

28 November 2024

Unsung hero of Victoria's energy transition taking shape on a remote country lane

Construction has started on a new facility in Victoria's western region that is critical to Victoria's clean energy transition and could help supercharge renewable energy development in the region.

Australian Energy Operations, through its subsidiary Transmission Operations Australia 3, is delivering the Ararat synchronous condenser (syncon) for the Victorian Government and the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) with Beon Energy Solutions building the project.

A syncon is a large spinning machine that provides 'system strength' to the transmission network by stabilising and supporting the power grid from voltage fluctuations, particularly from variable energy sources such as wind or solar.

When completed in late 2025, it will be the largest of its type anywhere in Australia and could enable up to 600MW of new renewable energy generation in the region.

Australian Energy Operations chief executive officer Glen Thomson said the syncon will help unlock large amounts of wind and solar generation for all Victorians.

"This facility will allow more clean electricity to connect to the network, while ensuring key system security needs are met," Mr Thomson said.

"Syncons could be described as the unsung hero of the energy transition – they don't get the same headlines as batteries, wind or solar, but they will play an equally crucial role in keeping the lights on for Victorian homes and businesses."

Over the next year, a highly skilled workforce will complete the complex task of installing the syncon next to the Ararat Terminal Station near Elmhurst.

Minister for Energy and Resources Lily D'Ambrosio said the project was part of a \$480 million investment by the Victorian Government in 12 projects to strengthen and modernise Victoria's grid.

"The Victorian Government is investing in the energy infrastructure our state needs to keep the lights on and allow more affordable and reliable renewable energy to flow to Victorian homes and businesses," she said.

"Projects like the Ararat synchronous condenser are crucial to provide stability to Victoria's energy grid as we connect the new solar, wind and battery storage that will secure our state's energy future."

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