



**COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY**  
**THE SECRETARIAT**

27 April 2010

Note on  
**Informal Meeting with Director General Philip Lowe (DG ENER)**  
*on future actions in the field of energy efficiency*  
Brussels, 27 April, from 3 to 4 pm

**I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

In its introductory remarks Director General Lowe explained that the action plan for energy efficiency should be ready by the end of 2010. As regards future measures to promote energy efficiency he outlined the 3 areas for action to improve it in the EU:

- (1) Energy efficiency requirements for products: The number of products covered by energy labelling should be extended. Minimum requirements are necessary, while stricter public procurement requirements in terms of energy efficiency may be considered, however, are not perceived by all stakeholders as the appropriate cost-effective measure;
- (2) Improving energy efficiency of existing buildings: Major challenge is the existing stock of buildings, therefore, mandatory standards for renovations might be a way forward;
- (3) Promotion of new technologies to improve energy efficiency: The SET-plan focuses very much on supply-side technologies, however, the development of demand-side technologies need also financial support; this includes deployment of smart grids.

He believes that the action plan should contain some mandatory elements. However, he has no firm view yet on the question, whether making the 20% energy savings' target mandatory would lead to better results. In this context, it is important to consider what the possible consequences are in case a Member State does not meet this target.

**II. ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS**

Members raised a couple of issues and questions related to future actions to promote energy efficiency such as:

- Concern about delaying action plan and its negative impact,
- Need for a solid demand-side assessment;
- Creation of a supply-side market for energy efficiency;
- Need to provide sufficient manpower to check delivery of national energy efficiency action plans by Member States,
- Link between energy efficiency measures and investment cycle in the buildings sector;

- Property structure of existing buildings (public) in some Member States in context of public budget constrains;
- Means to ensure that smart grids are for the benefits of the consumers;
- Energy savings potential in industry compared to private sector;
- Use of unspent funds of the Recovery Plan for energy efficiency measures;
- Need to combine mandatory targets with EU financing.

### **III. ANSWERS BY DIRECTOR GENERAL LOWE**

Mr Lowe informed about the creation of an energy efficiency task-force inside the Commission. He expressed his preference to present the assessment and proposals for energy efficiency simultaneously at the end of the year, but offered to present an interim document with a preliminary assessment earlier, if Parliament wishes.

He stressed that in addition to some mandatory elements, the action plan should aim at a change of behaviours. As a new measure, he put forward the idea to set a kind of "energy efficiency conditionality" for any CO<sub>2</sub> related EU financing, meaning that EU support should only be granted, if energy efficiency is also increased. He believes that not necessarily more financial support is needed, but best practises of existing schemes (e.g. loans) should be promoted given the advantage that investments in energy efficiency are directly beneficial for the final consumer. In this context, the cohesion fund should also be used more extensively for energy efficiency.

The Secretariat/Felix Lutz