



# MEDIA RELEASE

## MARTIN FERGUSON

Minister for Resources and Energy  
Minister for Tourism

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6 August, 2009

09/131

### **AUSTRALIAN SOLAR INSTITUTE BOARD APPOINTED**

The Minister for Resources and Energy, Martin Ferguson AM MP, today announced the appointment of Ms Jennifer Goddard, Professor Michael Cardew-Hall, Mr Jason Coombs, Dr Michael Sargent AM and Mr Peter Thomas to the board of the new Australian Solar Institute (ASI). Ms Goddard will chair the ASI.

The ASI is a \$100 million commitment by the Australian Government to support solar thermal and solar photovoltaic research and development. This commitment will foster greater collaboration between solar researchers in universities, research institutions and industry and help forge strong links with peak overseas solar research organisations.

Minister Ferguson said: “The Australian Government is committed to developing a world-leading solar energy industry in Australia. The ASI is essential to accomplishing this aim and progress is already evident, with projects worth \$5 million each being funded by the ASI at the Australian National University, the University of New South Wales and the CSIRO centre in Newcastle.

“The ASI’s focus on collaboration will help retain solar expertise in Australia and help put us at the forefront of R&D in this field and help develop the next generation of solar researchers. With funding of \$100 million over four years the ASI has the resources it needs to advance solar research and development. The appointment of the board provides the ASI with the management and industry expertise to drive solar research.”

A competitive grants program will distribute the majority of the ASI’s research funding. A call for applications under the program will be made by the ASI Board in coming weeks.

“The ASI is further evidence of the Government's commitment to developing a suite of cost-effective low-emission energy technologies to meet the renewable energy target of 20 per cent by 2020.”

The ASI is part of the \$4.5 billion Clean Energy Initiative (CEI) announced in the 2009 Budget.

“The CEI complements the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme and Renewable Energy Target by supporting the research, development and demonstration of low-emission energy technologies, including solar energy, that will help transform Australia into a low-carbon economy.”

For further information on the ASI visit: [www.ret.gov.au/energy](http://www.ret.gov.au/energy)

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## AUSTRALIAN SOLAR INSTITUTE BOARD APPOINTEES

**Ms Jenny Goddard - Chair.** Ms Goddard is a former Deputy Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) and is an independent director and consultant. She was the chair of the Establishment Committee for the ASI and therefore has a detailed knowledge of the ASI and its aims. Ms Goddard has 23 years' experience as an economic policy adviser to the Australian Government, initially in the Treasury and then in PM&C where she worked until mid-2008. Ms Goddard chaired the COAG Competition and Regulation Working Group for two years, resulting in leaders agreeing to reforms to improve the national energy market and heavy vehicle transport pricing and to reduce the national regulatory burden.

**Mr Peter Thomas** is as an independent Director. Mr Thomas is currently the director of TFG International. He also holds directorships in a number of other organisations. Mr Thomas was employed for over 30 years at KPMG, including as a partner for more than 20 years. His positions at KPMG included partner in charge of office tax practice, chairman of the firm's Australian tax practice and representative on the firm's worldwide tax governing body. Mr Thomas is currently Chairman of the Tax Concessions Committee of Innovation Australia and a board member of Indigenous Business Australia. Mr Thomas brings considerable expertise and experience in financial accounting and the operation of Government grants programs.

**Dr Michael (Mike) Sargent AM** is as an independent director. Dr Sargent is a consultant in information technology, energy, environment and utilities issues. Dr Sargent is a director of five organisations including the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO), National ICT Australia and eCommerce Standards Pty Ltd and is Deputy Chairman of Epicorp Ltd. Dr Sargent has 45 years' experience in the utility industry in Australia, United States and Canada in a number of engineering and management roles, including chief executive officer of Transfield Energy Group and CEO of Australian Capital Territory Electricity and Water (ACTEW) Corporation.

**Mr Jason Coombs CA** is the Director of Strategy for the UNSW. He has experience in finance and business management in both the private and public sector, holding positions with Energy Australia, Sydney Ports Corporation, Pacific National, GlaxoSmithKline Plc, Railtrack Plc CBC & Associates and the NHS Executive within the past 10 years. Mr Coombs has experience in technology commercialisation and strategic business planning.

**Professor Michael (Mick) Cardew-Hall** is currently director, Development and Innovation at the Australian National University. Professor Cardew-Hall has over 25 years' experience as a chartered engineer, manager, academic and entrepreneur in the engineering, manufacturing and information technology fields. He has held technical and managerial positions with leading UK companies such as GEC and Rolls-Royce Plc. Within Australia he has held a number of academic positions including professor and head of engineering, deputy dean and acting dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science at the ANU.