

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Electricity generation greener in 2009

- **Biggest emitting power stations in 2009 revealed**
- **Renewables and gas generation grow by 11 per cent and 8 per cent**
- **Power station emissions down 2.4 per cent overall**
- **Coal-fired electricity dirtier due to increased use of most carbon intensive stations**

Electricity generation across Australia's five eastern states was greener in 2009 compared with the previous year. This was despite a continued reliance on coal-fired power stations and an increase in the use of some of the largest and most greenhouse intensive coal-fired stations in the country.

The findings are part of The Climate Group's Electricity Generation Report 2009, which reports on electricity generation and associated emissions from coal, gas, liquid fuel and renewables. The report reveals the biggest emitting power stations in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania.

In total, power stations generated 208 million Megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity in 2009, 2.1 per cent less than 2008, and emitted 181 million tonnes of greenhouse gas, a decrease of 2.4 per cent on 2008.

The three biggest emitting power stations in 2009 were all in Victoria: Loy Yang A emitted 18.81 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e, Hazelwood 16.25 million tonnes, and Yallourn W 15 million tonnes. Bayswater and Eraring in New South Wales were the fourth and fifth most polluting stations, emitting 14.92 million tonnes and 13.96 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e respectively.

Growth of 11 per cent in renewable electricity generation and 8 per cent for gas meant that the average carbon intensity of electricity fell by just more than one per cent compared with 2008, to 0.87 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e/MWh.

The overall share of renewables and gas remains small, accounting for 9.3 per cent and 8.0 per cent of total generation respectively (but up from 8.3 per cent and 7.6 per cent in 2008).

Electricity and emissions across the five states continues to be dominated by a relatively small number of large coal-fired power stations: the top 20 generators of electricity were all coal-fired and accounted for more than 90 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions. The top 10 accounted for more than 70 per cent of total emissions.

Total electricity generated from coal declined slightly, accounting for 82.3 per cent of total electricity, down from 84 per cent in 2008. This fall was largely due to less output from Liddell, Mt Piper, and Vales Point B in New South Wales.

However, electricity generation and emissions from some of the country's most carbon intensive power stations increased last year. Of the top seven most carbon intensive power stations, six generated more electricity in 2009 – including Victoria's Hazelwood, Yallourn W and Loy Yang B.

In South Australia, electricity generation increased at Playford B, the most carbon intensive\* station in all five states. In New South Wales, the most carbon intensive generator, Redbank Station, also produced more electricity than in 2008.

**Rupert Posner, The Australia Director of The Climate Group said:**

“The report shows that the mandated targets for renewable energy are making a difference, with our electricity becoming less greenhouse intensive.

“The fact that we generated more electricity from some of the most carbon intensive power stations means that, despite having a smaller overall market share, the carbon intensity of coal-fired electricity actually increased.

“This outcome is a clear example of why we need a price on carbon. We need to reduce our dependence on our most greenhouse polluting power stations but without a price on carbon the cheapest, rather than the least-polluting power stations are used first.”

The average carbon intensity of coal-fired power stations in Australia in 2009 was 1 tonne CO2 per MWh, gas was 0.57 and zero for renewables.

**N.B. The results varied across the states – for a state by state breakdown please see the individual sections with the full report.**

**End.**

\* Carbon intensity applies to the total electricity generated. Hazelwood is slightly more carbon intensive in terms of “sent out” electricity.

**Notes to Editors:**

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For full summary tables, please see the full report.

**Time scale and power stations included**

This 2009 Electricity Generation Report looks at generation and associated emissions during 2009 and compares them with the previous year. All scheduled fossil fuel and renewable energy power stations that contribute to the National Electricity Market (NEM) are included, as well as renewable energy power stations registered to create Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) or Victorian RECs (VRECs). The report does not include generation from non-scheduled power stations, renewable energy generated from small solar systems on private homes, or from power stations not registered to create RECs.

Please note that not all the power produced in each state is consumed in each state, as states regularly export and import electricity via the National Electricity Market. For more information on the report's methodology see Annex 1.

**About the Weekly Greenhouse Indicator**

The Climate Group has tracked greenhouse emissions from energy use in Victoria, NSW, Queensland and South Australia on a weekly basis since the beginning of 2007.

The Greenhouse Indicator provides accurate and real time information on greenhouse gases produced each week from energy use. It includes the major sources of greenhouse emissions that can be tracked accurately each week and is a unique tool designed to bring greater understanding to the issue of climate change and to help track greenhouse gas emissions in selected Australian states. It was developed with advice from some of Australia's best experts in the field.

For more information visit [www.theclimategroup.org/indicator](http://www.theclimategroup.org/indicator)