



Forrest pursues green dream

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Body

Fortescue will open Australia's largest electrolyser manufacturing facility in Gladstone on Monday as part of plans by the Andrew Forrest-backed mining giant to become a major force in hydrogen and renewable energy.

The 15,000sq m advanced manufacturing facility in Queensland, constructed and fully commissioned in two years, will have capacity to produce over 2GW of Proton Exchange Membrane (PEM) electrolyser stacks annually.

The launch has paved the way for the Queensland government to sign off on the next phase of the facility - a 50MW green hydrogen production facility called PEM50.

Fortescue Energy chief executive Mark Hutchinson said the facility had positioned **Fortescue** as a large-scale producer of what would be an increasingly sought-after commodity in the global shift to green energy.

"We're strategically focused on building out our energy business," he said. "Not only are we developing a pipeline of green energy projects, we're also now designing and manufacturing the specialised equipment and technology that will underpin our green hydrogen projects and that of others." Mr Hutchinson said the facility would produce electrolysers designed in-house by **Fortescue**, establishing the company as an original equipment manufacturer.

"The process of splitting hydrogen and oxygen isn't new, but the innovative ways the world is looking to use green hydrogen to decarbonise are, and that means demand for green hydrogen and for the electrolysers to produce it is growing rapidly," Mr Hutchinson said.

The Queensland government supported the site's development, providing an electrical substation, road network, communications and a local scheme water connection, as well as the allocation of land.

The federal government tipped \$44m in under the collaboration stream of the Modern Manufacturing Initiative.

Fortescue executive chairman Andrew Forrest will be in Gladstone to launch the site with representatives from Queensland government including Premier Steven Miles, and federal Industry and Science Minister Ed Husic.

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"Together we have laid the cornerstone for what will be a massive new manufacturing industry in Australia creating the potential for thousands of new green energy jobs," Dr Forrest said.

More than 100 jobs were created during the construction process. The facility on the outskirts of Gladstone will ultimately underpin more than 300 direct and indirect jobs.

Electrolysers pass an electrical current through water, splitting it into hydrogen and oxygen.

The electrolyser facility is the first stage of a wider Green Energy Manufacturing Centre being developed by **Fortescue** on the 100ha Gladstone site. The next phases will include a hydrogen system testing facility and **Fortescue**'s PEM50 green hydrogen project.

PEM50 will receive development approval from Queensland's Coordinator-General on Monday, paving the way for construction to begin.

It will use the locally made Proton Exchange Membrane (PEM) electrolyzers with approval to produce green hydrogen for local and export markets. Once operational it will be **Fortescue**'s first commercial-scale green hydrogen facility.

"Queensland is now leading the nation on investment in renewable energy, and we are now seeing that translate into good manufacturing jobs in our regions," Mr Miles said.

"This is why one of my first announcements as Premier was to commit to 75 per cent emissions reduction by 2035 on the path to net zero because it means accelerating investment in good clean economy jobs in our industrial heartlands." Mr Husic said: "This hydrogen gigafactory shows what can be achieved when government and industry work together."

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