

Media Release

9 November 2020

Aware Super welcomes State Governments' investment in Australian renewables

Aware Super welcomes the NSW Government's *Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap* released today which highlights the need for additional energy infrastructure and investment in rural and regional communities to find low-emissions alternatives to coal power stations scheduled to close in the State in the medium term.

Aware Super Chief Investment Officer Damian Graham said a key element of the Fund's response to climate change risk and future investment strategy was greater exposure to renewables and new lower-emissions technologies.

He said the Fund was particularly pleased to see a focus on improving the State's electricity grid; something that had been a barrier to investment in renewables in the past.

'We believe climate change is one of the most significant financial risks to our portfolio and our members' long-term financial security,' Mr Graham said. 'As part of our response to this risk, we have recently divested from thermal coal mining and set targets to increase our investment in renewables and new technologies across our portfolio.'

'One of the barriers to this investment in Australia has been significant capacity constraints with the energy grid. Announcements like the NSW Government's *Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap* help to provide long-term investors like Aware Super with more certainty.'

'We believe that sustainable investments will be more successful in the long-term. Investing in renewables and storage capacity not only supports our members to achieve a better retirement outcome, it also supports a growing industry that will drive economic growth in NSW and beyond.'

Mr Graham said while the initiatives outlined in the roadmap were a positive step forward, when considering any future investment though, the Fund would need to further understand the pricing structure developed to support the plan.

Today's NSW Government launch coincides with the Victorian Government's announcement that one of the world's largest lithium-ion batteries would be installed near the Moorabool Terminal Station, just outside of Geelong.

'As a long-term investor we welcome both the NSW and Victorian Government's focus on increasing storage capacity through initiatives like battery storage. This is an area we have been investigating for some time and hope to have some further announcements about this in the near future,' Mr Graham said.

'Earlier this year Aware Super outlined a number of targets and goals that we are striving towards to prepare to transition our portfolio for a low-carbon future. We believe this transition is essential to providing our members with the best possible sustainable long-term returns.'

'We support a net zero emissions target by 2050, and a key element of our strategy moving forward is to invest in initiatives aligned to this goal.'

'The announcements from both the NSW and Victorian Governments are a welcome step and send strong, positive signals to long-term investors and the community alike.'

-ends-

Media enquiries:

Di Lloyd, Senior Manager Corporate Affairs, 0419 177 599, media@aware.com.au

Note to Editors:

Previously known as First State Super we changed our name to **Aware Super** in September 2020.

Aware Super is a name that reflects our members and what we stand for. It echoes the strengths of our past, aligning to our purpose to be a force for good in superannuation, retirement and advice, driving better outcomes for our members, their families and communities.

First State Super's been the fund for people who value community since 1992, we're now one of Australia's largest funds and we're continuing to grow. We merged with VicSuper this year and together we manage more than \$125 billion in savings for in excess of 1 million members located across the country.

Our members work in roles that breathe life into their communities and they expect us to do the same. So, we invest in assets that we believe will make a positive difference today - improving our communities, building a more a sustainable economy and supporting employment both locally and globally at the same time as providing strong long-term returns.

Discover how we're helping members do well financially while doing good in the world: Visit aware.com.au.