

Empowering communities

Key highlights

In 2004–2005 the Sustainable Energy Authority

- › Launched the Green Power advertising campaign in partnership with Victorian energy retailers, which increased consumer awareness of Green Power from 40% to 61% and increased Green Power customers by 20%
- › Hosted 153 events in the Sustainable Energy Centre to bring together experts and business and community leaders, bringing the total to over 250 events
- › Increased by 135% the number of information outlets in regional Victoria through the regional partnerships program by launching 19 new outlets and bringing the total to 33
- › Captured and communicated learnings from Sustainable Public Lighting Initiative demonstration projects to the local council public lighting network through seminars, newsletters and a new website
- › Expanded the Energy Task Force to a further eight projects across Victoria, retrofitting 904 additional homes, bringing the total to 2329, with further support for the program allocated by the Victorian Government under the *A Fairer Victoria* policy
- › Provided access to information on Victoria's renewable energy resources on the Authority's website
- › Extended the TravelSmart—*Better ways to work* Program to two further councils through the Communities program
- › Continued to progress Local Energy Efficiency Demonstration projects to realise energy efficiency in local government facilities and worked to build the capacity to replicate these outcomes more broadly

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Empowering communities

This section outlines the activities and achievements of the Sustainable Energy Authority in empowering local and regional communities to reduce energy consumption and drive investment in energy supplied from sustainable sources.

Expanding access to information and expertise

The Sustainable Energy Authority expanded access to information through a range of channels to ensure Victoria has access to the best available information to inform choice and accelerate the adoption of sustainable energy across the State.

Sustainable Energy Centre

The Sustainable Energy Centre was opened in September 2003 and provides a hub for the exchange of international, national and local information and expertise on sustainable energy.

In 2004–2005, the Centre hosted a total of 153 events, bringing the total to over 250 since the Centre was launched. Events included national workshops and seminars, stakeholder functions and training programs that advance sustainable energy and brought together a broad range of experts and business and community leaders.

SE CONNECT was launched in 2004–2005, a pilot program that provides the Authority's partners with greater access to the expertise and resources available through the Sustainable Energy Centre. Partners have access to the library and bookshop discounts as well as a network between our partners to facilitate information exchange.

Since 2003, the bookshop in the Sustainable Energy Centre has provided the Victorian public with greater access to information on sustainable energy across all sectors.

In 2004–2005, the number of titles available through the bookshop increased to over 45, and sales exceeded 340 books worth over \$22 000.

Top selling titles in 2004–2005 are listed in table 4.

Table 4

The Sustainable Energy Centre bookshop provides access to best-practice sustainable energy information to the Authority's partners and stakeholder and the general public.

Title	Author	Copies sold in 2004–2005
Sustainable House	Michael Mobbs	58
Victorian Wind Atlas	Sustainable Energy Authority	38
The Energy Saving House	Thierry Salomon	29
Natural Capitalism	Amory Lovins	26

Information partnerships

The Authority partners with local community-based organisations in Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and metropolitan Melbourne to increase the reach and access of sustainable energy information.

Information outlets enable householders, community groups and small businesses to access information locally to help reduce their energy use and choose more sustainable forms of energy supply.

During the year, access to sustainable energy information in metropolitan and regional Victoria was expanded by 135% following the opening of 19 new information outlets through these partnerships. There are now a total of 33 information outlets across the state, providing information to Victorian communities (figure 25).

Through the information partnerships, the Authority has supported the development of two display centres in Victorian communities. The Geelong Home Ideas Centre Sustainable Home display, developed in partnership with CREATE Geelong, and the Building Display Centre EcoZone were launched in 2004–2005 and display cost-effective energy efficiency options to the general public and serve as information outlets.

