

New England REZ North Community Reference Group

Monday 15 June 2026

EnergyCo

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo)



Acknowledgment of Country



The Energy Corporation of New South Wales acknowledges that we are meeting on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and we show our respect for Elders past and present through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

Agenda

Item	Responsible
1 Acknowledgement of Country	Margaret Harvie
Welcome, housekeeping and apologies	Margaret Harvie
Meeting procedures: • Pecuniary interests • Noting of actions • Questions Register update	Margaret Harvie
2 Project updates	Julian Watson
3 Field work and property access update	Dan Taylor
4 New England REZ Access Scheme update	Flynn Reyners
5 REZ First Nations engagement	Leanne Thompson
6. Break	
7 CRG member updates	All
8 Uralla Shire Council – Local Housing Strategy	Emily Sims
9 General business, questions and updates	All
10 Proposed CEBP workshop, next regular meeting	All

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Meeting procedures

Noting of actions

Overview

- ✓ An action register is provided with each meeting agenda to support accountability and transparency.
- ✓ The aim is to close out all actions by the following meeting, where possible.
- ✓ Actions will be delivered by the following meeting unless assigned a timeframe for delivery based on feedback from CRG members.

Maintaining an open and trusting environment is our priority, and we'll continue to provide thorough meeting notes to ensure transparency.



Thunderbolt's Rock, Uralla

Questions and Action Registers



Questions Register

- Created in response to member requests for greater clarity, transparency and timeliness in tracking questions and answers.
- Captures all questions taken on notice, as well as any submitted in writing for the register between meetings. Members can submit questions at any time.
- An updated Register will be circulated before each meeting (noting that inclusion of questions depends on when they are received).
- A further updated version will be distributed after each meeting, including any questions taken on notice.

Action Register

- The Actions Register records key commitments made during meetings and tracks progress against them.

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Project update

Project updates since last meeting



- **Announcement of refined 1km-wide study corridor** inclusive of indicative 250 metre easement for inclusion in Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – CRG online briefing (4 May)



- **Community Employment Benefit Program** - \$60 million funding announcement by Minister Sharpe (14 May)



- **INSW Health Check** – part of the NSW Treasury ‘gateway’ process
- **Port to REZ** – Progression of design work at Tamworth



- **Access scheme** – Preparation of draft scheme declaration
- **Network Operator** – Continuation of ‘Request for Proposal’ process with participants



- **Surveys and assessments** – Cadastral, biodiversity, heritage, visual amenity
- **Design and technical liaison** – Transgrid, Transport for NSW



- **Agency discussions** – for example, NSW RFS
- **Standing Order 52 compliance**

Project updates since last meeting



- **Industry engagement** – Hunter Energy Symposium (27-28 May)



- **Key stakeholder engagement** – University of New England REZ Forum (14-15 May), Aboriginal Focus Group meetings



- **Council engagement** – Corridor refinement, local roads, Staces Rd (Uralla)



- **Community engagement**



- Presentations – Tamworth OSOM Project Team, Nemingha (7 May)
- Events – Upper Hunter Show (20, 21 Mar) Total Field Day (1-2 May), McCullys Gap Energy Forum (Muswellbrook Council – 13 May)



- Information Stands – Muswellbrook (HTP Project – 26 May)
- REZ Mobile Offices – Muswellbrook (9 Jun), Scone (10 Jun), Nundle (11 Jun)



- **Notifications** – Staces Rd, Uralla: 14, Tamworth OSOM route: 23 letters, approx. 50 notifications
- **Landowner meetings** – Corridor refinement, acquisition, access tracks



- **Webinar** – Property and acquisition (10 Jun)
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Field study in progress

Upcoming project activity

- CEBP program development and funding allocation model
- Refined 1km Corridor – continued landowner engagement and confirmation
- Draft Access Scheme development and consultation program
- Identifying sites for temporary workforce accommodation
- Continued preparation of supporting studies and assessments for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Items to note

