Speaking at an ALP National Conference business observer event today, NT Chief Minister Clare Martin outlined her Government’s three-point plan to kick-start debate on a national energy policy.

Ms Martin told the group that the Federal Government’s current policy - that energy supplies should be left to the players in the international marketplace - is misplaced.

“The recent Moomba disruption exposed deep flaws in the nation’s energy capacity,” she said.

“As a result, I believe that the implementation of a comprehensive National Energy Policy is required immediately.”

“The simple fact is that a successfully functioning economy must be underpinned by long term, secure supplies of energy at internationally competitive prices - what happens when there is an energy failure like Moomba?”

Ms Martin said the three point plan provides a decisive first step to opening debate on a policy.

- The Federal Government must adopt a stronger hands-on approach to Energy Production. They must require projects to meet a ‘National Interest Test’ to ensure Australia’s long term strategic energy interests are protected and secured.

- Australia must adopt a ‘use it or lose it’ regulatory regime to ensure gas and oil deposits are developed in accordance with the national need – not simply by the timetables of global giants. Often after a gas deposit is discovered it is capped and then “warehoused” or left untouched for years until the joint venturers decide to develop it.

- The Government should adopt the Gas Access Regime recommended in the draft Productivity Commission Report. That regime was designed to encourage new investments in pipeline infrastructure that would see more clean burning, Greenhouse friendly gas eventually brought onshore for national energy requirements.

“My Government strongly believes that we - as Australian Governments - need to work together on this issue and agree on a national policy approach,” she said.

“I have lobbied for this for more than 18 months and it’s time the Federal Government acted.”