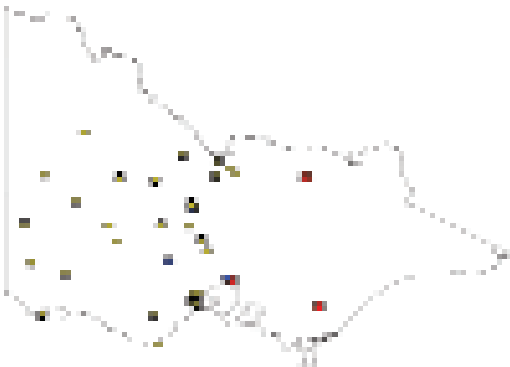
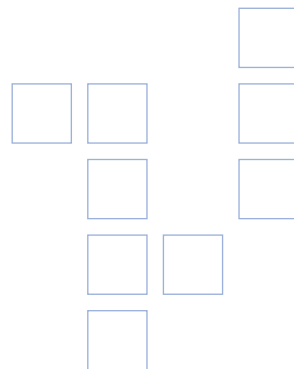


Figure 25
Location of sustainable energy information partners and outlets in Victoria as at 30 June 2005.



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Internet services

The Sustainable Energy Authority provides access, information and expertise via a broad range of channels in addition to our regional partnerships.

The growing trend towards accessing information through the internet continued with a 60% increase in the number of visitors to the Sustainable Energy Authority website www.seav.vic.gov.au. A total of 902 353 visits to the site were recorded during the year.

The website has been updated to include detailed information on Victoria's renewable energy resources. This includes detailed maps displaying the location and extent of the resource in Victoria.

In addition to the general sustainable energy information hotline and the hotline service dedicated to the High Efficiency Gas Heater Rebate, a new dedicated hotline service was established to support the launch of the Green Power advertising campaign.

Media

Strategic promotion of initiatives, partners and proactive media engagements enabled the Sustainable Energy Authority to provide general advice on sustainable energy outcomes.

In addition to two television appearances to provide information to the Victorian community on sustainable energy choices, staff also participated in 35 interviews and issued 59 media releases and 37 media statements. A total of 91 media enquiries were received by the Authority seeking sustainable energy expertise.

Targeted information products

The Sustainable Energy Authority continued to provide targeted information to assist particular sectors become more sustainable in their energy use.

Case studies were developed to support replication of the projects under the Commercial Office Buildings Innovation Initiative (COBEII) (page 56). The case studies showcase innovative technologies, provide access to the learnings from the demonstrated projects and include information about sustainable energy choices in commercial building design. They were launched through events held with the Melbourne Forum and are available on the Authority's website.

Development of a targeted sustainable manufacturing website commenced in 2004–2005 to provide industry sector partners and stakeholders with up-to-date, relevant sustainable energy information and a virtual hub for the sustainable manufacturing market.



Figure 26
The COBEII case studies are available on the Authority's website.

Publications and seminars

The Sustainable Energy Authority provides expertise nationally and internationally on sustainable energy options across the industrial, commercial, residential and government sectors.

Through participation in conferences and seminars and involvement in broader government projects, effective networks with other centres of expertise are maintained to provide best-practice information in the sustainable energy sector.

Publications

In addition to extensive information published on the website, the Authority produces a range of publications to increase stakeholder and community understanding of sustainable energy issues and the Authority's initiatives.

The following brochures, booklets and documents were produced for stakeholder access in 2004–2005.

General publications

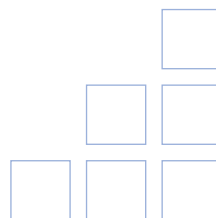
- > Annual Report 2003–2004
- > Business Plan 2004–2005—*Realising options for a sustainable energy future*

Technical reports

- > Commercial Office Building Energy Innovation Initiative case study—Automotive Centre of Excellence
- > Commercial Office Building Energy Innovation Initiative case study—Bordo International Head Office

Promotional material and information on initiatives

- > Expressions of Interest documentation:
 - Renewable Energy Support Fund
 - Business Energy Innovation Initiative
 - Commercial Office Building Energy Innovation Initiative
 - Victorian Solar Innovation Initiative
 - Sustainable Energy Innovation in Educational Facilities
 - Energy Task Force
- > Green Power brochure—*The power of everyone*
- > Green Power local government challenge kits
- > Energy Task Force brochures
- > Solar Hot Water Rebate guidelines and consumer fact sheets
- > High Efficiency Gas Heater Rebate guidelines and consumer fact sheets
- > High Efficiency Gas Hot Water Rebate guidelines and consumer fact sheets
- > Solar Cities Victorian update



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Conferences and seminars

The Authority regularly presents at conferences and seminars to influence national and international directions on sustainable energy and establish networks to facilitate access to information and expertise.

