



Media Release

Small-scale solar thermal project delivers low cost power

A new small-scale solar thermal demonstration plant is set to make a splash at the City of Newcastle's swimming pool in Wallsend.

ARENA CEO Ivor Frischknecht today joined Parliamentary Secretary for Industry Bob Baldwin at the official launch of the plant, which was designed and constructed by local company Granite Power in collaboration with the University of Newcastle and several other partners.

"The \$1.7 million project integrates solar thermal and GRANEX heat engine technology and is supported by \$812,000 funding from ARENA," Mr Frischknecht said.

"The 200 kilowatt solar field, located at the Wallsend swimming complex, will generate 30 kilowatts of electrical output and 150 kilowatts of heat for the swimming pool.

"The GRANEX technology efficiently turns low-grade waste heat into electricity which increases the amount of electricity that can be generated from the solar thermal field."

Mr Frischknecht said the demonstration project was the first of its kind and would produce thousands of hours of valuable operating data.

"It demonstrates the potential of small-scale solar thermal systems in providing cost effective energy options, particularly for off-grid areas," Mr Frischknecht said.

"ARENA recognises the importance of supporting renewable energy projects that are innovative, economically geared and increasingly market-driven – such as those that could deliver low cost power to remote mining communities.

"It is vital that Australia continues to deliver world-leading and cost-effective renewable technology solutions that keep up with economic growth."

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For more
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About the Australian Renewable Energy Agency

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) was established by the Government as an independent authority on 1 July 2012 to make renewable energy technologies more affordable and increase the amount of renewable energy used in Australia. ARENA is funded to 2022 to invest in renewable energy projects, support research and development activities, and increase industry and community knowledge about renewable energy.

About Granite Power

Based in Newcastle, Granite Power's principal technology development is the GRANEX heat engine. GRANEX™ is an innovative development of the conventional Organic Rankine Cycle (ORC) technology that improves cycle efficiency and increases the net electrical output that can be recovered from a given heat source by about 40 per cent.