

Lunchtime series

Provocations and Inspirations

Hydrogen: Cost and Technology Challenges

Alex Dronoff

Chair, Hunter Hydrogen Taskforce

Date: Tuesday 24 March 2026
12:15 pm for a 12:30 start.
Finishes 2:00 pm.

Venue: Union University and Schools Club, 25 Bent Street, Sydney (corner of Bent and Phillip Streets)

Registration: Registration at [this link](#) is required **before 2.00 pm on Thursday 19 March 2026**. Numbers are limited.

Cost: \$75 (RSNSW or UUSC members); \$85 (non-members/guests). *A warm meal and wine will be served for lunch.*

Dress: Smart business casual (jacket preferred). **No denim.**

Hydrogen: Cost and Technology Challenges

A Future Made in Australia (FMiA) is a major federal government program (announced in the 2025-25 Federal budget) that establishes a policy framework called the National Interest Framework (NIF) that imposes rigour on government decision-making on public investments, particularly those that need to attract large-scale private investment. The program will see investment of \$22.7 billion over the next decade focused on two major streams:

- Net zero transformation; and
- Economic security and resilience

The stream has three major areas of focus, one of which is ***Renewable Hydrogen***.

The focus of this program is to utilise Australia's abundant renewable energy resources to produce green hydrogen and use this to replace carbon in the manufacture of metals such as iron, steel and aluminium. This would substantially reduce or even eliminate emissions of carbon dioxide, one of the major contributors to global warming.

In this talk, Alex Dronoff will explore the cost and technology challenges in the production and safe handling of the very large volumes of green hydrogen required to have a major impact on the replacement of carbon in industrial processes such as green metals and fuels.

(cont'd...)

About the Speaker



Alex Dronoff, Chair, Hunter Hydrogen Taskforce

Alex is chair of the Hunter Hydrogen Task force and was a founding director of the Australian Hydrogen Council. He was appointed CEO of Fichtner Australia in 2021 to establish Fichtner's operations in Australia, building on the strength, global expertise and experience of the German parent. Currently, he is a member of Supervisory/Advisory Board of Fichtner Australia/New Zealand.

As CEO, he was responsible for the growth of the renewable engineering consulting business in the areas of renewable hydrogen and its derivatives such as ammonia, methanol, efuels, solar PV, concentrated solar power (CSP), battery energy storage systems (BESS), thermal storage, energy from waste (EfW) and pumped hydro.

Fichtner was commissioned by the Dutch and Australian Governments, in collaboration with the German Government, to undertake work into the certification of renewable hydrogen.

Prior to working for Fichtner, Alex developed and grew the Clean Energy business for BOC/Linde and was one of the pioneers in advocating the need for the energy transition and developed the early pilot hydrogen projects. He is a senior executive with over 30 years' experience (including 15 years with Shell, both nationally and internationally) in the traditional oil and gas industries, before focusing on renewable energy.