



This newsletter is produced by PRASEG for distribution to members once a week. PRASEG seeks to provide readers with news and parliamentary information related to renewable and sustainable energy issues.

PRASEG is a cross-party parliamentary group with 126 parliamentary and 250 industry members. If you would like to become a member, please contact Rose Dickinson, PRASEG Coordinator, at info@praseg.org.uk. For further information visit www.praseg.org.uk

7th August 2009: This Week's Headlines...

Energy security report presented by Malcolm Wicks MP

See DECC [press release](#), coverage in [Edie.net](#) and [New Energy Focus](#), and click [here](#) for report

EAC indicates Government might miss own emissions target

See EAC [press release](#) and [report](#) and coverage in [BBC](#), [The Guardian](#), & [The Independent](#)

Ofgem proposes £500M for trials on electricity networks

See Ofgem [press release](#) and coverage in [Guardian](#), [Independent](#), [FT](#) and [New Energy Focus](#)

Contents...

- 1 Upcoming PRASEG Events (page 2)
- 2 Recent news articles and press releases (page 3)
- 3 Recent reports and parliamentary activity (page 8)
- 4 External events of interest (page 10)

Party Conference Fringe Events

Climate Clinic 2009



PRASEG is holding events in Climate Clinic this year, details of which will be circulated by email. Dates for your diaries are:

Lib Dems: Tuesday 22nd September in Bournemouth

Labour: Monday 28th September in Brighton

Conservative: Tuesday 6th October in Manchester

Please join us in September at Climate Clinic locations to join what will be some exciting panel discussions on future sustainable energy use. The venues are *not* in the secure conference zones – no passes are required to attend

For further details contact Rose Dickinson at info@praseg.org.uk or on 020 7233 5887.



2. RECENT NEWS ARTICLES AND PRESS RELEASES

HEADLINES

Energy security report presented by Malcolm Wicks MP

- **DECC press release: Energy security Analysis welcomed – Wednesday, 5th August 2009**
The UK is on track to meet the challenge of securing energy supplies both internationally and domestically, a new report commissioned by the Prime Minister Gordon Brown concluded today. The report - 'Energy Security: a national challenge in a changing world' report - by the Prime Minister's Special Representative on International Energy, Rt. Hon. Malcolm Wicks MP complements the actions set out in the recently published UK Low Carbon Transition Plan. It finds that many of the actions being taken to reduce climate risk also need to be sustained to tackle energy security. [DECC](#)
- **Concerns over energy security good news for renewables – Thursday, 6th August 2009**
A desire to insulate the UK from the turbulent energy markets of a fossil fuel starved future could drive growth of renewable, and nuclear, energy production in the country. A report unveiled on Wednesday by Malcolm Wicks MP, the Prime Minister's Special Representative on International Energy, stresses the importance of moving away from a reliance on imported energy. [Edie.net](#)
- **Large increase in renewables needed to ensure energy security – Wednesday, 5th August 2009**
A report into energy security by the Prime Minister's special representative on international energy, Malcolm Wicks MP, has said that a higher level of renewable energy supply would have a positive impact on energy security in the UK by reducing the amount of fossil fuel consumed and reducing the need for fossil fuel imports. [New Energy Focus](#)

Environmental Audit Committee indicates Government might miss own emissions target

- **Environmental Audit Committee Press Notice: Report publication: "Greening Government" – Wednesday, 5th August 2009**
Taxpayers face bill if Government fails to reduce emissions; Report highlights drop in renewable energy used by Government and poor progress on cutting. [EAC](#)
- **Green failures 'may hit taxpayer' – Wednesday, 5th August 2009**
The failure of government departments to cut their carbon emissions could hit taxpayers, MPs have warned. The Environmental Audit Committee said it was "unconvinced" that the government would reach its own target of reducing emissions by 12.5% by 2011. It said departments could end up paying better performing private firms under the Carbon Reduction Commitment scheme which is to be introduced next year. The government said there was no proof that taxpayers would be affected. [BBC](#)
- **Government 'set to miss its own emissions targets' – Wednesday, 5th August 2009**
The Government is still producing 2.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide a year and is not doing enough to meet its own targets on emissions, MPs will warn today. By Kevin Rawlinson, [The Independent](#)
- **Ministers accused of backsliding on carbon targets – Wednesday, 5th August 2009**
Renewables use and recycling drop in government departments as MPs warn taxpayer may face cost of meeting targets. By Andrew Sparrow, [The Guardian](#)
- **MPs warn taxpayers to pick up bill for missed Whitehall carbon targets – Wednesday, 5th August 2009**
Carbon Reduction Commitment trading mechanism raises prospect of public sector buying carbon credits from private firms. By James Murray, [BusinessGreen](#)

