

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP
Minister for Climate Action
Minister for Energy and Resources
Minister for the State Electricity Commission



Thursday, 29 June 2023

SEC TO SECURE A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR VICTORIAN WORKERS

The Andrews Labor Government is securing more jobs and more savings for Victorians, with a new \$3 million training package to upskill the energy workers of the future.

In a suite of training programs to be rolled out by Solar Victoria, a \$1.5 million investment will deliver free training for 1,000 plumbers and fourth-year apprentices to design and install energy efficient heat pumps and solar hot water systems.

Households that switch to solar panels and a heat pump could save up to \$1,100 a year on their electricity bills.

Another \$500,000 will deliver free training for a further 400 electricians and fourth-year apprentices to complete training to safely design and install rooftop solar and home battery systems.

In a move designed to boost workforce participation across the community, the Labor Government will invest \$250,000 to support Aboriginal businesses to participate in the renewable energy sector.

The package will also help attract more women to take the first steps in a fulfilling and rewarding career in the solar and renewable energy sectors through a \$100,000 mentoring program.

Renewable energy technologies are evolving rapidly. We'll expand mentoring programs to offer 40 extra placements – so qualified electricians, electrical engineers and licensed electrical inspectors can get free on-site technical mentoring and follow-up support to install or inspect solar PV and battery systems.

Increased demand for installations will see more workers entering the solar industry for the first time. To ensure best practice across the industry, we'll invest \$150,000 in safety solar training in regional areas, funding for site supervisor training and new training for safe handling of solar panels.

Another \$300,000 will go towards further research to identify skills gaps and trends, so we can keep growing the sector and help industry capitalise on opportunities of the energy transition.

Victorians remember the State Electricity Commission (SEC). It meant a fair deal on your power prices and good, stable jobs for Victorian workers.

We're bringing it back to drive down power bills, reduce emissions and help create up to 59,000 jobs in renewable energy – with at least 6,000 for apprentices and trainees.

As we work to meet our target of 95 per cent renewable energy generation by 2035, workers will be key to the transition.

Today's *SEC Energy Jobs and Skills Forum* is one of the first steps in ensuring the workforce is equipped to meet future demand – and that it has safe, secure, meaningful work.

Experts from the renewable energy industry, employers and unions, peak bodies, Traditional Owner groups, TAFEs, universities, technical schools, training providers have come together to help shape the Victorian Energy Jobs Plan and inform the design of the SEC Centre of Training Excellence.

The Government is investing \$12 million towards a business case for the SEC Centre of Training Excellence, the Victorian Energy Jobs Plan and new VET qualifications, \$10 million for a Hydrogen Energy Worker Training Centre and \$6 million for a Wind Worker Training Centre.

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We've established a \$50 million TAFE Clean Energy Fund to train workers with critical skills that we need as we bring back the SEC.

The Fund includes \$6 million for Stage 2 of the Asia Pacific Renewable Energy Training Centre at Federation TAFE in Ballarat, \$5 million for TAFE Gippsland to create a Clean Energy Centre in Morwell and \$5 million for South West TAFE to deliver a Building Innovation and Design Centre in Warrnambool.

The SEC is powered by an initial government investment of \$1 billion, which will be strategically invested to help deliver 4.5 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2035 – the equivalent replacement capacity of Loy Yang A. The first project as part of the SEC's pioneer investment will be announced later this year.

For more information, visit www.vic.gov.au/sec

Quote attributable to Minister for the State Electricity Commission Lily D'Ambrosio

"We're bringing back the SEC, and with it, the next generation of the energy workforce – from tradespeople to the energy jobs of the future."

Quote attributable to Minister for Skills and Training Gayle Tierney

"A renewable economy will create enormous opportunities for government, industry, the education and training sector and workforces across the state – and we want to make sure Victorian workers will reap the rewards."

Quote attributable to Minister for Education and Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins

"We want to ensure our renewables sector reflects our community – so everyone gets a fair go. That's why we're supporting more women to take on apprenticeships and providing mentoring to those starting out in the industry."