

12 October 2017

Spotlight on mental health for the energy sector

A Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy for the energy network sector will be released today as part of a national energy Mental Health and Wellbeing forum in Melbourne.

Today's seminar will include presentations from Dr Tom Nehmy, an award-winning clinical psychologist and Mr Mitch McPherson, 2017 Tasmanian Young Australian of the Year and founder of SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY.

Energy Networks Australian Interim CEO, Andrew Dillon said the rapid transformation of the energy sector has created well-recognised opportunities and challenges for the industry.

"The energy industry is experiencing exciting change that is important for our community but it can also create an uncertain environment for the sector's workforce," Mr Dillon said.

"The unique nature of energy networks, responding to natural disasters and emergencies, working in rural or remote areas, calls for a whole of industry commitment to mental health and wellbeing

"This week Australians recognise National Mental Health week in order to raise public awareness and reduce stigma around mental health issues.

"The *Energy Networks Australia Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy* has been developed to better position the energy sector to create a positive mental health and wellbeing environment for our workforce and community.

"Energy networks have a vision that prioritises the need to establish appropriate mental health and wellbeing practices across the industry," Mr Dillon said.

Tim Rourke, Chief Executive Officer of Victorian networks CitiPower, Powercor and United Energy will present on mental health leadership, drawing on a 5 year journey to embed positive mental health strategies that target awareness, prevention and early intervention including peer-to-peer support, an Employee Assistance Program and programs that strengthen personal and organisational resilience.

Jemena's Emma Peck will discuss how the network has used existing business data to create a case for change and how this was used to develop a Mental Wellbeing Action Plan. This plan includes the 'Mind Power' series targeting 'psychological injury', a program where a psychologist facilitates a session during team meetings to address a mental wellbeing risk in that team.

"Building on the work network businesses have already undertaken, this strategy provides clear direction and tools for our members, demonstrating our commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of our workforce as part of maintaining a safe workplace" Mr Dillon said.

The Energy Networks Australia, *Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy* is available [here](#).

ENDS

The *Mental Health and Wellbeing Seminar* will be held today, Thursday 12 October at the State Library of Victoria, Melbourne. The seminar program 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.