



Details of Solar Flagships Released

Posted by [Phil Hart](#) on October 30, 2009 - 3:12pm in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

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This news is just in via the [Australian Solar Energy Society](#).



The Federal Government has announced additional details around its \$1.5 billion project to construct and demonstrate up to four large-scale solar power plants in Australia, using solar thermal and photovoltaic (PV) technologies – known as the Solar Flagships program.

The key elements of the 2 page release were:

- The focus remains on 4 large-scale, grid connected projects operating within a “competitive electricity market”.
- The combined solar power generation capacity of these projects is “up to 1000 megawatts (MW)”.

The other objectives are:

To develop a solar industry in Australia, encourage regional development, provide research infrastructure, develop Australian intellectual property in solar power generation and develop and share technical and economic knowledge from the program.

The program is now occurring in 2 phases:

- Phase one will occur in 2010, with further details to be released in 2009.
- 1 solar thermal and 1 PV project, with a target of up to 400MW of combined generation capability will be selected.
- Must use “commercially proven solar technologies”, (that is defined as projects using technology already operational at 30MW for 12 months), or modules below 30 MW, that can be “scaled with backing from financial and construction firms for scale-up plans”.
- The solar thermal project must be at located at one site.
- The PV project can be at up to 5 sites with each site generating at least 30MW of electricity
- The timing of the selection round will be known in 2010 with the release of the program guidelines.
- Assessment of project proposals will be conducted by an independent body, the Solar Flagships Council.
- The second funding round is planned to be held after the outcome of the first selection round is reviewed.
- In Round 2, two projects will be funded that may be either solar thermal or PV.
- Energy storage for Round 1 projects will be optional, but will be viewed favourably.
- The successful solar thermal project in round 1 will be allowed to include hybrid solar generation combining gas or other types of renewable energy, adding no more than 15 percent of the project’s total electricity output.
- Funding will be at the rate of “at least two dollars from private and state or territory government sources for every dollar from the Solar Flagships program”.
- Funding from the Solar Flagships program will be in addition to revenues projects earn from sale of electricity and Renewable Energy Certificates.
- Projects require state or territory government endorsement.
- The projects will also need to include a research infrastructure component, and will be assessed by the Education Investment Fund (EIF) Advisory Board.
- Therefore, successful projects will need to meet both the EIF evaluation criteria and Solar Flagships criteria.

The only online reference I can find to these new details is from Greens Senator Christine Milne, who does not seem pleased:

["Hollow men" Solar Flagships design ignores solar industry's advice](#)

The contrast between the Rudd Government's efforts to do what polluting companies request and their utter disregard for the advice and requests of the renewable energy sector could not be starker, the Australian Greens said today.

The snippet of extra information on the design of the Solar Flagships scheme put out by Minister Ferguson today shows that the Government has completely disregarded the advice of the renewable energy industry as to how to design a scheme that will work to stimulate the base-load solar power.



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