

Chief Minister meets industry representatives in Canberra on Sunrise gas

Chief minister, Clare Martin, met representatives from peak industry groups in Canberra today to discuss her Government's campaign to bring Sunrise gas onshore from the Timor Sea.

The industry groups included the Australian Industry Group, the Australian Gas Association, the Australian Pipeline Industry association, and the Minerals council of Australia, among others.

Joint developers of the 8.4 Trillion cubic feet Sunrise gas field Shell, Woodside and Phillips Petroleum are currently re-examining the case for bringing the gas onshore to Darwin via Pipeline. It could then be used to fuel industrial expansion in the Territory, and be piped elsewhere in Australia to meet domestic customer's needs.

The Territory Government is opposed to the so-called Floating LNG option, one that Shell and Woodside have indicated they prefer. The FLNG option has never been tried before but proposes that Sunrise gas be loaded onto a floating barge to convert the gas to liquid on site. The resource would then be exported directly to North American markets.

At the meeting Ms Martin outlined her plan to work with business to try to persuade the Federal Government, and the joint developers, that bringing gas onshore was in the national interest.

"Sunrise gas onshore will create thousands of extra jobs for Australians, and will increase GDP by \$15 billion," Ms Martin said.

"A new northern gas source is required to keep downward pressure on gas prices in Southern States to keep Australia's competitive advantage. Sunrise is such a source."

The meeting welcomed news of a potential major new additional source of energy into Australia.

In general terms, the meeting agreed that what was needed in Australia was a more competitive energy market, better diversity of supply and more affordable costs.

Noting the very keen interest by industry for competitive energy, Ms Martin called on the Federal Government to look closely at domestic gas demands and supply issues in the context of the Council of Australian Government's Energy Market Review. Ms Martin said the focus of the review should not be solely on electricity but also include gas pricing in the longer term.

Ms Martin said it has been a constructive meeting, with several of the organisations planning to further lobby the Federal Govt to try to keep Sunrise onshore.

The Chief Minister will meet with Deputy Prime Minister John Anderson at 3:30pm (Canberra Time) in his Parliament House office.