

27/4/03

Re: Mandatory Renewable Energy Targets Review.

To whom it may concern

With a growing appreciation of the implications of global warming on the economy, environment and the long-term sustainability of agricultural and pastoral industries, I applaud this review. Clear targets to reduce greenhouse gases are essential and with both a high public interest in these matters and technologies available, now is the perfect time to establish pragmatic and reasonable targets.

One of the primary questions that the Panel is to review is to determine whether the *Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000* (hereafter referred to as the Act) has encouraged additional generation of electricity from renewable energy sources. The answer must be an unequivocal no! But this is not necessarily because the Act does not have the potential to deliver significant changes in energy generation, but because the Act is both recent and targets too modest.

Surely, the Act was passed in recognition of the growing need for renewable energy.

The change from (largely) coal fired power stations to other forms of electricity generation requires significant changes. And as these are state based, each state needs to go through the process of alterations in understanding applications and opportunities for these “new” technologies. I don’t think the 3 years (the time since the Act was introduced) is long enough for this to take place.

A target of 2% of renewable energy from new sources within the Act is too modest. And this too has limited the introduction of renewable energy sources around the country. In my state, Western Australia, there are existing wind power turbines in Esperance and Albany, but little application in other, more populated, centres (though a wind power plant is planned for Fremantle). If the renewable energy target was

higher than this may change: it is much easier to rely on the usual forms of energy production, surely the antithesis of the intention of the Act.

To ensure that the Act does encourage changes to renewable energy then it must set targets that both reflect the necessity of change and give impetus to the introduction of renewable energy. Ten percent of all new electricity generation may achieve the intent of the Act. The technology exists, but motivation to achieve this is hampered by reluctance to change abetted by a modest target.

Yours Sincerely,

Jeff Richardson