



District Council of Cooper Pedy Newsletter

Welcome to the Opal Capital of the World

SPECIAL ISSUE - FEBRUARY 2014

News Release:

Minister Tom Koutsantonis

Wednesday, 12 February 2014

Power price relief for South Australia's remote communities

Power price relief is on the way for the thousands of South Australians living in remote communities that are not connected to the electricity grid.

Minister for Energy Tom Koutsantonis said a re-elected Labor Government will introduce reforms to ensure remote communities will pay about the same price as customers connected to the grid.

The new pricing structure to be introduced from 1 July 2014 follows representations made by Labor candidate for Giles Eddie Hughes. The reforms will use residential and small business standing offers offered to Adelaide customers to determine tariffs in remote areas.

Based on an average annual household consumption of 5000 kW/h, South Australians living in remote areas are expected to save up to \$45 a year on their power bills in 2014/15. Large business customers are expected to see significant savings on their current costs.

"Introducing competition to the energy market a year ago has put downward pressure on electricity prices for people living on the grid" Mr Koutsantonis said.

"While ground-breaking reforms mean discounts for South Australians connected to the grid, some communities have not been able to share in the benefits of increased competition."

"To ensure remote communities such as the tourist and mining hub at Cooper Pedy are not overlooked, a re-elected Labor Government will introduce a new tariff structure for power bills."

"These changes will reduce tariffs in remote areas from their current level to those comparable with the standing offers available to grid-connected residential and business customers."

Remote Areas Energy Supply Scheme Cooper Pedy Power Price Equalization

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Outback Power Action Lobby, the District Council of Cooper Pedy and Cooper Pedy Retail, Business and Tourism Association. Labor's sudden decision to cut \$1.3 million from the Remote Areas Energy Supply Scheme (RAES) in 2011 has had a devastating effect on the Cooper Pedy community and economy.

This abrupt change of policy has inflated costs for essential services and driven down business confidence. Remote communities deserve better.

We recognise the unique tourism industry of Cooper Pedy and the discriminatory impact of costs imposed on the community.

That is why the State Liberals are committed to reinstating the subsidy to the residents to reinforce the RAES with a view to ensuring that households and businesses in remote areas see power prices reduced from their current levels to those comparable to standing offers available to grid connected customers.

In addition, a Marshall Liberal Government will take action to assess complementary energy solutions, including subsidising new take up of solar, converting diesel generation in remote communities to gas and seeking Commonwealth funding for grid connection.

This commitment is a clear demonstration of support for Cooper Pedy from the State Liberals.

— Martin Hamilton-Smith MP —
Shadow Minister for Energy

"These energy reforms for remote areas are part of Labor's focus on reducing cost-of-living pressures for all South Australians that has already delivered more than 30 initiatives to make this state a more affordable place to live."

Under the Remote Areas Energy Supplies scheme about 2,600 customers are provided with more than 15 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity annually.

The infrastructure to generate and supply power at 10 RAES sites across South Australia is owned by the State Government, while three networks are independently owned at Andamooka, Cooper Pedy and Yunta.

The RAES scheme's tariff structure currently aims to keep power bills for households capped at 10% above the on-grid price, while business customers pay a tariff closer to supply prices.

— Minister Tom Koutsantonis —
Minister for Transport and Infrastructure
Minister for Mineral Resources and Energy
Minister for Housing and Urban Development



Media Release: Power win for the Outback

19 February 2014

The Outback Power Action Lobby - OPAL - has delivered a big win for 13 Outback communities, with both major political parties now committed to restoring electricity tariffs to close to those paid by on-grid customers.

"This is great news for Coober Pedy and the other 12 communities who have been paying through the nose for power for the past three years", Mayor Baines said.

"The tariff has hit businesses and consumers alike, killing investment and harming our tourism industry. We are delighted that both parties have now made a written commitment to bringing that to an end. This is a win for common sense and we congratulate both sides of politics for their stand and we now look forward to July 1st when the changes will be implemented".

