

Enigin Update - Australian Budget Casts Shadow on Solar

IN TUESDAY night's Australian Federal Budget announcements, Australia's renewable energy sector took a battering, although further funds are released for energy efficiency programmes.

The budget allocated A\$13m (US\$14.13 million) in extra funding to support energy-efficiency programmes, with more than A\$20m (US\$21.7 million) being provided to improve the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by large companies, and further funding to be used to monitor energy production and use, by corporations.

Australian Treasurer, Wayne Swan, announced an early end to the National Solar Schools Program, will cease two years earlier in June 2013; leaving only two rounds of funding to go, saving A\$156.4 million (US\$170 million).

According to Greg Combet, Australia's Climate Change and Energy Efficiency minister, the saving of \$156.4 million will go towards funding for energy efficiency, greenhouse and energy reporting, and Solar Cities programs.

The biggest loser from last night's announcement was the large-scale Solar Flagships programme, which will be subject to A\$220 million (US\$239 million) in funding cuts over the 2 years from 2012 to 2013.

"This is a disappointing federal budget for the solar industry," said John Grimes, chief executive of the Australian Solar Energy Society, calling the move "another unnecessary solar policy rollercoaster. Solar Flagships has been the subject of funding cuts and funding restorations."

Combet said the government was committed to introducing a price on carbon, and the budget improved existing climate change programmes to "better align with that objective".

"The government will use every cent of revenue from a carbon price to....help businesses adjust to a clean energy economy and to tackle climate change," Combet said.

In other measures, another \$28.1 million (US\$30.5 million) has been set aside over five years for energy efficiency programs, which it is understood will be launched as part of a carbon price in the coming month.

Enigin Plc's energy efficiency solutions and renewable energy reporting system (Eniscope Renewable Energy Hub) have been helping many businesses and organisations in Australia to improve energy efficiency and get the best out of any renewable energy source.

Available exclusively through Energy Partners Australia, and worldwide, these solutions deliver impressive energy and financial savings while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Picture of [Solar Panels being installed by OregonDOT](#)