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FROM THE CHAIR

On 1 July this year, ARENA celebrated its 10th anniversary.

Established in 2012 to bring together the best of government, business and Australian innovation, ARENA has been instrumental in building the foundations of the renewable energy industry in Australia. We now embark on our second decade and head towards 2030 with increased ambition.

The Australian Government has committed to achieving net zero by 2050 and emissions reduction of 43 per cent by 2030, creating an important signal of intent for others in government, industry and for all Australians. To meet this commitment, Australia must accelerate progress on decarbonisation across multiple sectors including electricity and

power, transport, industry, mining

and agriculture.

Australia, along with the rest of the world, is facing significant economic and social challenges that create risks for the success of the energy **transition.** Compared to even a year ago, we are now experiencing rising inflation and interest rates, a tightening labour market, constrained global supply chains and an uncertain recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In the energy and emissions reduction space in particular, commodity prices have spiked as a result of the war in Ukraine. The IPCC Sixth Assessment Reports show that the world is already experiencing the negative effects of climate change and that not enough is being done to limit warming to the levels agreed in the Paris commitment. This is driving increased ambition and demand into a supplyconstrained global environment.

Australian innovation can play an important role in the national and global energy transition. Australia has proven itself to be a significant innovation hub. The rapid cost

reduction in solar power is a great Australian success story, achieved through the work of the Australian Centre for Advanced Photovoltaics (ACAP) and others. We continue to see bold ideas driven by deep technical innovation in homegrown start-ups like SunDrive, which recently reclaimed the world record for solar cell efficiency and MGA Thermal, which is using innovative phase change material to significantly reduce the cost of energy storage. There are exciting Australian innovators across a diverse range of technologies including the next wave of renewable energy generation, hydrogen, energy storage, grid scale batteries and virtual power plants.

ARENA's vision is to support the global transition to net zero emissions by accelerating the pace of pre-commercial innovation, to the benefit of all Australians. We do this by providing financial assistance and sharing knowledge to help accelerate progress. In the 10 years since our creation in 2012, ARENA has invested over \$1.86 billion in 628 projects with a total project value of \$8.05 billion, meaning that for every dollar of Commonwealth funding third-parties have invested \$3.32.

The next 10 years will be critical for Australia's clean energy transition. ARENA stands ready and able to help. Our vision, and the capability, knowledge and networks we have built since 2012, position us uniquely to drive pre-commercial renewable energy innovation and accelerate progress towards net zero.

Yours sincerely

Justin Punch Chair

Statement of preparation

I, as Chair of the Board of the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (the accountable authority) present our four-year Corporate Plan as required under paragraph 35(1)(a) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013.

Justin Punch

Chair, August 2022

Period of coverage

The Corporate Plan is prepared for the reporting period 2022-23 to 2025-26.

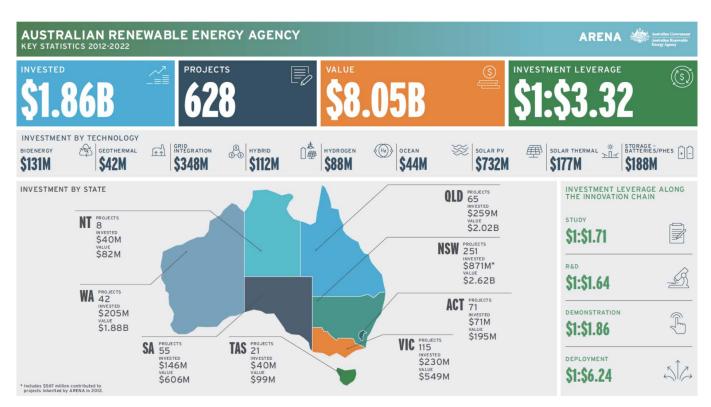
OUR VISION AND PURPOSE

ABOUT ARENA

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) was established under the *Australian Renewable Energy Act 2011* (Cth) (ARENA Act), which commenced on 1 July 2012.

