

Media Release

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WA innovation supported by *Climate Ready* grant

Bibra Lake businessman, Masoud Abshar, is thrilled with Senator Kim Carr's announcement this week that more than \$450,000 in grant funding had been awarded to his company Magellan Powertronics in the latest round of the federal government's *Climate Ready* program.

The grant was awarded to assist in the development of a Solar-Hybrid Power Line Conditioning Unit (PCU) which is being developed to improve power reliability for rural areas being serviced by Single Wire Earth Return (SWER) technology.

With almost 200,000 kilometres of SWER line servicing nearly 100,000 rural customers, Australia has one of the largest SWER networks in the world. However, SWER technology is not without its limitations, with customers connected to the network frequently experiencing poor voltage and unreliable power quality.

"The PCU will take surplus energy gathered from a solar array, store it in batteries and then feed it back to the network during heavy load periods" said Abshar. "It will really improve power quality for rural customers."

But the technology will not only result in improved outcomes for customers connected to the network.

"Increasing the performance and quality of the existing network means less major capital investment will be required to upgrade the lines" said Abshar. "On top of that, the harvesting of solar technology to capture energy means less usage of gas or coal power during peak periods, making this technology doubly attractive to utilities managing marginal SWER lines."

Abshar is delighted that the efforts of his research team have been acknowledged by the scheme. "It's really pleasing to see WA minds finding innovative solutions to such important problems."

Abshar hopes to have the Solar-Hybrid PCU ready for early commercialisation by mid-2010.

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