- Council motions – Walcha and Armidale
- Central West Orana incident
- New England land access incident

Upcoming community engagement activities



EnergyCo information stand at Tocal Field Day

- **Meetings** - Whitehouse Lane Residents Action Group, Tamworth Regional Council and Transport for NSW (18 Jun).
- **Survey** – Tamworth OSOM intersection upgrade.
- **Events** – Aberdeen Highland Games (4 Jul), AgQuip Field Days (18-20 Aug).
- **REZ Mobile Office**
 - Armidale (23 Jun, 21-22 Jul)
 - Uralla (24 Jun, 5 Aug*, 1 Sep*)
 - Walcha (25 Jun, 4 Aug*)
 - Invergowrie (6 Aug*)
 - Tamworth (2 Sep*)
 - Scone (15 Sep*)
 - Muswellbrook (16 Sep*)

** = subject to venue availability and confirmation*

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Field work and property access

Accessing private property



- Majority of current field investigations are being carried out on public land. However, in some instances, access to private property may be required.
- Where access to private land is needed, EnergyCo will engage directly with the landholder to discuss the proposed activities and seek prior consent before entering the property.
- Providing access to private property for field investigations is entirely voluntary.

Property access agreements



- If a landholder agrees to provide access, they will be asked to complete a **property access agreement**, allowing EnergyCo and its contractors to enter to undertake investigations
- The agreement incorporates any landholder instructions and information such as biosecurity requirements, known hazards, or restricted areas.
- EnergyCo and its contractors provide clear and detailed information about the proposed activities including the scope of work, expected duration, working hours, equipment to be used, and any potential temporary impacts.
- **Landholders** retain the right to withdraw consent at any time or to update the access conditions. In these circumstances, they can contact their designated **Property or Place Manager** to discuss any changes.

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New England REZ Access Scheme update

REZ Access Scheme Update and New England REZ Access Scheme

- In August 2025, EnergyCo released the New England REZ Generation and Storage Consultation Paper (Consultation Paper).
- EnergyCo has made changes based on feedback about approaches to manage generation and storage, including **design features of a potential access scheme**.
- The NSW Government is undertaking consultation on an updated approach to REZ Access Schemes.

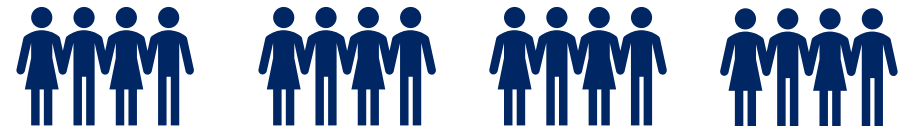
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The updated REZ Access approach **will introduce controls over most or all high voltage network infrastructure in a REZ** rather than to a subset, so that all large-scale generation and storage projects will be subject to consistent requirements.

