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Pelena Has The Power

Off to the highlands of western PNG, Dorriigo's Pelena Energy recently sent a Hydro-Electric-Turbine to Ok Tarim to generate power for a clinic, village school and all houses.

Peter Lynch, who established Pelena Energy with his wife Salena Bryce, is excited about this project and will fly to Ok Tarim later this month to oversee the installation.

"The generated hydro energy at this village is very small due to the small stream," said Peter Lynch. "It will only generate five kilowatts. However, this amount is sufficient to provide streetlights and lighting in each house, power for radios and phone charging, and electricity to run a clinic and school. The isolation of the village — less than two kilometres from the Indonesian border — will mean it can offer modern services and medical facilities to benefit a very large area," Pelena's client is Western Power, a subsidiary of PNG Sustainable Development Programme.

Established in 1998, Pelena Energy relocated to Dorriigo just over six years ago. Managing Director (and outgoing Chamber President) Peter Lynch said, "We chose Dorriigo for a number of reasons including our preference for the distinct and varied climate. Also closeness to the coast and road, rail and airports played an important factor. The size of own, primary and secondary schooling, hospitals, ambulance, & police

was also a significant factor". Due to the high rainfall and mountainous terrain we expect to grow and expand our business in the area of hydro-electric systems.

The current project was shipped in early March via Brisbane to Port Moresby.

The fully packed container travelled by ship across the Gulf of Papua to the mouth of the Fly River; from there it was loaded on a barge to travel 850km upstream to the inland port of Kiunga where it arrived a few days ago.

From Kiunga, the container will travel by road to Ningerum and will be unpacked and lifted by helicopter to the village of Ok Tarim.

Once all goods are in Ok Tarim, Peter Lynch and a supervisory team from Solomon Islands and PNG will work with the village community to construct the hydro. Peter Lynch said, "There are no roads or airstrips nearby, only tracks, so the hydro will benefit a very large number of people".

"With a focus on rural energy and enterprise development in Melanesian countries such as Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Vanuatu, Pelena is also involved in coconut oil

extraction and utilisation in engines, boat building, village food processing technologies & partnering with village communities for income generation. Last financial year, 94% of Pelena's income was sourced from exports, with this year looking like being closer to 99%. Pelena's approach is to engage with communities to assist them to construct the systems, eliminating the need for roads, bulldozers and trucks".

Peter Lynch, "Dorriigo is surprisingly suited to manufacturing for us. Processes like welding are better suited to the cooler climate due to employee comfort benefits. Additionally, we've discovered that our location in a rural part of Australia is extremely attractive to our clients as they believe we can relate to their logistical rural isolation".

"We'd like to become the micro-hydro centre of the South Pacific" said Mr. Lynch. "Holding us back is the red tape for installing micro-hydros in NSW. It's virtually impossible to install a micro-hydro in NSW for income generation without expending more than \$120,000 on environmental assessments".

Pelena specialises in turbines capable of generating up to 250kW. Refer: www.pelena.com.au