

Media Release

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\$10M Bridgewater Solar Facility shines at opening

Clean energy technology company, Solar Systems, has opened its \$10 million Bridgewater Research and Development Facility, near Bendigo.

The Premier, John Brumby, officially opened the Facility at a ceremony today.

Solar Systems Chairman, Michael Hamson, said the completion of the 140KW Bridgewater Facility was a major milestone for the company and Solar Systems is grateful for the support shown by the Federal Government of Australia and the Victorian State Government for this project.

“The opening of the Bridgewater Facility represents a major achievement for Solar Systems as a home-grown Victorian company, because we have established a world-class, large scale research and development facility,” said Mr Hamson.

“This project is an important step in the development of this technology, our company and an entire new industry that is ideally positioned to contribute to our response to climate change while also supporting Victoria and Australia’s economy,” Mr Hamson said.

Hi-tech photovoltaic technology currently being tested at the Bridgewater Facility will be progressively installed at a \$420 million large-scale solar power station.

The Mildura region has been selected as the preferred location for the first stage of this large-scale, \$420 million 154MW solar power station – the world’s largest and most efficient solar photovoltaic power station.

Construction of the solar power station will commence in 2009 following the signing of a \$292 million Development Agreement between Melbourne-based Solar Systems, and leading integrated energy company, TRUenergy, in February 2008.

Speaking at the opening of the Bridgewater Facility, TRUenergy Managing Director, Richard McIndoe said the company was delighted to be developing the power station project, which following completion, will become a key asset in TRUenergy’s generation portfolio.

“Australia needs long term investment in future low emission technologies. As a leading, low emissions energy provider, TRUenergy has already invested around \$1 billion in renewables and clean fuel generation in Australia,” said Mr McIndoe.

“Solar System’s next generation technology will be the basis of the solar power station and will provide cost effective, carbon free electricity. This offers substantial benefits to TRUenergy as it helps us expand our low emissions portfolio at a lower investment price and complements our existing strategy to pursue a least-cost path to deep emissions reductions over the long term,” Mr McIndoe said.

The partnership between Solar Systems and TRUenergy will also allow Solar Systems to start development of further solar energy projects across Australia and Asia at a crucial time when so many countries are looking to adopt renewable energy technologies in order to meet large-scale emissions reduction targets.

Solar Systems media enquiries:
Alice Thorpe Ph: 03 8862 8100, Mob: 0400 945 830
Email: alice.thorpe@solarsystems.com.au

www.solarsystems.com.au

TRUenergy media enquiries:
Sarah Stent Ph: 03 8628 1263, Mob: 0418 142 173
Email: sarah.stent@truenergy.com.au

www.truenergy.com.au

Media Backgrounder

About TRUenergy

TRUenergy is one of Australia's largest, integrated energy businesses with 1.28 million customer accounts. TRUenergy's business portfolio spans fuel ownership, generation, and electricity and gas retailing, providing a strong integrated platform from which to harness further growth and reduce risk.

Its assets include:

- Yallourn power station (1480MW) and adjacent mine in the Latrobe Valley
- Hallett power station (180MW) in South Australia
- A master hedge agreement delivering sole rights to electricity from Newport and Jeeralang power stations in Victoria (966MW)
- 400MW gas-fired power station (under construction. When complete TRUenergy Tallawarra will be Australia's most efficient gas-fired power plant
- The Iona gas storage facility near Port Campbell in Victoria
- Long term agreements with upstream gas and renewable energy suppliers
- Investments in coal seam gas reserves
- 20% interest in Solar Systems
- a strategic \$57 million commitment to geothermal energy through a joint venture with Petrathern

In February 2008, TRUenergy entered into a Development Agreement with Solar Systems and provided \$40 million to Solar Systems in return for a 20 percent ownership interest. This investment will help ensure growth and continued success as the global leader in the development of concentrated photovoltaics.

In addition, TRUenergy will contribute seven million dollars to the development of a two megawatt (MW) heliostat concentrated photovoltaic pilot plant, subsequently investing up to \$285 million to build the remaining stages of the project, and adding to \$129.5 million of Federal and Victorian Government funds already earmarked for the project.

TRUenergy is also constructing Australia's most efficient gas-fired generation project, near Wollongong, in NSW. When complete, the Tallawarra plant will emit 70% less emissions than traditional coal-fired power stations.

As a substantial investor, generator and retailer in the Australian energy sector, TRUenergy recognises its responsibility to take a lead role in the development and implementation of effective carbon reduction solutions. Based on the assumption that an effective national carbon trading scheme will be introduced, its Climate Change Strategy is a blueprint for achieving such reductions, committing the business to emissions reductions across its portfolio by 60% by 2050.

TRUenergy is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the CLP Group, which is listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and has a market capitalisation in the vicinity of A\$22 billion. CLP operates a vertically integrated electricity generation, transmission, distribution and retail business in Hong Kong, and has operations in energy businesses in Australia, India, China, Taiwan and Thailand.

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Email: sarah.stent@truenergy.com.au



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About Solar Systems

Solar Systems is a clean energy technology company, based in Melbourne, Australia. We develop, manufacture and deploy world-leading concentrator photovoltaic (CPV) power station technology.

Conducting significant research and development programs, Solar Systems also builds and operates large scale solar power stations.

Solar Systems technology is a complete power station that is highly modular and upgradable.

Research on Solar Systems' concentrator photovoltaic technology commenced 18 years ago. Since 2000, we have established six power stations, including four commercially operating power stations in Central Australia and two earlier demonstration plants.

Solar Systems technology works by concentrating solar energy with mirrors and converting it to electricity with high efficiency photovoltaic (PV) cells. Photovoltaic literally means 'electricity from light'.

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