

# Climate & Energy



*Whilst Victoria has exceeded its recent emissions reduction targets, the overall approach to climate action lacks the urgency of what is required to address the climate emergency.*

*We must also acknowledge that the impacts of global warming are already here and unavoidable. Thus, a responsible government should implement specific policies on climate resilience and adaptation while simultaneously taking an ambitious approach to emissions reduction, from households to transport.*

*Climate policies must seek to reduce emissions and transition to Net Zero and 100% renewable electricity grid as soon as possible. The shutdown of coal-fired power stations is fast approaching, and it is imperative that our grid and storage capacity are ready for the switch. There should be no new fossil fuel projects in Victoria, including gas import facilities, to ensure we can meet our emissions reduction targets.*

*My policy has a strong focus on incentives to help our community electrify both as a cost of living measure and as a way to rapidly reduce our reliance on gas. By making it easier and cost-effective for our community to install behind-the-meter energy systems and to improve home energy efficiency, we will reduce the overall strain on our grid, making the transition away from fossil fuels much simpler.*

*My priorities on climate and energy include:*

## **1. Subsidies for low to middle-income households**

The Victorian Government currently offers small rebates and loans for various home energy and electrification upgrades. I support incentives to electrify and improve home energy efficiency, but for low to middle-income households, rebates and loans offer little help.

While electrifying can save households \$1,920 to \$2,230 per year<sup>[1]</sup>, that saving is inaccessible to those without the upfront capital to purchase energy upgrades.<sup>[2]</sup>

I support Victoria switching to a subsidy-only system for low to middle-income households, where the subsidy would cover the full cost of most upgrades.

Low to middle-income homeowners could purchase a typical 6.6kW solar system for roughly \$6,000<sup>[3]</sup>. A renter could purchase balcony solar\*, draught proofing, ceiling insulation and portable induction cooktops together for about \$4,000 to \$6,000.

**My policy is to provide subsidies up to \$6,000 for electrification and home energy upgrades to low and middle-income households.**

\*Balcony solar is not yet legal in Victoria, but my position is to remove the ban.

## ***2. Rapidly reduce our reliance on gas***

Victoria must reduce our reliance on gas as quickly as possible. Currently, more households and businesses in Victoria are connected to the gas network than in any other state.<sup>[4]</sup> As Victoria's gas runs out, AEMO has flagged a peak-day supply shortfall risk in southern states from 2029<sup>[5]</sup>, with supply gaps from 2030.<sup>[6]</sup>

Getting households off gas saves what's left for peaking and industries that can't yet transition.

Gas is more expensive than renewable energy and subject to price hikes from the international market. Gas is also a fossil fuel with significant adverse environmental impacts, and gas stoves are estimated to account for 12% of childhood asthma.<sup>[7]</sup>

I do not support drilling for more gas in Victoria or seismic blasting. Expert advice is clear that very little gas remains in Victoria and that it would be very expensive to obtain.<sup>[8]</sup> Given this, further gas drilling in Victoria has no economic justification.

I support Victoria's existing gas substitution roadmap and the existing restrictions on new gas appliances. However, to accelerate our transition away from gas, we must set an ambitious target to eventually close our gas distribution network.

I support the following measures to fast-track electrification and decrease the reliance on gas, ensuring we can close Victoria's residential and small-commercial gas distribution network by 2045:

- An inquiry into gas disconnection incentives and the effectiveness of existing electrification education programs
- Maintain our constitutional ban on fracking and coal seam gas
- Include a detailed apartment-specific strategy in the next update of the roadmap
- No new gas expansion in Victoria
- Build a world-leading offshore decommissioning industry
- Residential gas cooktops and space heaters must be replaced with electric appliances once they reach end of life
- Keep the ban on gas connections in new residential builds
- Mandates for all new buildings (residential and commercial) to include solar on rooftops where practical

**My policy is to update Victoria's gas substitution roadmap with a plan to close Victoria's residential and small-commercial gas distribution network by 2045.**

### ***3. Unlock commercial rooftop solar***

The Federal Government has recently expanded the Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme to include rooftop solar installations up to 1 megawatt.<sup>[\[9\]](#)</sup> This change creates an extraordinary opportunity to produce renewable energy close to consumers and share it with nearby residents in Urban Renewable Energy Zones, easing pressure on the grid and fast-tracking our renewable transition.<sup>[\[10\]](#)</sup>

The State Government must seize this opportunity and introduce appropriate regulations and guidelines to scale the commercial rooftop solar industry, where commercial rooftops (likely through rooftop renting), paired with batteries, become energy producers.

**My policy is for a well-planned, coordinated investment in commercial rooftop solar and batteries that will fast-track progress towards our emissions**

reduction targets.

#### ***4. Prepare for the renewable energy transition***

With the closure of coal-fired power stations rapidly approaching, we must accelerate the establishment of transmission infrastructure to support the renewable energy transition. VNI West is already two years behind schedule<sup>[11]</sup>, and unnecessary project reviews will only delay it further and scrapping the project will increase power bills for families and businesses.<sup>[12]</sup>

By the mid 2030s, approximately 4.8 GW of coal-generated electricity will have shut down, and by then we must have installed 11.4 GW of new grid-scale renewables, most of which must come from onshore wind and solar.<sup>[13]</sup> This is a major logistical challenge, and achieving it will require significant investment and ambition from Government.

