

Tuesday, 7 February 2023

## BRINGING BACK PUBLIC POWER WITH LEADING ENERGY EXPERTS

The Andrews Labor Government is laying the foundations to deliver government-owned renewable energy and put power back in the hands of Victorians, with an Expert Advisory Panel appointed to guide the revived State Electricity Commission (SEC).

Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for the State Electricity Commission Lily D'Ambrosio today announced six of Australia's most prominent energy experts and business leaders will advise Government on bringing back the SEC, and how the state can best generate clean energy to drive down power bills.

The Expert Advisory Panel will guide the SEC's work to make sure it delivers the maximum benefits of public energy ownership to Victorians – with lower power prices, faster investment in renewable energy, storage, and lower emissions.

The SEC's Expert Advisory Panel will be chaired by John Bradley, Secretary of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action – and will also include Audrey Zibelman, Andy Penn, Anna Skarbek, Alan Finkel and Jo Benvenuti, alongside Interim SEC CEO Chris Miller.

Audrey Zibelman is a former Managing Director and CEO at the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO), where she oversaw the ongoing transition to a decarbonised energy grid.

As former CEO of Telstra, Andy Penn's leadership of an ambitious, 5G-focused transformation will bring unique insights on delivering an essential service within a commercially competitive environment.

Anna Skarbek is CEO of Climateworks Centre, a not-for-profit developing the low carbon economy, and is also a former banker and founding board director of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation and the Carbon Market Institute.

Former chief scientist Alan Finkel is a neuroscientist and engineer. He led the National Electricity Market Review, development of the National Hydrogen Strategy, and panel advising the 2020 Low Emissions Technology Roadmap.

Jo Benvenuti is a former Executive Officer of the Consumer Utilities Advocacy Centre specialising in consumer engagement, energy and water, and also held an executive position for Victoria's Energy and Water Ombudsman.

The Labor Government will initially invest \$1 billion towards delivering 4.5 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2035 – the equivalent replacement capacity of Loy Yang A. The SEC will begin market sounding for its first investment in the first half of this year, engaging with industry, unions and training providers through a skills and workforce forum.

The SEC will help deliver more than 59,000 new jobs to construct, maintain, and operate clean energy assets. A guaranteed 10 per cent – or 6,000 – of those jobs will be apprenticeships and traineeships, delivering secure jobs for young Victorians and building the workforce our government-owned energy sector needs.

Later this year, the government will hold a Renewable Energy Skills and Workforce Forum, bringing together representatives from clean energy employers, unions, training providers, peak bodies and Traditional Owner groups.

The forum will ensure we have the workforce and skills for the thousands of new roles needed to construct, maintain, and operate clean energy assets under Victoria's renewables revolution.

We'll also establish the SEC Centre of Training Excellence to coordinate and work with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority to accredit courses in clean energy – as well as adding clean energy to the VCE Vocational Major.

The SEC will help deliver Victoria's nation-leading renewable energy and emissions targets – hitting 95 per cent renewable energy by 2035 and net zero by 2045, driving the creation of 59,000 jobs by 2035 and increasing Gross State Product by about \$9.5 billion.

**Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews**

*"We promised we wouldn't waste a moment setting up the SEC to put power back in Victorians' hands, and we're getting on with it – with our Expert Panel up and running to make sure we deliver cheap, clean energy for Victorians."*

**Quote attributable to Minister for the State Electricity Commission Lily D'Ambrosio**

*"The revived SEC will be supported by six of Australia's leading business and energy experts – ensuring Victoria has the best advice to deliver government-owned renewable energy, slashing energy prices and emissions."*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Employment Ben Carroll**

*"The SEC's plans for more renewables means thousands of jobs for Victorians – and at least 10 per cent of those jobs will be apprenticeships and traineeships, building up our young energy workforce."*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney**

*"Our nation-leading transition to net zero, supported by the SEC, will be supported by our world-class training and skills system, creating workforces for a cleaner, greener future."*