

**Media Release: Carbon Reduction & Trading Conference**

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Delay of Carbon Trading Not Just About the Financial Crisis

The federal government's apparent decision to delay the carbon trading scheme by around six months may still leave Australia unprepared for its introduction, according to carbon trading expert, Jan Brandjes of Carbon Focus.

"Our scheme is not proposed to be introduced until the end of 2010," Prime Minister Kevin Rudd told the Fairfax Radio Network today. Until now, the government has stuck firmly to the July 1, 2010 start date, despite pressure from the Australian Industry Group for a two-year postponement in light of the economic downturn.

"The government has bought itself and the business community more time but even with another six months, both may well find themselves caught out by the introduction of the emissions trading scheme," says Jan Brandjes.

Mr Brandjes is in the midst of organising the Carbon Reduction & Trading Conference and says most businesses remain in the dark about even the most basic concepts associated with the new emissions regulations.

"Most don't even realise they need to act, let alone what they need to do," he said. "Even if business started today in earnest, Australia's business community was bound to miss the July 1 deadline because it was simply unprepared. If they do treat this extra breathing space as a holiday, we'll see a repeat of the disastrous UK experience."

Among the presenters at the Carbon Reduction & Trading Conference will be Rob Cawthorne and Andrew Barson of the Carbon Reduction Institute. The pair will explain how small to medium enterprises can cope with the downwards pressure from large emitting companies.

"In the UK, hundreds of thousands of businesses were completely caught out because the perception that only the large companies and organizations were going to be affected left many CEOs and managers asleep at the wheel," Mr Brandjes said. "It looks like it won't be any different here."

Sponsored by Sustainability Victoria, the Carbon Reduction & Trading Conference will run from March 31 to April 2 at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre. For more information, visit www.carbonconference.com.au [<http://www.carbonconference.com.au>] or phone Australian Exhibitions & Conferences on (03) 9654 7773.

Media release prepared by Firefly Marketing. Phone: (03) 9736 4334, mobile: (0421) 530 944 or email: marianm@fireflymarketing.com.au

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