

## Accelerated MEPS move welcomed

The Ministerial Council on Energy (MCE) has endorsed the proposal to fast-track the implementation of the second round of Minimum Energy Performance Standards (Stage II MEPS) for single-phase room air conditioners.

The proposal was brought forward in response to a call from several industry groups in mid 2004.

MCE chairman Shane Holt said the Equipment Efficiency Committee (EEEC) undertook extensive consultation with stakeholders to determine the most cost-effective course.

This included releasing several Regulatory Impact Statements (RISs) on Stage II MEPS.

The MCE accepted recommendations to bring forward the implementation date of Stage II MEPS for single phase air conditioners by 18 months, from 1 October 2007 to 1 April 2006.

State, Territory and New Zealand government officials will now imple-

ment the regulations to ensure that products manufactured or imported into Australia after 1 April 2006 that do not meet these new standards will not be able to be sold here.

The Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Equipment Manufacturers Association (AREMA) president Rod King was delighted with the implementation of the standards.

AREMA has been a strong supporter of the new single-phase MEPS program, King said.

"We were instrumental in negotiating the new MEPS schedules, which were acknowledged by the then Parliamentary Secretary for Environment as pushing the envelope.

"We are naturally pleased to see the package put forward at the National Air conditioning Conference in Sydney in 2004, coming to fruition.

"Having said that, this experience has shown there is a need to revise the MEPS procedures, to allow



Shane Holt.

greater certainty at an earlier stage in the process.

"The Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO) has said that there is nothing sacrosanct about the existing process, and is working with ourselves, AELMA and CESA to develop a revised process that will overcome some of the problems that emerged during the last round."