

# Media Release

**The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP**

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change  
Minister for Solar Homes



Tuesday, 3 August 2021

## **NEW PROJECTS TO ACCELERATE VICTORIA'S RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONES**

The Andrews Labor Government has announced six new major energy projects across regional Victoria, that will prepare our grid for the unprecedented load of renewable energy in the pipeline.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio said the Stage One projects of the \$540 million Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) will make it easier for new projects to be connected to Victoria's grid — signalling to developers Victoria is ready for new solar and wind projects.

Currently Victoria has its strongest energy infrastructure in the Latrobe Valley, where coal fire power has historically been concentrated.

However, Victoria's most abundant renewable resources are found along the windy Southwest coast, and Western Victoria, as well as the sunny North-west. These transmission upgrades will improve and modernise the energy grid in these areas, so more renewables can flow through Victoria.

These six projects include three pieces of infrastructure that will work like 'shock absorbers' to smooth out higher and lower rates of energy flowing through the lines, make it easier for renewable energy to enter the grid.

There are also three projects that will upgrade the transmission network, to increase the capacity of existing lines, so they can carry higher energy loads, pumping more renewables across Victoria.

The Labor Government has commissioned the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) to seek tenders for the six projects, which will modernise Victoria's electricity grid and unlock new renewable energy investment.

The Government will continue to assess a further two network investment projects - the Mortlake Turn-in, and the Western Victorian Transmission Network Upgrade which is also subject to an Environment Effects Statement process currently underway.

The works to strengthen the grid will enable it to handle up to 1500 megawatts of additional generation and are the first phase of a broader plan to unlock up to 10,000 megawatts across Victoria's Renewable Energy Zones.

VicGrid, a new body which has been established as a Division within the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, will oversee investment decisions related to the \$540 million REZ Fund. VicGrid will continue to evolve, following further stakeholder consultation, to coordinate the future development of Victoria's REZs.

For more information visit [energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/renewable-energy-zones](https://energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/renewable-energy-zones).

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

*"These projects are an investment in unlocking the next wave of renewable energy across Victoria. They will ensure we have the transmission needed to harness the sunshine and wind across Victoria."*

*"This is a clear signal to investors that Victoria is open for business, and ready for new wind and solar projects that create jobs and opportunities in local communities across Victoria."*