

Work Starts On New Energy Plan

The terms of reference for the development of a New Zealand Energy Strategy (NZES) have been released by Energy Minister, David Parker.

Parker said the strategy would identify priorities to achieve the government's energy objectives of reliability and resilience; environmental responsibility; and fair and efficient prices for energy for current and future generations.

"The energy options and environmental constraints we face in the years ahead make for complex decision-making", Parker said. "It's important that we act now to provide the confidence and right signals for investment in New Zealand's sustainable energy future. The security of our energy system is a priority for the government."

"The key challenge is to strike a balance between flexibility around the options we have

and the uncertainties we face, while providing enough direction to provide a reasonable level of certainty that the strategic objectives we decide to pursue will be achieved."

The terms of reference set out the overall purpose of the strategy, the proposed approach

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to developing the strategy and the process for engaging with stakeholders. "I'm very keen to make sure all interested stakeholders get an opportunity to contribute to the development of the NZES. That is why I am releasing these terms of reference."

He said details of the engagement process will be announced shortly. These will include workshops on specific areas of interest, as well

as widespread public consultation on the draft strategy, which is expected to be published during September.

"The government has implemented a wide range of energy policy initiatives to support energy markets, manage security of supply, and promote energy efficiency and renewable sources of energy," Parker said. "Across the world, countries are grappling with the challenges posed by dramatic price increases, constraints on fuels supplies, and the impacts of climate change."

"Consequently, energy is one of the most important issues we face today," he said. Parker said the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy was being revised at the same time and would focus on how energy demand is managed. ■