



Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability  
Minister for Corrections and Justice Health  
Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety  
Minister for Mental Health  
Member for Kurrajong

Obj # 20/09384

Dear Citizen's Jury member

Thank you for participating in Evoenergy's Citizen's Jury events in October and November last year. I appreciate you taking the time to share your views and experiences as part of this process. Your contribution on behalf of the ACT community will substantially shape the future directions of the ACT's energy system.

Evoenergy has provided me with a copy of the report summarising the jury's recommendations. Ahead of your next meeting, I would like to address how the ACT Government intends to work together with Evoenergy and the ACT community to address emissions from natural gas.

There are two policies which will address the recommendations of the jury. The *ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-2025* (the Strategy) sets out actions to work towards achieving our 2025 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target, build resilience to climate change impacts and progress towards achieving net zero emissions by 2045. Action 4.5 of the Strategy commits the ACT Government to develop a plan for achieving zero emissions from natural gas use by 2045. This plan is due to be delivered by 2024. Furthermore, the ACT Government is developing its *Sustainable Energy Policy 2020-25* (the Policy), which will further consider the transition to renewable energy sources.

The ACT Government has not announced or made a commitment to ban natural gas use. The Government committed to amending planning regulations to remove the mandatory installation of reticulated gas in new suburbs. This does not prevent its installation should customers continue to value this service. However, in developing its position on the future of natural gas, the ACT Government recognises the inconsistency of ongoing natural gas use with achievement of our emission reduction targets.

Achieving zero emissions from natural gas will require a considered approach, based on open engagement with the ACT community and the best available technical data. I note the jury's recommendation that the ACT Government consider the potential impacts on our electricity network. This issue is being actively considered under Action 4.5 of the Strategy.

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## ACT Legislative Assembly

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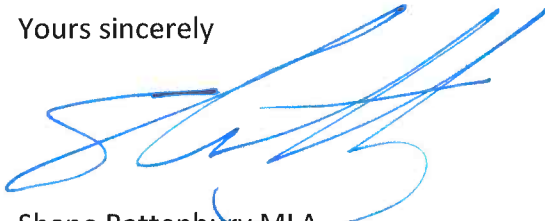
The ACT's 100% renewable electricity target means that electricity is at present the most viable zero emissions replacement for natural gas. The ACT Government is considering alternatives such as hydrogen or biogas, however, we note that industry movement on these technologies needs to accelerate for them to be viable, and the alternatives need to be compatible with a zero emissions future.

The jury raised concerns about the financial impact of the transition to zero emissions from natural gas on vulnerable customers. The ACT Government takes these concerns seriously and is committed to ensuring that this transition is fair and equitable for all members of our community. A key consideration of the Policy will be how to support vulnerable people in our community to ensure the transition to a zero emissions future is a fair and inclusive one.

In regard to ACT Government assistance and incentives, our Actsmart programs and the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme are helping consumers to manage their energy use, improve energy efficiency in the Territory and reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions. Following the release of the Strategy, these programs are being updated with a renewed focus on reducing emissions from transport and natural gas.

Thank you again for participating in Evoenergy's Citizen's Jury event.

Yours sincerely



Shane Rattenbury MLA  
Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability

25 MAR 2020