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**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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**Pensioners welcome CPRS financial compensation but want practical measures too**

Peak body for older Australians, COTA Over 50s, says that additional payments to seniors under the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) are well targeted and will effectively compensate them for the energy price spike that will accompany the scheme's introduction in July 2010. But the main game is to achieve long term energy efficient households.

"These direct CPRS compensation payments are very welcome", said Executive Director, Dr Geoff Bird, "but it is how the government supports households to lower their costs through real reductions in energy use that remains the key issue. Today's announcements are largely silent on energy efficiency measures, and this is where the real gains are to be made.

"Home insulation, efficient appliances and eco-friendly heating and lighting have to be supported in very practical ways. We know that word of mouth is a powerful motivator for getting people to take on energy reduction measures, and governments need to engage directly with householders and communities to get that happening. Helping low income people to retrofit their homes for energy efficiency is a key strategy for minimising energy expenditure. Funds raised by the carbon permit system should be applied to this sort of practical task.

"Just as households, community groups and businesses have all been included in the CPRS, we urge the government to take a similar approach to its national infrastructure scheme. Infrastructure funds should be spent not just on large scale projects but on domestic and neighbourhood infrastructure that will boost energy efficiency. This will also support the growth of green skills in the workforce, including among lower skilled workers.

"Serious action on climate change is vital. I would not be surprised if many older Australians say they are unimpressed by the relatively low 5 per cent carbon reduction target announced by the Prime Minister."

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