

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio
Budget Senate Estimates

Question: BR52
Topic: Clean Energy Hub
Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Birmingham asked:

Has the Government transformed Australia into the Clean Energy Hub of the Asia Pacific as promised by Rudd Labor at the 2007 election? How is such a claim measured and who determines which Asia Pacific country is the hub?

Answer¹:

The Government is making significant investments in clean energy technologies. The Clean Energy Initiative underpins the Government's strong support of clean energy technologies and includes the Australian Centre for Renewable Energy, the Australian Solar Institute and the Solar Flagships Program which supports the deployment of large-scale solar energy in Australia.

The Australian Government has also implemented the expanded Renewable Energy Target (RET) which delivers on the Government's commitment to ensure that 20 per cent of Australia's electricity supply will come from renewable sources by 2020. The expanded RET scheme came into force on 1 January 2010.

On 24 June 2010 the Parliament passed a number of further amendments to the RET scheme, to help provide certainty to developers of large-scale renewable energy generation projects and households and businesses wishing to install small-scale renewable energy systems. From 1 January 2011, the RET will include two parts - the Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme (SRES) and the Large-scale Renewable Energy Target (LRET). The LRET, covering large-scale renewable energy projects, will deliver the vast majority of the 2020 target. The SRES will cover small-scale technologies such as solar panels and solar hot water systems, provide a fixed price of \$40 per megawatt hour of electricity produced, and deliver the remainder of the target. These changes will ensure that large-scale renewable energy projects are no longer impacted by the demand for small-scale renewable technologies. More information about the RET can be found on the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency's website at www.climatechange.gov.au.

¹ Unless otherwise stated all information is current as at 30 June 2010.

In relation to the 2007 election commitment to make Australia the clean energy hub of the Asia-Pacific region, the Government launched the \$20 million Clean Energy Innovation Centre on 1 April 2009, and the former Minister for Trade, the Hon Simon Crean MP announced \$14.9 million on 12 May 2009 for the Clean Energy Trade and Investment Strategy. The strategy to invest in clean energy has broadened to include China, India, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Latin America and the Middle East.

Further information is available on the Clean Energy Trade and Investment Strategy at the Austrade website: <http://www.austrade.gov.au/Clean-energy-overview/default.aspx> and further detail on the Clean Energy Innovation Centre is available at <http://www.cleanenergyinnovation.net.au/>.