

Tabled by: Darren Miller,
CEO, ARENA
Tabled at: 12.55 pm,
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**ARENA Opening Statement
Budget Estimates October 2023**

Thank you to the Committee for this opportunity to appear on behalf of the Australian Renewable Energy Agency.

I would like to begin with acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are gathered today, the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people, and pay my respects to their Elders past and present I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here today.

Hydrogen Headstart

Since ARENA's last appearance at Senate Estimates, we have been tasked with delivering the Government's Hydrogen Headstart program, which opened for applications on October 10th.

Announced in the 2023-24 budget, the \$2b program aims to catalyse Australia's hydrogen industry to take advantage of our unparalleled opportunity to be a global hydrogen leader.

As other countries step up their ambitions, Australia is meeting the challenge and providing the investment needed to stay competitive in the global hydrogen race.

Renewable hydrogen is a promising zero emissions energy vector and feedstock with the potential to transform Australia's energy system, including in hard to abate sectors, but the emerging industry requires government support as it scales up.

Hydrogen Headstart is the Australian Government's largest investment in renewable hydrogen to date and a critical step in unlocking Australia's renewable energy superpower.

ARENA and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) designed the program following consultation with a broad range of key stakeholders, which involved 114 written submissions and three public forums with over 400 participants.

Hydrogen Headstart builds on ARENA's success as a leader in renewable hydrogen, having committed over \$308 million to 46 renewable hydrogen projects since 2017.

ARENA's support for renewable hydrogen spans early-stage research deployment projects through to first-of-a-kind deployments including hydrogen refuelling and hydrogen trucks, hydrogen for producing renewable ammonia, hydrogen for use in alumina refining and remote power.

We're thrilled to be delivering this transformative program and with Australia's abundant renewable energy resources, I believe Australia is well placed to be a global leader in the renewable hydrogen industry.

Thank you.