

MEDIA RELEASE

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Research shows NSW consumers reacting to Climate Change at the ballot box and in the home

Concern about climate change is impacting on NSW voting and household energy decisions according to research undertaken during the election campaign for the Energy Retailers Association of Australia (ERAA).

The detailed on-line survey of a representative sample of 502 NSW residents by ACNielsen found that 89% were either quite concerned or very concerned by climate change. Perhaps more significantly, 60% said climate change had the potential to impact their voting intention during the NSW election, with Labor voters (64%) more likely to say it could be a factor compared to Coalition voters (50%).

“For energy retailers and the broader energy sector the message is that we have to anticipate that climate change will continue to be a major factor in driving decisions by politicians and that we must participate in the debate and ensure that actions taken are both sensible and effective”, the Executive Director of the ERAA, Mr Cameron O’Reilly said.

In this regard the research found that the NSW initiative to promote “Greenpower” had achieved high awareness with 79% of respondents being familiar with the policy. Awareness did not however translate to high uptake with just 7% connected to Greenpower, with cost and a lack of time being cited as the major factors in why more of the sample had not moved over.

Clear tolerance limits in terms of how much extra people were prepared to pay for Greenpower were identified with 42% saying they would pay up to \$6 more per week, 18% up to \$10 more per week and just 7% more than \$10 per week.

Certification by Government of renewable energy was seen to make a difference to consumers with 62% of those not connected to Greenpower saying that it would make it more likely they would switch over to Greenpower.

“The conclusions in relation to Greenpower appear to be that Government and industry have successfully promoted awareness and that there is an important function for Government in offering certification, but beyond that, there is a natural limit to the market based on affordability”, Mr O’Reilly said.

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Where other simple energy efficiency steps were concerned, such as the installation of energy efficient light bulbs and energy efficient showerheads, there has been a high consumer response with 80% indicating they had installed at least 3 efficient light bulbs in their house and 58% indicating they had the AAA rated efficient showerheads in their bathrooms.

Moreover, when it came to energy efficiency tips from their energy retailers, some 66% of respondents indicated they had acted upon some of the advice provided by industry. Furthermore when it came to their own purchasing decisions in relation to appliances, some 27% said that energy efficiency was a major factor in their decision, second only to cost (46%), and outranking considerations such as brand and appliance features in importance to consumers.

“The clear impression from this research is that climate change influences individual purchasing decisions and that information provision from Government and industry plays an important role in helping willing consumers contribute to the fight against climate change”.

“We would therefore say to Government that energy retailers with their millions of customer relationships and knowledge of energy efficient practices, can be a major ally in confronting climate change and that policies developed without our active input will be less effective than those we are involved in from the design stage”, Mr O'Reilly went on to say.

For further information:

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About ERAA

The Energy Retailers Association of Australia (ERAA) is the peak industry body representing retailers of electricity and gas in Australia's National Electricity Market (NEM) and national gas market. Member companies operate in all the States of Australia and have over 11 million customers. The members include AGL, Origin Energy, Truenergy, Energy Australia, Integral Energy, Country Energy, Aurora Energy, Horizon Power, Synergy Energy and ActewAGL.



Energy Retailers Association of Australia

**Results of ACNielsen Polling on NSW
Consumer Response to Climate Change**

Cameron O'Reilly, Executive Director

Background

- 502 people surveyed on-line by ACNielsen
- All from NSW
- Aged 18+
- 12 questions
- Survey undertaken in early March in the lead up to the NSW election

Concern About Climate Change

	Total	ALP	Coalition	Greens	Independent
Very Concerned	45%	47%	38%	72%	48%
Quite Concerned	44%	46%	44%	28%	47%
Not Concerned	11%	7%	18%	0%	5%

* Figures may not add up to 100 due to rounding

Influence of Climate Change Policies on Vote

	Total	ALP	Coalition	Greens	Independent
YES	60%	64%	50%	87%	62%
NO	40%	36%	50%	13%	38%

* Figures may not add up to 100 due to rounding

Concern About Climate Change

	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25-39	40-54	55+
Very Concerned	45%	46%	45%	42%	38%	52%	48%
Quite Concerned	44%	40%	48%	49%	48%	39%	42%
Not Concerned	11%	14%	8%	9%	14%	9%	10%

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Have you heard of Greenpower?

	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25-39	40-54	55+
YES	72%	75%	69%	61%	71%	72%	77%
YES and Connected	7%	8%	6%	8%	8%	7%	5%
NO	21%	17%	25%	31%	21%	21%	18%

* Figures may not add up to 100 due to rounding

Does Certification of Greenpower make a difference?

	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25-39	40-54	55+
YES	62%	59%	65%	80%	65%	59%	57%
NO	38%	41%	35%	20%	35%	41%	43%

* Figures may not add up to 100 due to rounding

Top 5 Reasons why Customers have not Switched to Greenpower?

	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25-39	40-54	55+
Cost	33%	37%	30%	29%	38%	34%	30%
Have not had time	21%	21%	21%	24%	21%	25%	16%
Did not know about it	19%	14%	24%	34%	23%	19%	12%
Don't like switching	15%	15%	15%	6%	12%	9%	25%
Not Necessary	7%	10%	5%	3%	5%	8%	10%

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How Much More Would you be Willing to Pay for Renewable Energy?

	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25-39	40-54	55+
No More	34%	36%	32%	24%	30%	36%	38%
Between \$2- \$6 per week more	42%	41%	42%	37%	41%	41%	44%
Between \$6- \$10 per week more	18%	17%	19%	29%	19%	19%	13%
Between \$10- \$20 per week more	5%	5%	5%	11%	7%	4%	2%
Over \$20 per week more	2%	1%	2%	0%	3%	0%	3%

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Steps to Address Climate Change at Home

	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25-39	40-54	55+
Installed >3 CFLs	80%	80%	80%	78%	72%	86%	83%
AAA Showerhead	58%	60%	57%	54%	54%	64%	59%
Water tanks	23%	22%	25%	16%	14%	27%	30%
Solar Hot Water	7%	7%	6%	5%	4%	6%	10%
Conserving Water	5%	3%	7%	1%	6%	5%	5%
Saving Power	5%	4%	5%	3%	8%	4%	3%
Solar Panels	2%	2%	1%	7%	0%	2%	1%

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Have you Put the Energy Efficiency Tips Provided by your Energy Company into Practice?

	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25-39	40-54	55+
YES	66%	67%	65%	55%	59%	72%	71%
NO	17%	18%	15%	18%	20%	14%	15%
Have not Received any tips	17%	14%	20%	27%	21%	13%	14%

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Most Important Factor when Choosing Household Appliances ?

	Total	Male	Female	18 - 24	25-39	40-54	55+
Cost	46%	48%	44%	60%	55%	44%	34%
Energy Efficiency	27%	20%	33%	12%	18%	27%	39%
Features	21%	25%	16%	20%	19%	22%	21%
Brand	7%	7%	6%	8%	8%	6%	5%

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