The impact of our work is significant. Since 2012, we have been instrumental in building the foundations of the renewable energy ecosystem in Australia. ARENA has invested over \$1.86 billion in 628 renewable energy projects to date, with a total project value of \$8.05 billion, meaning that for every dollar of Commonwealth funding third-parties have invested \$3.32.

FIGURE 1 ARENA AT A GLANCE - FUNDING COMMITMENTS TO PROJECTS 2012-2022



¹The \$1.86 billion includes \$567 million contributed to projects inherited by ARENA in 2012.

ARENA's vision is to support the global transition to net zero emissions by accelerating the pace of pre-commercial innovation, to the benefit of Australian consumers, businesses and workers.



To achieve this vision, our work is focused on delivering ARENA's purpose: to support improvements in the competitiveness and supply of renewable energy and other low emissions technologies by providing financial assistance and sharing knowledge, to accelerate innovation that benefits all Australians.²³

The Corporate Plan outlines our key activities and approach to delivering on our purpose for the next four years. You can also read about ARENA's:

- principal objectives and priorities for the provision of financial assistance in our **General Funding Strategy**
- investment priorities and how to apply for funding in our Investment Plan
- achievements and outcomes to date in our latest Annual Report.

To stay up to date on ARENA, visit **arena.gov.au**.

²This purpose aligns with the outcome statement for ARENA in the 2022-23 Portfolio Budget Statements of the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (tabled 29 March 2022). As of 1 July 2022, ARENA's portfolio Department is the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

³ARENA provides support for low emissions technologies to the extent that our enabling Act and any Regulations permit.

OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

ARENA's strategic priorities are guided by our vision and purpose, as informed by the main objects of the ARENA Act, which are to:

- improve the competitiveness of renewable energy technologies
- > increase the supply of renewable energy in Australia.

We operate within complex markets and sectors that are shaped by a number of key trends. Our strategic plan, and in turn our approach to delivery, are influenced by:

The global energy transition

The global energy transition continues to accelerate. Global demand for renewable energy and other low emissions technologies is expected to grow significantly over the coming decades to enable countries to meet their long-term emissions reduction ambitions. Australia is well positioned to play an important role in this transition, given our abundance of natural resources, land availability, research and development abilities, proven export capabilities and infrastructure, and strong trading relationships.

Australia's own transition is underway, with governments, industry and consumers increasingly recognising the value of renewable energy technologies. In September 2020 the Australian Government extended ARENA's funding, committing baseline funding of \$1.43 billion over the ten years to 2032. Through its role in improving the competitiveness and increasing the supply of renewable energy in Australia, ARENA works to support the Government's climate change and energy objectives, anchored by the Government's goals of net zero by 2050 and emissions reductions of 43 per cent by 2030. The Government's Powering Australia plan aims to significantly increase the share of renewables in the National Electricity Market by 2030. It also

outlines a range of programs which ARENA can support, either through contributing our lessons and knowledge, or as an implementing agency.

ARENA's activities are also influenced by the emissions reduction targets and policies set by State and Territory and Local Governments, as well as other government agencies and regulators.

Technology and innovation in renewable energy and related technologies

Technology research, development, demonstration and deployment will be critical in the next phase of the energy transition. Australia's electricity system is rapidly evolving. Solar and wind are now the cheapest sources of new bulk electricity supply, and Australian consumers and businesses are installing distributed energy technologies in record numbers. Over 3 million⁴ households have installed rooftop solar to reduce their electricity costs and emissions.

Australian industry continues to pioneer new technologies, with significant large-scale projects planned or underway. A lower-cost, renewable energy dominated electricity grid also enables emissions reduction through higher electrification of other sectors such as transport, buildings and industry. As the adoption of renewables increases, challenges include ensuring grid stability and reliability, and shaping demand to better match variable generation. There are also further gains to be made in driving down the cost of generation, which would put downward pressure on electricity prices and unlock further emissions reduction opportunities in heavy industry and renewable energy exports.

