

On 3 July 2017,

On Energy Policy and, the Proposed Clean Energy Target (CET)

We described the CET as a compromise on a compromise, aimed at finally achieving bi-partisan support for a long-term policy framework that will provide needed investment certainty.

Tim told us that he supported the Finkel Review findings and that he was in favour of a Clean Energy Target, though he was uncertain about where the target should be set.

We told him of Alan Kohler's view that the CET can only succeed if the target is set at 0.6. Success depends on bipartisan support for a policy that responds to the need for energy investment reform and is aligned to community and business expectations.

Tim said that security of supply, affordability of supply as well as emissions reduction must be the aim. We countered that the absence of policy clarity and consequent market manipulation by the heavyweight incumbents has resulted in lower security, lower affordability and increased emissions. A good, consistent policy that encourages investment in renewables and storage as well as revision of the NEM rules along lines previously discussed, will be capable of achieving all three aims simultaneously.

In a subsequent follow up letter, Tim wrote, amongst other things:

I can assure you I am focusing all my energy on making sure we get the energy policy setting right. I am slightly more optimistic. Over the past decade there has been a sensible realignment on the fringe voices on both sides of the energy policy debate in favour of a more reasoned and practical resolution. My hope is that we can land it.

16 March 2017.

On Energy Policy and the Climate Emergency

Three of our members, Martin May, David R and David W met Tim in his office. We wanted to convey to him a sense of the growing concern being expressed in the community about the lack of leadership from the Government in dealing with the increasing climate crisis.

This was expressed at our climate forum in February with 350 people present, mostly new to BCCAG. We told him about The Climate Emergency Petition we had launched. Tim offered to deliver the Bayside petition to Parliament, if we wished.

The recent proposals to expand the pumped-hydro capacity of Snowy Hydro were welcome, we said. This did not however alleviate our concern about the lack of a coherent national plan that was adequate to the challenge, we told Tim, who joined in a lively discussion about what the components of such a plan should be. He told us that dealing with these challenges did require putting ideology aside and finding pragmatic solutions. The RET was one such pragmatic solution, he agreed, which was needed to provide certainty to investors. We told him that an emissions intensity scheme as well as regulatory changes to the National Energy Market were needed to remove barriers that favoured incumbent fossil fuel generators. Tim was receptive to these ideas.

Finally, we gave Tim a copy of a report titled *Our Energy Future: a plan to transition Australia to clean energy*. We also invited him to a private screening of an important doco, *The Age of Consequences*, which deals with the national security consequences of climate change. Tim agreed to deliver a message on our behalf to the Minister for Energy Josh Frydenberg.

25 October 2016:

Responses to the SA Power Blackout

The meeting was requested following correspondence between BCCAG and Tim Wilson about the SA state-wide blackout caused by a freak storm event and the subsequent attempts by Govt. spokespersons to blame the blackout on wind power and to attack the state-based Renewable Energy Target (RET). David R. and Alan Pears represented BCCAG.

David noted Tim's statement at a pre-election meeting that he accepts the evidence of climate change. Mounting evidence now points to change happening faster than the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) models predicted. 2016 will be the third consecutive year, following 2015, and before it 2014, to be declared the hottest year on record. This last year has seen a string of catastrophic events just in Australia, the catastrophic fires in Tasmania last summer burning through areas with 1,000 year-old trees that have never seen fire. (*This information surprised Tim.*) We saw the catastrophic bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef and the 1:100 year storms that lashed the east coast from NSW to Tas. Then we had the catastrophic storm that hit SA in September. The severity of all these events and the frequency with which similar events have been occurring conforms to what climate science predicts.

The rush to blame wind power on the blackout betrayed an unwillingness to accept the evidence. The truth is that we can expect more frequent such extreme and disruptive events if we fail to act on climate change with urgency.

We referred Tim to a report by The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) in 2013 that established the feasibility of a rapid transition to a zero-emissions energy system. Tim expressed interest in the report and googled it on his phone during the meeting.

Alan spoke about the cost of upgrading the current ageing energy system and pointed out that large investments were needed, whether or not a transition to renewables was made. The costs of rolling out deployed renewable technologies was now comparable to those of replacing and upgrading systems with existing coal and gas burning plants, particularly when including the operational costs of the plant.