

ERGON ENERGY UPDATE

Hello again!

As we mentioned in our last Barcoo Banter update in June, we've sadly reached the end of an era for the solar concentrators at the Windorah Solar Farm. Commissioned in 2008, the solar concentrator farm was Ergon's first ever solar farm trial and has been an iconic symbol of Windorah for the past 15 years.

While solar concentrators were state of the art renewable energy technology at the turn of the century, significant advances in solar PV and batteries in the last couple of decades, mean that they are no longer the most efficient way to meet Windorah's long-term energy needs.

After a slight delay to the original decommissioning timeline, the solar concentrator removal, site demolition and earth works are scheduled to commence on site on 9 October 2023 and will take about 3 weeks to complete. During this time the solar concentrators will be deconstructed and removed off site where parts will be recycled. The site will then be cleared in preparation for the new solar farm and battery. Please be on the lookout for some extra trucks and machinery in the area during this time.

Speaking of the new solar and battery farm, the Queensland government formally announced Windorah, and three other solar projects, in a joint media statement from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services, the Honourable Mark Bailey, and the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement, the Honourable Mick de Brenni. The Ministers' announced:

- *The Palaszczuk Government's 2023-24 Budget is delivering \$28 million to take Boulia, Burketown, Doomadgee, and Windorah off expensive fossil-fuelled power.*
- *These projects will see solar generation and battery storage systems contributing renewable energy to the generation mix of the four power stations, supporting the reduction of diesel usage.*
- *Windorah: Ergon Energy Network is planning to install 850kW of solar PV and 1,000kWh of energy storage, which will save 150,000 litres of diesel and \$300,000 each year.*

- *The projects will also create direct and indirect jobs in these communities, as part of the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan.*

You can check out the full media release here: [Sunshine to savings: remote Queensland communities to save big with solar - Ministerial Media Statements](https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/98544)
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The new solar farm and battery will ensure over half of Windorah's total power is sourced from renewable energy, and we have longer term plans to see this figure go to 100% renewable energy by 2040. This project demonstrates our commitment to remote and regional communities and will ensure that Windorah remains at the forefront of the transition to a renewable energy future.

We wanted to say thanks to the Barcoo Shire Council and community for allowing us to serve you in this way, and we look forward to our next visit back to your region. Personally, I (Andrew) can't wait to get back to the schools and talk more about the new Windorah Solar Farm project and renewable energy and see how we can all save power in our homes and communities.

For more information on the solar farm, you can contact Andrew at andrew.kunst@energyq.com.au

Thanks again everyone, and we look forward to seeing you again next time we visit.

Andrew Kunst, Kein Jones and Kate Austin
Isolated Networks and Community teams
Ergon Energy Network