On the demand-side, fuel switching in industry and transport has lagged supply-side progress in shifting to renewables, with these sectors accounting for approximately 80 per cent of final energy use in Australia. While a portion of fossil fuel-based emissions from these sectors could be abated through electrification, a sizable portion will require alternative clean fuels to decarbonise. A key challenge is the need for high-temperature heat, with the required technologies still some way from commercialisation.

Clean hydrogen is emerging as a decarbonisation solution for energy uses that are not well suited to electrification. We are at the start of what will be a multi-year journey to clean hydrogen becoming commercially viable. While there are deployments of hydrogen produced from renewable energy in Australia, support is needed to realise the vision outlined in the National Hydrogen Strategy announced in November 2019.

Energy security and supply chain challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a significant impact in Australia and across the world. Supply chain disruptions and equipment and labour shortages will likely continue to impact many ARENA-funded projects. Energy security, and the role of renewable energy, is also becoming a more significant focus internationally due to various geopolitical factors, including the war in Ukraine and its impacts on global energy imports and exports.

⁴Accurate as at 31 January 2022, see energy.gov.au.

OUR CORPORATE PLAN

OUR VISION

To support the global transition to net zero emissions by accelerating the pace of pre-commercial innovation, to the benefit of Australian consumers, businesses and workers

OUR KEY ACTIVITIES

Provide financial assistance for projects that align with our strategic priorities



Optimise the transition to renewable electricity

- Enable ultra lowcost generation
- Improve the economics of energy storage
- Optimise largescale integration
- Support flexible demand



Commercialise clean hydrogen

 Support a viable clean hydrogen industry across the full value chain



Support the transition to low emissions metals

- Accelerate the transition to a low emissions steel value chain
- Accelerate the transition to a low emissions aluminium value chain



Decarbonise land transport

 Accelerate the decarbonisation of urban and long-distance land transport

Maximise the value of ongoing projects through effective project delivery, knowledge sharing and by supporting collaboration

DELIVERING ON OUR PURPOSE

Deliver on our purpose through our capabilities and cooperation, performance and risk management

NOTE:

This reflects ARENA's strategic priorities as set by the Board in April 2022 (see next page for more details). ARENA may also administer targeted programs funded by the Australian Government.

OUR KEY ACTIVITIES

PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO AUSTRALIAN RESEARCHERS, INNOVATORS AND BUSINESSES FOR PROJECTS THAT ALIGN WITH OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

We support the commercialisation of renewable energy and other low emissions technologies by investing in innovation. We provide support along the innovation chain, balancing investment in emerging commercial technologies with early-stage research, development and demonstrations to address long-term needs.

ARENA's strategic priorities⁵ are to:



Optimise the transition to renewable electricity



Commercialise clean hydrogen



Support the transition to low emissions metals



Decarbonise land transport

These priorities reflect an overarching vision to reduce emissions by lowering the cost and increasing the availability of low emissions technologies including renewable energy, to grow the share of renewables in the electricity mix, support fuel-switching and electrification where possible, become more flexible in when we use electricity, and support the development of technology solutions for hard-to-abate sectors where a pathway to lower emissions is expensive or currently not feasible.

ARENA's baseline funding is provided through a number of programs:

- > The Advancing Renewables Program (ARP) funds renewable energy projects at various stages of development and is continuously open for applications.
- Research support is available periodically through specific research and development programs and strategic research initiatives.

In addition to committing baseline funding to eligible projects, ARENA will use its expertise in grant funding to administer targeted programs funded by the Australian Government.

More details on how we plan to drive impact through our funding can be found in our Investment Plan. See arena.gov.au/about/publications/funding-investment-plan.

Priorities for the provision of financial assistance as set by the ARENA Board in April 2022. See the latest ARENA General Funding Strategy for more information.



