



Annual General Meeting 2006

CEO report

Jim Downey

This is my second report tabled at a Moreland Energy Foundation annual general meeting. Over the past year I have enjoyed meeting our members and supporters and look forward to continuing our work together into the future.

During 2006 we continued to deliver our projects and programs in an effective manner. We also undertook some substantial development work which will come to fruition over the coming year.

A brief summary of our work during the year ended 30 June 2006 is set out in this report.

Household Program

Home Energy Action

MEFL has delivered a shortened version of the Home Energy Action training to various groups including corporate audiences and community groups from other council areas. We have developed a new consultancy brochure and will be using it to continue to promote Home Energy Action training to a broader audience over the coming year.

Home Energy Stars

The Home Energy Star project has continued to recruit participants steadily through community outreach and word of mouth.

The majority of our new stars have come to us through new mothers groups, partly due to a new recruitment approach we trialled where group members received free compact fluorescent lamps as an incentive to sign up on the spot for the Home Energy Star project, following a talk by a MEFL staff member. Interest in the Home Energy Star project really picked up during the last half of the year from across the community, which appears to be part of a growing awareness of energy and greenhouse issues. Demand for the service has become so strong that we have had to create a waiting list for new Stars. One of the challenges for the household program in the year to come is to find a way to meet this growing demand effectively and efficiently.

The planned relaunch of the Home Energy Star project has been put on hold while we explore options for expanding and refining the service, such as including a retrofit component and making better use of the CERES Ecohouse. We are also putting together a Home Energy Star case study booklet, to be ready in time for the relaunch.

Home maintenance worker training

We delivered a one day training session to the home maintenance team at Mornington Peninsula Shire, which covered basic energy principles, retrofitting products and technologies and a hands-on installation session. The training was very well received. We have also developed a relationship with Moonee Valley City Council, who hope to engage MEFL to deliver training for their maintenance teams in the coming year.

Kits

280 kits were distributed throughout Moreland libraries during the year, the vast majority to households. 310 kits were distributed as part of workshops undertaken with new mothers groups. Other kits were distributed at festivals, events and on request / enquiry.

Renovators advice

The 5 Star Renovators Service has continued to be popular with Moreland residents. We provided detailed advice to 18 people during the year, as well as a number of telephone and email consultations. We have continued to promote the service through mothers groups, festivals and other community outreach activities and have been exploring avenues for extending the reach of the service. We have identified a number of opportunities including targeted promotion through Council's planning department and as part of MEFL and Moreland Council's ICLEI-funded real estate project (to be delivered in 2006/07).

First Rate Assessments

Our staff member Anna is now an accredited First Rate assessor and we are continuing to provide assessments as requested on a consultancy basis. Anna attended a First Rate assessor's information session to learn about the new generation of assessment software.

Household Small Projects

Support for the EcoHouse at CERES environmental park has continued with MEFL helping to upgrade the sub-floor insulation and increase the lagging of the Green Heat solar-hydronic heating system. MEFL has provided advice and assistance regarding the proposed renovation of the Ecohouse. We are also undertaking analysis of the energy consumption data for the Green Heat system in order to assess how this relatively new product performs.

Business Program

Phoenix Fridge Project

The Phoenix Fridge project set up by MEFL during 2004 has now been operating as a stand alone business for over a year by project partner the Brotherhood of St Laurence. The project collects on average 40 fridges a week, repairing 20 for resale and recycling the remainder.

The project has recently been awarded \$250,000 from the Victorian Government's Sustainability Fund and has negotiated \$120,000 sponsorship from electricity retailer TRU Energy. The combined funding will allow a significant expansion of the project including an additional processing site, a dedicated collection truck, an awareness campaign and training and employment initiatives. The scheme aims to sustain the collection of 5000 second hand fridges per year from the community.

MEFL continues to provide technical and other support to the project.

Brunswick St Business Audits

The Business Program has provided project management and delivery of an energy efficiency project in high profile Brunswick St shopping precinct for Yarra City Council.

The project involved auditing businesses in the street and providing advice and assistance with reducing energy use. We will monitor business actions taken over a period of one year to provide us with a further understanding of the actions business take based on information provided, together with an assessment of the most effective measures and approaches.

Training

MEFL's training programs have been highly successful this year with strong attendance at the quarterly *Introduction to Energy Management* course and a series of tailored programs for clients. A strategic plan is being finalised to further enhance training opportunities.

Solar Cities

See below.

