



Media Release

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First cab off the rank: First of 12 large scale solar farms completed in Emu Downs, Western Australia

In a landmark achievement, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) today announced Emu Downs is the first of its 12 large scale solar farms funded under its \$92 million round to be completed.

Under the round, ARENA provided \$92 million in funding to 12 large scale solar farms which are currently under construction or nearing completion in Queensland, NSW and WA. Once built, these dozen solar farms will have a total capacity of 492.5MW. ARENA provided APA Group with \$5.5 million to build the 20MW solar farm on the site of its wind farm, 200km north of Perth.

ARENA CEO Ivor Frischknecht said the the completion of the Emu Downs Solar Farm was a significant milestone for renewables in Australia.

“Before ARENA’s strong investment, large scale solar remained in its infancy in Australia. The competitive round was critical in supporting the technology to becoming competitive and helping to close the gap that exists between large-scale solar PV and other commercially competitive forms of power generation, including wind energy.

“APA’s Emu Downs Solar Farm marks the beginning of a quick succession of our large scale solar farms reaching completion this year, injecting \$1.1 billion into solar PV,” Mr Frischknecht said.

“Beyond just funding a dozen new solar farms, this round acted as a catalyst to kickstart the large scale solar industry in Australia, dramatically reducing the price of solar energy.

“Thanks to our efforts and those of our partners, there are solar farms being built without government funding. Six years ago, there were just 10MW of solar in Australia, whereas this year there will be over 1800 MW, with over 10 GW in the pipeline, which is a huge step forward in a short space of time,” he said.

The ambitious \$50 million project has around 75,000 solar panels, utilising the existing

transmission connection infrastructure from the adjacent wind farm.

APA has entered into a power purchase agreement to sell electricity and renewable certificates generated by the solar farm to energy provider Synergy, to 2030.

APA Managing Director and CEO Mick McCormack said: “APA is grateful for ARENA’s support over a number of years to get this exciting project, APA’s first solar farm, constructed and delivering an enhanced energy solution from our combined wind and solar farm.”

Along with Emu Downs and the Badgingarra Wind Farm under construction across the road, APA is building a 230MW renewables precinct with the potential to power 176,000 Western Australian homes with both wind and solar.

For further information on ARENA’s 12 LSS projects, visit arena.gov.au

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**For more
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