During the year, representatives of the Authority presented at the conferences and forums listed in table 5.

In addition, eight presentations were made to participants in the residential buildings sector on the 5 Star Standard, eight presentations to various industry groups on the Authority's demonstration initiatives and three presentations to educational and government groups on energy efficiency in government facilities.

Table 5
Presentations delivered by the Authority in 2004–2005.

Event	Location	Topic
World Renewable Energy Congress	Denver, USA	Developing a Renewable Energy Strategy for Victoria, Australia
Energy User's Association—Greenhouse and Energy Efficiency	Briefings Melbourne	Victorian greenhouse abatement measures and impacts
Renewable Energy Generator's Association Forum	Tasmania	Australian Policy Environment—a Victorian perspective
Business Council for Sustainable Energy—Sustainable Energy 2005	Melbourne	National Framework for Energy Efficiency Update International Developments—Solar Water Heating Market Support Schemes Laying the foundations for Victoria's 5 Star standard
Australian Wind Energy Association—AusWIND 2004	Tasmania	Developments in wind energy policy in Victoria
European Solar Thermal Energy Conference	Freiburg, Germany	International Standards for Solar Water Heaters—relevance for Europe Solar hot water in the Australian tradeable certificate system and regulations in the State of Victoria
Solar 2004	Perth	Solar Water Heating Support Schemes International Energy Agency—Solar Heating and Cooling Program Barriers and opportunities for renewable energy development in Victoria
International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)	Victorian Forum	Sustainable Public Lighting

International networks

The Authority continued to build networks to provide access to international expertise on sustainable energy. Table 6 outlines the outcomes of the overseas trips undertaken in 2004–2005.

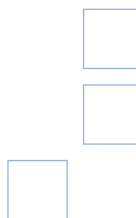


Table 6
The Authority builds its expertise through international networks.

Event	Description	Outcomes
Participation in the Executive Committee of the International Energy Agency Solar Heating and Cooling Programs	<p>The Authority represented Australia at the Executive Committee of the International Energy Agency Solar Heating and Cooling Program meeting in Costa Rica. The trip also included a two day technical study tour to inspect innovative solar cooling installations.</p> <p>The Authority represented Australia at the Executive Committee of the International Energy Agency Solar Heating and Cooling Program meeting in Spain. The trip also included presentations to the European Solar Thermal conference (see page X) and a tour of test laboratories to investigate hail damage to solar collectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Incorporation of Australian outcomes into the Business Plan for the Program to increase the benefit to Australia from the Program > Involvement of Australian organisations in International collaborative research programs > Recognition of Victoria's leadership role in international standards and development of regulations for residential sustainability > Understanding of European solar thermal energy production policies and programs > Understanding of hail impact test procedures and the performance of innovative products for incorporation into Australian standards
Study tour of Sweden's Natural Step program for sustainability in local government planning	The 11 day tour visited metropolitan and rural sites in Sweden where sustainability actions have been implemented based on the Natural Step Program. The tour also included lectures with the founders of the Program and other sustainability leaders in Sweden.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Insight into local government on Sustainability in Sweden, Europe and North America > Established international networks with individuals and organisations working on local sustainability initiatives

2.5

Empowering communities

Stimulating uptake of sustainable energy products and services

Green Power

During the year, the number of Victorian households making the switch to Green Power increased significantly, following the Green Power *Power of Every One* campaign.

At 30 June 2005, the campaign had already resulted in an increase in awareness of Green Power products by 21%, and customer numbers increased by 37% to 46 000 customers. This is compared to an increase in customer numbers of 3% over 2003–2004. The growth in Green Power customers in Victoria is illustrated in figure 27.

