



I'm A Victorian. Can You Please Sell Me Some Electricity?

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Yesterday's revelation that the [closure](#) of the Hazelwood power station in March 2017 means Victoria will need to import electricity from New South Wales and/or Tasmania during summer peaks shows the extent to which governments are mismanaging our energy future.

The Australian Energy Market Operator [report](#) issued after the Hazelwood announcement also noted that in 2015-16:

- Victoria accounted for 27% of the electricity consumed in the National Energy Market, 86% of which came from brown coal;
- Victorian exports provided 14% of South Australian consumption, 6% of New South Wales' and 6% of Tasmania's; and
- Hazelwood alone produced 22% of Victoria's electricity.

When a state that has an estimated [430 billion tonnes](#) of brown coal – equal to hundreds of years of supply, and is the historic heart of the nation's gas and oil industry, is unable to reliably provide



its own electricity, you know you have a big problem.

The problem with Australia's electricity system is too much government control, too many regulations and playing favourites with particular technologies. This is probably why over the last decade, Australia has slipped from having the lowest energy costs in the OECD to the 27th lowest as [revealed](#) by the Minerals Council of Australia on Thursday.

This is why it was a pleasant surprise on Friday morning when the Australian Financial Review [reported](#) that the owner of ERM Power, Trevor St. Baker, has offered to buy Hazelwood, as well as the recently decommissioned Northern Power Station at Port Augusta in South Australia. Whether he is successful remains to be seen, but it is heartening that Australia has not yet lost all of its independent thinking entrepreneurs.

Good luck to him.