



WA the forgotten State in Federal energy policy thinking?

The DomGas Alliance says Western Australia's energy needs appear to have fallen off the map in the current Federal Energy White Paper process.

The Alliance says Canberra's focus appears to be on trying to fix a looming gas shortage in New South Wales, brought about by the start-up of LNG exports from the East coast.

DomGas Alliance Executive Director Matt Brown said Western Australia faces a similar threat by 2020 but is not getting the same policy attention.

"Canberra recently briefed the East coast media about a proposal for a so-called single national gas market," Mr Brown said.

"This would be created through a pipeline to link Darwin through to the interconnected pipeline network on the East coast. That could be good news for industry and jobs on the East coast, albeit that Canberra concedes the gas that flows through it will be expensive.

"The only problem is that this so-called 'national' market does not include supply to Western Australia. However, gas from the Browse Basin off the Western Australian coast is going to be pumped to Darwin and could theoretically be traded into the Sydney market.

"Our gas, like our GST revenue, would be sent and spent on the East coast.

"We are not suggesting a pipeline should be built to link WA to this system at this stage. To do so would show a complete failure of policy as we have enormous gas resources off our coast that could be brought to market here with some leadership from Canberra.

"But it is clear that our State's energy needs do not figure greatly in Canberra's thinking. It also confirms that if Canberra gets energy policy wrong, there is no fallback option for Western Australia, unlike other States that can get more gas through the 'national' system.

"A national energy policy should put the energy needs of Australian industry and Australian workers first.

"And Western Australia's heavy reliance on natural gas for our industry, jobs and economic growth must be a major consideration.

"Western Australia should not simply be viewed as the place that can export the most gas and earn the most tax revenue for Canberra.

"The jobs of mums and dads in Western Australia are just as important as those of mums and dads on the East coast."

For further comment contact Matt Brown on 0419 813 171.