

*Third reading***Motion agreed to.****Read third time.****CRIMES AMENDMENT (RAPE) BILL***Council's amendments***Returned from Council with message relating to amendments.****Ordered to be considered next day.****PERSONAL EXPLANATION**

**Ms D'AMBROSIO** (Mill Park) — I wish to make a personal explanation to the house. On Wednesday, 31 October, during members statements, the member for Bulleen made accusations that I or my electorate office staff undertook work on a publication written by Mr Ico Najdovski and Mr Robert Najdovski.

I wish to state categorically that the accusation made by the member for Bulleen is utterly incorrect and fictitious. No work on this publication was undertaken by me or my office staff. In fact, neither the text nor the design work of the publication became known to me or my staff until after the book was published and printed.

16:20

**NATIONAL ELECTRICITY (VICTORIA)  
AMENDMENT BILL***Statement of compatibility*

**Mr BATCHELOR** (Minister for Energy and Resources) tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act:

In accordance with section 28 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, I make this statement of compatibility with respect to the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment Bill 2007.

In my opinion, the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment Bill 2007, as introduced to the Legislative Assembly, is compatible with the human rights protected by the charter. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

**Overview of bill**

The bill will facilitate further reform of the electricity sector consistent with the national energy market reform program under the Council of Australian Governments. In particular, the bill contains transitional provisions with respect to the transfer of responsibility for economic regulation of

electricity distribution from the Victorian Essential Services Commission (ESC) to the Australian energy regulator (AER). Under those provisions, administration of the ESC's electricity distribution price determination 2006-10 will transfer to the AER on a specified date.

**Human rights issues**

The bill does not affect any human rights protected by the charter.

**Conclusion**

For the reasons outlined above, I consider that the bill is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

PETER BATCHELOR, MP  
Minister for Energy and Resources

*Second reading*

**Mr BATCHELOR** (Minister for Energy and Resources) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The bill will facilitate implementation in the Victorian electricity sector of the next phase of the national energy market reform program under the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). In particular, the bill contains transitional provisions with respect to the transfer of responsibility for economic regulation of electricity distribution from the Essential Services Commission (ESC) of Victoria to the Australian energy regulator (AER).

The national energy market reform program is being implemented through the COAG Ministerial Council on Energy (MCE). In 2005, in the first phase of the program, the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) and the AER were established as rule-maker and regulator respectively, a new national electricity law (NEL) was enacted by South Australia as lead legislator, and new national electricity rules (NER) were made. The law and rules currently apply to the wholesale market and to transmission.

In the second phase, a bill introduced in September into the South Australian Parliament will amend the national electricity law to provide for the AER to regulate all distribution networks in the national electricity market. Amendments to the national electricity rules have also been developed in consultation with industry and other stakeholders. The law and rules, as amended, will establish a single national regulatory framework for electricity networks — distribution as well as transmission.

The COAG Australian energy market agreement requires transfer of responsibility to the AER