

Plumbing in a rapidly changing sustainability policy scene

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Drivers of Policy

- Climate: mitigation, adaptation, recovery after extreme events
- Economic and structural efficiency – streamlining, national consistency, etc
- Accountability for delivered sustainability outcomes
- Manage consumption and peaks in energy and water demand to limit cost increases
- Green skill development, capacity building
- Reduce social and economic impacts of increasing energy and water prices

Some Recent Policy Directions (1)

- National Framework for Energy Efficiency, National Strategy for Energy Efficiency and Prime Minister's Energy Efficiency Task Group
 - More stringent building energy and appliance regulation – ongoing reviews, flow-on changes to Standards
 - Mandatory disclosure of energy (and water performance) at time of resale or lease (residential and non-residential)
 - High greenhouse impact hot water system phase-out
 - Possible national integration of state energy efficiency trading/obligations for energy retailers (VEET, NESS, REES)
- Energy Efficiency Opportunities, EREP (Vic), E&WSPs (NSW)
- Green Skills Agreement – develop training and certification for green skills
- Financial incentives for climate mitigation, adaptation, energy and water efficiency

Some Recent Policy Directions (2)

- Focus on upgrading existing buildings and infrastructure:
 - New priorities (eg high ghg hot water service phase-out from 2012)
 - Audits/assessments, data collection
 - Incentives, regulation, information, innovation
 - Outcome is rapid changes in products, systems, required documentation, training
 - VEET to be extended to small business
- Examples of incentives:
 - Solar HW, heat pump, PV rebates, Small Renewable Energy Target
 - City of Melbourne financing model for building upgrades
 - Australian Carbon Trust partnerships
 - Funding from emission trading scheme?

Implications for Plumbing

- More work/business opportunities driven by customer response to regulations and incentives
- Need to upskill and reskill – ongoing
- Keep up with rapid product and technology change
- More accountability while complexity of installations increases
- Focus on upgrading instead of ‘like-for-like’ replacement
- Need for ‘systems’ and ‘services’ thinking