

# Media Release

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**\*Vision available\***

## **\$1.8 billion EnergyConnect project powers on at Buronga**

Construction of Australia's largest transmission project is progressing well, with the first group of workers moving into a 30ha purpose-built camp and the pouring of the first concrete foundations for steel towers at Buronga, near Mildura.

The \$1.8 billion [EnergyConnect](#) project will allow energy to be shared between NSW, South Australia and Victoria for the first time and enable the connection of new renewable generation to support the nation's clean energy future.

Transgrid Project Director Stephen Troughton said "EnergyConnect is the biggest project ever undertaken by our company – it is a key part of the energy superhighway which will transform energy supply for millions of Australians.

"Our construction partner SecureEnergy JV has completed the first concrete foundations for 26 towers (of 291) on the alignment from Buronga to South Australia.

"About 6,000 concrete footings will be required to support 1,500 towers across the project from Wagga Wagga to the South Australian border," said Mr Troughton.

The landmark project is providing a boost to local and Indigenous communities through employment, opportunities for local businesses and suppliers, improvements in infrastructure and increased economic activity.

"EnergyConnect is a once-in-a-generation transmission project that will improve the affordability, reliability and security of electricity supply and we are really pleased construction is moving full steam ahead for this critical infrastructure."

More than 70 workers are now living in EnergyConnect's first worker accommodation camp built on a 30ha site at Buronga. The 200-module camp will house up to 340 workers, with high-quality living amenities and recreational facilities and services including a gym, Wi-Fi, wet mess, retail facilities, and delicious food prepared daily onsite.

It is one of five purpose-built camps being constructed to accommodate workers across the project alignment with associated offices and laydowns for equipment.

"We are engaging a workforce which is unprecedented for a transmission construction project in the country, with EnergyConnect set to create 1,500 jobs," SecureEnergy JV Project Director Samuel Basanta Lopez said.

"Providing accommodation for our workforce is one of the first steps in constructing Australia's largest transmission line and ensuring they are safe and comfortable away from home.

“A broad range of workers from across Australia are living at the Buronga camp including engineers, logistics and material managers, labourers, catering staff and plant operators, with more project team members to arrive.

“We are committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of our workers who are often away from their homes for extended periods.

“These high-quality camps provide comfortable living and recreational facilities and services for our workers and also reduce travel to construction sites to minimise fatigue. They also ease pressure on the local rental market and accommodation providers.

“To help meet our sustainability goals, we will recycle at least 90 per cent of our daily water usage at each camp for use as construction water for compaction of soil and dust suppression.”

SecureEnergy Camps and Logistics Manager Jason Ponosh said the initial group of workers at the brand-new camp at Buronga were enjoying their home away from home.

“The mood is great in the camp with comfortable rooms and amenities and people are rating the food as excellent,” Mr Ponosh said.

“We will also be introducing a range of evening activities for the camp community including pool, ping pong competitions, cards and board games to help boost employee health and wellbeing.

“The camp will provide a high level of service for our staff and contractors.”

The Buronga site will be home to one of the largest substations in Australia. It will also be one of the most complex in the Southern Hemisphere for technology and engineering with equipment including two 120 MVA capacity synchronous condensers, five phase-shifting transformers, three power transformers and four shunt reactors.

Delivery of first power for EnergyConnect is expected by the end of 2024.

### **EnergyConnect fast facts**

- A 900km interconnector to be built from Wagga Wagga (NSW) to Robertstown (South Australia) and Red Cliffs (Victoria).
- Transgrid and its construction partner SecureEnergy JV is responsible for the 700 NSW section from Wagga Wagga to the South Australian border, with a 22km connection to Red Cliffs. South Australia’s ElectraNet is building the remaining 200km from the border to Robertstown.
- The \$1.8 billion project will allow sharing of energy between the three states for the first time, enable integration of renewable generation, lower the cost of wholesale electricity, and help achieve national emission reduction targets.
- EnergyConnect will save NSW customers \$180 million per year, create up to 1,500 jobs and contribute \$4 billion in net economic benefits.
- The project will involve:
  - 9,000 kilometres of conductor cabling, enough to span from Sydney to Perth three times
  - 1,500 new transmission towers using 30,000 tonnes of steel
  - 60,000 cubic metres of concrete for tower footings and substation works

- One million cubic metres of earthworks to excavate tower footings and create substation foundations and site access points
- Sustainability measures including using guyed towers which require 15 per cent less steel and 25 per cent less concrete, the use of low carbon concrete, and reduced vegetation clearing.

### **Camp Buronga fast facts**

- A purpose-built camp to accommodate 340 workers with associated offices and laydown for equipment on a 30ha site.
- Australian Portable Camps has delivered more than 200 brand new modules safely to site, with the camp being managed by Compass Group ESS.
- The Buronga camp is one of five camps being established across the EnergyConnect project alignment from Wagga Wagga to the South Australian border.
- Other purpose-built camps will be located at Renmark Road, Wentworth; on the Cobb Highway near Hay; Dinawan (Coleambally) on the Kidman Way; and Lockhart on the Collingullie Jerilderie Road. An existing camp at Balranald will also be utilised.
- Camp facilities include rooms with ensuites, a recreation room, gym, small retail facilities, Wi-Fi, mess, wet mess, 24/7 security, and laundry, welfare and non-denominational spiritual meeting facilities.

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