Ofgem proposes £500M for trials on electricity networks

- **Ofgem press release: Ofgem's £6.5 billion investment proposals to boost customer service and cut carbon from regional electricity networks – Monday, 3rd August 2009**
Energy regulator Ofgem has unveiled proposals that will deliver better customer service from the regional electricity network companies, maintain high network reliability and pave the way for further



carbon reductions. [Ofgem](#)

- **Electricity investment boost approved – Monday, 3rd August 2009**
A 25 per cent increase in investment in Britain's electricity distribution networks to £1.3bn per year over the next five years has been given the green light by Ofgem, the energy regulator, to restore crumbling infrastructure and encourage new "smart grid" technology. By Ed Crooks, Energy Editor, [FT](#)
- **Ofgem plans 'smart grid cities' as it gears up to go green – Monday, 3rd August 2009**
Regulator cites plans to provide infrastructure for renewable micro-generation. By Tim Webb, [The Guardian](#)
- **Ofgem unveils plans for £500 million Low Carbon Networks Fund – Monday, 3rd August 2009**
Energy regulator Ofgem is proposing a £500 million fund to support large-scale trials of advanced network technology, which it says could help the electricity network accommodate growth in micro-generation and electric vehicle use. [New Energy Focus](#)
- **Power upgrades will put £3.76 on average bill – Monday, 3rd August 2009**
Upgrades to the regional electricity network will add an average of £3.76 a year to bills over the next five years, the regulator said today. Around £6.5 billion will be invested between 2010 and 2015 but Ofgem has told the companies responsible for the network that they must deliver their plans for 17 per cent less than they originally forecast. By Graeme Evans, Press Association, [The Independent](#)

OTHER NEWS

Environment Agency moves to unblock hydropower log jam – Friday, 7th August 2009

New guidelines aim to make it simpler for developers to gain approval for small-scale hydroelectric projects. [BusinessGreen](#)

Cloud ships on course to beat climate change, says Copenhagen study – Friday, 7th August 2009

They sound like ideas from a Jules Verne novel, but giant engineering schemes designed to alter the climate offer the cheapest way of avoiding catastrophic global warming, according to a growing number of scientists and green-minded entrepreneurs. By Ben Webster, Environment Editor, and Hannah Devlin, [The Times](#)

Clinton Foundation to build solar power station near Pakistan border – Thursday, 6th August 2009

The Clinton Foundation has agreed to build the world's largest solar power station close to India's border with Pakistan, a government minister has confirmed. By Dean Nelson, [The Telegraph](#)

Ban sales of poorly insulated homes, says Energy Saving Trust – Thursday, 6th August 2009

Owners of poorly insulated homes should not be allowed to sell or rent them until they have invested in energy efficiency measures, the Government's advisory body on domestic energy use says. Ben Webster, Environment Editor, [The Times](#)

UK Green Building Council proposes pay-as-you-save loans

- **Hand out £10,000 loans to make UK homes greener, say experts – Thursday, 6th August 2009**
But pay-as-you-save scheme gets lukewarm response from government. By Ashley Seager, [The Guardian](#)
- **Building industry proposes £10,000 green home loans – Thursday, 6th August 2009**
Green Building Council sets out plan for £5bn pay-as-you-save green home loan scheme. By James Murray, [BusinessGreen](#)



Construction set to begin on "largest" offshore windfarm – Thursday, 6th August 2009

The first phase of what is believed to be the largest renewable energy project ever under taken has received €613 million (£523 million) worth of investment to enable work on the 330MW facility to begin this month. [New Energy Focus](#)

Occupiers of Vestas wind turbine factory face eviction tomorrow – Thursday, 6th August 2009

Bailiffs serve six workers still occupying Vestas plant on Isle of Wight with warrant giving them 24 hours to leave. By Rachel Williams and agencies, [The Guardian](#)

Energy bills will cost £80 a year at new eco-home, developers claim – Thursday, 6th August 2009

