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Firms urged to conduct energy audit for improved efficiency

Govt has allocated up to RM110,000 per company to carry out energy audit

by **ALIFAH ZAINUDDIN**

MALAYSIAN companies are encouraged to conduct an internal energy audit as a way to be more mindful and efficient in using electricity.

Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water secretary general Datuk Seri Dr Ir Zaini Ujang said the move to take stock of a company's day-to-day energy usage will offer an enormous insight into how energy can be better utilised.

"Once you know where the bulk of the energy is consumed, you can make the necessary changes to reduce consumption as well as costs," Zaini said when met after *The Malaysian Reserve's* (TMR) Third Green Growth Roundtable on "Powering Malaysia: Transitioning Towards Clean Energy" held in Bangi yesterday.

"At the moment, it is not yet compulsory. We are more focused on increasing the number of energy auditors in the country. Under the 1Malaysia Training Scheme programme that we have with Tenaga

Nasional Bhd (TNB), we are looking to create 600 energy auditors this year," he said.

Zaini added that the government has, since last year, allocated up to RM110,000 per company for firms to carry out an energy audit.

However, he noted that the urgency to adopt cleaner energy largely depends on how corporations view the effect of the transition on their respective bottom lines.

"It is the same across different industries. If the top management looks into the bottom line and see that they can save their total cost of operation, they will do it and the country will be able to achieve our target of attaining a certain level of energy efficiency," Zaini said.

Despite the many favourable contentions given on green initiatives, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers energy management committee chairman Puan Sri Maimon Arif Patail said profitability remains the crux of renewable energy (RE) implementation.

"The order of the day is profitability. Of course, making sure that we are in compliance with whatever regulations that are out there is important but it really is about business as usual," Maimon said.

Typically, she said corporations

are faced with a spike in their cash-flow when they decide to adopt RE initiatives and therefore need a certain assurance on the investment returns.

"A lot of our members are looking to it (install solar panels on roofs), but as small and medium enterprises, one of their biggest issues would be cashflow because the initial cost is very high and you do not get financing for this," Maimon said.

Meanwhile, TNB Energy Services Sdn Bhd MD Dr Ir Ahmad Jaafar Abd Hamid said any measures taken must be technically suitable.

"Although it is good that we can utilise rooftops as part of our solution, we must look into the suitability of the sites first and whether it fits well to the entire system," Ahmad Jaafar said.

Additionally, Energy Commission chairman Datuk Abdul Razak Abdul Majid said Malaysia needs to consider security as well as the cost of energy supplies.

"Government's aim is to ensure that our energy prices will always be affordable to the masses," he said, adding that at the same time the commission has to ensure that energy's supply and security measures must be 15 years ahead of time.

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Pic by Hussein Shaharuddin

(From left) **TMR COO MV Swaminathan, Ahmad Jaafar, Maimon, Zaini, Abdul Razak, PricewaterhouseCoopers Advisory Services Sdn Bhd ED Adeline Khoo Suet Ling and ENSEARCH chairman KN Gobinathan** at the **TMR's 3rd Green Growth Roundtable** yesterday