

- Wright
- Mayo
- Grey
- Kingston
- Kennedy
- Fisher
- Longman
- Wide Bay
- Bowman
- Wakefield
- Brand
- Barker
- Pearce
- Flynn
- Blair
- Canning
- Makin
- Port Adelaide
- Dickson
- Rankin
- Bonner
- Richmond
- Petrie
- Cliffax
- Coxley
- Maranoa
- Fadden
- Boothby
- Moreton
- Parke
- Lalor
- Cowan
- Sturt
- Hindmarsh
- Moore
- Forrest
- Forde
- Hasluck
- Hinkler
- Mcpherson
- Tangney
- Lilley
- Capricornia
- Adelaide
- Mcewen
- Fremantle
- Ryan
- Lyne
- Farrer
- Flinders
- Murray
- Page
- Indi
- Mcmillan
- Gippsland
- Cowper
- Bendigo
- Groom
- Corangamite
- Hume
- Gorton
- Gilmore
- Holt
- Dawson
- Swan
- Canberra
- Fraser
- Herbert
- Paterson
- Mallee
- Stirling
- Perth
- Chifley
- Chariton
- Griffith
- Greenway
- Eden-Monaro
- Moncrieff
- Calare
- New England
- Calwell
- Macquarie
- Lyons
- Macarthur
- O'Connor
- Riverina
- Durack
- Wannon
- Mitchell
- Leichhardt
- McMahon
- Hunter
- La Trobe
- Dunkley
- Isaacs
- Dobell
- Corio
- Ballarat
- Fowler
- Robertson
- Aston
- Curtin
- Werrima
- Cunningham
- Lindsay
- Throsby
- Shortland
- Casey
- Berowra
- Newcastle
- Brisbane
- Franklin
- Gellibrand
- Hughes
- Maribyrnong
- Scullin
- Denison
- Deakin
- Bruce
- Blaxland
- Chisholm
- Mackellar
- Wills
- Menzies
- Batman
- Bass
- Hotham
- Bennelong
- Parramatta
- Jagajaga
- Banks
- Braddon
- Goldstein
- Watson
- Reid
- Cook
- Bradfield
- Barton
- Kooyong
- Grayndler
- Warringah
- Lingiari
- Melbourne
- North Sydney
- Kingsford Smith
- Higgins
- Melbourne Ports
- Solomon
- Sydney
- Wentworth



# The Solar Revolution in Higgins

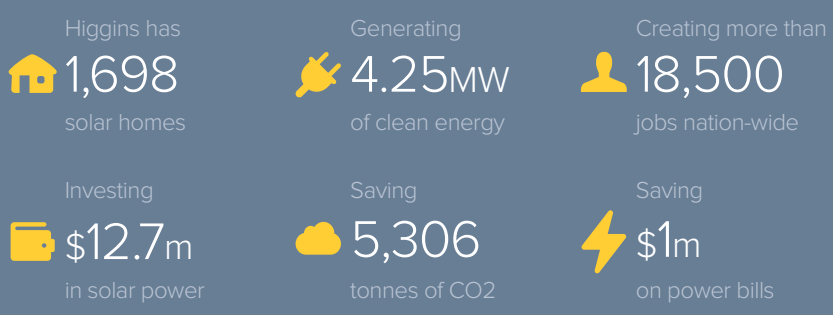
**IN SUCH A SUNNY COUNTRY, SOLAR JUST MAKES SENSE.**

This has been recognised by over 5 million Australians who live in a home with solar panels or hot water. These families have taken control of their power bills while also doing their part for our environment.

“Going solar has helped our family reduce our energy bills by \$250 a quarter, and now my neighbour wants to do the same!”

– Peter, father of two young children, Toowoomba, QLD

This growth in solar homes has been made possible by the Renewable Energy Target, which helps families with the cost of installing solar. At least 2 million more families are expected to go solar in the next 5 years. This uptake has translated in solar becoming a vital industry in Australia, currently employing over 18,450 workers in more than 4,000 small and large businesses.<sup>1</sup>



That means, since the publication of the last solar briefer in November 2013...



All in all, Higgins now ranks:



**NOTE ON FIGURES:** These figures are estimates, based on an average 2.5kW system size and Clean Energy Regulator, SunWiz and Australian government data.