Community Entities Program

Kinda Cooling

We assisted seven kindergartens and childcare centres to obtain funding through Moreland City Council's *Sustainable Moreland Environment* Grants program. Actions that were funded included double glazing skylights, draught sealing and improving ventilation. Most of the council-funded works have been completed and MEFL will deliver Home Energy Action workshops for the kinder community in 2006/07. MEFL was also successful in obtaining \$23,000 funding through Sustainability Victoria's Victorian Solar Innovation Initiative to plan and implement further energy efficiency improvements for the participating kinders and centres. MEFL has been refining the list of works to be undertaken for each facility and works will begin during 2006/07.

New Mothers Groups

Our energy efficiency information sessions for new mothers groups continued during the year. The arrival of a new baby can be a time when energy use suddenly increases in the household. These sessions aim to give Mums tips on how to minimise this increase. They are extremely popular in Moreland and during the year we met with more than 300 new mothers, distributing kits and Energy Smart Thermometers to all participants.

Festivals

MEFL was present at the four major festivals across Moreland and the Sustainable Living Festival. We enjoyed meeting many Moreland residents and providing them with advice to reduce their energy consumption. We also attended a number of festivals in other Council areas.

Advocacy

During the year our advocacy work included :

Victorian Parliament Inquiry into the Energy Services Industry

The Victorian Parliament, through the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, conducted an inquiry into the Energy Services Industry. We highlighted where we believed the barriers are to the adoption of energy efficiency both within households and businesses. Our submission discussed the need for formal training and accreditation for intermediaries -such as electricians -in the sector. We also provided the committee with a number of recommendations around incentives to increase the uptake of energy efficiency. A number of these resulted in formal recommendations from the Committee to Government.

Moreland City Council Car Parking Strategy

We completed a submission to the Moreland City Council Car Parking Strategy which we hoped would result in Council including some innovative measures, such as charging higher parking rates and permit fees for larger vehicles. We are pleased to say some of our key recommendations were picked up - for example, the strategy contains a commitment for Council to develop a separate car sharing strategy. It also picks up on recommendations we made around travel demand management, including encouraging local businesses to provide home-delivery services as well as incentive schemes for staff and customers to leave their cars at home.

Council staff were very receptive to most of the suggestions contained in our submission and although the strategy didn't specifically commit to all of them, in many places it did leave the door open for them to be revisited in future.

Distributed and decentralized generation - Ray Morgan

MEFL and Sustainability Victoria jointly hosted a visit to Melbourne by Ray Morgan, CEO of the Borough of Woking who generate and distribute energy through their company Thamesway Energy. The intention of Ray's visit was to promote small decentralised energy generation projects using renewables and co-generation.

While gas fired cogeneration technology has to date had a limited uptake in Australia, the Woking Council has used this as the basis for its own grid, generating its own electricity for use by Council and sale to other customers. Woking is also investing in solar photovoltaics, despite having far less sunlight hours than Melbourne.

While in Melbourne Ray held a workshop on distributed generation and visited a number of State Government officials and politicians.

Ironically, the Woking model was originally based on the Brunswick Electricity Supply Department, the latter which was forced to be sold under privatisation of the SECV. MEFL has been inspired by Ray's visit and we are presently investigating how we might apply some of the work Ray has implemented in the UK here in Victoria.

Environmental mandate for energy regulators - Dr Gill Owen

MEFL together with CUAC and Sustainability Victoria hosted a visit to Melbourne by Dr Gill Owen. Gill visited a number of politicians and their advisors and the visit culminated in a seminar where she outlined the approach to sustainability and the environment within energy regulation in the UK. While Australian energy regulators focus on economic regulation only, the UK regulator Ofgem has a duty to contribute to sustainable development. This provides legal comfort to the Ofgem Board, able to pursue regulatory outcomes which include economic, social and environmental outcomes.

The range of policy and programs driving sustainable energy in the UK is a demonstration of the potential of an integrated approach to energy security and climate change response. The Australian approach continues to be over reliant upon an energy market, which has clearly not delivered for sustainable energy to date.

Energy Efficiency Commitment

Following Gill Owen's visit MEFL, Esther Abram and Dr Alan Pears jointly prepared a paper which has been submitted to the Victorian Government outlining a potential energy efficiency commitment on energy retailers. The proposal is modeled on the UK approach which Gill presented at her workshop and has been adapted to better suit Victoria.

Car Sharing

Our advocacy work included lobbying and negotiation with Councils for car sharing schemes to be introduced. These programs – common in Europe – reduce the need for car ownership where instead cars are shared amongst residents. A key factor in their uptake is the policies of Local Government about the requirements for car parking facilities in new developments and providing special car parking provision for car share schemes.

National Pollutant Inventory

MEFL provided a submission to the Federal Government's review of the National Pollutant Inventory (NPI). This review was looking at whether or not to list greenhouse gas pollution (and therefore the larger polluters) on the inventory.

