The gas infrastructure is already built, it's already in the ground, and it has the potential to deliver clean energy. In Canberra, the gas grid is relatively new and has many years of life left in it.

Another key reason is customers prefer gas heating to reverse-cycle electric heating in places where the mercury regularly drops below zero – like the ACT.

We do not support policies that drive additional investment in electricity networks simply to replace gas, especially when there are renewable gas options available. It's a lose-lose for customers – they have to pay more for electricity infrastructure, and they don't get any benefit from the gas infrastructure they are already paying for.

The smarter and more efficient pathway is to decarbonise our gas networks by looking to alternate sources such as hydrogen and biogas.

Read the ENA article in full [here](#)



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