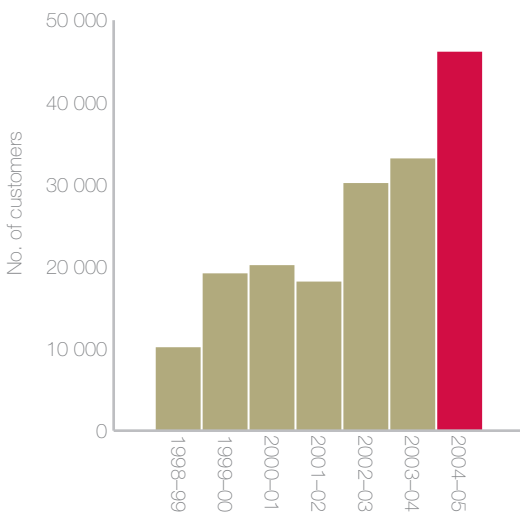


Figure 27

Consumer uptake of Green Power in Victoria has grown since its introduction in 1999. The recent *Power of Every One* campaign contributed to a 37% increase in the number of Green Power customers in Victoria taking the total number to over 46 000.

Victorian Green Power customers purchased a total of 136 gigawatt-hours of Green Power, increasing the demand for new renewable energy generation.

More details of the Green Power awareness campaign are provided on page 97.

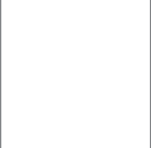
Solar Cities

The Solar Cities Program is a \$75 million dollar initiative announced in the Australian Government's white paper on energy in 2004, *Securing Australia's Energy Future*. The program will reduce the barriers to the uptake of distributed solar generation, enhance technology leadership in the development of photovoltaic systems and application of smart metering and enable trialling of demand management and cost-reflective energy pricing measures.

The Sustainable Energy Authority is the key Victorian agency delivering the Australian Greenhouse Office's Solar Cities Program and has worked with key Victorian stakeholders to develop proposed Solar Cities projects for Victoria.

The Authority has facilitated the development of strong Victorian proposals by bringing together the best available expertise to facilitate access to best-practice sustainable energy information and support the development of competitive Victorian consortia.

As at 30 June 2005, three Victorian projects had submitted proposals to the Australian Greenhouse Office for review. See page 96 for in-depth information.



Local government leading by example

Local government is well placed to lead by example and promote community-wide adoption of energy efficient and renewable energy products and services in local and regional communities.

In particular, community facilities provide an excellent opportunity to showcase and explain the benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy products. Local governments can also advocate the adoption of sustainable energy products and services by residents.

During the year, the Sustainable Energy Authority worked actively with local governments across the state.

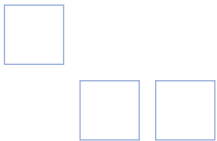
Local government promotes sustainable public lighting

It is estimated that Victoria's local councils spend \$50 million per annum on public lighting, which represents approximately 40% of their total energy costs.

In November 2003 the Sustainable Energy Authority implemented the Sustainable Public Lighting Initiative (SPLI) supported through the Victorian Greenhouse Strategy.

Thirty-eight sustainable public lighting projects across Melbourne and regional Victoria were established to showcase the installation of energy efficient public lighting. Nineteen demonstration projects have been completed in 2004–2005, establishing a network of sustainable public lighting providers, distribution companies and local government. The initiative has secured additional investment of \$1.3 million from project partners.

Significant learnings from these projects have been applied to encourage replication across all municipalities. The network established by the Authority in 2004–2005 provides a forum for information exchange for those working in public lighting to continue to build the capacity of the industry to make more sustainable energy choices. The Authority also worked with Environs Australia to develop the Sustainable Public Lighting web hub, an online information centre for public lighting initiatives www.energy-toolbox.vic.gov.au/publiclighting



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Local government leads the way to work

The TravelSmart—*Better ways to work* Program has been developed through a partnership between the Department of Infrastructure and the Sustainable Energy Authority. The Program contributes to reducing Victorian's dependence on cars and their contribution to greenhouse pollution.

The Authority supported the commencement of the world's largest multi-modal travel behaviour change project through the TravelSmart Households Program. The project, in the Cities of Maribymong and Moonee Valley, aims to reach up to 45 000 households to influence the switch to sustainable alternatives to cars.

Following completion of a similar project in the City of Darebin during the year, a decrease in on-road traffic in the project area was recorded.

The Authority also supported the pilot of local government and schools programs and TravelSmart worked with Melways to produce three new maps for the publication highlighting sustainable transport options.

