



Media Release

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Two thirds of Australians support demand response

More than 64 per cent of Australians support the idea of incentivising energy users to curb their energy use, an independent poll commissioned by the Australia Institute has found.

On behalf of the Australian Government, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency and the Australian Energy Market Operator, this week announced its \$35.7 million demand response trial will deliver 200 megawatts (MW) to manage extreme peaks.

Demand response involves paying energy users to be on standby to shift or reduce their power consumption, draw on their battery storage or switch to back up generation when energy supply reaches critically low levels.

Demand response provides a contingency to avoid outages when demand surges, such as during a summer heatwave or when generators fail.

Independent think tank Australia Institute today [released](#) independent polling that found nearly two thirds of Australians supporting demand response.

The nationwide demographically representative poll of 1421 people in September found:

- Four out of five (80 per cent) of Australians surveyed were keen to participate;
- Eighty five per cent were willing to turn down their thermostat by two degrees;
- Eighty two per cent were willing to switch off appliances not in use;
- Less than one third of people believe building new power stations was a better way to meet peak demand than managing demand.

The three-year trial will involve 10 pilot projects run by eight companies across New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, with at least 143 MW ready this summer.

The pilot projects will involve both commercial and industrial businesses and residential households who will volunteer to be on standby to conserve energy for short periods.

ARENA Chief Executive Officer Ivor Frischknecht said the polling was a very encouraging sign that demand response would be embraced by Australian consumers.

“Demand response makes better use of our existing poles, wires and generators, reducing costs for all energy consumers.

“This polling clearly indicates that Australians support the idea of managing demand during peaks in a smart, cost-effective way that avoids the need to build new infrastructure,” Mr Frischknecht said.

“Moreover, this polling suggests many Australians are happy to adjust their energy use slightly - such as turning down their cooling or heating, or switching off appliances not in use - to ease pressure on the grid if they can reduce their energy bills,” he said.

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For more information, visit arena.gov.au/demand-response or arena.gov.au/blog