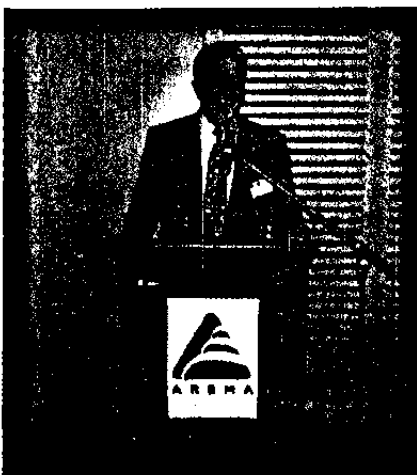

AREMA Announces MEPS Acceleration

Planned minimum energy performance standards (MEPS) intended for October 2007 have been advanced to April 2006, according to the president of the Air-conditioning and Refrigeration Equipment Manufacturers Association of Australia (AREMA), Rod King.

AREMA had told the Environment Minister David Kemp of the change on June 4, and made the decision public at the APEC Conference Air-conditioning and Energy Performance—the Next Five Years, held in Sydney, June 7, with delegates from around the world attending.



AREMA President Rod King

King said the proposal involved accelerating the October 2007 to April 2006 for 1-phase non-ducted vapour compression air conditioners for household use, up to 7.5 kW capacity. This includes non-ducted splits, wall-hung units, room air conditioners and consoles.

"AREMA will leave 3-phase MEPS unchanged," King said.

As a strong supporter of MEPS, AREMA had worked closely with the Australian Greenhouse Office to examine areas where MEPS could be advanced in a practical fashion, without undue economic disruption.

"This was a way of moving the agenda forward, but importantly our proposal contains qualifications," King said.

"We have made it very plain to the government that our proposal is conditional on a number of things necessary to support the initiative. First, we are confident that existing processes including the Regulatory Impact Statement process, will ensure costs and competition will be considered.

"Secondly, we need a commitment that the government will commit adequate resources to policing and enforcement of MEPS, particularly in regard to importing non-compliant equipment."

King said industry could move forward only if the government was committed to a level playing field.

"With hundreds of air-conditioning importers currently operating in Australia, it is essential that a strong enforcement effort underpins the integrity of the MEPS program."

At a dinner held after the conference at Darling Harbour in Sydney, King emphasized the solid relationship between government and industry.

"While the task ahead is considerable, with energy and good will we as a united front can succeed. This is an important year for AREMA—we now have in place our website and the introduction of import licensing for equipment, stewardship across the industry and continuing peak load issues."

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