

Media Release

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Barron Gorge Hydro to provide more clean, green power

One of Queensland's cleanest and greenest power stations, Barron Gorge Hydro, will increase its electricity output by ten percent by the end of this year, Member for Barron River Steve Wettenhall announced today.

Mr Wettenhall said Stanwell's completion of a \$10 million upgrade of the power station's two generating units would increase generating capacity from 60 to 66 megawatts.

"Barron Gorge Hydro, on the Barron River, is one of Queensland's cleanest and greenest power stations providing greenhouse-gas-free power to industry and homes," he said.

"It provides one of the most environmentally sustainable forms of energy.

"I am pleased to say that the completion of the \$10 million upgrade will mean we can produce more clean, green power," he said.

"Stanwell's upgrade also shows our commitment to the power station, and the 17 jobs it provides, in the longer term."

Mr Wettenhall said the refurbishment will improve the reliability and efficiency of the generating units at Barron Gorge Hydro, which began operation in 1963.

"Before the upgrade it had a maximum generating capacity of 60 megawatts – enough to power 600,000 100 watt light bulbs," he said.

"Water from Kuranda Weir, on the Barron River, descends over 400 metres along a tunnel to drive turbines at Barron Gorge Hydro before the water is returned to the river.

"Barron Gorge Hydro makes greenhouse gas savings of around 260,000 tonnes a year and is a certified green generator.

"It is owned by Queensland's largest energy producer, Stanwell Corporation, a Queensland Government owned corporation."

Mr Wettenhall said in 2003 Stanwell released a \$28 million strategic plan to extend the life of Barron Gorge Hydro until 2055.

Phase one was completed in 2006 and included a mid-life refit for the whole plant. The refurbishment of the two generators is phase two of the program.

"The Queensland Government, through Stanwell Corporation, is committed to enhancing and upgrading Barron Gorge Hydro for the long term," Mr Wettenhall said.

"It is also committed to providing the cleanest energy possible," he said.

Electricity from Barron Gorge Hydro is sold into the National Electricity Market.

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Background

Stanwell Corporation is Queensland's largest power generator, with the installed capacity to supply more than 45 per cent of the state's peak power needs. Established on 1 July 2011 and owned by the Queensland Government, Stanwell is the owner and operator of:

1400 MW Stanwell Power Station (coal) near Rockhampton

1400 MW Tarong Power Station (coal) in the South Burnett

443 MW Tarong North Power Station (super-critical coal) in the South Burnett

385 MW Swanbank E Power Station (gas) near Ipswich

120 MW Swanbank B Power Station (coal) near Ipswich

345 MW Mica Creek Power Station (gas) near Mount Isa (not connected to the NEM)

86.4 MW Kareeya Power Station (hydro) in Far North Queensland

66 MW Barron Gorge Power Station (hydro) in Far North Queensland

32 MW Mackay Power Station (gas) in Central Queensland

7.3 MW Koombooloomba Power Station (hydro) in Far North Queensland

4.3 MW Wivenhoe Small (hydro) located at Wivenhoe Dam

Stanwell will sell energy from the 195 MW Collinsville Power Station in north Queensland, through a Power Purchase Agreement with its owners Transfield Services Infrastructure Fund.

Stanwell owns Meandu Mine, which has the capacity to supply up to seven million tonnes of coal a year to the adjacent Tarong power stations. It has a coal supply agreement with Wesfarmers Resources' Curragh Mine that includes the sharing of revenue from coal exports. Stanwell also has gas interests including an equity stake in Blue Energy Limited.

Stanwell is an active competitor in the National Electricity Market (NEM). The Corporation sells electricity into the NEM spot market pool and provides ancillary services to the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) to ensure the secure and reliable supply of electricity throughout Queensland.

Stanwell employs nearly 1000 people across its various sites.