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\$26M funding to advance hydrogen fuelled network

Energy Networks Australia welcomes today's announcement of \$26.25 million in funding from the Commonwealth government towards the Future Fuels Cooperative Research Centre (CRC).

Australia's gas network businesses will contribute \$8 million towards the venture, in addition to investing in trials that will demonstrate how hydrogen technology can be used in our existing gas networks.

"The more than \$90 million Centre will undertake cutting edge research that will accelerate a decarbonised gas industry", Energy Networks Australia CEO Andrew Dillon said.

"Our nation's gas networks are a colossal system, delivering as much energy as the electricity networks, and in some cases, such as Victoria, even more," he said.

"Applying transformational technologies of biogas, hydrogen and Carbon Capture and Storage to existing networks could build and maintain a highly reliable energy system."

The industry-led research will continue to develop pilot trials and exploratory projects that network members have already started.

The deployment of hydrogen technology is the focus of the Centre's research program, but additional fuels, such as biogas, are also being tested as alternatives.

"We have research proposals ready to go and are eager to move forward with trialling hydrogen production and storage," Mr Dillon said.

"Decarbonising our nation's gas industry will support our global obligations under the Paris Climate Change Agreement and simultaneously help to secure a reliable, affordable energy system.

"We need a suite of measures to decarbonise our energy and transport sectors. Countries around the globe are investigating the potential for hydrogen to play a significant role.

"Using existing and new gas infrastructure will be essential for Australia to benefit from the expected global demand for hydrogen.

"We look forward to working with the Future Fuels CRC over the next seven years and bringing new, innovative energy storage and supply systems to Australian homes and business."

Research is expected to begin in July 2018.

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Energy Networks Australia represents Australia's electricity transmission and distribution networks and gas distribution networks. Our members provide energy to virtually every household and business in Australia.