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Queensland Microgrid Pilot Fund open

Energy and Renewables Minister, Mick de Brenni, launched the \$10 million Queensland Microgrid Pilot Fund (QMPF) in late December 2022 to help accelerate resilient power supply in regional and First Nations communities and create more local jobs.



A solar farm, part of Doomadgee's isolated network, in north west Queensland. Photo credit: Yurika.

As one of the first initiatives to be delivered under the [Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan](#), the two-year program offers grants for feasibility studies and projects that develop and deliver microgrids across regional areas of Queensland, boosting the network resilience of communities, including against extreme weather events.

Grants are available from \$250,000 for feasibility studies and up to \$5 million to build microgrid projects that meet the QMPF program objectives and eligibility criteria.

Successful projects under the fund are expected to boost local job opportunities during project development and construction, as well as operation and maintenance of these innovative power systems.

The fund is open for applications until March 2023. Visit the [Queensland Microgrid Pilot Fund](#) web page.

A new wind farm for Queensland

A major wind energy project is set to progress this year, with a 15-year deal signed between government-owned corporation Stanwell and a global renewable energy producer.



The site of Stanwell's Mount Hopeful Wind Farm project. Photo credit: Neoen.

Construction is planned for the 330 megawatt (MW) Mount Hopeful Wind Farm from August this year, with the project expected to come online in 2026.

At the end of 2022, Stanwell signed the deal with renewable energy producer Neoen for 215 MW.

The site is located 50 km south of Rockhampton and is strategically located within the Central Renewable Energy Zone, near the Stanwell Power Station site.

The project is expected to create around 220 construction jobs, with up to 12 ongoing operational and maintenance roles.

Mount Hopeful Wind Farm is one of a number of strategic partnerships the corporation is pursuing that supports its diversification strategy and aligns with the objectives of the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan.

Pumped hydro project engagement

Stakeholder engagement is continuing around the Borumba and Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro projects.



Attendees at the Imbil community information session.

Queensland Hydro held information sessions for the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project in Imbil and Gympie in November 2022 to report on the results of hydrological and ecology studies and outline exploratory and access works starting in mid-2023. The Borumba Stakeholder Reference Group gathered for its third meeting in November 2022, focussing on hydrology and ecology, traffic and transport, exploratory works and transmission corridors.

Over November and December 2022, Powerlink met with residents of Blackbutt, Gympie, Imbil, Jimna, Kilcoy, Kilkivan, Maidenwell, Nanango, Woolooga and Yarraman and received feedback on the proposed Borumba transmission corridors. Queensland Hydro supported Powerlink with these sessions.

Information sessions for the Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro Project were held at Eungella and Finch Hatton in November 2022. The sessions focussed on project timeframes for geotechnical, environmental and hydrological studies. Further meetings were held with environment groups as well as an Industry Forum for business about the Expression of Interest process. A meeting with the Traditional Owners followed in December 2022, to discuss cultural heritage assessments and environmental studies.

Engagement will continue during 2023 to better understand the impacts and benefits of pumped hydro.

Electrician Nathan values his work and colleagues at Swanbank E

Nathan Lawley thrives on the diversity of working as an electrician at CleanCo Queensland's Swanbank E Power Station.



What starts as a typical work day can quickly change and Nathan rises to the challenge.

"I'll come in with a plan and that plan has to change to assist a colleague with their job or to reprioritise another more important one," Nathan says.

Nathan also values the supportive team culture that exists on site. "The attitude and team cohesion within the workforce at Swanbank is second to none. This was evident to me as a contractor before I started here as a full-time employee and was a large motivator in applying for the job," Nathan says.

Nathan completed a science degree before embarking on a career as an electrician and he encourages others to consider a trade, before or after university.



Hydrogen powering ahead in Queensland

Queensland continues to lead renewable hydrogen development in 2023.

Publicly-owned Stanwell is progressing the CQ-H2 project to Front End engineering Design (FEED), in keeping with the government's publicly-owned power policy. With Queensland Government funding of \$15 million, the



FFI's Green Energy Manufacturing Centre (GEM) in Gladstone.

large-scale renewable hydrogen project aims to export hydrogen to Japan, and supply large industrial customers in Central Queensland. CQ-H2 could deliver over \$17.2 billion in hydrogen exports and \$12.4 billion to Queensland's gross domestic product over its 30-year lifespan, creating up to 8,900 new jobs.

Fortescue Future Industries' Gibson Island ammonia facility has progressed to FEED, with potential to produce around 70,000 tonnes of renewable hydrogen annually. Their Gladstone Green Energy Manufacturing Centre (GEM) has commenced construction, and will initially manufacture 2 gigawatts (GW) of electrolysers per annum.

Also in Gladstone, Korea East West Power co-signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Australia's Hydrogen Utility (H2U) to help fast-track the H2-Hub. Once completed, the coordinated project will have a total capacity of up to 3 GW of electrolysis and up to 5,000 tonnes of green ammonia per day.

The Han-Ho Hydrogen Consortium is set to complete a feasibility study on the Collinsville Green Energy Hub which will have the potential to generate up to 3,000 MW of renewable energy per annum once constructed.



Australia's first Hydrogen Centre of Excellence

Australia's first Hydrogen Centre of Excellence was officially opened in November 2022 by Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk, Queensland Treasurer Cameron Dick, Minister Mick de Brenni, Minister Di Farmer, and the Attorney General Shannon Fentiman.



The Hydrogen Centre of Excellence now open in Beenleigh.

This \$20 million state-of-the-art vocational training centre was built in partnership with the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre (PICAC) in Beenleigh. It includes specialised gas training equipment, lower carbon technology upgrades, and is designed to provide training for more than 1,000 trainees and apprentices each year.

Queensland's Hydrogen Centre of Excellence will help to ensure there is a suitably skilled workforce available to respond to the needs of future hydrogen projects.

The centre is one of four renewable and hydrogen facilities committed to by the Queensland Government. Other training centres include:

- \$23 million Renewable Energy Training Facility at Pinkenba (recently opened)
- \$10.6 million Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Training facility at Bohle TAFE campus in Townsville
- \$2 million to upgrade training facilities at Gladstone State High School.



Queensland's renewable energy targets



50%
renewable energy
by 2030



70%
renewable energy
by 2032



80%
renewable energy
by 2035



NET ZERO
emissions
by 2050

Queensland energy snapshot



3,025 MW
large-scale solar



4,350 MW
rooftop solar



731 MW
hydro and
pumped hydro



846 MW
wind



8,119 MW
coal



3,121 MW
gas



473 MW
bioenergy



419 MW
other (including diesel)

Large-scale renewable energy in Queensland

(operational and committed since 2015)



50
projects



\$10+ billion
invested



8,000
construction jobs



5,700+ MW
capacity

Renewable energy in Queensland



8,500+ MW
renewable capacity
(large-scale and small-scale
currently operational)



22.7%
from renewable
sources

*All figures except 'renewable sources' current as at 30 November 2022. 'Renewable sources' figure current December 2021 to November 2022. Construction jobs figure is an estimate.



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