



State backs Albany wave power project

**PETER KERR
 EXCLUSIVE**

The world's biggest wave power project is set to go ahead near Albany after the State Government last night announced it would contribute \$12.5 million to the renewable energy initiative.

Carnegie Corporation's \$300 million pilot project aims to produce 50MW of power from the ocean off the South-West — enough electricity for 30,000 homes.

Environment Minister Donna Faragher and Energy Minister Peter Collier said funding from the Government's Low Emissions Energy Development fund would help Carnegie to develop its power station

by 2013. The funding was subject to the Perth-based company matching every dollar of Government funds with \$3 from elsewhere, Mrs Faragher said.

WA had risked losing the project to Victoria because the Barnett Government had delayed announcing the winning tender for LEED's October round of grants.

The delay fuelled fears among renewable energy companies that the fund was under threat from the Government's plan to slash 3 per cent from all departments' spending.

The Victorian Government announced this week it was keen to use its equivalent \$72 million Energy Technology and Innovation Strategy fund to attract Carnegie's project to

the coast off its Gippsland region. The system was invented in WA by Carnegie chairman Alan Burns.

Submerged buoys on the seafloor collect wave energy in the form of pressurised sea water that is pumped through turbines onshore.

The water can also be desalinated using a reverse osmosis procedure.

WA Sustainable Energy Association Chief executive Ray Wills said the program would take advantage of WA's ocean resource.

"It's fabulous because it will provide base-load power to the South-West grid and dispel a range of criticisms that some analysts of renewable energy have," Mr Wills said.

Carnegie declined to comment.

