

darling downs solar farm.



APA hosts Queensland Premier at Darling Downs Solar Farm

APA's Darling Downs Solar Farm, situated around 250 kilometres west of Brisbane, hosted a special visit on 23 January 2018 by the Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk. The Premier dropped in on the site as part of a wider visit of renewable energy infrastructure facilities in the region.

Palaszczuk was joined on her site visit by Anthony Lynham, Minister for Mines and Energy; Mark Furner, Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Natural Resources; Paul McVeigh, Mayor of the Western Downs Regional Council; and Andrew Smith, Deputy Mayor of that council.

Only around 1,000 of the total 423,000 solar panels were installed at the Solar Farm but that did not minimise the Premier's enthusiasm for the project. She told APA's local team that she was greatly impressed by the mammoth scale of the project, which she noted in her official remarks was greatly contributing to the local economy.

"The renewables sector in the Western Downs is generating jobs, and this can be seen by the unemployment rate of 4.8 per cent — 1 per cent below the state average," Palaszczuk said.



Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk speaks to media at the Darling Downs Solar Farm.

"The region is already a powerhouse in agricultural production, from beef to cotton and chickpeas. Now, renewable energy is adding diversity and strength to the Western Downs economy."

Work at the site continues six days per week, with construction productivity increasing as the workforce becomes familiar with surroundings, equipment and panel

assembly. While this has been going on Powerlink has begun building the connection infrastructure, which is a significant milestone.

The community can next expect a reduction in traffic movements to and from the site after the Easter break as all the equipment will have been delivered for storage and eventual incorporation into the construction.



Construction update as at 1/3/18

The site was officially opened in July 2017, with the establishment of the Site offices, crib facilities and site security and the enabling works like clearing, grubbing, access tracks and fencing completed.

- 800 of the expected 1,100 containers of material have been received on site.
- 60 per cent of the 53,000 steel post have been secured in the ground waiting for the solar panels to be erected.
- 16 kilometres out of a total 30 kilometres of underground HV cables have been installed.
- Almost 30,000 PV modules have been installed on site. The final total will be over 420,000.

Works on the substation, connecting the solar farm to the Powerlink network, are also progressing well and the next phase of the project will see commencement of commissioning in May. The plant output will then be gradually increased until the ultimate 110MW plant capacity will be reached in September 2018.

Local employment

Nine months have passed since RCR held a community engagement session at the Dalby Showground. A lot has happened since then and we can now provide an update on the progress of the works and the level of local business and community engagement in the project.

RCR has confirmed that its target of achieving a high local labour content on the project has been achieved, with 70 per cent of the 170 workers currently working on the project being locally employed through labour hire or local subcontractors. A total of 38 local subcontractors and small businesses are contributing to the success of the project. RCR have been keen to maintain a high representation of local workers at the site.

Community site visits

RCR would like to renew the invitation to interested members of the Dalby community to come out to the site for an open day. The specifics of this event still need to be finalised and we shall provide more details in due course.



The substation switch-room arriving on site

For more information

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