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Innovative energy powers the future

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**PAUL
EVERINGHAM**



Otto von Bismarck once said that politics is the art of the possible. And the recent release by the Environmental Protection Authority of its draft guidelines in relation to greenhouse gas emissions fits into that category. The revised draft guideline also acknowledges the State Government's aspiration of net zero emissions by 2050.

Greenhouse gas emissions are a complex policy area and the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of WA supports an approach that ensures each resources sector project is assessed on its merits. We also believe that the most efficient way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is through a nationally consistent approach, driven by the Federal Government.

The EPA's new guidelines put the onus on industry to show how they are "proposing all that is practicable" to reduce emissions over the life of the project and recognise that climate change policy and technological innovation are rapidly changing.

As was highlighted at the recent Resources Technology Showcase, the resources sector is at the cutting edge of innovation, whether it's in automation, exploration, processing, or greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

Gold Fields' Agnew Mine, in the northern Goldfields, will be the first mine in Australia to be powered by a wind, solar, battery and gas microgrid. The renewable energy microgrid is

expected to provide up to 60 per cent of the mine's energy requirements with the potential to meet almost all its energy requirements at certain times.

In August, Chevron announced the start-up of one of the world's biggest greenhouse gas mitigation projects ever undertaken by industry with its carbon capture and storage program. Once fully operational, the carbon dioxide injection facility will reduce Gorgon's emissions about 40 per cent or up to four million tonnes a year.

Woodside has set a new target to offset global portfolio equity reservoir carbon dioxide from 2021 and are not only on track to meet their 2016-20 target of 5 per cent energy efficiency improvement against their baseline, they have set a new 5 per cent target for 2021-25. They have also pioneered the use of a one-megawatt hour battery on the Goodwyn A Platform, cutting emissions by reducing the need for back-up power generation.

BHP's WA iron ore operations have reduced the greenhouse gas emission intensity of its iron ore production by 11 per cent over the past five years.

This has partly been achieved by using technology that recovers waste heat from electricity generation and then allows additional power to be generated.

CITIC Pacific Mining has invested in a 51 gigalitre-a-year desalination plant to help meet its water requirements. Choosing to include energy recovery units significantly reduces the amount of energy required for the process, because it recycles energy that would otherwise be lost and is expected to reduce emissions by about 27,500 tonnes of carbon a year.

Rio Tinto has started a six-year program to upgrade the engines of its



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200 haul trucks in the Pilbara. It will include fuel-saver control technology. The total fuel savings will be more than 20 million litres of diesel a year.

The resources sector is leading the way in tackling greenhouse gas emissions and will play a critical role as we move towards a lower emissions global future.

This will be achieved through providing cleaner fuels such as gas and hydrogen, as well as producing minerals that are essential for batteries, increased electrification and renewables.

For decades, WA's economy has prospered because of our abundant mineral and energy resources. What we need is a policy framework that enables our resources sector to remain competitive and innovative on the local, national and international stage and the EPA's revised guidelines are a step in the right direction.

Paul Everingham is the Chamber of Minerals & Energy of WA chief executive.



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