To ensure a smooth transition to a fully renewable grid, we must:

- Investigate if the 2024 ‘fast tracking’ of onshore wind projects is having the desired impact and speed up planning approvals if necessary.
- Fast-track the Western and Eastern Victoria transmission reinforcement programs, alongside VNI West and the Western Renewables Link, so new wind, solar and offshore wind projects can connect to the grid in time to meet our 2030 targets<sup>[14]</sup>
- Invest in long-duration storage. Victoria is on track for its 2030 storage target, but with only one announced long-duration storage project, we risk electricity shortfalls if wind and solar output are low during peak demand.<sup>[15] [16]</sup>
- Plan our exit from coal, ensuring that plant closures are paired with firm replacement capacity including storage.
- Accelerate offshore wind projects
- Plan for demand that exceeds forecasts, building in a buffer for higher-than-expected demand growth

**My policy is to keep Victoria's grid transition on track by fast-tracking transmission and onshore wind projects, sharing the benefits with communities, accelerating offshore wind and investing in long-duration storage.**

## ***5. Rapid electrification of transport***

Victoria's transition to renewables-powered transport is too slow. Ambitious policies are needed to transition government fleets to electric vehicles and ensure public charging infrastructure can support consumers in switching from ICE vehicles to Electric Vehicles.

The Zero Emissions Vehicle Roadmap lacks ambition. It's time to move away from trials and replacement plans without end dates. We need to create a new Zero Emissions Vehicle Roadmap, and the plan should include:

- A statewide EV charging network strategy, including EV chargers at workplaces, on-street charging, park-and-ride car parks, and shopping centres, and charging solutions for electric trucks along major freight routes. [\[17\]](#)
- Incentives such as low or no-interest loans for freight transport to electrify
- Legislate an end date to have transitioned the entire bus fleet to electric
- Legislate that all new VicFleet purchases are EVs (excluding where no suitable EV option exists for operational tasks)
- Targeted investment to support local government to electrify their fleets
- Commence a feasibility study for the electrification of V/Line trains

**My policy is for an updated Zero Emissions Vehicle Roadmap, with ambitious legislated targets across government fleets and public charging infrastructure**

## ***6. Set new targets & mandate transparent reporting***

I support Victoria's existing 2045 net zero target, the existing interim targets and the renewable energy targets, but our reporting data is published ~two years after the fact.

We must mandate annual, transparent accounting against these targets, and set specific industry targets for the aviation, mining, maritime, and agriculture sectors. The Government should then publish an audited sector-by-sector progress report against these targets.

AEMO should also be tasked with producing an annual assessment on Victoria's energy transition, outlining the gap between retiring energy assets and replacement renewable generation and storage with a forward delivery audit. This statement should be tabled in parliament with a Government response required. [\[18\]](#)

Additionally, Victoria is required to set its 2040 climate targets by 2028, but the next Parliament should bring this forward. This will provide certainty and confidence for investment in the renewable energy transition.

**My policy is to set new and ambitious climate targets in early 2027, mandate industry-specific targets and transparent reporting from Government and require an annual assessment on our transition from AEMO.**

## ***7. Prepare for the impacts of global warming***

There is no doubt that we are in a climate emergency and the impacts from global warming are already here and unavoidable.

Victorians are already experiencing adverse impacts of a warming planet. Bushfire seasons are longer, flooding is more frequent, and many homes are simply unequipped to handle extreme heat.

Government has a responsibility to prepare our communities for what is to come. Yet, of the 80 recommendations to government from the Parliamentary Inquiry into Climate Resilience, the government has only fully committed to 37 of them, most notably refusing to support the recommendation for a Resilient Homes scheme. [\[19\]](#)

The Resilient Homes recommendation is based on similar schemes in NSW and QLD, where support is provided to rebuild, improve resilience, or to buy back homes at high risk, allowing homeowners to relocate.

**My policy is for government to urgently develop an implementation plan for the inquiry's recommendations that are not yet fully committed to, including a Resilient Homes scheme.**

## ***Climate FAQs?***

**Do you support public funds for fossil fuel projects?**

No

**Do you support Victoria's constitutional ban on hydraulic fracturing and coal seam gas?**

Yes

**Do you support new fossil fuel projects, including new gas expansion?**

No

**Do you support an earlier exit from coal-fired power generation than currently planned?**

Yes, in principle. I want Victoria to exit from coal-fired power as soon as possible. Should the next government increase the urgency of the renewable energy transition, I would support an earlier exit from coal-fired power if it was practicable and supported by expert advice.

**Do you support increasing royalties or other charges on existing (or new) fossil fuel mining projects?**

Yes, companies should pay considerably to access our non-renewable resources, and ideally this would disincentivise fossil fuel extraction.

**Will you remove the ban on balcony solar?**

Yes

**What is your position on Data Centres?**

Data Centres should supply their own renewable energy and water and not be built in residential areas.