

1 JULY 2004



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Queensland Small Business Urged to Shop Around for Cheaper Electricity Prices**

If you spend \$10,000 or more a year on electricity, the Energy Retailers Association of Australia is urging Queensland's small businesses to start shopping around for a better price.

This follows the Queensland Government's decision to open competition to customers who use more than 100 megawatt hours, or about \$10,000, a year on their electricity bill.

"Small business such as convenience stores, bakeries and fast food outlets can now get quotes for their electricity from 17 retailers in Queensland," the Executive Director of the ERAA, Deane Russell, said today.

"Many large customers have seen reductions in retail electricity prices since the deregulation of the industry and now small business can also now choose their retailer. Before this competition opened up, only large businesses using over 200 megawatt hours a year could get access to the other electricity retailers".

"Safeguards remain in place, with small businesses having the choice of staying in the current system and regulated tariff or moving to a new electricity retailer and potentially lower prices. Customers should seek advice before entering into any new arrangements because not all customers will be able to get savings".

"We support the Queensland Government in the introduction of this further competition," Mr Russell said. "More than 50 per cent of Queensland's total electricity load is now open for competition, and the number of customers that can chose their electricity retailer has more than doubled.

"Queensland has the highest growth in electricity demand in Australia, with growth last year of over 6%".

"Driven largely by the dramatic growth in air-conditioning load, the industry and government have been working to ensure reliability and security of electricity supply to all customers. It is important that the prices to this new group of customers are fully cost reflective and transition to market-based levels to encourage new investment that will be required and to promote competition for secure and competitive electricity supply to all homes and businesses".

A list of all energy retailers, and links to their web sites, is available at [www.eraa.com.au](http://www.eraa.com.au)

for further information contact

Deane Russell  
Executive Director  
Energy Retailers Association of Australia  
Work 02 93694296  
Or preferred: mobile 0419 444 112