
From: Ron Lipinskas
Sent: Friday, 14 August 2009 3:51 PM
To: Environment and Resources Committee
Cc:
Subject: ERC: Inquiry into Energy Efficiency Improvements

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to make this submission to the Environment and Resource Committee for the Inquiry into Energy Efficiency Improvements as per your discussion paper no 1.

Regards
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Introduction

Below are some comments regarding the Environment and Resource Committee (ERC) Paper No 1. and also from the attendance of the Seminar organized by the ERC in Brisbane on the 7th August 2009 which I attended. I thank the ERC for giving me the opportunity to provide feedback and organizing the Seminar which I attended.

Duplicating the success of reducing water usage in Queensland

This has often been used as an example of what can happen and therefore could happen within the energy sector. This ignores some basic fundamental differences that need to be considered as follows:

- There were no skeptics that water shortages were occurring. For energy, skeptics do exist that climate change is not occurring or that there is no concern for running out of primary energy source of coal in electricity generation.
- Water shortages could easily be measured and reported as percentage of water in dams full. It could also be shown on television with the level of water in the dams that was quite visual. This can't be done with energy, the amount of GHG increase in the atmosphere or the amount of coal still in the ground is harder to illustrate as it was for water.
- Water is a very local issue, that is, other countries or States of Australia were not using Queensland water. If I used less water, there was more water in the local dams. With energy, GHGs are caused worldwide, and if running out of coal were a problem then the solution is Queensland stop exporting coal or there are substitutes such as gas, renewable etc. Running out of water was much more obvious.

It is therefore recommended that concentrating on the financial savings is the most effective way, with reduction of GHGs obviously important, but not the focus of the approach. This is especially true for commercial/industry where the bottom line is most important. It is acknowledged that some residential households do act from conscience with concern of the environment, but even here I think highlighting monetary savings in light of ever rising energy costs will be most effective overall.

State and Federal agencies

Interaction between the State and Federal governments is not clear to me. How does the Energy and Resource Committee (ERC) fit in with the National Framework for Energy Efficiency (NREE)? There should be cooperation between the Federal and State governments on such important issue to ensure that the "efficiency" of the relevant bodies is maximized by ensuring:

- gaps in legislation or general approach to energy efficiency do not exist, or at least recognized to be addressed at a later stage
- conflicting legislation or approach does not occur between federal and state governments
- doubling up work done by either level of government does not occur, but rather complement each other.

Queensland State agencies

Within Queensland government are various agencies/bodies that need to be sure are working cooperatively and also presents a clear picture to industry which department is responsible for which section. This could mean a central area that external customers/industry could contact to assist with who and how to deal with the various agencies/departments in Queensland Government. This central area could also provide a centralized and overall reporting mechanism to the ERC as necessary. This could be taken further to assist external customers/industry the relevant body whether it is local council, state or federal government and what is the relevant department.

For example, as I attended the Brisbane Seminar organized by the ERC on the 7 August 2009, I was surprised that the Office of Clean Energy were not officially present or made any presentation. Therefore the ERC could ensure there are clear and concise objectives between departments, particularly for those outside of Queensland Government, for example:

- Departments of Environment and Resource Management
- Department of Infrastructure and Planning

Specific examples where there could be some confusion could be what is the position of the ERC or how does it work/compliment activities such as:

- Improving Sustainable Housing in Queensland, Discussion paper, June 2008
- A workshop organized by the Office of Clean Energy in about March this year held in Ipswich regarding the Ripley housing estate

It should also be noted that there could and should be some interplay between training/education and employment. In this case I refer not only to dealing with installation of insulation or audits as per ClimateSmart Home Service, but also the education and employment with those areas that result in intellectual property or technology that can subsequently be exported from Queensland.

Even with a simple term such as energy audit, it was noted by one of the speakers during question time that there are different types and levels of audits requiring different expertise and providing different type of information. I echo that point of view and hope the committee is aware of such issues.

Clear goals for ERC

As mentioned above, I did attend the seminar in Brisbane on 7 August 2009. As asked at question time by another attendee as to why so many empty seats, one needs to wonder why. From my perspective, I believe the scope was too diverse to cover in one morning. For example, as a resident why would I attend when it also covered industry, business groups and governments? Again take someone from industry, why should they attend, what was the message you wanted to get across aimed at them? But they needed to sit through other sessions that may not have been of interest so the time issue could have been a problem.

Finally I don't think any follow up or further actions of participants was pushed enough other than please provide feedback on the form or make a submission (as this is) to your committee. Consider those that may have already contributed to Climate Smart 2050, or the Improving Sustainable Housing in Queensland discussion paper may be left wondering if there is doubling up.

Concentrate on being a coordinating body of the many existing departments within the Queensland and Federal governments. The ERC could organize workshop such as all those concerned with energy efficient housing which would include architects, builders, developers, relevant departments etc, to ensure all have the same goals and definitions in mind when speaking energy efficiency, what are the barriers such as training or legislation problems. Within the workshop specific issues could be raised and hopefully resolved or marked for further action.

Also of equal importance is being able to monitor and track improvements in energy efficiency. In this case it could entail determining what energy usage needs to be monitored and measured, and what costs are incurred. The ERC in conjunction with a focus group could determine what information is required, is it being collected and collated, and is it recent and of sufficient detail to provide the information. The old adage is that if you can't or aren't measuring it or monitoring it, you can't control it. The "it" being where and how energy is being used. In the ERC paper no 1. "Areas for comment" part 2, *In economic and environmental terms, what energy efficiency initiatives have been effective in Queensland?* This could be answered with adequate and effective monitoring as mentioned above, only the term effective would need defining by the Government as far as balance between the economics and environment.

For part 3 of the ERC paper no 1, does mention the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, but fails to mention the NFEE or the Federal Governments Energy Efficiency Opportunities (EEO), which is in my opinion strange.

Conclusion

I hope the above may provide some points of discussion for the committee and is of some benefit. The ERC should be congratulated on the seminar presented and the valuable work it is undertaking. It is from my perspective that the most valuable contribution the ERC could make is as an overall coordinating body between Queensland Government, Federal Government, industry and general public. Allow the various departmental bodies undertake the specialized work, whether energy efficient housing, transport etc. The ERC could ensure that these departments are coordinated in their approach where necessary, adequately resourced to effectively do the job, and ensure a common interface to industry and general public. There already are many examples of what to do technically so should not be of concern to the ERC.

In closing, should the ERC like me to elaborate on any of the above, please do not hesitate in contacting me. I wish you the best in your endeavors as I believe we are all passionate about not only the state of the planet and our unsustainable ways, but finding a way to move forward on it to benefit current and future generations. It should be noted that part of my expertise and background is with quality assurance, process improvements and procedure, therefore my focus on scope, clear interfaces and messages to others, rather than any specific policy or technology as this will follow.

Yours Faithfully

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