



SilexSolar
Australian Clean Energy

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Thiess-Silex Solar Consortium confirmed as major bidder to build large scale solar photovoltaic (PV) power station in Australia

The consortium between Thiess, a market leader in critical infrastructure construction and utility services and Silex Systems Ltd, an ASX listed company with world-class expertise and capability in solar technology, today publicly confirmed its interest in constructing the nation's first solar photovoltaic (PV) power station as part of the Commonwealth's Solar Flagships Program.

The announcement coincides with recent news that the NSW Government will contribute \$120M in funding to the project.

Chris Wilks, Executive Director of Silex subsidiary and consortium partner SilexSolar, said Australia has the home-grown capacity to build the new power station which will ultimately be one of the biggest in the world. "The Thiess-SilexSolar consortium offers a unique all Australian bid for Solar Flagships, which will see industry research, world class development and manufacturing capability, and the consequent IP that is developed during the project, stay here in Australia for the lasting benefit of all Australians." he said.

Mr Wilks said the Thiess-Silex Solar proposal includes the use of solar PV technology, the fastest growing energy technology in the world, and will have an expected average output of approximately 400GWh/yr. The consortium contains Australia's only significant manufacturer of PV cells and panels, which would be wholly made at the SilexSolar plant at Homebush.

More than 1300 Australian based jobs would be created. Thiess Chief Executive Officer, Australian Operations, Nev Power said that if successful in its bid, the partnership will ensure the Solar Flagships project will directly benefit the Australian solar and construction industry, rather than seeing investment and expertise going offshore through projects put forward by off-shore companies.

"The Solar Flagships project is not only vital to developing large scale utility level solar power, but also to kick starting the local manufacturing industry, so Australia can get its share of the \$40 billion worldwide solar PV industry," Mr Power said.

Thiess has already delivered large energy and renewable projects such as the Darajat Unit III 110MW Geothermal power station project and the Swanbank Waste Management Facility in Queensland, the second of its kind in the world to capture gas for electricity generation.

The Thiess-SilexSolar consortium plans to construct a regional manufacturing facility for the assembly of panels close to the project site, maximising local content and employment. This would create an assembly and distribution hub for SilexSolar's Australian made solar products to be delivered to the central and eastern states.



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Mr Wilks said many of SilexSolar's staff have over 25 years in the industry including experience in Europe and the US, and have previously developed and delivered smaller solar power projects in Australia and South East Asia.

"We are investing heavily in the ingenuity of the Australian people and are well placed to commercialise Australian intellectual property rather than letting it go overseas. To aid in this we have our own Research and Development facility, and a strong partnership with the ARC Photovoltaics Centre of Excellence at the University of NSW, the key centre of Australian solar energy research.

"Our already established Homebush manufacturing plant and R&D facility, the largest in the Southern Hemisphere, provides the perfect base to facilitate and house the growth in manufacturing and solar expertise this project will generate." Mr Wilks said.

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For further information contact Michael Lyons on (07) 3002 9374, 0408 619 055 or email mlyons@thiess.com.au

About Thiess

For more than 75 years, Thiess has been helping to build our nation. The Snowy Mountains Scheme, Sydney Harbour Tunnel, Melbourne's EastLink project, Brisbane's \$4.8 billion Airport Link and Victoria's \$3.5 billion Desalination Project are just a few iconic projects to bear the Thiess brand. A commitment to delivering great outcomes for clients has allowed the company to expand throughout Australia and into New Zealand, Indonesia, India and most recently the Middle East.

Thiess has an annual turnover of \$6.5 billion and over \$17 billion dollars of work in hand. With over 16,000 employees, it has become one of Australia's leading and most trusted construction, mining and services companies. Thiess is a wholly owned subsidiary of Leighton Holdings Pty Ltd.

About SilexSolar Pty Ltd

SilexSolar is a subsidiary of Silex Systems Limited, an ASX-listed public company which has several cutting edge technologies under development (www.silex.com.au). Silex's solar division comprises SilexSolar and Solar Systems. SilexSolar was established in July 2009 following Silex's acquisition of the Sydney Olympic Park (SOP) solar manufacturing facility from BP Solar. SilexSolar is now the largest integrated photovoltaic (PV) cell and solar panel manufacturing facility in the southern hemisphere, and the only commercial manufacturer of solar cells and panels in Australia. Silex's solar division also includes Melbourne-based Solar Systems Pty Ltd (SSPL), acquired earlier this year. In contrast to SilexSolar's conventional panel business which also serves the residential and commercial rooftop solar panel market, SSPL's technology is directly applicable to large utility-scale solar power generation using its patented "Dense Array" concentrating photovoltaic (CPV) solar conversion technology. This technology utilises ultra-high efficiency PV cells (initially developed for space applications) and is ideally suited to the burgeoning utility scale solar power station market. SSG's technology is in the final stages of development and is expected to be available for commercial deployment in 2011, starting with a ~150MW solar power project planned for Mildura, Victoria – potentially the largest solar power station in the world.