Local government demonstrates energy efficiency

The Sustainable Energy Authority continued to work on 15 projects with local councils established under the Local Energy Efficiency Demonstration (LEED) initiative. The projects realised energy efficiency opportunities to facilitate sustainable energy outcomes, monitoring the results and using these learnings to build capacity within local government to replicate.

The Energy Tracker software was also finalised during the year. The software enables local governments to track their own energy use and was expanded in 2004–2005 to include water, waste and transport. The program is available on the Authority's website www.seav.vic.gov.au

Working with low-income households

The Energy Task Force continued its success in its third year of operation, with over 900 low-income homes being provided with energy efficiency retrofits. The program expanded in 2004–2005, to include areas outside the Neighbourhood Renewal areas.

Eight new projects were established with five projects in Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the remaining three in other areas of disadvantage, including a community that formerly relied heavily on wood for heating sourced from Box-Ironbark forests.

The Energy Task Force works with labour market programs to develop local sustainable energy skills and expertise through the delivery of energy efficiency improvements to homes. By improving energy efficiency, the Energy Task Force makes homes more comfortable and more affordable to live in.

The Energy Task Force is a unique collaboration between the Sustainable Energy Authority, the Department of Human Services, the Department for Victorian Communities and a range of community-based service providers and is implemented using a community development approach.

The roles of the various partners are illustrated in figure 28. The collaboration delivers multiple benefits including improved home quality and comfort, energy and cost savings, skill development and employment for work team participants, increased community awareness of the benefits of energy efficiency and reduced greenhouse pollution from the residential sector.

Retrofit teams comprise local unemployed people who are provided with training by the Authority and the Community Jobs Program to conduct home energy audits and retrofits. In addition to the completion of the retrofits, the Energy Task Force resulted in 76 people being trained to undertake home energy audits and implement energy efficiency improvements. One project also resulted in the establishment of a new business, making fittings for homes and employing six people.

New to the Energy Task Force in 2004–2005, is a project delivered through a school-based apprenticeship scheme. Students attend school three days a week with the remaining two days being put toward training for a Building and Construction apprenticeship, including retrofitting homes.

In partnership with Origin Energy, new Energy Task Force consumer education materials were developed during the year, including a fridge magnet of handy tips for reducing energy and a thermometer showing optimal temperatures.

Origin Energy, in conjunction with Kildonan Child and Family Services, also assisted in the review of household energy awareness training provided to the Energy Task Force work team participants.

In April 2005, the Victorian Government announced its *A Fairer Victoria* social policy. The policy aims to provide equality to all Victorians, and committed a further \$600 000 for the Energy Task Force.

