



The Hon Chris Hartcher MP

Minister for Resources and Energy

Special Minister of State

Minister for the Central Coast

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 29 April 2011

NSW GOVERNMENT PLACES HOLD ON SOLAR BONUS SCHEME

The NSW Government has moved today to stop the blowout in the Solar Bonus Scheme by putting a two month hold on new applications pending the result of the Government's Solar Summit Stage One.

NSW Minister for Resources and Energy, Chris Hartcher said the Government was placing the Scheme on hold to new applications effective midnight on 28 April 2011 and will introduce legislation to Parliament as soon as possible to support this option.

The former Labor Government's Solar Bonus Scheme has blown out by more than \$759 million, with the total cost based on existing applications reaching up to \$1.9 billion.

"We believe this to be a fair and responsible measure for a policy that from the outset has been characterised by an extraordinary level of mismanagement," Mr Hartcher said.

The Scheme will be reviewed at Stage One of the NSW Government's Solar Summit, to be held Friday 6 May 2011.

"We made a commitment during the election campaign to hold a Solar Summit within our first 100 days of office to examine Labor's bungled Solar Bonus Scheme," Mr Hartcher said.

"We want to quickly get to the bottom of how this outrageously expensive policy was put to the NSW Parliament."

The Summit will seek to determine the Solar Bonus Scheme's true cost, as well as identify opportunities to limit cost blowouts through restructuring the Scheme.

Stage Two, to be held within the Government's first 100 days in office, will work to establish a sustainable future for the NSW solar industry and encompass broader industry involvement.

The Solar Summit will be chaired by Professor Mary O’Kane, NSW Chief Scientist and Scientific Engineer.

The Summit will bring together representatives from industry, government, environmental groups and consumer groups as well as energy experts to manage the Solar Bonus Scheme’s costs and ensure the further development of solar energy in NSW.

“The NSW Government is committed to renewable energy. But our focus will be on sensible, sustained, and affordable progress for renewables,” Mr Hartcher said.

For general information on the Solar Bonus Scheme visit www.industry.nsw.gov.au/energy or call the Energy Information Line on 1300 136 888.

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