



ACT Government
2005-2006 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

\$318,000 TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The ACT will have the capacity to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by about 153,000 tonnes a year by 2008 thanks to a new, four-year environmental initiative worth \$318,000, Chief Minister and Minister for the Environment Jon Stanhope said today.

The funding will be used to implement the ACT Greenhouse Gas Abatement Scheme (GGAS), which legally obliges electricity retailers to source greater percentages of their product from cleaner and 'greener' supplies each year.

"Greenhouse gas emissions are a community problem and this scheme is a cost-effective community solution," Mr Stanhope said.

"Electricity is responsible for about 60 per cent of Canberra's greenhouse gas emissions. As electricity retailers begin to source more and more of their product from cleaner supplies, Canberrans will have the satisfaction of knowing that when they switch on the lights or use their ovens they are having less of an impact on the environment. And, in turn, electricity retailers will start thinking more seriously and more creatively about efficient uses of electricity and cleaner, alternative energy sources.

"Initiatives to reduce emissions might include developing renewable electricity plants, buying power from generators that use cleaner coal technologies, educating the public to be more efficient with their electricity use and planting trees to reduce carbon dioxide levels."

Electricity retailers will be required to meet mandatory annual greenhouse gas benchmarks set by the GGAS.

"Retailers will have to demonstrate each year that they have reached the benchmark by producing greenhouse gas abatement certificates," Mr Stanhope said. "The certificates will show how many tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions the retailer has saved by getting their power from a cleaner source or by energy efficiency measures and tree-planting."

The ACT scheme will be integrated with a similar NSW scheme that has been running for two years. Both will be administered by the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

The \$318,000 allocated in the Budget will give the ACT access to IPART's sophisticated computer systems, which can monitor, audit and report on greenhouse gas emissions and electricity retailers' compliance with the scheme.



The funding will also support the independent regulation of the scheme by the ACT Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission.

“The Greenhouse Gas Abatement Scheme is part of the ACT Government’s push to develop clean industries that generate fewer greenhouse gases and less noise and air pollution,” Mr Stanhope said.

The GGAS was established under the ACT Government’s new *Electricity (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) Act 2004* which came into effect on 1 January 2005.

Statement ends