



MEDIA RELEASE

16 April 2007

Alice Springs is acknowledged as Australia's Solar Centre

The sun was certainly shining on Alice Springs today, when The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, Minister for Environment and Water, announced that Alice Springs was successful in its bid to become an Australian Solar City.

Alice Springs Solar Cities Consortium presented its detailed business case to the Australian Greenhouse Office in April 28 last year, and has since been anxiously awaiting the announcement.

It is a well known fact that Alice Springs has more hours of sunshine than most other major cities in Australia, and with today's announcement it will now officially be acknowledged as Australia's Solar Centre.

Today's announcement is a huge win for Alice Springs, and will mean Government funding of up to \$12.3 million will be put toward implementing the business case put forward by the Alice Springs Solar City consortium.

The Consortium has committed \$17.2 million, which combined with the Government funding, will enable Alice Springs to embark on a four-step journey to become: Energy Wise, Energy Savvy, Energy Committed and finally, Energy Champions.

As a Solar City, Alice Springs aims to achieve a vision of cooperation between Government, industry and business, and the community in becoming a national and international showcase for sustainable living through the use of solar energy, and energy efficient practices.

"I am absolutely thrilled for Alice Springs, and so proud that the hours of commitment and hard work that the Consortium put into building our business case helped to achieve this amazing result for our community and Central Australia," said Mayor Fran Kilgariff.

The Consortium's focus is now going to be on working with the all levels of Government and the wider community in Alice Springs to implement the Solar Cities vision.

"We look forward to everyone participating in the range of initiatives that are included in our Solar Cities programme, in particular the community, who have for many years expressed the desire to make better use of the solar resources in Central Australia," said Grant Behrendorff, Chairman of the Alice Springs Solar Cities Consortium.

"We can now strive to develop a community conscious of its unique environment and precious natural resources, and one which is empowered to make informed decisions and intelligent use of energy and water," said Mr Behrendorff.

Central to Alice Springs' Solar Cities project is the establishment of a one-stop-shop, which will be known as the Smart Living Centre. The Smart Living Centre will be the activity hub, coordination centre, education venue, and showroom for Solar Cities programme activities.

Highly visible solar power installations will also be installed in high-profile locations including the Alice Springs Airport, Araluen Arts Precinct, Alice Springs Town Pool, and the Iparpa sewerage treatment facility. They will serve as a highly visible reminder that energy is a whole-of-community issue.

In addition to this, participating households and businesses will install smart meters and trial time of use tariffs. The Solar Cities programme also aims to install a further 1000 solar hot water heaters in Alice Springs, coupled with financial incentives, energy audits and efficiency measures.

An exciting opportunity exists for photovoltaic (PV) generators to be installed onto residential roofs at innovative pricing to make them more accessible to Alice Springs' residents. Power and Water have committed to buying all PV energy generated in Alice Springs at a significant premium over current tariffs.

"This programme will engage the entire community to actively employ energy efficient practices, and be more aware of the ways in which we can make changes to our homes and businesses to conserve energy. We plan to become a model for the rest of Australia and the world to follow," said Mayor Kilgariff.

For further information contact:

Mayor Fran Kilgariff (08) 8950 0525 or 0419 376 060

Chairman Alice Springs Solar Cities Consortium Grant Behrendorff (08) 8951 4330 or 0427 514 330