Developers of a series of new eco homes have claimed that energy bills will only cost residents £80 per year. Saxon Weald has built the properties in Billingham, West Sussex, which will generate energy from solar panels and harvest rainwater for use in flushing toilets, 24dash.com reported. [EST daily news](#)

Scotland launches first CHP plant – Thursday, 6th August 2009

The first combined heat and power facility in Scotland has been officially opened today (August 6) in a ceremony at the Dumfries site. The plant, which is set to be operated by waste and energy firm Scotgen, is designed to cater for 60,000 tonnes of municipal, non-hazardous and hazardous waste each year and produce 6.2MW of energy to be exported to the National Grid. [New Energy Focus](#)

Harrabin's Notes: Breaking the jam – Wednesday, 5th August 2009

In his regular column, the BBC's environment analyst Roger Harrabin draws on his experience of a quarter of a century reporting the environment to assess the thesis of two veteran environmentalists who believe the Copenhagen climate meeting will not deliver results. [BBC](#)

Glut of solar deals shines light on clean tech investment recovery – Wednesday, 5th August 2009

Survey shows returning investor confidence, as flurry of solar deals suggests investment and acquisition war chests are being opened. By Cath Everett, [BusinessGreen](#)

Sandbag is bagging carbon credits – Wednesday, 5th August 2009

Part environmental watchdog and part social-networking site, Sandbag lobbies the United Nations and European Union for tighter caps on carbon emissions and permits, while buying up carbon credits. By Candace Lombardi, [Cnet News](#)

Fall in power demand 'unprecedented' says Drax – Tuesday, 4th August 2009

Industry demand for power station's electricity slumps 8%; Factory closures and fall in demand for new cars a factor. By Ashley Seager, [The Guardian](#)

UK's first green skills centre takes root in Wales – Tuesday, 4th August 2009

A green skills centre teaching more than 1,300 people a year to work in green technologies is being set up in the Welsh valleys. The British Gas Green Skills Centre in Tredegar, Blaenau Gwent, announced last week (Wed, July 29), will help the Welsh Assembly Government deliver energy efficiency measures to 40,000 homes. [Edie.net](#)



Banding the Renewables Obligation: Has the Government gone far enough? – Tuesday, 4th August 2009

In a special article for NewEnergyFocus.com, Simon Read of international law firm Pinsent Masons takes a look at the banding of the Renewables Obligation. [New Energy Focus](#)

Scotland promises more energy efficient homes – Tuesday, 4th August 2009

The Scottish government is offering almost 100,000 householders help to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. In an effort to tackle the emissions of existing housing stock, the Scottish Executive will be providing grants for up to 96,000 homes. The money will be funneled through the executive's Home Insulation Scheme which will allow householders in certain areas to apply for financial support when looking to upgrade their insulation. [Edie.net](#)

Obama's green credentials tested by battle against mountaintop mining – Tuesday, 4th August 2009

James Hansen and Darryl Hannah among those opposing open-cast coal extraction that destroys mountains and forests. By Suzanne Goldenberg, [The Guardian](#)

€300m European grant for Belgium's largest wind farm – Tuesday, 4th August 2009

Belgium's largest wind farm will be built off the coast of the country with European funding of €300m (£254 million). [Edie.net](#)

Report on wind turbine health risk

- **Wind turbines cause heart problems, headaches and nausea, claims doctor – Monday, 3rd August 2009**

Wind turbines can cause heart problems, tinnitus, nausea, panic attacks and headaches among people living nearby, according to a US doctor who has studied their effects for five years. By Ian Johnston, [The Telegraph](#)

- **Are wind farms a health risk? US scientist identifies 'wind turbine syndrome' – Sunday, 2nd August 2009**

Noise and vibration coming from large turbines are behind an increase in heart disease, migraine, panic attacks and other health problems, according to research by an American doctor. By Margareta Pagano, [The Independent](#)

- **Industry slams reports of "Wind Turbine Syndrome" – Tuesday, 4th August 2009**

British Wind Energy Association argues there is ample evidence to reject claims from US doctor that wind turbines are responsible for health problems. By James Murray, [BusinessGreen](#)

Eco homes: large houses with small bills – Monday, 3rd August 2009

How can a rambling pile keep its costs down? By Sarah Lonsdale, [The Telegraph](#)

Eco gadgets for the home – Monday, 3rd August 2009

Sarah Lonsdale tests some of the latest energy-saving gadgets for the home. [The Telegraph](#)

