

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## ADELAIDE STAGE SET FOR HOTTEST EVER WORLD SOLAR CHALLENGE

The field for this year's World Solar Challenge 2011 Darwin to Adelaide is the largest yet and the stage is set for an adventure of epic proportions, contested by 21 countries, CEO of the South Australian Motor Sports Board, Mark Warren announced today.

Speaking from Adelaide's Victoria Square, Mr Warren said, 'on Sunday October 16 under the blazing Darwin sun, 42 teams will take to the starting line, among them three teams from Australia, to do battle for line honours 3,000 kilometres away, here in Adelaide'.

'This year the World Solar Challenge will focus on engaging and inspiring some of Australia's brightest young minds who hold the key to making sustainable green technology a mainstream possibility.

'We hope that schools like Lockleys Primary School here today to see Aurora's 'Evolution' first-hand, will participate in both our inaugural Schools Solar Contest and new science module. The competition, in partnership with Messenger Community Newspapers, is designed to encourage solar discovery and innovation and our schools program, PD Plus, has been developed jointly with RI Aus to enable teachers to use the World Solar Challenge theme within their science based curriculum.

'From past winners and rivals, Japan and The Netherlands, to the million dollar Michigan contingent and our own Aurora, NSW University and SA Tafe teams, to those first time competitors from India, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, Switzerland, Italy and Korea, this event promises David and Goliath contests at every checkpoint. It is testimony to ingenuity, adventure and courage and showcases the possibilities created by the power of nature combined with human endeavour,' Mr Warren said.

'Watched by the world and set against the spectacular backdrop of Australia's unforgiving outback the growing list of competitors demonstrates the appeal this event holds internationally. Our outreach program this year will help to ensure Australian communities have the opportunity to take part,' he said.

'This is a truly unique event, the largest of its kind in the world. Some \$25 million dollars is literally crossing the country and many more millions are being invested in the technology being tested here, as we drive towards a more sustainable future.

'And yet as unique as this event is it struggles for recognition in Australia where all things sport are considered gold and science a very long way from the media podium. This is an opportunity to inspire our next generation of thinkers and for Australian companies to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability on the world stage.

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'As both the Head of the World Solar Challenge and as a father of two bright young minds it's fantastic to announce the Schools Solar Contest to take this great event into the classroom. The World Solar Challenge is a fantastic theme and will definitely make science fun. I have no doubt that some of the innovations that the school teams create through this competition will be of great interest to the World Solar Challenge teams from around the world. And I look forward to meeting the winning school on the start line. We also have plans to make the finish line a real celebration with a vision for Victoria Square to become an interactive, sustainable village,' Mr Warren said.

Event Director for 20 years, Chris Selwood, said his inspiration to keep coming back was the teams themselves.

'They're not talking about a greener future...they are pushing the boundaries of innovation and making dreams a reality today. For some of them it's such a massive effort just to get here, let alone to make the 3,000 kilometre crossing. To share their dreams with students in Australian classrooms is really exciting, Mr Selwood said.

Director of RiAus and Catalyst presenter, Dr Paul Willis, also believes the World Solar Challenge is a great opportunity to engage young minds and show them where a passion for science and engineering can take you.

'We will be working closely with the World Solar Challenge this year, supporting teachers with a new PDplus module to help bring the excitement, and the science, into the classroom, Dr Willis said.'

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