# GROWING JOBS, INVESTMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: BACKGROUND ON THE RENEWABLE ENERGY TARGET

The Renewable Energy Target was set up by the Howard Government in 2001 to create more incentive for renewable energy and a diverse energy mix in Australia. In 2010, with bipartisan support, the target was extended to ensure that at least 20% of Australia's electricity comes from renewable sources by 2020.<sup>2</sup>

The Renewable Energy Target has proven to be a great success. Investment in renewables has grown to over \$20 billion, creating over 24,000 jobs across Australia and helping put solar panels and solar hot water on the homes of over 5 million Australians.<sup>3</sup>

The target is currently under review, with some concerns that the review could lead to a cut to the target. However, changing the Renewable Energy Target could have the following consequences:<sup>4</sup>

Up to  
 **\$21 billion**  
in investment renewables would disappear, including large-scale projects and small-scale wind and solar

There will be up to  
 **11,100 less jobs**  
in solar and renewables every year

Household electricity prices would rise by over  
 **\$44** | **\$142**  
per year by 2020 | per year by 2030

Energy generators would receive an additional  
 **\$6–12 billion**  
in revenue between 2015 and 2020

As a long term bipartisan policy on which substantial investment decisions have been made, cutting the target would also lead to substantial sovereign risks.

Quite simply, changes to the Renewable Energy Target translates to less jobs, less investment and more financial struggle for all Australians.

“Changes to the Renewable Energy Target will mean a pause in domestic and small businesses buying solar. It will have a big impact, making solar less affordable. I might have to lose more staff.”

## **SOLAZONE ON THE SUNSHINE COAST:** **A LOCAL COMPANY PROVIDING LOCAL JOBS AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

Passionate about solar, Ernest started his own solar business in Melbourne in 1983. In 1988, Ernest moved to the Sunshine Coast, QLD, and opened his second office, where he still lives today.

Thirty-one years of involvement in the solar industry has given him a real understanding of the “solarcoaster” – fluctuations in the solar industry caused by changes in Government policy.

“Solazone has gone through lots of ups and downs with changes in Government policies. These changes always have a huge effect on our staff.”

“At our biggest, we had 16 staff members working for us in Australia. But, now I’m down to six.”

“I recently had to let a few staff go because it’s been quiet since the Queensland Government’s policy changes to feed-in tariffs.”

Like many small solar businesses, Ernest is concerned about any changes to the Renewable Energy Target .

“We’re suffering at the moment – all solar businesses are – as we try and figure out what’s going to happen with the target.”

For Ernest, solar is not just a business issue – it’s a community issue.

“Solazone’s business is really important to our community here on the Sunshine Coast.”



“All of our employees are locals. And, when someone buys a system here, there’s layers of people – sales, admin, installation, electricians, plumbers – who are all from the community. All the money spent is actually invested back into the community.”

“Not only that, but they have apprentices – young people who are learning a trade in a growing industry who will be able train other people. It gives them a real future.”

“That’s why it’s really important for our community on the Sunshine Coast that our business and the solar industry keep going.”

## IXL GROUP: A MANUFACTURING COMPANY THAT'S GONE SOLAR

Historically dependant on the local automotive industry to support its steel fabrication business, in April 2014 IXL opened a new manufacturing facility in Adelaide that will produce and supply structural components for two of Australia's biggest new solar farms.

These new solar projects in Broken Hill and Nyngan in NSW will have a combined capacity of 155MW, supplying energy for over 50,000 homes and generating investment of \$440 million. Importantly they are creating 450 direct construction jobs on site, as well as hundreds of flow on jobs off-site.

“As an Australian owned company that has been based in Geelong for over 150 years, we have had to explore new business opportunities as local automotive manufacturing declines. Making mounting structures for First Solar has been a natural extension for our business, and we believe that Australian-made mounting systems can be more competitive with imports.”

– Claude Dagescy, General Manager, IXL Solar

With abundant land and sun Australia could be building many more solar farms like these across the country, generating new jobs for Claude's workers along the way. The renewable energy sector provides an opportunity for companies to find new manufacturing opportunities as some traditional industries decline.

**But this will only happen if the Renewable Energy Target is kept strong.**



PV framing manufacturing in Salisbury South Australia

Australians overwhelmingly support solar. In fact, poll after poll shows that an overwhelming majority, up to 80%, want more renewables—not less.<sup>5</sup>

As the solar industry shows, investing in renewable energy translates to obvious benefits for everyone—including creating jobs, greater domestic investment, and more choice and lower bills for families.

That's why it's important that good policy measures, like the Renewable Energy Target and State/territory policies to grow solar, are kept and strengthened.



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