

3 October 2012

Media Release

## **MINISTER GRYLLS TO OPEN NEW POWER STATION IN MERREDIN**

Perth-based Merredin Energy Pty Ltd is pleased to announce that the Honourable Brendon Grylls MLA, Minister for Regional Development will officially open the new 82MW Merredin Energy Power Station on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2012 in Merredin, Western Australia.

The \$93 million, open cycle power station was completed in August, will operate as a peaking station to support the Perth metropolitan grid at peak periods, such as when Perth is experiencing extremely hot weather or gas supply disruptions.

The power will be sold to the wholesale electricity market, which will pay Merredin Energy for the fully available capacity and the on-call energy generated.

The Station is strategically positioned at mid-point along the 220kV transmission line that links Perth metro to the Goldfields to decrease the amount of lost energy along the line and improve stability, supporting the Collie-Muja generation plants, which are the main source of baseload capacity for the South West Interconnected System (SWIS).

Merredin Energy Director, Shane Jones said the booming Western Australian economy has created a need for improved security of WA's electricity supply.

"The increase in infrastructure and mining projects in WA are adding to the strain put on the already stretched SWIS with excess generation capacity being used-up by the growing number of customers reliant on the power supplied from the system," he said.

"The Merredin Energy Power Station is an essential infrastructure project for the State, which will add vital capacity to the existing SWIS, servicing customers from Perth to the Goldfields, assisting with network stability and reducing line losses."

To ensure reliability of supply, Merredin Energy has built a system that has fast response gas turbines to cater for spikes in demand during the peak periods or sharp falls in generation by intermittent (renewable) generators.

"Having an industrial gas turbine plant with full and precise dispatch control, like the Merredin Energy plant, provides Western Power's System Manager better handling of the transmission line," he said.

Transmission line stability will assist regional development in the Central Wheatbelt by supporting the increasing load put on the system as more large industrial or mining projects are commissioned.

The station comprises two advanced GE frame 6B diesel fuelled gas turbine generators and associated

plant, with a total nominal capacity of 82 MW. The station is connected via a single circuit 132kV overhead transmission line to Western Power's Merredin Terminal north of the power station.

Located adjacent to the Western Power transmission terminal on Robartson Road in Merredin, the station will run on average for around 300 hours per year and have an operating life of approximately 25 years.

Merredin Energy has retained Perth Energy as an established electricity retailing and generation company to manage the development, construction and operation of the plant. Perth Energy has been operating in the South West Interconnected System for more than 10 years and is a respected and successful participant in the wholesale electricity market.

130 people were employed in the construction of the plant, including 30 local workers from Merredin.

Merredin Energy has also contracted a local supplier to provide ultra-low sulphur distillate, required to power the station.

As a result of the plant being established, tens of millions of dollars in capital spending was invested in the region and future renewable capacity projects could now be developed.

ENDS

For more information please contact:

Shane Jones

Director

Merredin Energy

P: 9420 0327

E: [s.jones@perthenergy.com.au](mailto:s.jones@perthenergy.com.au)

Media

Jasmine Green

Clarity Communications

P: 9380 0700

M: 0414712241

E: [jasmine.green@claritycommunications.com.au](mailto:jasmine.green@claritycommunications.com.au)