Media Release

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Final tower rises as colossal construction effort gets set to power NSW, Victoria and South Australia

The last of 1,500 steel towers have been constructed on Australia's largest electricity transmission project, completing the 700km backbone of EnergyConnect in NSW and bringing millions of consumers across three states closer to accessing cleaner and more affordable power.

Transgrid and its construction partner Elecnor Australia have erected the final tower at Bundure in the Riverina region, marking a significant milestone for the nation-critical project which will increase renewable energy sharing between NSW, South Australia and Victoria.

Line stringing works have also been completed, with 10,385km of high-voltage conductor cabling installed, enough to span from Sydney to Perth three times.

Executive General Manager of Major Projects Gordon Taylor said 1,508 towers and monopoles have been erected from the South Australian border to Wagga Wagga and into Victoria, using 46,068 tonnes of structural steel.

"EnergyConnect is the first major transmission project to accelerate Australia's renewable energy transition and will help strengthen the national grid and position NSW as a leader in clean energy," Mr Taylor said.

"The project is part of our plan to give industry and consumers peace of mind as coal generation winds down in NSW, stabilising the grid at a time when reliability and affordability are national priorities.

"We have achieved extraordinary progress in construction of the project this year, which is now 90% complete and on schedule to be finished in 2026.

"Installation of the final tower and completion of line stringing works caps off a massive logistical operation and construction effort involving up to 1,700 personnel working in parallel across a 700km project alignment.

"As part of our commitment to sustainability, the project includes 733 guyed towers which require 21% less steel and 15% less concrete to construct compared to conventional self-supporting structures. We have also used low carbon concrete in all tower foundations.

"EnergyConnect has seen the first Danubio towers erected in Australia, with 338 of the structures specially designed for the 500 kV line between Bundure, near Coleambally, and Wagga Wagga. Each of these towers weighs an average of 60 tonnes and takes 16 days to construct.

“Construction of the project has provided an economic boom for regional NSW, including much-needed jobs, skills development, education, training and local business support in communities across the EnergyConnect corridor.”

The 159km western section of EnergyConnect, from Buronga, NSW to the South Australia border and Red Cliffs in Victoria, has already been completed and energised, including construction of one of the biggest and most complex substations in the Southern Hemisphere.

Construction of the world-class Dinawan substation at Bundure is being finalised, and a major expansion of Wagga Wagga substation has also been completed.

Elecnor Australia’s EnergyConnect Project Director Felipe Delgado said constructing more than 1,500 towers across 700km often on remote terrain, has been an extraordinary achievement for the project.

“This construction and engineering milestone is one that showcases what can be accomplished when the client, delivery partner, industry and community work together towards a shared goal,” he said.

“EnergyConnect is a project of many firsts – from the introduction of Danubio 500 kV towers to Australia, the use of low carbon construction materials and our Legacy 100 workforce program upskilling the regional construction workforce.

“It’s a privilege for Elecnor Australia to help build the backbone of this nation-critical interconnector, and we are proud to have played a leading role in delivering this once-in-a-generation project alongside Transgrid.”

For more information about EnergyConnect visit: https://www.transgrid.com.au/projects-innovation/energyconnect/

EnergyConnect construction fast facts

- 700km of new transmission lines from the South Australian border to Red Cliffs (Victoria) and Wagga Wagga (NSW)
- 1,508 towers and monopoles requiring 46,068 tonnes of steel including guyed, Danubio and self-supporting structures
- 10,385km of high-voltage conductor cabling, enough to span from Sydney to Perth three times
- New world-class substations at Buronga and Bundure and a major expansion of the existing Wagga Wagga substation
- More than $264 million invested with 325 local businesses across the Riverina, Murray and Sunraysia regions.

Vision available here

Clean vision and interviews: https://vimeo.com/1147861392/8080bd6082?share=copy&fl=sv&fe=ci
Transmission map animation: https://vimeo.com/1122728458/a92f42ebb0?fl=ls&fe=ec
Video: https://vimeo.com/1147859467/47ee12ccd7?share=copy&fl=sv&fe=ci

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