

## Geoff Stapleton receives Order of Australia Award



Mr Stapleton's list of achievements and groups he has been associated with is long and impressive. He has worked in Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Some of his roles include:

- Director, International Training Global Sustainable Energy Solutions
- Executive Officer, Sustainable Energy Industry Association of the Pacific Islands since 2022
- Member and Chair, Standards, Training and Accreditation Committee, 2000-2012.
- Initiator and Conference Chair, Solar World Congresses 50, 2020.
- Initiator and Project Lead, ISES Online Solar Energy Museum.
- Initiator and Project Lead, The Century of Solar - Stories and Visions of Renewable Energy Booklet.
- Member, New South Wales Government, Sustainable Energy Development Authority Advisory Board, 1996-1999.
- Chair, Solar Energy Industry Association of Australia, NSW Chapter, 1992-2002.

Mr Stapleton has lived in Lake Tabourie since 1989 and said it was a lot better than living in a crowded city.

The SEIAPI Executive Committee is proud of Geoff's award and would like to thank him for his contribution to the solar industry as a whole and in particular the Pacific solar industry.

Geoff is very passionate about setting up solar training in the Pacific and lest we forget, he likes skiing.



**SAVE ENERGY!  
HARNESS RE  
TECHNOLOGIES!  
GO SOLAR!**



# June 2025 Newsletter

## SEI-API-MDF Collaboration

The Market Development Facility (MDF; <https://marketdevelopmentfacility.org/>) is supporting SEI-API to implement projects aimed at unlocking finance for solar PV through development and adoption of relevant standards. Through this SEI-API-MDF collaboration, the following key activities will be supported:

- Engagement of a technical projects officer to lead strategic projects
- Developing a strategic plan to deliver on priorities and diversify funding sources
- Educational materials, guidance and training for financiers, guidelines and webinar.

It is a 50/50 partnership where MDF will provide a contribution of AUD89,900 for the above activities and SEI-API will provide equivalent support through in-kind technical support in the facilitation of guideline updates, a manual for financiers, strategic plan development and delivery of technical webinars.

MDF will support SEI-API to hire a technical projects officer for a period of 12 months. This will allow SEI-API to engage with its members and other stakeholders, coordinate and deliver on key strategic projects, and identify future funding opportunities.

Furthermore, MDF will support SEI-API to develop and implement our strategic plan. This will include engagement with members and other stakeholders to determine strategic priorities, and identification of future funding sources. The strategic planning will consider how to sustainably provide services which enhance the quality of solar installations and products in the Pacific region, including ongoing support for financiers, training and certifications for solar installers and regulatory and policy advocacy. In addition, MDF will support the SEI-API to develop educational materials and guidance that simplify technical jargon, financing pathways, system components and installation practices in simple terms for both financiers and their customers. MDF will organise and deliver training and webinars associated with these documents.

SEI-API will proactively disseminate materials to solar businesses, development partners, financiers and customers to influence investment decisions, improve practice and build confidence in the energy market. SEI-API has advertised the Technical Projects Officer position and will be recruiting a suitable candidate shortly. More developments on this collaboration will follow in the coming months

## Solar partnership energising Solomon Islands' remote community hub

The solar "hub" at Takataka Cultural Centre in Solomon Islands' Malaita province has been installed and energised, a major milestone for the Off-Grid Renewable Energy Partnership between Superfly Limited, Mai-Ma'asina Green Belt (MMGB), Save the Children Solomon Islands and the Australian Government. Serving a community of more than 4,000, the Cultural Centre is well on its way to becoming a major solar-powered "hub" for the region, with affordable solar kits as "spokes" for local businesses and households to improve energy access across remote areas of East Are'are. The solar system will power the cultural centre, freezers for cold storage and a charging station for an electric boat. It's also laying the groundwork for a scalable, community-driven solution to energy challenges in other remote communities across the Solomon Islands.

The Off-Grid Renewable Energy Partnerships are part of a Pacific Climate Infrastructure Financing Partnership initiative to expand the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP)'s climate investments. REnew Pacific is AIFFP's AUD75 million program to power off-grid communities across the Pacific and Timor Leste, like this one, with renewable energy. (Edited from: <https://www.aiffp.gov.au/>)



**Takataka Cultural Centre in Solomon Islands' Malaita province**  
Source: <https://www.aiffp.gov.au/>

# June 2025 Newsletter

## Australia provides additional S\$ 38 million for Tina River Hydropower Project



The Australian Minister for Pacific Island Affairs, Hon Pat Conroy MP, has announced that Australia will provide an extra SBD38 million to the Tina River Hydropower Development Project and re-affirmed Australia's support for this flagship renewable energy project in the Solomon Islands. Tina River Hydro is Australia's largest climate investment in the Pacific, with approximately SBD 402 million (about AUD 74 million) invested.

This includes financing from the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP) of a 22km transmission line connecting the hydropower site to Honiara's electricity grid. Together the Solomon Island-Australia partnership is taking meaningful action on climate change, and powering Honiara for the future. The project is co-financed by: Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, Asian Development Bank, Government of Australia, Green Climate Fund, Korea EX-IM Economic Development Cooperation Fund and World Bank. (Article credit: Australian High Commission, Solomon Island's post).



