

AUSTRALIAN RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY (CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS) BILL 2011

Portfolio	Resources and Energy, the Hon Martin Ferguson AM MP
Legislation	<i>Australian Renewable Energy Agency (Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2011</i>
Content	<p>The <i>Australian Renewable Energy Agency (Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2011</i> sets arrangements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the transfer of existing renewable energy technology programs and projects from the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, (which includes those projects under the oversight of the Australian Centre for Renewable Energy (ACRE)); and • transfer of projects, assets, liabilities and staff from the Australian Solar Institute (ASI) to the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA). <p>The bill also provides for consequential amendments arising from the establishment of ARENA including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repealing the <i>Australian Centre for Renewable Energy Act 2009</i>, to allow the advisory role of the ACRE to transfer to ARENA; and • amending the <i>Clean Energy Regulator Act 2011</i> to allow the Clean Energy Regulator to disclose protected information to ARENA, where this will be of assistance to the operation of ARENA.
Background	<p>ARENA is a key part of the Australian Government's clean energy future package, which includes introducing a carbon price, promoting innovation and investment in renewable and low emissions energy, encouraging energy efficiency, and creating opportunities in the land sector. This is in addition to the established 20 per cent by 2020 Renewable Energy Target.</p> <p>ARENA will be tasked with managing over \$3.2 billion in Australian Government funding, with around \$1.7 billion of this funding currently uncommitted and available for ARENA to use to promote renewable energy technology innovation.</p> <p>ARENA's role in renewable energy technology innovation will be complemented by the \$10 billion commercially oriented Clean Energy Finance Corporation, which will drive innovative solutions to businesses seeking funds to launch clean energy and energy efficiency proposals and technologies.</p> <p>The Bill is submitted in conjunction with the <i>Australian Renewable Energy Agency Bill 2011</i> (ARENA Bill).</p>

Expected Outcome	<p>The Bill will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Repeal the <i>Australian Centre for Renewable Energy Act 2009</i> (b) Amend the <i>Clean Energy Regulator Act 2011</i> to allow disclosure of information from the Clean Energy Regulator to ARENA; (c) Establish times for transition of Commonwealth programs and projects and for transition of the ASI projects, assets, liabilities and staff; (d) Give effect to above transfers at the appropriate transition times; (e) Allow for consideration of undecided Commonwealth and ASI funding applications by ARENA; (f) Outline entitlements for ASI staff arising from staffing transfers; (g) Provide for the termination of ASI office holder positions; (h) Determine arrangements for final reports following the wind-up of the ACRE board and ASI; (i) Allow for recommendation by ARENA board members of the ARENA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and appointment of the ARENA CEO prior to ARENA commencement.
Issues	<p>This initiative was agreed by the Multi Party Climate Change Committee (MPCCC), and the legislation has been drafted consistent with the MPCCC Agreement.</p>
Financial Impact	<p>Neutral - the Australian Government has already re-allocated funding from existing programs in anticipation of programs transferring to ARENA, and the funding was settled as part of the Clean Energy Future package.</p>
Timing	<p>Introduction of the Bill in the 2011 spring sitting period will allow the Bill to be considered by Parliament alongside the other legislative Bills being considered in that sitting period that are part of the agreement between the members of the Multi Party Climate Change Committee.</p>
Caucus Committee	<p>Economic, Productivity, Innovation and Industry.</p>
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