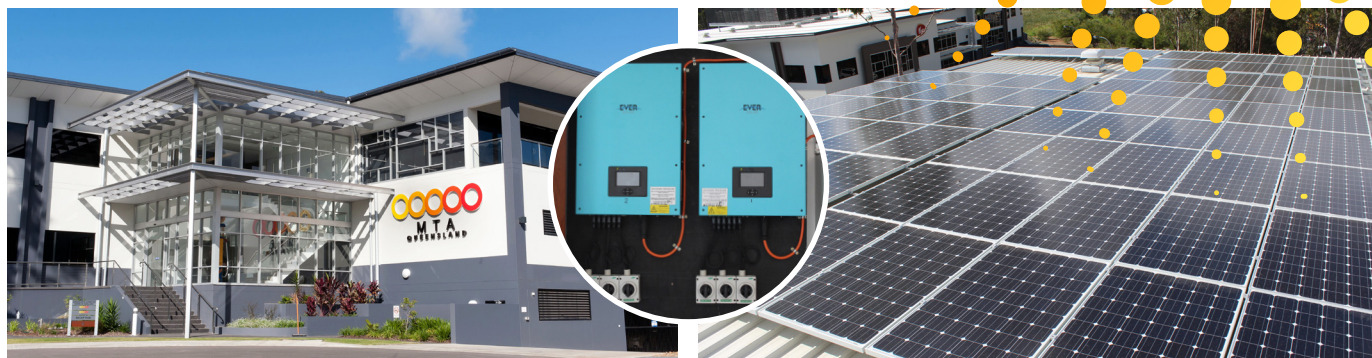


Solar revolution

MTAQ GETS A BOOST FROM SOLAR POWER



THE MTAQ HAS joined the solar power revolution, with the Association's headquarters at the Sir Jack Brabham Centre of Excellence now crowned by an array of solar panels.

Installed in mid-December 2013, the 30kw system has been generating, on average, 148kw per day in its first month of operation, about one third of the building's daily energy requirement.

To put that into perspective, the average family home uses about 21kw a day.

"It has, and will, put a big hole in our energy bill," said Kathy Winkcup, MTAQ Business Manager. "We have no say over the increases in energy price, but with this solar system we do have some control as we are producing part of our energy. It's a system that should pay for itself in five to six years."

The solar system was procured through, and installed by Queensland company, Australian All Energy Solutions (AAES).

Founded by Laurie Bradbrook and Paul Reynolds, AAES has installed systems across the state, providing solutions to farming customers as well as commercial and industrial projects, including a notable project in which solar panels were combined with fabric and used as shade sails over a shopping centre car park.

"The customer wanted to see whether fabric and solar could be integrated," said Laurie. "Large shopping centre car parks could become solar fields. The system is

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very flexible and could be used even to run charging stations for hybrid and electric vehicles."

AAES takes a broader view of energy solutions, complementing the solar panel business with other energy saving plans.

"Over the past 12 months we've identified an area for businesses where peak demand falls outside of solar generation hours," said Paul. "We're looking at power optimisation to be able to help those businesses. That goes hand-in-hand with solar. It's not just a matter of saying 'put solar panels on every building', it's a matter of identifying what's the best course of action. And as we are 'All Energy Solutions' we look at all facets of that."

"We do an energy audit, look at the power bill - we look at everything, analyse it and determine how best we can help. Whether it be solar, voltage optimisation or even the use of lighting and heating in the business - depending

on what the customer wants to achieve, we can put a plan together."

And this approach should be an attractive one to automotive industry businesses.

"Those businesses would get a lift from these systems," said Paul. "From spray painting units in workshops to new car dealerships which use lighting 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the amount of power it takes to run equipment and systems is significant. We have solutions that can really help."

AAES has also teamed up with Solar Financial Solutions to provide a finance plan that lets customers install a range of energy saving solutions without a large upfront payment and a number of benefits, including no deposit and flexible terms up to seven years.

Once the system has been installed, AAES performs regular checks to make sure everything is working well.

"One of our strengths is we go back and monitor," said Paul. "People often don't understand energy, so it pays to go back and talk to them and check the system with them. That way they learn about the system too."

It's an area of their business that MTAQ appreciates.

"One of the reasons we chose AAES was their follow-up service," said Kathy Winkcup. "They have returned to make sure the system is working properly. Their customer service is exceptional. They truly are passionate about their product." 