



## \$300m project to harness power of the sea

# State rides energy wave

VICTORIA is in the running for a \$300 million wave power project, with predictions 20 per cent of the state's electricity could be generated by the ocean.

The State Government is in talks with Western Australia's Carnegie Corporation to develop a wave energy plant.

The talks come as the Federal Government prepares to announce a \$435 million renewable energy development plan this week.

The wave system uses under-sea buoys to harness energy by pumping water through turbines onshore.

It can also be used to drive desalination plants.

The company wants to build a 50 megawatt demonstration plant — enough to power about 30,000 homes.

It is eyeing seabed sites near the power grid off the state's west coast and Gippsland.

Carnegie Corporation managing director Mike Ottaviano said the state's wave power resource was huge.

About a fifth of the state's energy needs could be economically supplied by the resource using the new-generation technology, Mr Ottaviano said.

"It's extremely consistent and reliable. It's a genuine baseload resource."

He said the state's manufacturing industry, including auto and wind power equipment manufacturers, would

### Ben Packham

be engaged to build wave energy equipment if the plant came to Victoria.

The State Government is believed to be interested in the project in the hope the state would become the nation's wave energy hub.

Federal Energy Minister Martin Ferguson, who will unveil the \$435 million Renewable Energy Development Program on Friday, said the Government wanted to support cutting-edge renewable technology.

"The Government's 20 per cent renewable energy target means by 2020, a fifth of Australia's energy will come from renewable sources," he said. "This is why we are supporting work to develop Australian wind, wave, solar, and geothermal technologies."

Victorian Infrastructure Minister Peter Batchelor said the State Government wanted to encourage renewable energy projects.

"The Brumby Government is investing in the development of large-scale renewable energy demonstration projects through our Energy Technology Innovation Strategy, and wave energy is eligible for funding under this initiative," he said.

Former prime minister John Howard promoted the Carnegie Corporation's wave energy technology ahead of the past election.