

# Media Release

**The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC**  
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council  
Minister for Training and Skills  
Minister for Higher Education



Wednesday, 30 June 2021

## **NATION'S FIRST WIND TURBINE TRAINING TOWER IN BALLARAT**

Federation University will build the nation's first wind turbine training tower to prepare Victorian students for jobs in the booming renewable energy sector.

Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney and Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio today turned the first sod at the Mount Helen campus, the gateway to wind farms across Western Victoria.

The 23-metre training tower will simulate the features of a working turbine with the capacity for 350 students to learn real-life skills each year. It will allow Federation TAFE to offer internationally recognised safety training courses as well as courses to upskill tradespeople to become wind turbine technicians.

The tower will be built by local company SJ Weir and Keppel Prince Engineering, based in Portland, and is expected to be completed in late 2021.

The training tower is part of the Asia Pacific Renewable Energy Training Centre, established by Federation University in collaboration with renewable energy companies Vestas, Acciona, GPG and Tilt Renewables. It aims to provide skills and training opportunities to local workers to meet the demands of the renewable energy sector.

The \$1.8 million project has been made possible by the first Victorian Renewable Energy Target Auction, which mandated strong local content and training requirements from projects to produce the skilled workforce that the industry needs, as it rolls out and maintains renewable energy projects across Victoria.

The auction, designed to support the Andrews Labor Government's legislated targets for renewable energy generation of 40% by 2025 and 50% by 2030, will deliver 928 MW of clean energy across six large-scale solar and wind farms, generate 900 jobs during construction and deliver enough energy to power almost 650,000 homes.

Since 2015, the Labor Government has made a record \$3.2 billion investment to rebuild TAFE and support universities and higher education to ensure Victorians have access to high quality education and rewarding career pathways.

The *2021/22 Victorian Budget* includes a \$383.8 million investment in the sector to ensure more Victorians get the training they need for in-demand jobs.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney**

*"Victorian TAFEs are world-class in terms of the unique learning environments and training opportunities offered to local students."*

*"This project will ensure Victoria remains at the forefront of the nation's clean energy future – and that we have a domestic pipeline of skilled workers ready for the many jobs that are available."*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio**

*"Our massive investment in renewable energy and our VRET auctions are creating a jobs boom for our regions. This training facility will help to deliver the skilled workforce we need to as more renewable energy projects come online."*

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**Quote attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle**

*“We know how important the renewable energy sector is for this region and we are proud that Ballarat is leading the way with Australia’s first wind turbine training tower to further boost skills, jobs and opportunities.”*

**Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison**

*“This new wind turbine training tower will create world class training opportunities right here in Ballarat and is a great outcome for local jobs and our renewable energy sector.”*