Mr Coro said businesses would be particularly pleased with the news. *"We have been paying up to 110% more than comparable on-grid businesses so this news could not come a day too soon", he said. "We have been fighting this for three years, but took the opportunity of the current State Election campaign to really ramp up our efforts through direct contact with politicians and through the media. The lobbying had paid off and entire Outback is the winner".*

Shadow Energy Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith last night wrote to OPAL co-chairs, Coober Pedy Mayor Steve Baines and Retail, Business and Tourism Association Chairman Robert Coro, saying *'the State Liberals are committed to reinstating the subsidy to the residents to reinforce the Remote Areas Energy Subsidy with a view to ensuring that households and businesses in remote areas see power prices reduced from their current levels to those comparable to standing offers available to grid connected customers.*

"In addition, a Marshall Liberal Government will take action to assess complementary energy solutions, including subsidising new take up of solar, converting diesel generation in remote communities to gas and seeking Commonwealth funding for grid connection.

"This commitment is a clear demonstration of support for Coober Pedy from the State Liberals."

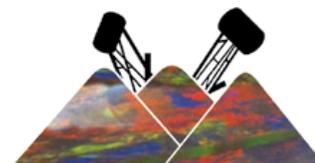
Last week, Minister for Energy Tom Koutsantonis said a re-elected Labor Government will introduce reforms to ensure remote communities will pay about the same price as customers connected to the grid from July 1st.

"A re-elected Labor Government will introduce a new tariff structure for power bills", the Minister said.

"These changes will reduce tariffs in remote areas from their current level to those comparable with the standing offers available to grid-connected residential and business customers".



District Council of Coober Pedy

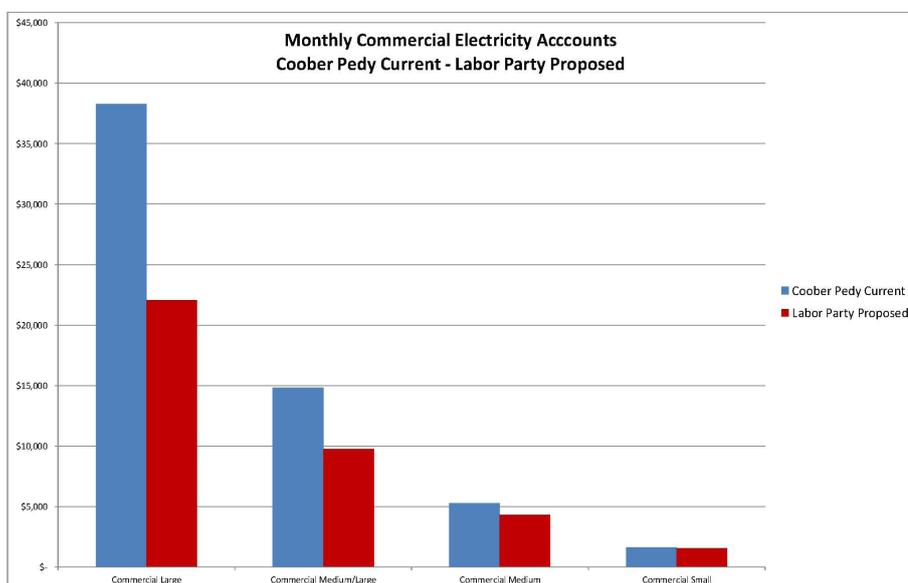


COOPER PEDY

RETAIL, BUSINESS AND
TOURISM ASSOCIATION

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Annual Events...

Harmony Day Celebrations

23 March 2014

Queen of the Desert Festival

15-19 April 2014

Opal Festival

19 April 2014

Coober Pedy Gem Trade Show

19-20 April 2014

The GREAT Breakaways' Bolt

31 May 2014

Coober Pedy Races

9-10 August 2014

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