



Media Release

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PM RUDD MUST ACT TO SAVE CLEAN ENERGY JOBS

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd must step in and unchain the Renewable Energy Target Bill from the disputed Emissions Trading Bill so that the renewable energy industry can have certainty, clean energy company Modern Solar said today.

“Our fledgling industry welcomes the Government’s expansion of the Renewable Energy Target to 20% by 2020, but is concerned by the way the legislation to make this happen is being held up,’ Managing Director Ron Bayley said today.

“Since the early termination of the Solar Homes & Communities Program (SHCP), our industry has been thrown into chaos; no replacement incentive scheme is in place, despite apparent support from all parties for the RET bill.

“Modern Solar has been trading under the belief the new bill will be passed soon; this ensures our current employees keep their jobs.

“But the new Solar Credits scheme is still under a cloud.

“With little choice, clean energy companies are weighing up their options regarding staff levels following the downturn in sales since 10 June.

“If the RET is delayed until next year, it will be devastating for companies like Modern Solar who are holding on in hope.

“In our case, we’ve invested over two years in recruiting, training and nurturing more than 100 dedicated and hard-working people.

“If we are forced to cut costs by letting go a substantial portion of our workforce, the costs and time involved in re-recruiting and re-training down the track – presuming the legislation is passed with adequate incentives -- will be enormous.”

Mr Bayley said installers have a pipeline of work, but the jobs of others are being put at risk.

“At Modern Solar, we have more than 100 people in sales, marketing, logistics, research and administration. Multiply that by all the players in the industry and it’s clear many thousands of jobs must be at stake.”

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Modern Solar is part of The Modern Group - an Australian company employing around 1000 people nationally. Its solar power photovoltaic (PV) systems convert sunlight directly to electricity using solar panels or solar cells mounted on rooftops. The electricity is used to provide power to homes, thus reducing electricity bills, greenhouse gas emissions and consumers’ contributions to climate change.