**1MWp grid-connected solar farm in Taveuni, Fiji**  
Source: Clay Energy

(Article source: The Fiji Times)

ENERGY Fiji Limited (EFL) is looking to spend \$2billion in its capital expenditure on projects it will undertake in the next four to five years.

EFL chief executive officer Fatiaki Gibson revealed this while presenting on Energy Security and Resilience in Fiji at the 20th Asia Clean Energy Forum that was held in Manila, Philippines in June, 2025.

Mr Gibson presented the company's investment plans required to keep lights on and meet renewable energy targets until 2029.

He said solar generation would see an investment of \$200million with co-investment in grid scale solar farms.

The others include: - Transmission assets - \$731m to strengthen and expand the grid; - Control centre upgrades - \$39m to improve operability of the grid with new generation mix; - Hydro generation: \$363m for new lower Ba River project; and \$290m for new upper Wailoa River project; and - Thermal generation: \$251m for new power stations at Vuda, Kinoya and Labasa; and \$62m for upgrades to existing plants.

He said EFL would continue to focus on thermal generation in its transition to renewable energy to ensure the lights remain switched on.

He also outlined the EFL's 10-year target up to 2035 with the focus on its transition plan to achieve its 90 per cent renewable energy target.

For full article, visit:  
[https://edition.fijitimes.com.fj/infinity/article\\_popover\\_share.aspx?guid=5f8f30f4-ba04-4a8e-8b08-c19a95332909&share=true](https://edition.fijitimes.com.fj/infinity/article_popover_share.aspx?guid=5f8f30f4-ba04-4a8e-8b08-c19a95332909&share=true)



### International Conference

6th International Conference on Solar Technologies and Hybrid Mini-Grids to improve energy access

SAVE THE DATE

8-10 April, Mallorca, Spain

[www.energy-access-conferences.com](http://www.energy-access-conferences.com)

### Regional Conference

32nd PPA Annual Conference and Trade Exhibition – Koror, Palau

Koror, Palau from 22 September – 25 September 2025

Please visit: [www.ppa.org](http://www.ppa.org)

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## FSM to benefit from World Bank supported ARISE project

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is expected to benefit from better, more reliable electricity under a project to be implemented by the Government of FSM with financing and technical support from the World Bank.

The 'Access and Renewable Increase for Sustainable Energy' (ARISE) Project with a budget of US\$42 million will increase access to electricity for over 3,500 people in remote islands, while improving the reliability of existing power supply and supporting the increase in renewable energy across FSM's four states: Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap.

FSM currently has among the lowest electricity access rates in the Pacific, particularly in Chuuk State, where two-thirds of households lack power. ARISE will directly address this, funding the construction of solar-powered mini grids and stand-alone solar home systems across four unelectrified islands in Chuuk state – Moch, Onoun, Tol-Wonip, and Uman – providing clean energy to households, schools, health clinics, and community facilities. In the main island, aging infrastructure and vulnerability to typhoons and storms mean that even those with electricity face frequent outages. ARISE is also expected to strengthen grid resilience in Pohnpei, Yap and Kosrae, replacing vulnerable infrastructure and upgrading systems to reduce outages. In Yap, the project will install underground feeders to improve power to critical services like hospitals, the airport and government buildings so they can provide power even after severe weather.

ARISE is expected to be implemented over six years by the FSM Department of Resources and Development, with support from state utilities and development partners. For more information, visit [www.worldbank.org/en/news](http://www.worldbank.org/en/news) (PRESS RELEASE NO: 2025/069/EAP)

## Standards Corner

In the recent months, SEIAPI has been conducting webinars related to the current Australia and New Zealand Standards and this will also be done on the USA National Electrical Code. To support these webinars, the newsletter will include this standards corner highlighting an installation issue identified during a site visit in the Pacific that does not comply with relevant standards, SEIAPI guidelines or international best practices.



The above installation has a battery system with terminals not covered. There are other chemicals located near-by that could be dangerous in the case of a battery fire. There is no dedicated ventilation because though the batteries are sealed, they can still provide explosive gasses if overcharged. This system does not comply with the following standard requirements:

- AS/NZS 5139:2019 Clause 6.2.5.2.2 (b) Shall have all live parts of batteries or battery modules insulated or shrouded
- AS/NZS 5139:2019 Clause 6.2.2.1 The battery system's location is selected such that there is protection from mechanical damage, environmental conditions and external influences.

Below is a system that does comply with the requirements having terminals properly shrouded/insulated. In the photos on the right and left, there is slight glimpse of vents on the sides of the enclosure for ventilation purposes.



Next Standards Webinar: 12 Noon Fiji Time  
Thursday 3rd July & 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2025  
Topic: AS/NZS 5139 Electrical installations -  
Safety of battery systems for use with power  
conversion equipment.

This will be the first of at least 3 webinars to cover  
AS/NZS 5139

For more updates, please visit  
<http://www.seiapi.com> or email on  
[info@seiapi.com](mailto:info@seiapi.com)/[secretariat@seiapi.com](mailto:secretariat@seiapi.com) for any  
queries and comments.

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