

# Media Release

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14 April 2011

## Intelligent infrastructure a bright idea in Bega

Bega residents can see a component of the Intelligent Network (IN) already in action in their town.

Essential Energy recently deployed an LED Streetlighting trial in the Sapphire Coast city, installing a number of new technology lights in the middle of the main street situated on the Princes Highway.

Over 12 months Essential Energy will test the energy saving potential of the equipment and the lifetime of the LEDs as part of the IN Community project, analyse the environmental and business benefits that can be made, and determine community acceptance of the new technology.

Essential Energy's Group Manager Intelligent Network Strategy, Trevor Whitehouse, said the streetlights are an important part of the IN Communities project which will consider all aspects of the community's energy needs – from what is needed in homes and businesses to what is needed in neighbourhoods.

"It's possible the efficient luminaires will provide significant energy and maintenance savings for Bega – using 50 to 90 per cent less power and lasting up to 50,000 hours," Trevor said. "With the trial lights changed out, overall the Council might save around \$1,540 per annum for this 12 month pilot."

The new LEDs will replace Bega's existing High Pressure Mercury luminaires.

"As with the overall IN Community trial, the importance of regional-based IN component roll-outs can't be overstated – these will deliver the scalability necessary to ensure the viability of the technologies being implemented," Trevor said.

As well as the potential for energy and maintenance savings, Essential Energy will assess the warm white light produced by the LED streetlights (possibly reducing light pollution and glare – into the evening sky, homes and businesses), consider the benefits of directional light targeting areas that need to be lit, and the practical use of dimmable controls.

Other intelligent technology already in Bega includes line fault indicators that automatically flash and send data to help crews pinpoint the location of a fault and restore power sooner; gas switches which allow remote isolation of faults and reconfiguration of the electricity flow; reclosers that can automatically restore supply or divert power around problems, and distance to fault relays which calculate how far a problem is from a substation for faster response times.

"Before the terms Intelligent Network or Smart Grid entered the main stream, we were strengthening our network by adding technology that made our infrastructure more reliable and responsive," Trevor said.

"Bega's size, great mix of customers and network infrastructure make it an ideal IN Community test bed – bringing together the technology with the customers' energy experience."

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Essential Energy is the new name for the operator of Australia's largest electricity network spanning 95 per cent of New South Wales' land mass. Owned by the New South Wales Government, Essential Energy employs around 4,600 people and also provides water and sewerage services to customers in far western New South Wales.