MAXIMISE THE VALUE OF ONGOING PROJECTS THROUGH EFFECTIVE PROJECT DELIVERY, KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND BY SUPPORTING COLLABORATION

We share what we learn so that the Government, industry and the public are better informed to navigate the energy transition. All recipients of ARENA funding are obliged to share knowledge throughout the life of their projects. We build on these project lessons by identifying and communicating portfolio-level trends and insights that, in turn, help to accelerate the pace of precommercial innovation in renewable energy and other low emissions technologies in Australia.

ARENA's approach to maximising the value of ongoing projects is already making a positive impact in industry:

- > 87 per cent of funding recipients agree that ARENA's knowledge sharing has helped the clean energy sector to grow and mature.
- 79 per cent of funding recipients agree that ARENA's knowledge sharing has contributed to the adoption of clean energy technologies and helped to improve the performance of these technologies.6

We will continue to provide quality portfolio insights to industry through data analysis, targeted studies and reports. Our access to a range of cutting-edge projects puts ARENA in a unique position to bring valuable insights to industry. For example, our electric vehicle portfolio includes a number of projects examining how smart charging could provide grid benefits and lower costs for consumers. Data from these projects will be analysed to give insights on charging behaviour and the limitations, costs and benefits of various charging technologies. It will also be used to inform the standards, regulations or policies needed to ensure Australia is ready for this growing demand category.

We will continue to bring together industry stakeholders, researchers and policy-makers through targeted events and collaboration networks. Such events and networks allow

Such events and networks allow us to share the outcomes, insights and trends from our projects. They also enable us to work with industry to identify and address barriers to commercially competitive renewable energy and other low emissions technologies, and to contribute to the development of future standards and regulatory frameworks that support the advancement of these technologies in Australia. For example, our hydrogen portfolio includes projects that examine the different use cases for hydrogen, for example, heavy vehicle transport, blending into the existing gas network and ammonia manufacturing. ARENA will bring together industry stakeholders to share learnings from these projects and tease out the barriers and potential solutions.

⁶Results of a May 2022 survey of 101 ARENA funded projects

DELIVERING ON OUR PURPOSE

CAPABILITIES AND COOPERATION

To deliver on our purpose, ARENA identifies the innovation needs of system operators, regulators, consumers and industry, and continuously builds and maintains the right organisational capabilities to address these. Our capabilities include:

Rigorous project assessment and selection

We apply a rigorous approach when assessing projects for funding, based foremost on merit and taking into account risk and the ability of the project to deliver value for money. Our assessment and selection processes aim to ensure that we do not fund projects that would proceed without ARENA support.

Risk-based and portfolio approach to project management

Our team of experienced client managers is focused on managing projects to success. Our people are strongly customer and outcome focused. We work closely with funding recipients to ensure that each project delivers value for money. Our project portfolio is risk rated and managed accordingly. This enables us to balance rigour and efficiency, maximise the chance of success and quickly vary or terminate non-performing projects. Portfolio management of funding agreements also allows us to monitor technology areas to appropriately identify broader risks and issues and to inform new program design.

Increasing impact through knowledge sharing

With extensive networks, established forums and award winning media and social media channels, we share knowledge broadly with the Australian community and industry to help them navigate the energy transition. These activities are made possible by our strong analytical, engagement and communication capabilities.

We will continue to build ARENA's 'Insights' brand, focusing on targeted knowledge sharing to informed industry audiences. We aim to connect and inform industry, researchers, scientists and businesses through reports and newsletters, events, webinars and other online forums.

Our communications mix - involving podcasts, videos, the ARENAWire Blog, website and social media channels - aims to present content in an engaging and accessible way. This allows us to reach a broader public audience and amplify our work.

Continuous improvement

We continuously refine our performance framework and grant management processes. We also undertake evaluations that demonstrate the extent to which our programs are delivering on our purpose.

Recognising the ever-growing importance of high quality data, we have established a specialised data function within the organisation which is responsible for both data management and performance reporting. This will allow us to improve how we measure, report and improve our performance.

