

## South Australia wind and solar served stunning 73% of demand in September

Giles Parkinson

Renew Economy

2 October 2020

The renewable energy records continue to fall, which in Australia must mean that Spring is in the air, because that is the season of usually good wind conditions, strong solar, and relatively low demand due to the mild temperatures. The share of renewables in Australia's main grid is breaking new records, including an instantaneous 52.5 per cent share reached on Friday, but the more striking achievement came in South Australia, where wind and solar combined to meet 73.3 per cent of local demand in the month of September.

As we reported on Thursday, [when noting the record 30 per cent share of renewables in the main grid for the month of September](#), South Australia's wind and solar reached 66 per cent of local generation.

But Dylan McConnell, an energy analyst from the Climate and Energy College in Melbourne, points out that South Australia is a net exporter (to Victoria) and the share of wind and solar in South Australia compared to local demand was 73.3 per cent.

Three quarters of the output came from wind farms, with the rest supplied by rooftop solar and the state's first three large scale solar farms. The share may have been more without various constraints and the decision by some wind and solar farms to switch off to avoid the numerous negative pricing events. The average wholesale price in South Australia over the month was around \$14/MWh.

The state's Liberal government has a target of "net 100 per cent renewables" to be reached before 2030, and the Australian Energy Market Operator believes this could happen as early as 2025.

That may depend on whether the proposed new link to NSW, Project EnergyConnect, goes ahead. But there are a huge number of big projects already committed, or in the pipeline, including the first 100MW stage of the Goyder South project, which could grow to a massive renewables hub of 1,200MW of wind, 600MW of solar, and 900MW/1800MWh of battery storage.

As well, the country's biggest hybrid wind and solar park (330MW) is being built near Port Augusta by DP Energy and Iberdrola, while Nexif is looking to add the second stage of the Lincoln Gap wind farm, and Sanjeev Gupta is about to start construction of a 260MW solar farm.

And there are many others in the pipeline.

## Wind and solar supply more than 50 % of Australia's main grid for first time

Giles Parkinson

Renew Economy

3 October 2020

The share of renewable energy broke new records for the third consecutive day on Saturday, with wind and solar providing more than 50 per cent of the demand on Australia's main grid for the first time, and for extended periods. The strong wind and fine solar conditions across much of the eastern states – along with relatively low demand due to mild weather and the start of the holiday weekend in some states – has contributed to the record breaking streak. On Saturday, in the late morning, the share of renewables reached 54.5 per cent, nearly two percent above the record set a day earlier. What was even more striking was the share of wind and solar, which broke above 50 per cent for the first time on Friday, and then did so more emphatically on Saturday, breaking through 50 per cent around 9.15am and staying above 50 per cent until around 1.30pm.

The wind and solar output got to a high of about 52.3 per cent, with slightly more than half of this coming from rooftop solar. The percentage of wind and solar might have been higher, but some wind and solar farms switched off to avoid the negative pricing events which were recorded in most states at some point in the day.

Pumped hydro facilities and big batteries were also busy pumping and charging during the period.

The federal government attacked Labor's 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030, describing it as reckless and economy destroying, even though it now concedes that is where the grid is heading, even without a coherent energy policy.

Some analysts say the share will go well beyond that by 2030. South Australia's Liberal government has a target of net 100 per cent renewables by 2030, and reached 73 per cent renewables in the month of September.

Labor has since abandoned its state emissions reduction target and renewable energy targets for fear that the Coalition and conservative commentators will say something nasty about them.

*(Note: This story is updated to reflect fact that wind and solar reached 50% of demand on Friday, although only for a short period).*