



# It's time to count cost of being carbon neutral



**ALEX ANTIC**

A RACE to become the world's first carbon neutral city is on and it seems that the Adelaide City Council is hellbent on getting there first — no matter what the cost.

The City of Adelaide produces 950,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum, yet when one considers that the world's total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are approximately 40 billion tonnes annually — that's 40,000,000,000 — our 0.0024 of 1 per cent contribution is the very definition of a drop in the ocean.

The State Government shares this aspiration and the joint Carbon Neutral Adelaide Action Plan confidently asserts: "The State Government and the council recognise that meeting our goal to be the world's first carbon neutral city will only happen with the support of the whole community."

Sounds very much like public sector speak for "this is going to cost you money".

What is the point of this exercise, I hear you ask.

According to the plan, taking first place in the carbon Olympics will "promote new business and investment opportunities arising from the city advancing its carbon neutral reputation".

Sounds very much like public sector speak for "we hope that this will distract you from

our economic problems".

In truth, I fear that the ACC has become embroiled in a gigantic State Government smokescreen, designed to convince the public that SA is progressive and performing well — despite having the most expensive power on the planet, the most unreliable power grid and the highest unemployment rate in the country.

Like Patty Hearst, the ACC appears to have acquired a case of Stockholm syndrome and our ratepayers have been

bound, gagged and dragged along for the ride.

Like most people, I have absolutely no desire to see our environment polluted, but when one considers our total emissions against the obsession the ACC has with all things carbon, I hardly think it is unreasonable to ask how much this entire exercise is costing our ratepayers.

While it's not difficult to find platitudes about the virtues of these lofty ambitions, it is hard to find conclusive, hard-hitting and bare-faced facts about the cost.

Next week, I will ask council to endorse a proper economic analysis of the costs associated with achieving carbon neutrality. Not a fluffy, self-congratulatory media statement, but a no-nonsense, warts-and-all analysis.

I want City of Adelaide ratepayers to be able to decide whether they are comfortable with the price they are paying

for being co-opted into an enterprise which will have no discernible impact on the environment around them.

**ALEX ANTIC IS A CITY OF ADELAIDE COUNCILLOR AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**



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**SMOKESCREEN:** Alex Antic fears ratepayers have been conned over government plans to make Adelaide CBD carbon neutral.