Bringing together people and ideas

Bringing together the right innovators, regulators, policy makers, researchers, industry

participants and consumer bodies can drive change in the energy sector.

Collaboration networks such as the Distributed Energy Integration Program (DEIP) create a space for strategic discussion and coordination of complex, multistakeholder challenges related to distributed energy resources. Building on the success of this program will ensure that behind-the-meter devices like rooftop solar, home batteries, electric vehicles and smart appliances benefit all users of the energy system and are integrated efficiently into networks and markets.

Through A-Lab, ARENA's innovation program, we have created cross-sector partnerships and world-first projects that draw on a network of people with the expertise and passion to drive systemic change in the energy sector. Due to the faceto-face nature of A-Lab events, all activities were paused during 2020 and 2021. There is now a strong appetite to re-establish the A-Lab program as COVID-19 restrictions continue to ease. A-Lab can continue to enable breakthrough creative thinking on some of the most exciting and complex challenges facing the energy sector.

ARENA will also continue to bring promising startups and entrepreneurs in renewable energy and other low emissions technologies together with investors as part of the third year of our partnership with Innovation Bay to host the Renewable Energy Founder Forum.

COLLABORATION **ACROSS THE INNOVATION** CHAIN

We will continue to work with the Australian Government and collaborate with other organisations across the innovation chain to share critical knowledge and invest in Australia's net zero future.

ARENA complements the Australian Government's support for innovation and energy sector reform by collaborating with organisations such as the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO), Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC), Australian Energy Regulator (AER), Energy Security Board (ESB) and innovators in industry (see Figure 2).

In particular, we work with the CEFC to administer the Clean Energy Innovation Fund (Innovation Fund). ARENA has two representatives on the investment committee of the Innovation Fund and we provide technical and commercial advice as required. More information on the Innovation Fund is available at

cefc.com.au/innovationfund.

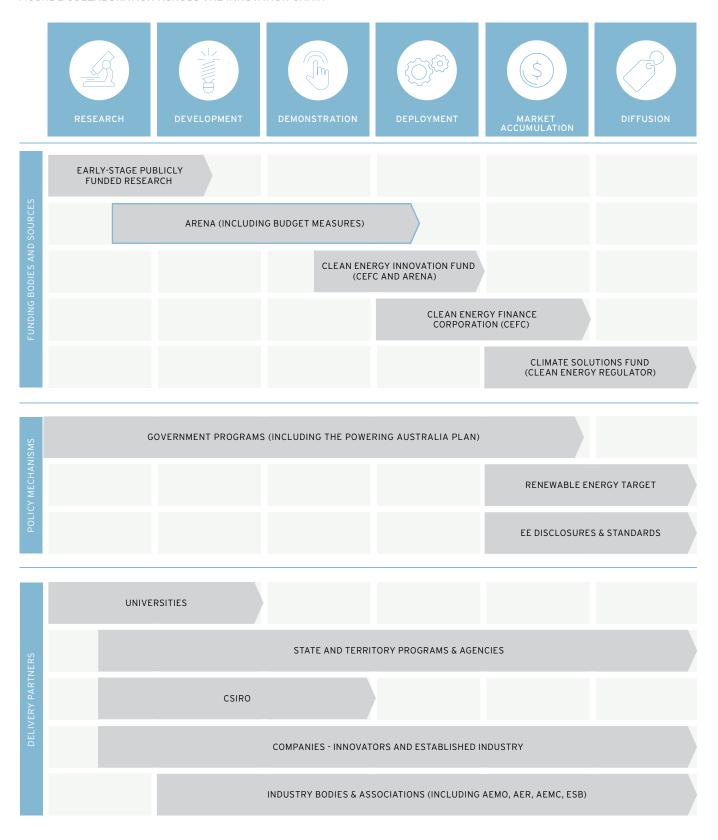
We also liaise and collaborate with other government agencies on initiatives such as the Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund and Climate Solutions Fund.

