

FRASER COAST Chronicle

Clean energy future for the Coast

Roderick Makim | 28th September 2011

Tags ▶ aircrafts, ergon energy, infrastructure, roames, seabird aviation

MILLIONS of dollars of infrastructure was unveiled on the Fraser Coast yesterday by Ergon Energy.

Two new aircraft from Seabird Aviation, which will help monitor Ergon's 150,000 kilometres of power network, were the first to be revealed, before the \$13 million new "green" energy depot was opened in Dundowran.

State Government Minister for Energy and Water Utilities, Stephen Robertson, said both unveilings were important developments for the region.

"It is all about sustainability and efficiency," Mr Robertson said.

With the Fraser Coast's population and energy needs set to continue growing, Mr Robertson said the new Ergon depot was essential for the region.

"Being three times as large as the previous site ... this facility will meet the needs of the business for the next 40 to 50 years."

Even more important was the four-and-a-half star energy efficiency rating of the new depot, Mr Robertson said.

"It is helping the Fraser Coast to move to a cleaner energy future."

Earlier, Mr Robertson also attended the official unveiling of the new Remote Observation Automated Modelling Economic Simulation (ROAMES) aircraft at Seabird Aviation.

The custom-built aircraft will cover Ergon's entire network across Queensland, providing data to enable geo-spatial modelling which Mr Robertson said would lead to "increased safety and reliability of electricity supply".

"By using data from ROAMES ... Ergon Energy expects to save \$44 million over five years," he said, before adding the aircraft would also have important roles in pinpointing power outages after natural disasters.

Seabird Aviation's project manager, Francois van Teijlingen, was also "extremely happy" with the ROAMES program. "It is exciting to be a part of such a cutting-edge, hi-tech project," he said.

The ROAMES aircraft use a dual scanner system to gather data, which is then processed via Google Earth to become a 3D "virtual world".



The minister for Energy and Water Utilities Stephen Robertson is shown a new ROAMES plane by Ergon Energy project manager Jared Baronian which was manufactured in Hervey Bay by Seabird Aviation.

Karleila Thomsen

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