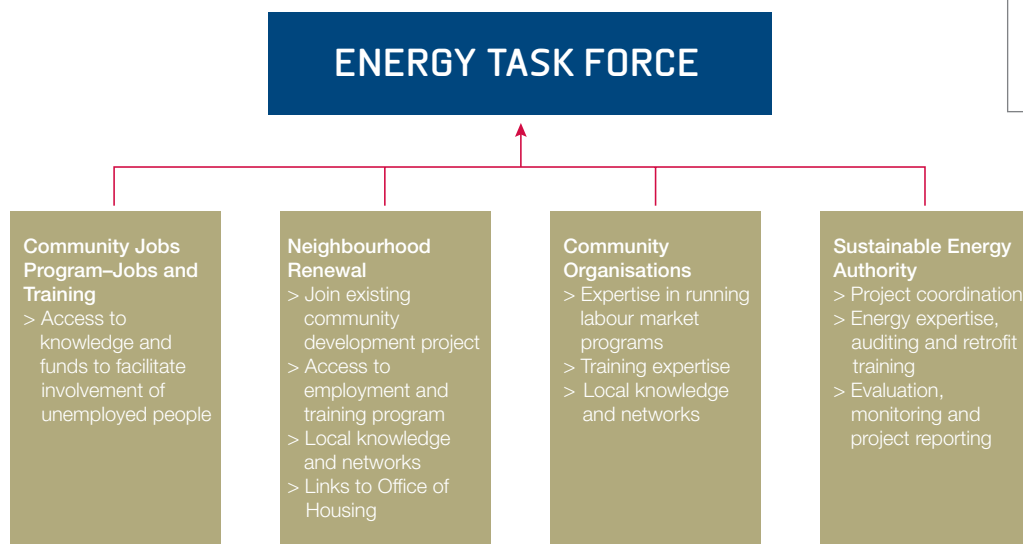
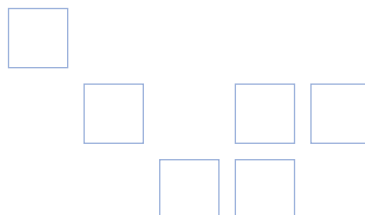
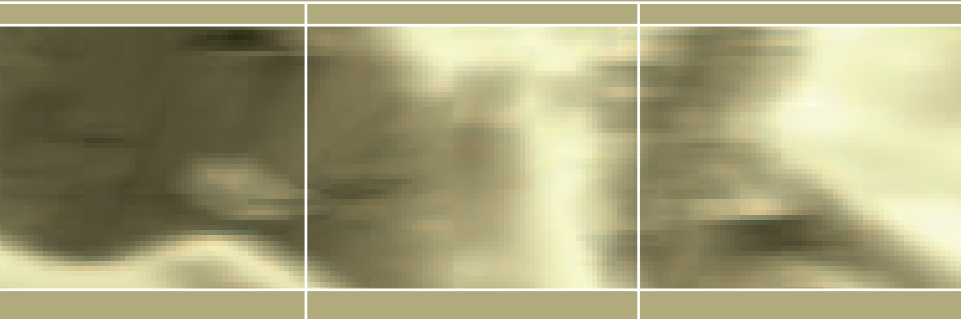


Figure 28
The roles of Energy Task Force partners.

› In-depth



› Solar Cities

As part of the Australian Government's Energy Statement released in June 2004, *Securing Australia's energy future*, the Prime Minister announced the \$75.3 million Solar Cities program. The program aims to create energy efficient communities of the future by integrating various approaches such as energy efficiency, smart meters, solar technologies and consumer-responsive pricing.

The trials will focus on existing residential and commercial infrastructure in grid-connected urban areas, and will demonstrate the potential to moderate future electricity supply and demand profiles, in particular for peak loads. The program will support four to five Solar Cities trial sites across Australia.

The Sustainable Energy Authority is coordinating the Victorian Government's involvement in the Solar Cities program. The Authority has worked with interested Victorian parties to develop consortia and progress strong competitive projects for submission to the Australian Greenhouse Office for assessment in the competitive tendering process.

In addition, the Sustainable Energy Authority is assisting any successful Victorian projects by providing:

- > access to international expertise in demand management program design
- > research to establish a benchmark for energy use profiles within the trial area.

Three consortia developed their projects with assistance from the Authority in 2005, with submissions due to the Australian Greenhouse Office in early 2005–2006.



> Green Power

During the year the Sustainable Energy Authority worked with energy retailers to deliver a Green Power advertising campaign to increase consumer awareness of Green Power products, and accelerate Green Power uptake.

Working in partnership

Research undertaken by the Authority indicated a low awareness of Green Power in Victoria, a clear barrier to Green Power uptake.

To address this, the campaign was developed to:

- > increase consumer awareness of Green Power from 40% to 60%; and
- > double the number of Victorian Green Power customers by December 2005.

The Authority partnered with Origin Energy and AGL to develop and deliver the *Power of Every One* media campaign which was launched in March 2005.

The campaign commenced with an intensive television advertising campaign which was supported by a range of activities including cinema advertising, sponsorship of the Melbourne Comedy Festival and a range of sign-up postcards and brochures to facilitate customer sign-up.

In addition, other promotional opportunities were pursued including the distribution of 'challenge kits' to local governments to engage local communities.

Campaign effectiveness

As a result of the campaign, consumer awareness of Green Power increased from 40% to 61%. In addition, consumer awareness of the ability to buy home electricity from renewable resources increased from 60% to 76% (figure 29).