MEFL argued that the 2000 review of the NPI by Professor Ian Rae recommended that industrial sources of the six major greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, perfluorocarbons, hydrofluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride) be added to the NPI reporting list. Six years later there has been no further progress. The reasons for listing back in 2000 are at least just as relevant today and if anything they have become even more compelling.

In the intervening six years we have not been successful in developing a publicly accessible, mandatory and comprehensive reporting mechanism which fulfils community right to know objectives when it comes to greenhouse gases. This strengthens the case for the NPI to become that mechanism. Alternative programmes have not sought to fulfil

these objectives and are unlikely to do so in the future. These include Greenhouse Challenge Plus (Australian Greenhouse Office), the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory and various State based environmental licensing schemes.

Project Ideas

MEFL developed a number of project ideas which were submitted to the State Government during the year. These included an Environmental Choices for New Parents project, decentralized energy generation projects using renewables and an energy efficiency scheme for Victoria.

Other

The year also saw MEFL attend a number of events with an advocacy focus such as the Walk Against Warming, Ride to Work Day and Community Greenhouse Workshops.

Northern Alliance on Greenhouse Action

MEFL is a member of the Northern alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA) and the Alliance co-ordinator – Judy Bush is a MEFL staff member funded by the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment.

The alliance works with our partner Councils in the Northern Metropolitan Melbourne region on greenhouse gas reduction initiatives. During the year the alliance expanded to nine Councils : Melbourne, Moreland, Darebin, Banyule, Manningham, Nillumbik, Yarra, Hume and Whittlesea.

It has been a stellar year for NAGA and a number of major projects have been implemented or commenced. MEFL plays a key role in a number of these projects. Some of these were :

Sustainability Street Northern Metro

This project is being jointly delivered with Vox Bandicoot and will result in at least 18 Sustainability Street groups across the NAGA region. MEFL staff member, Jason Cox was appointed co-ordinator of the project in March 2006.

The participating Councils are Whittlesea, Moreland, Melbourne Darebin and Yarra. The groups will work to establish networks of sustainability beacons in their areas and develop locally appropriate strategies to reduce energy, waste and water use. Food co-operatives, car sharing and other sustainability initiatives will also be adopted.

A major outcome of the Sustainability Street approach is the building of a real sense of community, sadly lacking in many parts of society today.

The project will run for three (3) years and will be formally evaluated by Victoria University.

Green Electricians

MEFL has always believed from our past experience that there are a number of “ intermediaries ” in the energy sector who could be an important conduit for people into a greater uptake of energy efficiency measures.

During 2006, NAGA received funding from the Australian Government's Australian Greenhouse Office to deliver the *Energy Smart Electricians* program. This project provided free information seminars and training for electricians to expand their expertise in the application of emerging energy efficiency technologies and government regulation around energy efficiency.

The pilot project was a great success and included providing the participating electricians with different types of energy efficient lighting for installation on the job.

During the course of the project the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) became involved and have taken the project further. MEFL and NAGA recently worked with NECA on a tender to the National Framework on Energy Efficiency to establish a green electricians accreditation scheme. The NECA tender proposes four modules :: Energy Management (mandatory module), Lighting, Pumps Fans and Motors, Heating and Cooling. The successful tender will be announced soon.

This development is an exciting initiative which will hopefully help establish a thriving energy efficiency ethic amongst electricians.

Energy Efficient Streetlighting

The potential greenhouse gas gains to be made from more energy efficient streetlighting are enormous given that on average 40 % of a Councils electricity usage is for public lighting.

NAGA has facilitated the establishment of the Victorian Sustainable Public Lighting Action Group. This group is hosted by the ESC and comprises reps from NAGA Councils, regional alliance co-ordinators, the Australian Greenhouse Office, Sustainability Victoria and electricity distribution businesses. It has recently agreed on a terms of reference and will work towards more energy efficient public streetlighting.

In the meantime, NAGA has recently received a grant to prepare Energy efficient Streetlighting Action Plans for all nine NAGA Councils.

Partnerships

Moreland City Council

Arguably our most important partner is Moreland City Council. During the year we worked with Council staff on a range of initiatives including Solar Cities, Kindergarten energy retrofits, Pentridge Village development, STEPS, staff training and the update of Council's greenhouse strategy.

We are pleased with the regular joint MEFL / Council sustainability staff meetings we now hold to exchange information, ideas etc

We are particularly grateful to staff and Councillors for their assistance with our joint Solar Cities bid and would like to particularly mention Peter Brown who was part of our delegation to Canberra and Ian Robertson for co-ordinating Council's involvement.

