

Fuel for Thought

Developing Energy Policy

Energy efficiency and energy security are pretty important issues for Australia, and so it has been pleasing to see the Federal Government looking at how it might develop and implement policies which can ensure reliable, efficient and secure energy supply into the future.



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What is particularly pleasing for QER is that the Government has recognised the role of alternative fuels in the energy debate.

The Government policy development approach involves a three-stage process, with an initial Issues paper inviting submissions from industry and others, followed by a Green paper which draws on those submissions and calls for more input, and finally a White paper which outlines the Government's strategic direction on energy and its policy commitments.

While much of the process is focused on the provision of stationary energy, the process also calls for input into liquid fuels policy, and QER has submitted a paper on the importance of developing alternative fuels to address our growing dependence on imports of petrol, diesel and other fuels.

Naturally, we believe Queensland's vast oil shale deposits represent a major opportunity for the development of home-grown fuels, and we've shown through our Paraho demonstration plant that we have the technology and process to produce high quality transport fuels in a way that meets environmental requirements and is acceptable to the community.

The fact is that Australia will have to develop a range of alternatives in addition to shale-derived fuels, including gas to liquids, coal to liquids and biofuels.

Our submission also comments on the critical area of approvals processes for the development of new fuel sources.

With approvals taking as long as four years for some projects it is a major problem for attracting investment, and we very much welcome moves by the Queensland and Commonwealth governments to streamline their processes.

Obviously it is necessary to ensure that approvals processes involve the highest standards, but removing duplication of government processes and ensuring timely actions can assist in developing industries which provide economic and employment benefits, while at the same time ensure stringent safeguards for communities and the environment.



Creating new fuels for Australia

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