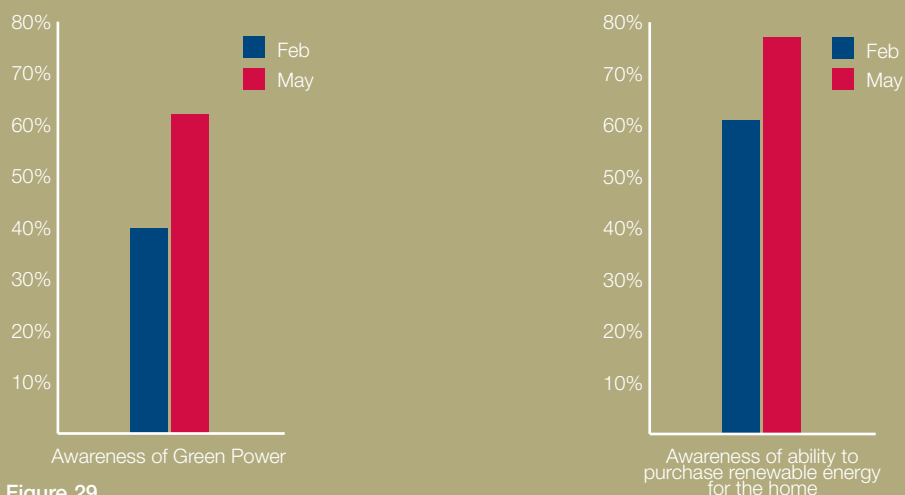


Figure 29

Responses from the Victorian public indicate that awareness of the Green Power products and the ability to purchase home electricity from renewable sources has increased significantly as a result of the Green Power media and awareness campaign, as measured by Newspoll.

Over 2004–2005, customer numbers increased by 20%. The number of Victorian Green Power customers at 31 June 2005 was over 46 000.

The success of the *Power of Every One* campaign has generated interest from other jurisdictions represented on the National Green Power Accreditation Steering Group. The potential to expand the campaign nationally is being explored.

Ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of the campaign is planned, with the number of Victorian Green Power customers reported monthly in *MX*, a publication distributed on Melbourne's public transport network.

› Staff profiles



Kim Barnett

Kim brings to the Authority extensive experience in working with community organisations to deliver welfare, educational and labour market programs.

She commenced working with the Authority in April 2003, where she has primarily worked on the Energy Task Force. Under Kim's leadership, the Energy Task Force has delivered 16 projects and retrofitted over 3000 low-income homes.

Kim was also heavily involved in the delivery of the second Business of Energy Efficiency Conference in Sydney in September 2004. She will now leave the Energy Task Force to lead the Green Power national marketing activity.



Kim Johnson

Kim Johnson has worked with the Authority since 1996, when she joined Energy Efficiency Victoria to provide customer service to the Victorian public.

She has worked in customer service for 20 years and has extensive experience in the energy sector. Prior to commencing with the Authority, Kim worked in customer service for an electricity retailer.

Kim's knowledge on consumer enquiries and customer service skills make her an integral team member in the smooth operation of the Sustainable Energy Centre. Kim contributes to addressing public enquiries and is an essential part of the operation of the bookshop.



Doug McPherson

Doug McPherson joined the Authority as a graduate in 1988, having completed a Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical) at Monash University.

His initial work involved testing and validation of Solar Hot Water Test Standard AS2984 and reporting on the performance of solar and gas hot water systems.

Doug has made a valuable contribution to the development and delivery of the Sustainable Public Lighting Initiative. He has played a key role in the establishment and management of partnerships under the program and now leads the team as they continue into the capacity building and replication phase of this successful program.

Doug has also been instrumental to the development of the FirstRate software to support the 5 Star Standard.

Future directions for empowering Victoria's community

As we make the transition to Sustainability Victoria, the Authority will:

- > focus on empowering communities to make decisions that lead to sustainable energy, water and materials outcomes
- > continue to develop and expand the provision of sustainable energy information and expertise through information partnerships
- > continue to increase the rate of Green Power sign-ups in Victoria and increase the strength of the Green Power brand
- > expand and implement projects developed under the Solar Cities Program to ensure best-practice sustainable communities in Victoria
- > develop and launch the sustainable manufacturing web information resource
- > expand the TravelSmart—*Better ways to work* Program to include further small-scale community travel behaviour changes
- > expand the Energy Task Force initiative by up to a further five projects across Victoria.