



Media Release

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First panels installed at Australia's biggest solar plant

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency today celebrated a major milestone with the installation of the first solar panels at AGL's large-scale solar plant in Nyngan, NSW.

ARENA's CEO Ivor Frischknecht joined federal and state officials, key stakeholders, community representatives and local workers at the 250 hectare construction site to congratulate project developers, AGL and First Solar, on this significant achievement.

"The advanced thin-film PV modules being installed today are the first of around 1.35 million panels that will harvest sunlight for the 102 MW solar plant," Mr Frischknecht said.

"ARENA is very pleased to be supporting this landmark project which, when complete will be Australia's largest solar power plant with the ability to generate enough renewable energy to power more than 33,000 homes each year.

"The development of large-scale solar is vital to a diverse energy future and makes good economic sense in Australia where we have an abundant supply of solar energy."

Mr Frischknecht said the AGL project would significantly increase local skills, knowledge and expertise.

"In addition to creating jobs, boosting skills and contributing to the local community, this project will play a pivotal role in advancing large-scale solar in Australia.

"ARENA is already working with AGL to ensure the valuable knowledge gained during the construction, as well as the ongoing operation of the project, is shared with the rest of the industry.

"Sharing information from the projects we fund is a core element of ARENA's philosophy. It serves to build investor confidence and reduce risk, thereby bringing down costs of future projects and helping deliver more energy options for Australia."

AGL's \$440 million, 155 MW Solar Project, is located over two locations at Nyngan and Broken Hill in western NSW, and is being developed in partnership with First Solar. A majority of the project funds will be spent on the Australian supply chain with benefits flowing to the region and beyond.

ARENA is supporting the project with \$166.7 million, and \$64.9 million is being provided by the NSW Government.

The construction phase of the 102 MW Nyngan Solar Plant began in January 2014 and is expected to be completed by June 2015. The 53 MW Broken Hill Solar Plant began construction in early July 2014 and is due to be completed in November 2015.

About ARENA

ARENA was established by the Australian Government as an independent agency on 1 July 2012 to make renewable energy technologies more affordable and increase the amount of renewable energy used in Australia. ARENA invests in renewable energy projects, supports research and development activities, boosts job creation and industry development, and increases knowledge about renewable energy.

About AGL

AGL is one of Australia's leading integrated renewable energy companies, operating retail and merchant energy businesses, power generation assets and an upstream gas portfolio. The company's diverse power generation portfolio includes base, peaking and intermediate generation plants, spread across traditional thermal generation as well as renewable sources including hydro, wind, landfill gas, biomass and solar. AGL is Australia's largest private owner and operator of renewable energy assets.

About First Solar

First Solar is a leading global provider of comprehensive photovoltaic solar systems using its advanced module and system technology. The company's integrated power plant solutions deliver an economically attractive alternative to fossil-fuel electricity generation today. From raw material sourcing through end-of-life module recycling, First Solar's renewable energy systems protect and enhance the environment.