We stay connected with our portfolio Department⁷ - the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water - as well as all State and Territory governments, and continuously look for opportunities to collaborate, share knowledge and co-invest in innovation.

7In our last reporting period (2021-22 to 2024-25), ARENA's portfolio Department was the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources. As of 1 July 2022, ARENA's portfolio Department is the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.



FIGURE 2 COLLABORATION ACROSS THE INNOVATION CHAIN



PERFORMANCE

ARENA's performance measures and targets outline what we aim to achieve through our key activities to deliver on our purpose. The below outlines the quantitative performance targets set by the ARENA Board. We have worked with other key organisations - including our portfolio Department⁷ - to put in place targets that support a coordinated approach.

FIGURE 3 ARENA'S PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK



TO SUPPORT THE GLOBAL TRANSITION TO NET ZERO EMISSIONS BY ACCELERATING THE PACE OF PRE-COMMERCIAL INNOVATION, TO THE BENEFIT OF AUSTRALIAN CONSUMERS, BUSINESSES AND WORKERS.

PURPOSE	KEY ACTIVITIES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	2022-23 TARGETS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
TO SUPPORT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE COMPETITIVENESS AND SUPPLY OF RENEWABLE ENERGY AND OTHER LOW EMISSIONS TECHNOLOGIES BY PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE, TO ACCELERATE INNOVATION THAT BENEFITS ALL AUSTRALIANS.	PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO AUSTRALIAN RESEARCHERS, INNOVATORS AND BUSINESSES FOR PROJECTS THAT ALIGN WITH OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.	ARENA commits and approves funding that supports renewable energy technologies.	Funds approved in 2022-23: \$326.0 million.	More competitive renewable energy technology choices for Australian consumers and businesses. Increased supply of renewable energy in Australia.
			Funds committed in 2022-23: \$364.9 million.	
		ARENA funding catalyses increased private sector and other third-party investment in renewable energy technologies.8	ARENA funding to private sector funding leverage ratio falls between 1:2 and 1:3 across the portfolio.	
		ARENA-funded projects increase the supply of renewable energy in Australia.	Each year ARENA contractually commits to at least 5 deployment and demonstration projects that increase the supply of renewable energy or renewable energy storage.	
		ARENA-funded projects advance the technological and commercial readiness of renewable energy technologies.8	80 per cent of completed projects achieve advance in TRL or CRI indicators over the life of the project.	
	MAXIMISE THE VALUE OF ONGOING PROJECTS THROUGH EFFECTIVE PROJECT DELIVERY, KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND BY SUPPORTING COLLABORATION.	ARENA produces and shares knowledge to enhance the competitiveness of renewable energy technologies.8	ARENA publishes at least 8 Insights newsletters and delivers at least 4 knowledge sharing events.	
			At least 50 per cent of stakeholders surveyed report that knowledge shared by ARENA has informed part of their decision making processes.	Industry learns more quickly. Government, regulatory bodies and the public are better informed to navigate the energy transition.
			4 per cent increase in visitor traffic (unique page views) to ARENA website.	
		ARENA performs its functions to a high standard, as judged by its stakeholders.	85 per cent of survey respondents ¹⁰ rate ARENA's performance as "good" or better.	

Performance results against the targets set above will be provided in the 'Annual Performance Statement' in the ARENA Annual Report for 2022-23.

RISK OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT

ARENA has embedded risk management into our culture to support well-informed investment decision making and project management. As a taxpayer-funded entity, we seek to maximise the value of the financial assistance that we provide. Value is maximised when our activities strike the optimal balance between risks and opportunities, and when we can effectively and efficiently deploy resources towards achieving our purpose.

Our Risk Management Framework is based on the International Standard for Risk Management (ISO 31000:2018). We have adopted five principles for managing risks, which apply to all risk management decisions made at ARENA. According to those principles, ARENA's risk management activities must be proportionate, aligned, embedded, dynamic and comprehensive.

