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Iconic airport wins again

THE \$2.3 million solar power station at the Alice Springs Airport is leading the way in renewable energy.

The project was completed in November last year and has already won a PowerWater Melaleuca award and is a finalist in the United Nations Association of Australia 2011 World Environment Day Awards.

More recently the project was recognised at the Engineers Australia Northern Division 2011 Engineering Excellence Awards, taking home two prizes.

The Alice Solar City initiative is the first of its kind in the southern hemisphere and is

made up of 28 solar arrays, which provide the airport with a quarter of its daily energy needs.

Darwin International Airport's Development manager Don McDonald was on the project committee when the station was being built.

He said: "The project had a long gestation, from concept to commissioning, but along the way we have demonstrated the airport's commitment to environmental sustainability.

"We have developed some great partnerships with the Alice Springs Solar City

team, the Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT Projects), the Department of Climate Change and solar experts Ingenero and SolFocus."

Alice Springs can play a strong leadership role in the future of renewable energy, says the general manager of Alice Springs Airport Katie Cooper.

She said: "The one thing Alice Springs has plenty of is sunlight, which offers great opportunities to capitalise on the government's current focus on solar energy as a way to reduce carbon emissions."

The Alice Springs Solar Power Station initiative is part of the

Alice Solar City Project, one of seven cities selected for funding under the Australian Government's \$94 million Solar Cities Program. The airport is the second "iconic project" for Alice Springs, after the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

At peak output the Alice Springs Airport Solar Power Station is reducing carbon emissions by an estimated 470 million tonnes (the equivalent of 70 Alice Springs households) over the life of the installation.

One of the 28 arrays is a designated research tool, gathering data to test new products.



The Alice Springs Airport Solar Power initiative