

BOOST FOR COMPETITION IN NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTRICITY INDUSTRY

Today, Senator Ian Campbell, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer, helped to promote greater competition in the Northern Territory electricity market by certifying as effective the Northern Territory Electricity Network Access Regime.

The NT Electricity Access Regime provides a legal framework for third parties, such as electricity retailers, generators and industrial users, to negotiate access to the services of the NT electricity network. The Regime is designed to ensure access to network services is on terms and conditions which are fair to both access seekers and the infrastructure owner - the NT Power and Water Authority.

"Providing a clear framework for access helps to promote competition by making it easier for new electricity generators and retailers to enter the NT electricity market. Increased competition encourages lower prices, improved choice and better quality services, greatly benefiting business and households in the NT", Senator Campbell said.

The NT Electricity Access Regime will be certified for a period of 15 years, providing a degree of certainty in the regulatory environment for infrastructure owners, operators and users, particularly when developing new electricity infrastructure.

"The certification of this regime will also help create incentives for electricity service providers to supply innovative and competitive services," Senator Campbell said.

The NT Government submitted its electricity access regime to the National Competition Council for assessment. The Council recommended that the NT Electricity Access Regime be certified as an effective access regime under Section 44N of the Trade Practices Act 1974 (TPA).

A copy of the Council's recommendation and a statement of reasons for the decision by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer is available at the Council's website, www.ncc.gov.au

CANBERRA
21 MARCH 2002

Contact: Tammie Webb, Senator Campbell's office
08 9325 4227 or 0417 400 227

<http://parlsec.treasurer.gov.au>