

Premier Jay Weatherill

Tuesday, 23 September, 2014

Premier calls for clarity on national RET to increase SA targets

Premier Jay Weatherill has announced the State Government will increase its Renewable Energy Target to 50 per cent by 2025.

The new 50 per cent Renewable Energy Target comes after the announcement in October that the Government was committed to an investment target of \$10 billion in low carbon generation by 2025.

Mr Weatherill said that the Commonwealth Warburton review into the national Renewable Energy Target and a lack of clarity had brought the green energy sector to a halt.

"Modelling shows that the RET has underpinned \$5.5 billion expenditure to date and was forecast to support a further \$4.5 billion by 2025," Mr Weatherill said.

"This new target of half of the States power to be generated by renewable sources will create jobs and drive capital investment and advanced manufacturing industries.

"But we will only be successful with both of these targets if the Federal Government maintains the current Renewable Energy Target Scheme arrangements.

"The sovereign risk created by the Federal Government's unnecessary and unexplained review into the national RET has caused a number of projects to be placed on hold, putting many construction projects and ongoing jobs at risk.

"There are hundreds, if not thousands of SA jobs in the renewable energy sector - these are the growth areas we should be supporting, not undermining."

In 2009, the South Australian Government committed to a target for the State to achieve 33 per cent of electricity generated from renewable sources by 2020.

Figures from 2013/14 indicate that 31.5 per cent of energy produced in South Australia was from renewable sources, but updated numbers from the Australian Energy Market Operator expected this month are likely to show SA has exceeded the target of 33 per cent.

"We took action at the local level, passing the nation's first dedicated climate change legislation and were the first State with a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions," Mr Weatherill said.

"We have demonstrated in South Australia is that, with the right policies and incentives, and with strong leadership and clear goals, even highly ambitious targets can be achieved and surpassed.

"We have sought to encourage these new advanced industries, and our economy - as well as our environment - has benefited.

"Along with industry, we call on the Commonwealth to support the Federal Renewable Energy Target and follow the example that we are setting in this important area."

The announcement comes as the Minister for Environment Ian Hunter is currently representing the South Australian Government at a meeting of the Climate Group and the United Nations Climate Summit hosted by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon in New York.

Mr Hunter joined with more than 300,000 others in the People's Climate March, the largest climate event of its type in history, with rallies in more than 150 countries.