'Speed up UK roll-out of smart meters to save families money' – Monday, 3rd August 2009

THE government must not delay over plans to introduce "smart meters" to every home in the country, energy companies have urged. The Energy Retail Association (Era) called on the government to turn its proposals



into "firm policy decisions and clear action", as research revealed almost two-thirds of people had not heard of plans for the meters. By Emily Beament, [Scotsman](#)

India's ambitious solar power plan

- **India looks to the sun for ambitious surge in green power – Monday, 3rd August 2009**
Manmohan Singh, India's Prime Minister, will chair a meeting today to decide whether to approve a National Solar Mission designed to curb India's carbon emissions and ease its crippling power shortages. It proposes boosting India's solar power generation capacity from almost zero to 20 gigawatts (20 billion watts) by 2020, 100GW by 2030 and 200GW by 2050, according to a draft seen by *The Times*. The entire world can generate about 14GW of solar power today. By Jeremy Page, [The Times](#)
- **India sets out ambitious solar power plan to be paid for by rich nations – Tues, 4th August 2009**
India plans to generate 20GW from sunlight by 2020, putting green energy targets of developed nations in the shade. By Maseeh Rahman, [The Guardian](#)

Wind industry body deals Vestas blow – Sunday, 2nd August 2009

Last-ditch hopes of saving the UK's only wind-turbine manufacturing plant have been dealt a blow, as the industry's own association admitted it did not make sense to keep it open. By Fiona Harvey, Environment Correspondent, [FT](#)

Nissan unveils its electric car, the Leaf – Sunday, 2nd August 2009

Sunderland in running to make five-door hatchback; Nissan claims Leaf is first electric-only mass-market car. By Tim Webb, [The Guardian](#)

The folly of 'magical solutions' for targeting carbon emissions – Friday, 31st July 2009

Setting unattainable emissions targets such as in the UK is not a policy — it's an act of wishful thinking, argues one political scientist. From Yale Environment 360, part of the Guardian Environment Network. [The Guardian](#)

Mayor kickstarts London fund with £4 million for green upgrades – Friday, 31st July 2009

London Mayor Boris Johnson has pledged £4 million to a scheme that could see some of the capital's public buildings supplied with small scale renewable energy. [New Energy Focus](#)

BWEA: Vestas crisis shows that wind farm nimbyism doesn't pay – Friday, 31st July 2009

The closure of the Vestas wind turbine factory in the Isle of Wight has highlighted the economic benefits of a vibrant wind energy industry and shown how nimbyism can stand in its way, the British Wind Energy Association said today (July 31 2009), writes Rachel Johnson. [New Energy Focus](#)



3. RECENT REPORTS AND PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITY

Parliamentary Report

Parliament is now in recess

Recent Reports

Environment Agency report: “Good Practice Guidelines Annex to the Environment Agency Hydropower Handbook” – 7th August 2009

Hydropower proposals often require the us to balance the requirements of developers with protection of the environment. When dealing with applications for permissions, it is important that we adopt a consistent and fair approach, based upon a thorough knowledge and understanding of: regulatory processes; the environmental issues to be considered, and the needs of hydropower developers. The responsibility for enforcing Hydropower legislation was transferred from the National Rivers Authority (NRA) to the Environment Agency on its creation under the Environment Act, 1995.

Click [here](#) to access report

UK Green Building Council report: “Financing Low Energy Refurbishment in Housing” (Pay as you save report) – 6th August 2009

UK-GBC task group publish in depth analysis of existing homes retrofit scheme.

Click [here](#) to access report

DECC report: “Energy Security: A national challenge in a changing world” – 5th August 2009

In October 2008, the Prime Minister asked Malcolm Wicks MP, as his Special Representative on International Energy Issues, to carry out an independent review of international energy security and how developments internationally were likely to affect the UK's energy security in the coming decades. His report was published on 5 August 2009 and complements the recently published UK Low Carbon Transition Plan, setting out an approach to energy security that will enable the UK to achieve its climate change objectives. The report focuses on the changing UK and global energy picture, pointing out that even with ambitious climate change targets, the world is still likely to be reliant on coal, oil and gas to meet over two-thirds of its energy needs by 2030.

The report considers how global trends affect the UK's medium and long term energy security and having concluded that energy independence is unachievable, addresses the UK's international strategy and how we interact with multilateral agencies. In terms of the UK's bilateral relationships, it recommends that Norway, Qatar and Saudi Arabia be prioritised as the most significant relationships for our energy security.