We embrace innovation through new solutions and ideas that will transform Australia's energy markets. We acknowledge that some of the projects we invest in may not fully achieve their original objectives, which is why knowledge sharing is an important part of ARENA's activities. Technology and commercialisation failures will occur and we accept this as a risk; we do not compromise on our robust project management processes and the due diligence conducted on every project, which helps to mitigate the levels of project risk that may be inherently high.

Risks are identified and assessed through a consistently applied and replicable methodology. This follows a structured approach which encompasses the context, identification, assessment, analysis and treatment of risks. The framework also features effective communication and monitoring of the portfolio risk profile and risk management activities.

Our strategic risk reporting addresses the highest level of risk that would impact us achieving our purpose. In line with risk management practices, these risks are monitored throughout the year by the ARENA Board and its Risk and Audit Committee. ARENA's risk appetite (the total impact of risk an organisation is prepared to accept in the pursuit of its strategic priorities) is reviewed annually. ARENA currently has three identified strategic risks.

1. THAT ARENA DOES NOT MAXIMISE ITS IMPACT

ARENA complements other funding bodies and provides financial assistance to research, development, demonstration and deployment projects. This necessarily requires us to have a positive risk appetite. We do not seek to manage all risks in the Australian energy sector or impose overly burdensome conditions on funding recipients that would stifle creativity, innovation or research.

We take a proportionate approach and acknowledge that some of the projects we invest in may not fully achieve their original outcomes, which is why knowledge sharing outcomes form an important part of what we do. Technology and commercialisation failures will occur and we accept this as a risk; we are nonetheless willing to invest in innovative ideas in the pursuit of emission reductions. We do not compromise on our robust project management processes and the due diligence conducted on every project, which helps to mitigate the levels of project risk that are inherently high.

To maximise the impact of financial assistance provided, our Board and management continually monitor causes that may lead to a reduction in impact and implement controls to mitigate this risk. Possible causes include:

- less favourable market conditions (including supply chain uncertainties)
- projects failing to achieve outcomes
- failure to share knowledge in a timely and efficient manner.

2. THAT ARENA EXPERIENCES A LOSS OF EFFECTIVENESS OR EFFICIENCY

We are a small government entity with a highly specialised workforce that provides funding to a rapidly growing and innovative sector. We continually monitor causes that may lead to a reduction in our effectiveness or efficiency. This involves strategic workforce planning and pursuing organisational improvements to business processes and investment in systems. Possible causes include:

- inability to attract or retain organisational capacity and/or capability leading to shortages or increasing costs
- failure to optimise technology and/or not achieving continuous organisational improvements
- failure to undertake robust program evaluations and incorporate lessons learnt into future program design.

3. THAT ARENA IS NOT ALIGNED WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Value from the financial assistance that we provide to market participants is maximised when there is strong alignment between ARENA and its stakeholders. We consult widely and continually review and adjust our strategy, including our strategic priorities, to maintain close alignment with the needs of the sector. Potential causes of misalignment include:

- > strategies are not adaptive to changes in the market
- > failure to maintain effective communication
- significant change in ARENA's external environment.

eln addition to renewable energy technologies, ARENA may provide support for other low emissions technologies to the extent that our enabling Act and any Regulations permit. The Technology Readiness Level (TRL) index is a global benchmarking tool for tracking progress and supporting development of a specific technology through the early stages of the technology development chain. The Commercial Readiness Index (CRI) is a framework developed by ARENA that extends to when the technology or application is being commercially deployed. For more information on TRL and CRI, visit arena.gov.au. PARENA uses a range of survey sources and methodologies to collect insights from ARENA funding recipients and broader stakeholders. Please see the Annual Performance Statement' in the ARENA Annual Report for 2022-23 for additional information.

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Further information is available at arena.gov.au

Engage with us

ARENAWIRE









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