



Media Release

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Port Augusta solar thermal investigation continues

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) today announced progress on Alinta Energy's Port Augusta solar thermal feasibility study.

ARENA CEO Ivor Frischknecht said Alinta has narrowed down the options for a renewable energy solution for the South Australian community.

"Alinta commissioned Parsons Brinckerhoff earlier this year to examine the available solar thermal technologies and potential plant locations," Mr Frischknecht said.

"Parsons Brinckerhoff found that a 50 MW solar thermal plant near Port Augusta's existing power stations is technically feasible.

"Alinta is now focusing its pre-feasibility work into a stand-alone solar thermal plant using 'power tower' technology that would see a field of mirrors concentrate light into a central receiver.

"A stand-alone option was favoured over hybridising existing coal-fired plants due to lower technology risks and the capability to operate on a longer life cycle.

"This next stage of the investigation will give a clearer indication of the costs, logistics and overall feasibility of the plant."

Mr Frischknecht said the high temperatures generated by power tower technology make it most compatible with molten-salt storage.

"A 50MW plant is capable of harbouring many hours of storage, presenting the key advantage of providing a steady flow of power through the night and during cloudy periods," Mr Frischknecht said.

"Alinta is favouring a site located to the south-east of the Port Augusta Power Station premises, big enough for the large array of mirrors, while benefiting from close proximity to a grid-connection point.

"The results so far represent an important knowledge sharing outcome for the renewable energy industry and will provide the Port Augusta community with early information on how the project may unfold."

An executive summary of both recommendations and the options and siting studies are available on the Alinta website: alintaenergy.com.au/solarthermal.

All pre-feasibility work is due for delivery in early 2015. The full feasibility study is due to conclude in December 2015.

About ARENA

ARENA was established by the Australian 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 investing in renewable energy projects, supporting research and development activities, and increasing industry and community knowledge about renewable energy.

About Alinta

Alinta Energy is a leading Australian-based integrated energy company, with a diversified portfolio including more than 2500MW of power generation assets, and more than 780,000 business and residential customers. We have a long history dating back to 1941 in energy operations, investments, and assets across Australia and New Zealand.