

# Key role for Senergy in Australia's first community wind farm

Senergy played a key role in the development of Australia's first community wind farm.

Hepburn Wind Farm, near Daylesford in the state of Victoria is the first community wind farm in Australia and will consist of two wind turbines connected to the 66kV network of electricity distributor Powercor. The output of the wind farm will be sufficient to supply around 2,300 homes with renewable energy.

Under the community wind farm model, shares in the project are sold to local community members, a model that is widely used in Northern Europe. A "not for profit" organisation called Embark has been set up to assist other community groups around Australia with replicating the Hepburn model, and it is hoped that this will be the first of many in Australia.

Senergy assisted Hepburn Wind with due diligence on electrical design and negotiation of the connection agreement with Powercor, in an integrated team effort involving colleagues from offices in Newcastle and Melbourne.

Distribution-connected wind farms can have highly challenging voltage management issues both in the vicinity of the wind farm and at locations many kilometres back toward the main grid. In order to minimise cost and maximise the amount of renewable energy that can be accepted by the grid, extensive, detailed design is required. This entails careful development of reactive power controls at the point of connection, and often wide area voltage control schemes such as Senergy's Gen AVC and Gen Plus products.

Andrew Jones, Business Development Manager in Senergy's Melbourne office said: "As well as assisting developers such as Hepburn Wind, Senergy is also taking the lead in a range of embedded renewable generation projects.

"We are heavily involved in a number of strategic studies and research programmes that will pave the way for future alternative energy initiatives in Australia such as distributed generation and electric vehicles."



Hepburn Wind Farm opening ceremony (image courtesy of Embark)