



Media Release

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ARENA launches \$7 million funding initiative for renewable energy to deliver system security services

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has today announced a \$7 million funding initiative focused on trialling how solar parks, wind farms or enabling technologies such as batteries can provide grid stability and security services.

The increase in the share of renewable energy and the retirement of traditional synchronous generators can add to system security challenges. Current techniques for managing system security events include requiring gas plants to curtail how much electricity is produced by solar and wind farms.

ARENA will be looking for projects that offer new opportunities for renewable and supporting technologies to provide system services traditionally performed by coal and gas-fired power plants.

These projects can include system strength provision, frequency control ancillary services (FCAS), fast frequency response (FFR), inertia provision and measurement and other services that may enhance system security.

ARENA CEO Ivor Frischknecht said demonstrating renewables could stabilise fluctuations in frequency and voltage which could help pave the way for more renewables to join the grid.

“System security has been a key focus of industry regulators, the market operator and participants. It was also the priority of the Finkel Review,” he said.

“As our electricity system transforms from a system of centralised synchronous generators to more diversified generation that includes more and more renewables, we need to find ways to deliver power system stability and security using less fossil fuels,” Mr Frischknecht said.

“If successful, these pilot projects will save consumers money and create new revenue streams for solar, wind and battery operators,” he said.

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Previously, ARENA has funded a successful trial of FCAS at Hornsdale Wind Farm in South Australia and a trial at Musselroe Wind Farm in Tasmania which is still underway.

Hornsdale is now registered for six of eight FCAS markets and will provide insights into the cost-benefit of using pre-curtailment to provide FCAS services from a new technology source.

“This funding initiative will build upon these projects and invites applications for additional system services to be provided by renewable technologies,” Mr Frischknecht said.

“By reducing the need for thermal generation to keep the system stable, the cost of energy will reduce over time,” he said.

For further information and to apply, visit arena.gov.au/funding