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Victorian Liberal Nationals onshore gas support welcome

The Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (APPEA) welcomes the Victorian Opposition's new commitment to onshore gas development.

APPEA Chief Executive Dr Malcolm Roberts said the Liberal Nationals' new onshore gas policy released today marked a turning point in Victoria's bipartisan rejection of local gas projects.

"The Liberal Nationals deserve credit for dropping their nonsensical opposition to conventional gas development," Dr Roberts said.

"Unlike Labor, the Opposition has recognised that Victoria has a gas supply problem and that more supply is desperately needed to put downward pressure on prices.

"The new Liberal Nationals policy is far from perfect: for example, it maintains an unscientific ban on unconventional gas.

"But Opposition Leader, Matthew Guy, and his team have at least recognised that Victoria must do what it can to solve its own energy problems and have stepped away from policies that would damage Australia's gas exports."

Dr Roberts said Victoria faced a significant gas supply challenge with a forecast shortfall of 116 petajoules next year, just as production from local offshore gas fields begins to decline.

He said the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) had warned that Victorian's were already paying a 25 per cent premium for their gas due to the restrictions imposed by the Andrews Government.

"Victoria cannot continue to rely on other states to solve its gas supply issues. The state has abundant local onshore resources but would rather import gas from other states or, incredibly, from overseas," Dr Roberts said.

"It's time the Labor Government recognised that the cheapest gas available to Victorian homes and businesses is the gas they are standing on. They need to get on and develop it."

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