Don Harwin
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Resources
Minister for Energy and Utilities
Minister for the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW ACTS TO PROTECT ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IN SUMMER

The NSW Government is moving to strengthen energy security in the unlikely event of an electricity supply emergency.

Under a legislative change recommended by the NSW Energy Security Taskforce, the Premier will be able to declare an electricity supply emergency, if the situation requires it.

Until now, only the NSW Governor could do so – a long and detailed process at a time when a quick response is needed.

Minister for Energy and Utilities, Don Harwin, said the change simply modernized existing law in the unlikely event of an emergency.

"By giving the Premier authority to declare an electricity supply emergency, it means we can immediately react, should we need to," Mr Harwin said.

"Speed is key should the need arise. This move is just another step in ensuring we are as prepared as we can be for whatever summer might bring".

Under the legislation, the Premier can declare an energy emergency if she is satisfied there is a disruption (or a real risk of disruption) to electricity supply to all or any part of the state.

"The reality is this legislation will only be implemented as a last resort at the time of an electricity emergency," Mr Harwin said.

"As the Minister for Energy and Utilities, I work closely with the Australian Energy Market Operator to monitor NSW's electricity demand-supply balance."

Earlier this year Minister Harwin established the NSW Energy Security Taskforce chaired by the NSW Chief Scientist.

The Taskforce released an Initial Report in May making a number of recommendations for implementation by summer 2017/18. This included improving the speed and ease with which the NSW Government can respond to an energy emergency, including revising legislative provisions where necessary.

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