

Media release

Pro Ventum International GmbH

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Mount Gellibrand wind farm gets planning approval

Pro Ventum International GmbH is delighted that the Victorian Minister for Planning, Rob Hulls has approved the 232 MW Mt Gellibrand Windfarm project in Western Victoria.

The windfarm is located 120 km west of Melbourne, close to the regional centre of Colac. The windfarm comprises 116 turbines of the 2 MW class with an overall capacity of 232 MW. The windfarm will produce over 700,000 MWh of clean energy which is enough to supply approximately 132,000 Victorian households.

The Mt Gellibrand wind farm will bring new jobs and investment to the Colac region and contribute significantly towards the Victorian Government's initiatives to safeguard Victoria's energy future and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the power generation sector. The recently announced Victorian Renewable Energy Target (VRET) scheme will provide the economic backbone for the Mount Gellibrand windfarm, a wind energy project that has been carefully sited to comply with the Victorian guidelines for the development of wind energy facilities in appropriate locations.

The VRET scheme will require electricity retailers to purchase a minimum of 10 per cent of their power from renewable sources by 2016, up from the current level of around 4 per cent. The scheme will deliver massive reductions of greenhouse gas emissions and is an important part of the Government's Environmental Sustainability Action Statement.

The decision strongly endorsed the merits of the project approving all of the 116 turbines proposed in the application. The windfarm site has been selected carefully to avoid sensitive environmental areas and has addressed mitigation measures to minimise environmental and community impact during construction and operation.

Pro Ventum has received strong support from the local community and the Colac Otway Shire Council throughout the planning process. Detailed independent expert reports regarding Planning, Landscape, Flora and Fauna, Cultural Heritage and Noise have been prepared to minimise any impacts on the area. After an extensive planning process over 3 years the planning application was submitted to the Department of Sustainability and Environment in May 2005. Over the following months extensive community consultation took place, including a six week public exhibition period. A three member independent planning panel considered the application in October 2005 and made its recommendation to the Minister.

Pro Ventum International GmbH will commence work on an Environmental Management Plan within the next few weeks. Commencement of construction is scheduled for 2007.

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