The report also considers actions we could take within the UK's borders to reduce import dependency. It recognises that energy efficiency must be the starting point of all action and welcomes the ambitious proposals set out in the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan, in particular the support for households to reduce their energy use. It makes recommendations on maximising the UK Continental Shelf and considerations around gas storage.

In addition, if the UK electrifies much of its transport and heating, demand for electricity in 2050 could be 50 per cent higher than it is today, making it possible that electricity could account for half of our overall energy use; it is within this context that Malcolm Wicks' review recommends that Government consider setting a higher aspiration for nuclear power generation and keep under review whether further policy instruments may be necessary to direct further investment in capacity towards non-fossil fuel power generation, including wind, tidal and wave.



Click [here](#) to access report

Environmental Audit Committee: Sixth Report – “Greening Government” – 5th August 2009 Summary

There has been some progress against targets for sustainable operations on the government estate. But the Sustainable Development Commission has found that in 2007-08 the Government was not on track to meet its target for the reduction of carbon emissions from its own buildings. In 2007-08 the Government was on track to meet its targets for recycling and for the sourcing of electricity from renewable sources, but it performed less well than it had in 2006-07. This is not good enough. It must continue to improve the sustainability of its operations each year. The ease with which the Government continues to meet some targets, even when its performance worsens, indicates the urgent need for the Government to set itself stringent targets that match the high level of ambition of its own policies on climate change and sustainable development. Under the current system, only central government departments and their Executive Agencies are required to report their performance against the targets. We urge the Government to extend a system of targets and monitoring to the wider public sector, including its outsourced operations. The Government has the potential to drive change in the wider economy through sustainable procurement, through investment in low carbon technologies and by driving the development of "green" skills in the workforce. But the Sustainable Development Commission found that Government performed poorly against its own targets. The Government must use its buying power to drive progress towards a greener economy. The Government has made changes to the governance of its sustainable operations. But the Sustainable Development Commission has found that many of these changes have been confusing or ineffective. The Government must ensure that there is a clear line of accountability for these matters, and the Cabinet Office Minister responsible must take an active role in overseeing performance management. Click [here](#) to access report

World Resources Institute: Summary of H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act (Waxman-Markey) – 31st July 2009

This summary provides a concise overview of H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security (ACES) Act, as passed by the House of Representatives on June 26, 2009 (This summary applies only to H.R. 2454 as passed and not subsequent iterations). The ACES is a comprehensive energy and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction bill substantially revised since the original discussion draft released on March 31, 2009. The ACES consists of five titles: Title I, Clean Energy; Title II, Energy Efficiency; Title III, Reducing Global Warming Pollution; Title IV, Transitioning to a Clean Energy Economy; Title V, Agriculture and Forestry Related Offsets. This summary roughly follows the structure of the bill; it deviates from this structure where we believe it facilitates understanding by grouping related components together. By John Larsen, Alexia Kelly and Robert Heilmayer. Click [here](#) to access summary

Environmental Audit Committee – New Inquiry: Adapting to climate change – 31st July 2009

The EAC Committee has commissioned a review from the National Audit Office (NAO) on climate change adaptation. This provides an overview of climate change adaptation policy in England, including the implications of the Climate Change Act 2008, the cross-government 'Adapting to Climate Change' programme and the current capacity across Government Departments to assess and manage risks to their objectives from future climate change impacts. The NAO's review is the starting point for a new inquiry into adaptation that is launched today. The purpose of the inquiry is to assess whether the Government is on the right path to embedding effectively climate change adaptation, and management of risks from future climate change impacts, into Government programmes, policies and decision making, and into those of the wider public and private sectors. The Committee will also examine whether climate change adaptation is being sufficiently funded and supported as a challenge for the long-term and the extent to which short-term pressures could prevent effective adaptation. Submissions should be sent to the Committee by Monday 5 October 2009. Click [here](#) for further information and details on preparing submissions



4. EXTERNAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

Energy Foundation courses

[Introduction to Renewable Energy](#): 8th September 2009, Milton Keynes

[Solar Thermal Training](#): 30th September 2009, Milton Keynes

[Photovoltaics & Wind](#): 13th October 2009, Milton Keynes

[Wood Fuel Heating & CHP](#): 3rd November 2009, Milton Keynes