



press release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sun shines on Blacktown - NSW's first Solar City

The Hon John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia announced today that Blacktown City in Western Sydney is one of only four communities in Australia to become a Solar City under the Federal Government's *Solar Cities* programme established in 2004.

Blacktown City's bid involves a consortium led by BP Solar and includes the ANZ Banking Group, Integral Energy, Landcom, Big Switch Projects and Blacktown City Council.

On behalf of the successful Blacktown City Solar Cities consortium, Mark Twidell, Regional Director of BP Solar Australasia, welcomed the announcement saying "Blacktown City is the perfect choice for a Solar City as it reflects the many energy challenges that Australian cities are facing today.

"Australia's peak power needs are growing every year due to a growing population and increasing demand for air conditioners," said Mark Twidell. "It is during these times of peak demand that the power generated from a solar system reaches its maximum."

"By employing solar power, smart meters, energy efficiency and new approaches to electricity pricing and financing, Solar Cities will provide cost effective solutions to assist in meeting Blacktown's peak energy needs and reduce the requirement for investment in electricity infrastructure."

"Deploying new technologies to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions is an important part of Australia's response to climate change," said Mark Twidell. "In Blacktown we will introduce new measures to demonstrate how technology that is readily available today can significantly reduce emissions."

The Blacktown Solar Cities project will prevent 25,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere each year, equivalent to taking 6,000 cars off Sydney's roads.

"Today we have brought together six leading names in energy, finance and the largest City Council in NSW to demonstrate how households can reduce their energy consumption without impacting their lifestyle. By adopting simple and easy measures, we estimate the community will save \$3 million in electricity bills and make a positive contribution to the environment," said Mark Twidell.

Mayor of Blacktown City, Councillor Leo Kelly, OAM said "The program and its benefits will be made available to the entire community and we are very keen to start the roll

out of hundreds of Australian-made solar electricity generating systems and tens of thousands of energy efficiency packs across the Blacktown City community.”

Today’s announcement was made at Blacktown City Council’s William Lawson Child Care Centre. The facility utilises a number of initiatives including solar PV, demonstrating the leadership Blacktown City Council has already shown in working towards a sustainable future for the community.

ENDS

For any inquiries please contact:

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Notes to Editors

Blacktown Solar City

- Covering 45 suburbs, Blacktown is the biggest Local Government Area in NSW and the third largest in Australia, behind Brisbane City and the Gold Coast.
- Blacktown City in western Sydney, is 35km west of the Sydney CBD.
- Blacktown City has a population approaching 300,000 people and is a young, culturally diverse community.
- The Blacktown Solar Cities project will run from 2006 to 2013.
- A range of different packages will be provided featuring solar PV, solar hot water, energy efficiency, free energy audits, smart meters, demand management, cost reflective pricing and innovative financing
- The project will seek to help residents, businesses and community organisations save money by using energy more wisely, saving energy and generating their own energy.

For further information on the Blacktown Solar Cities consortium visit:

www.blacktownsolarcity.com.au

Solar Cities Project – Australian Government initiative

- Solar Cities is a \$75.3 million initiative announced by the Prime Minister in the Energy White Paper, Securing Australia’s Energy Future, in June 2004.
- Solar Cities will be implemented by the Department of the Environment and Heritage through trials in Adelaide and at least three other electricity grid-connected urban areas around Australia.
- Solar Cities is an innovative program which is designed to demonstrate how solar power, smart meters, energy efficiency and new approaches to electricity pricing can combine to provide a sustainable energy future in urban locations throughout Australia.
- It is a partnership approach that involves all levels of Government, the private sector and the local community.
- The program will run from 2004/05 to 2012/13, with the focus on program design and site selection in the first year.

To learn more, visit www.greenhouse.gov.au/solarcities

Consortium Lead:

BP Solar

- BP Solar is Australia's largest manufacturer of solar photovoltaic products, with almost 300 employees at its Sydney Olympic Park facility.
- In 2005, BP Solar annual PV production capacity in Australia was expanded by 25% from 40MW to 50MW in an effort to cope with growing demand.
- BP Solar's Sydney Olympic Park facility is the largest of its kind in the southern hemisphere and recorded over AUD\$90 million in export sales in 2005
- BP Solar is a key business within BP Alternative Energy and a global company with over 2200 employees focused on harnessing the sun's energy to produce solar electricity. This includes the design, manufacture and marketing of quality solar electric systems for a wide range of applications in the residential, commercial and industrial sectors.
- With over 30 years of experience and installations in over 160 countries, BP Solar is one of the world's largest solar companies and has manufacturing facilities in the U.S., Spain, India and Australia.

To learn more, visit www.bpsolar.com.au and www.bpalternativenergy.com

Consortium Partners:

Blacktown City Council

Will bring the following elements to the benefit of the Project"

- Established relationships with a myriad of key community groups, schools, business and other non government and government organisations.
- An understanding of the communities (target audience) responses to environmental, social and economical issues.
- Established communication avenues with the entire community.

ANZ

- ANZ is a very different bank making a sustainable contribution to society
- ANZ will offer attractively-priced financial products to increase the affordability of solar energy and other energy efficient technology
- It will promote the Solar Cities project through its branch network and community engagement

Integral Energy

- Integral Energy distributes and retails electricity and value-added services to more than 2.1 million people in households and businesses across a network franchise spanning 24,500 square kilometres in Greater Western Sydney, the Blue Mountains, the Illawarra, and the Southern Highlands.
- Integral Energy is committed to take all prudent and reasonable steps to promote renewable energy resources, implement energy efficiency and energy management initiatives.
- In 1996, Integral Energy was the first Australian electricity company to commit to buying back excess electricity produced by customers' solar equipment.
- Integral Energy is recognised as a pioneer in energy management programs in Australia, and was the 2005 NSW Energy Smart Utility at the Green Globe Awards.

To learn more, visit: www.integral.com.au/solarcity

Landcom

Landcom is a State Owned Corporation that masterplans living communities and has developed residential, commercial and industrial properties for close to 30 years in New South Wales. In that time, Landcom has produced over 60,000 lots and dwellings, and strives to deliver even

more quality developments, which set new standards in social, environmental and economic sustainability.

Landcom's commitment to Blacktown Solar City includes:

- \$1000 incentive for at least 200 new homebuyers who install a 1 kW solar system for generating power at their new home at Second Ponds Creek, Kellyville Ridge.
- Encouraging installation of gas-boosted solar water heating.
- Energy efficient house design.
- A Sustainable Living Centre at Second Ponds Creek to be built by Landcom and Australand.
- Homeowner education on energy efficiency and benefits of solar power.

Landcom's involvement in the Consortium will assist driving major change in energy use in new housing developments.

Big Switch Projects

- A leading energy and demand management company, already well known within the Blacktown business community for business energy efficiency services.
- Will offer energy efficiency upgrades to businesses within the community.
- Will support the community and the Blacktown solar city at energy efficiency seminars and other community events.