



The Advocate

JUNE 19 2019 - 3:00PM

More renewables bolster case for Marinus Link, Tasmanian Energy Development Conference hears



Lachlan Bennett

Local News

DELEGATES: Hydro Tasmania chief executive Steve Davy, Minister for Energy Guy Barnett, Project Marinus general manager Bess Clark spoke at the Tasmanian Energy Development Conference in Devonport on Wednesday. Picture: Phillip Biggs
A higher than expected increase in renewable energy capacity requires the second Bass Strait interconnector to be built as soon as possible, the Tasmanian Energy Development Conference has heard.

Clean Energy Regulator executive general manager Mark Williamson said 5000 megawatts of wind and solar energy would be added to the national electricity market this year and "at least that level in 2020 and 2021"

"Looking forward, the most likely scenario is you get that 29,000 megawatts to come in some time between 2023 and 2024," he told *The Advocate*.

"That's a lot of renewables that need firming up so I think that kind of supports the need for the Marinus Link (interconnector) to come on as quickly as possible."

RELATED:

- **Tasmanian renewable energy jobs surge**
- **Government commits \$30m for Battery of the Nation strategy**
- **OPINION: Helping to secure our energy future through battery of the nation**

The Marinus Link could be switched on as early as 2025 under a "best case scenario" timeline that assumes the project can clear a range of regulatory and planning hoops in a timely manner.

The project requires up to \$3.2 billion to construct infrastructure capable of transporting 1200 megawatts between Tasmania and Victoria.

Marinus Link project manager Bess Clark said the interconnector would have a 40-year lifespan and could be constructed in two 600 megawatt phases.

"... It will probably take in order of four years to build the link," she said.

"So our board looked at the fact that this link is really a matter of when it's needed, not if it's needed (and) that it was prudent that we continue to progress this link and to get on with the environmental approvals so that we can build it."



The federal government has already kicked in \$56 million to fast-track the development of the Marinus Link, with a business case slated for release at the end of the year.

Tasmanian Minister for Energy Guy Barnett said the federal government has made it "very clear" the Marinus Link was nation infrastructure and "Tasmania should not pay more than its fair share".

Mr Barnett said Marinus and other renewable energy developments would usher in a wave of economic opportunities reminiscent of a new era of hydro-industrialisation.

"We are now pioneers for our next generation....," he said.

"These are long-term projects that will deliver ongoing development growth and job opportunities, particularly in rural and regional Tasmania and particularly for the North-West Coast."

The Marinus Link will stretch from the Burnie area to the Latrobe Valley in Victoria, with the final route to be revealed in mid 2019.

The project and the Battery of the Nation project were extensively discussed at the Tasmanian Energy Development Conference in Devonport on Wednesday.