

Smart Grid Australia provided the vision for the Smart Grid/Smart City project

In 2009 Smart Grid Australia presented its vision and ideas to the government in relation to what is now known as the Smart Grid/Smart City Project (SGSC). The project was so well received by the government that it doubled the proposed funding to \$100 million. The aim is to link 9,500 homes to a smart grid during the period 2010-2013. The project was awarded to a consortium and is expected to deliver many valuable lessons and highlight key issues to be considered in the deployment of Smart Grid solutions across Australia.

The Australian Government launched SGSC in Newcastle on Friday 8 October 2010. The three-year project runs across five sites in Sydney and the Hunter Valley (Newcastle, Scone, Sydney CBD, Ku-ring-gai and Newington). It will represent Australia's first commercial-scale smart grid. It also is one of the largest and most integrated smart grid projects anywhere in the world.

The technology will allow residents to see real-time analysis of electricity usage for their households and even for individual appliances, to help them make better decisions about energy efficiency in their homes and minimise their environmental impact.

Smart Grid Australia chairman Charles Pople said that he *“was very pleased with the launch of the project and he offered the government Smart Grid Australia's Industry Alliance to support industry playing a leading role during the roll out period.”*

He also mentioned that *“as a result of the high profile that has been generated by smart grids, many electricity companies are planning and launching their own smart grid activities independently of SGSC, and these will contribute to the "gene pool" of information that will be the foundation of future national deployments”*.

Guido Bartels chairman of the Global Smart Grid Federation (GSGF) congratulated Australia from his office in Washington DC and indicated that not just Australia, but indeed the global smart grid community was extremely interested in this project and its outcomes. *“Already several of the global best practices regarding smart grid reside in Australia and with this EnergyAustralia led SGSC project the country is further reinforcing their leadership position in an area so foundational for economic growth, energy security and a sustainable future”*, added Guido Bartels.

The smart grid demonstration will also test real-time, complex information about grid performance in order to improve control over the network for Australian energy transmission and distribution companies.

Smart grid infrastructure uses sensors, meters, digital services and analytic tools to automate, monitor and control the two-way flow of energy across operations - from power plant to plug. By combining advanced communication, sensing and metering infrastructure with existing energy networks, smart grids enable the delivery of a more efficient, robust and consumer-friendly electricity network.

Benefits include:

- Energy efficiency: the system will enable sophisticated analysis of consumption patterns enabling a real-time view of energy use to identify opportunities for reduction.
- Analytics: customers will have an internet window to their technical and commercial data, to track current consumption and choose the most appropriate agreements.

The EnergyAustralia Consortium consists of technology companies including Smart Grid Australia members IBM, Newcastle City Council and GE Energy Australia as well as AGL, Sydney Water and Hunter Water.

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