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Siemens to deliver Australia's first solar farm synchronous condenser

Siemens, in partnership with VINCI-Energies/Electrix (main EPC contractor) will design, develop and deliver Australia's first large synchronous condenser to be installed at a solar farm. When operational, this unit will play a crucial role in strengthening and stabilising the electricity grid that will connect to TOTAL-Eren's Kiamal solar farm in Victoria.

The 265MW (DC) solar farm located near Ouyen, in North West Victoria, owned by Total Eren, is expected to be the largest in the state when it starts commercial operations late-2019.

When developed, the synchronous condenser will be installed by VINCI-Energies/Electrix. Siemens will carry out the complete commissioning of the synchronous condenser and maintain it as a part of the long term package solution. In addition to helping strengthen the electricity grid connected to the Kiamal solar farm, it will also be beneficial to other large scale renewable projects in the area looking for grid security and strength in a region that has recently witnessed an influx of new wind and solar farms.

"As Australia's energy mix diversifies, so does the importance of technologies that help stabilize the electricity grid. Synchronous condensers are a proven technology and part of a cost effective solution," said Jeff Connolly CEO and Chairman of Siemens Australia and New Zealand.

"While they are a conventional technology, our synchronous condensers include the latest and most advanced generator circuit breakers, excitation, starting, control and protection systems and other auxiliaries that tackle the challenges facing our changing networks."

Speaking on the contract win, Andrew Theodore, the head of Siemens' Energy Management division in the region said, "About 30% of the country's energy generation capacity comes through Siemens technology and we're proud to secure the contract to design and develop Australia's first

synchronous condenser being installed at a solar farm to support the growing renewables energy sector.”

“In recent times, the synchronous condenser has received significant interest from the renewables industry due to its crucial role as a cost-effective solution providing short circuit contribution that helps enhance system strength in the grid. Synchronous condensers are one of a suite of technologies Siemens has in its portfolio that help address the challenges of integrating large amounts of renewable energy into the grid”, added Andrew.

Tony Croagh (Executive GM VINCI-Energies/Electrix Australia) echoed these words and added: “This project is of great significance to VINCI-Energies in the region as it solidifies its strategic vision of growth for its renewable energy contracting services. This project highlights the strength of bringing VINCI Energies’ and Siemens’ international expertise as well as local knowledge together - to offer world class solutions to an increasingly international client base in the energy sector in Australia.”

Synchronous condensers support and improve power transmission quality in a wide range of applications:

- Stabilization of grids
- High-voltage DC transmission links based on line-commutated converter technology
- Transmission grids with a high amount of power infeed from renewable sources
- Retirement/shutdown of conventional power plants

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Siemens AG (Berlin and Munich) is a global technology powerhouse that has stood for engineering excellence, innovation, quality, reliability and internationality for 170 years. The company is active around the globe, focusing on the areas of electrification, automation and digitalization. One of the world’s largest producers of energy-efficient, resource-saving technologies, Siemens is a leading supplier of efficient power generation and power transmission solutions and a pioneer in infrastructure solutions as well as automation, drive and software solutions for industry. With its publicly listed subsidiary Siemens Healthineers AG, the company is also a leading provider of medical imaging equipment – such as computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging systems – and a leader in laboratory diagnostics as well as clinical IT. In fiscal 2017, which ended on September 30, 2017, Siemens generated revenue of €33.0 billion and net income of €6.2 billion. At the end of September 2017, the company had around 377,000 employees worldwide. Further information is available on the Internet at www.siemens.com.