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Unlock our gas: Energy Minister

Gas moratoriums in Australian States and Territories should be lifted to help address the current east coast gas supply challenge, Energy Minister Josh Frydenberg told industry leaders in Melbourne today.

Minister Frydenberg delivered the Ministerial Address at the Energy Networks Australia Gas Vision 2050 seminar, confirming that gas is an essential part of an affordable and reliable energy system.

“Dr Finkel himself had a whole chapter on gas where he made it very clear that we should be dropping these blanket, state-wide bans and moratoriums,” Mr Frydenberg said.

“Unforgivably here in Victoria there’s a moratorium on onshore conventional gas extraction and a ban on onshore unconventional gas exploration.

“But we should be dropping those mindless, job destroying gas moratoriums and bans and putting in its place a case by case approach where individual land owners and farmers have their say.”

Minister Frydenberg urged conference attendees to support innovative approaches to State Government royalty schemes, as introduced in South Australia, to better align the interests of landholders with sustainable gas development.

“New South Wales has got itself into a position where it imports 95 per cent of its gas so clearly we need to bring on more supply,” Minister Frydenberg said.

Minister Frydenberg recognised future planning being done for the long-term future of the gas sector, such as the Gas Vision 2050 developed by peak gas industry bodies.

Speaking at today’s seminar, Energy Networks Australia Gas Committee Chairman Ben Wilson said gas has a decarbonisation trajectory in just the same way that electricity does.

“Storage is important, batteries are very sexy, but it’s worth bearing in mind that the storage capability for the Australian gas system today is already built, already paid for and is the equivalent to six billion Tesla Powerwalls,” Mr Wilson said.

“Whilst 44% of home energy on average is delivered through the gas network, that’s only 13% of emissions so gas is a low carbon fuel.”

Energy Networks Australia CEO John Bradley said Australia’s gas supply and existing infrastructure should be a national advantage as our energy mix continues to evolve.

“The Gas Vision 2050 demonstrates how biogas, hydrogen and carbon capture and storage could provide new zero-emission and low emission fuels,” Mr Bradley said.

“They could deliver power to Australian homes, businesses and vehicles using the existing distribution network.”

The Gas Vision 2050 is available [here](#).

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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.