Solar Cities

The Coburg Solar Village proposal was one of eleven sites short listed by the Federal Government's Solar Cities programme for further consideration. The CSV consortium, lead by MEFL in partnership with the Moreland City Council, submitted our final Detailed Business Case in April 2006 and lodged it as a \$10 M project. The proposal, if successful would provide a significant increase in energy efficiency and sustainable energy projects in Moreland.

These will include a substantial installation of Solar power throughout Coburg.

This project has provided us with the opportunity to form a number of partnerships with participating organizations. These are :

Moreland City Council	Victorian Government	AGL
Coles Myer	Pentridge Village	Future Energy
Origin	Thamesway Energy	Savewater! Alliance
Members Equity C U	Ecosaver	Village Well
Village Green	Vox Bandicoot	CERES
Brotherhood of St Laurence	CSIRO	Energy Response
Eko op	Centurion Metering	Strahan Research
RMIT	Institute for Sustainable Futures	

We would like to particularly thank Peter Brown (CEO Moreland City Council), Dominic Drenen (Origin energy) and Paul Murfitt (Sustainability Victoria) for being part of our presentation to the assessment panel in Canberra.

Community Power

Our co-operative green power buying project offered a new simplified green power product to residents of Moreland, Melbourne, Yarra, Darebin and Banyule Council areas. Under the new arrangements, Community Power is now the most cost effective way for households to sign up to Green Power.

As part of our promotion of Community Power MEFL gave presentations to many community groups and attended a range of events throughout the northern metro region. We also offered a number of incentives such as energy efficient lightglobes and sustainability packs.

The Environment Shop

We would like to promote and thank our partnership with the Environment Shop in High Street Northcote for their assistance in offering us great deals on sustainability packs, energy efficient lightglobes and up to date information on products available on the market.

CERES and the Origin Energy Eco House

We continued our support for the Energy Eco House at CERES and we are currently looking at ways MEFL and NAGA could better utilize the facility.

Sustainability Victoria

Our partnership with Sustainability Victoria (SV) resulted in a number of key initiatives being completed during 2006. These included : our Solar Cities submission, workshop on distributed generation, the Phoenix Fridge project, workshop on an environmental mandate for the energy regulator, Smart Energy Zones project development and developing possibilities for energy efficiency projects in the industrial sector.

The new CEO of SV Mr Geoff Mabbett was also given a tour of Moreland by MEFL early on after his appointment to this important position. A group of us thoroughly enjoyed the presentation at CERES, Merri Creek Management Committee and the bike ride to The Moreland City Council offices for meetings with the Mayor and CEO.

This partnership is a highly valued relationship for MEFL.

Financial

I am very pleased to report we returned a small surplus for the year of \$36,821. This was a significant turn around against a budgeted loss of \$38,539. This is the third year in a row MEFL has returned a surplus. In 2006 the surplus is largely due to reduced payroll costs and a great effort by staff members to raise contract and consultancy income, in this area I would like to especially mention Bruce Thompson and Anna Stempel.

Staffing, the board and thanks

We devoted considerable effort during 2005 / 2006 towards reaching agreement on a new MEFL workplace agreement. We had the agreement registered in the Industrial Relations Commission in March 2006 and we are proud of our achievements. MEFL has a modern and contemporary workplace agreement that fits well with our operation with some interesting clauses e.g. agreements to pay employees' bicycle repairs if they cycle to work, agreement for interest free loans to purchase bicycles etc

The year has seen some staff changes at MEFL. Judy Bush was appointed NAGA co-ordinator in August 2005 and Jason Cox was appointed Sustainability Street co-ordinator in March 2006. Both are doing a sterling job. Anna Stempel obtained a promotion to the position of Household Project co-ordinator in May 2006 following the departure of Euan Williamson. Anna is applying herself well to the very large task of offering advice to households on energy in our area.

I would like to reiterate the comments made in our farewell to Euan published in our last Moreland Energy News and thank Euan for all his efforts.

Rachel Oliphant was appointed Community Power promotions officer in Jan 2006 and has done a terrific job. Rachel's skills are now being used on other projects within MEFL. Khadiga Hamed continued in the role of offering important administrative and project support.

Bruce Thompson continued in his role as Business Program co-ordinator and I would like to extend a sincere thanks and congratulations to Bruce for his efforts over the past year. He has not only delivered on major projects (Phoenix Fridge and Solar Cities to name

two) he has offered me tremendous personal assistance as CEO over my first twelve months at MEFL.

I would also like to thank our chair Mike Hill and the other MEFL board members for their valuable assistance over the past year. Mike in his chair's report will discuss a number of the board initiatives undertaken during 2005/2006.

I look forward to meeting more of the people associated with MEFL over the coming year and thank you for the warm welcome I have received since arriving.

Jim Downey
CEO