

Media Release

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First towers rise on nation's largest electricity transmission project

Construction of Australia's largest transmission project critical to the country's clean energy future has reached a major milestone with the first of 1,500 steel towers rising from the ground in the Far West of NSW.

The \$1.8 billion EnergyConnect project will enable the sharing of electricity between NSW, South Australia and Victoria for the first time, integrate renewable energy into the grid, and help Australia achieve its emissions reduction targets.

Transgrid and its construction partner SecureEnergy are building the 700km NSW section of the project from Wagga Wagga to the South Australian border, with a connection to Red Cliffs in Victoria.

"We are getting on with the job of delivering the critical infrastructure needed to provide Australian households and businesses with cheaper, more reliable and sustainable energy," Transgrid CEO Brett Redman said.

"The raising of our first transmission towers on EnergyConnect is yet another significant milestone in building the energy superhighway to accelerate the nation's clean energy future."

Construction crews have erected the first guyed towers using a 230-tonne crane at Buronga, near Mildura. Unlike conventional self-supporting towers, which stand on four legs, guyed towers comprise a central mast held in place by four steel cables.

"Importantly, this type of tower requires about 15 per cent less steel and 25 per cent less concrete in construction, achieving a reduced carbon footprint. It is just one of the ways Transgrid is delivering more sustainable outcomes on our transmission projects as we lead the transition to a clean energy future," said Mr Redman.

"In addition to providing backbone infrastructure supporting Australia's transition to a renewable energy future, EnergyConnect will save NSW customers \$180 million per year or \$64 per household, on average, as part of our broader efforts to put further downward pressure on customer bills. The project is also creating up to 1,500 jobs, primarily in regional NSW, and contributing \$4 billion in net economic benefits.

"EnergyConnect is also providing a major economic injection in local communities along the project alignment, with our construction partner SecureEnergy investing more than \$17 million with local businesses to date. Spending in local communities, awarding local procurement packages and buying locally is a key priority."

Meanwhile, works are well underway on the expansion of Transgrid's Buronga substation, which will become the main hub for energy sharing between the three states. Earthworks on the substation bench

are now complete, with concrete foundations being poured to hold the synchronous condensers and transformers at the heart of the facility.

“The 16-hectare expansion of the Buronga substation is the equivalent of 20 football fields and, once operational, it will be one of the largest and most complex substations in the Southern Hemisphere,” said Mr Redman.

Following the establishment of a 30-hectare worker accommodation camp and laydown with office facilities at Buronga, construction is also progressing on another two camps on Renmark Rd, west of the South Australia border, and near Lockhart, at the eastern end of the project alignment.

Ultimately, six workforce camps will be established along the EnergyConnect alignment, providing the equivalent of 490,000 nights of accommodation during the project. The camps will relieve pressure on limited housing and accommodation in local communities, reduce travel to construction sites, and ensure the health and wellbeing of workers with high-quality living amenities including gyms and recreation rooms.

For more information about EnergyConnect visit: www.transgrid.com.au/energyconnect

VIDEO AVAILABLE HERE

Master: <https://youtu.be/zVnFnPPclx8>

Clean: https://youtu.be/mx3fth3_Tqk

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