



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

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BUILDING A GREEN FUTURE FOR AUSTRALIA'S RED CENTRE

Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett today launched the \$37 million Alice Springs Solar City, which will help the local community save energy, save money and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

As part of the launch Minister Garrett joined Northern Territory Chief Minister Paul Henderson to open the Alice Solar City Smart Living Centre.

“This fantastic one-stop shop showcases solar hot water, photovoltaic systems, energy efficient lighting and smart metering technologies – with a host of solar and energy-saving offers,” Mr Garrett said.

“For example, energy-wise residents who cut their electricity use by between 10 to 20 per cent will receive a 10 per cent discount on their bill. If they cut their bill by even more they are rewarded with a 20 per cent discount.

“This is what Solar Cities is all about – helping families and businesses take action on climate change and seeing what works best so that we can roll it out to the rest of the nation.

“It’s about building a low carbon future.”

Mr Garrett said that Alice Springs enjoyed one of the highest levels of sunlight in the world and that more than half of Alice Springs households were already harnessing the sun’s energy with solar hot water.

“Alice Springs is a unique example of how the Australian Government’s Solar Cities program is learning more about the needs of a remote community in reducing greenhouse gas emissions,” Mr Garrett said.

“We’ll be collecting vital data through installing solar photovoltaic panels on homes and businesses, rolling out solar hot water systems and smart meters and providing solar installations for iconic sites around Alice Springs.

Northern Territory Chief Minister Paul Henderson said that the six year Alice Solar City project would bring many benefits to the Alice Springs community and would position the town as a leader in sustainable living.

“The project will bring many benefits to the community, businesses and residents by reducing greenhouse emissions, conserving energy and saving dollars through energy efficiency,” Mr Henderson said.

The Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, and Member for Lingiari, Warren Snowdon, said Alice Springs was forging a new pathway in the use of energy efficient technologies and solar energy.

“As well as increased public awareness in sustainable energy use, Alice Springs will save around 10,667 kilowatt hours in electricity demand and 12,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year,” Mr Snowden said.

The Alice Springs Consortium will receive \$12.3 million under the Australian Government’s Solar Cities initiative and the Renewable Remote Power Generation Program.

The consortium, consisting of the Alice Springs Town Council, Northern Territory Government, Northern Territory Power and Water Corporation, the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre, Arid Lands Environment Centre, Tangentyere Council and the Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce will contribute \$7.3 million to the project. Other contributions will be sourced to bring the total project value to \$37 million.

Australian Government’s Solar Cities program: www.environment.gov.au/solarcities

Renewable Remote Power Generation Program: www.environment.gov.au/renewable/rrpgp