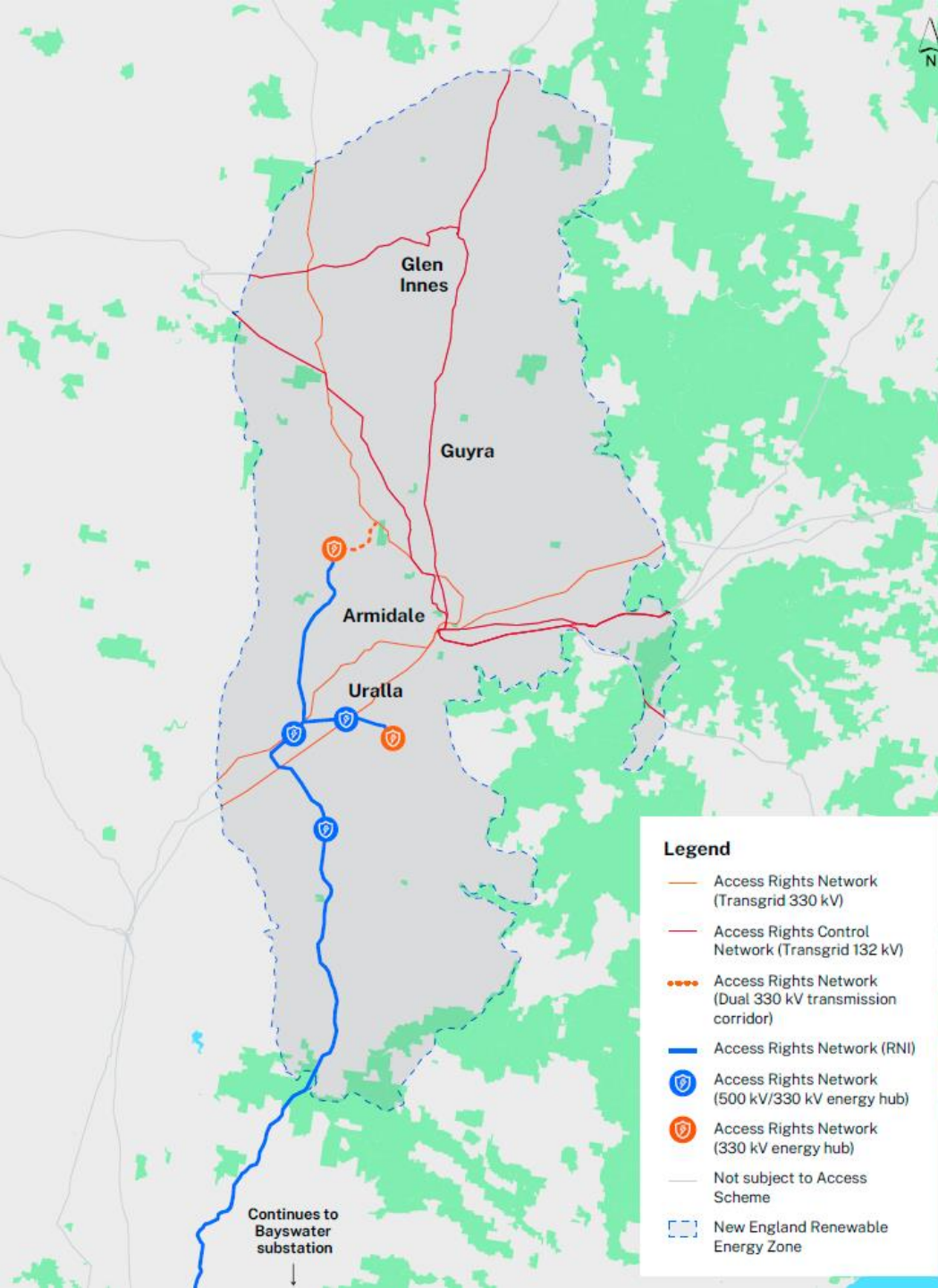


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Consistent community and employment benefit contributions means all generators and storage projects benefit from improved investment certainty, strengthened community support, and reduced risk of individual projects negatively effecting community sentiment.



New England REZ Access Scheme



- An access scheme supports management of generation and storage to prevent oversubscription, and provides a coordinated connection process.
- Consistent with the REZ Access Scheme approach, two tools are proposed to manage access in the New England REZ:
 - **Access Rights Regime:** Projects must competitively tender for an Access Right to connect to network infrastructure specified as the **Access Rights Network**.
 - **Access Control Mechanism:** Projects are required to meet certain eligibility criteria to obtain EnergyCo consent to connect to the **Access Control Network** through a non-competitive process.
 - Transitional arrangements will be in place to exempt some projects or give early access subject to certain eligibility criteria.

New England REZ Access Scheme

Proposed scope and scheme term

- **Network scope** outlines the network elements to which the access scheme will apply.
- The Consultation Paper included network scope options to **exclude** the 132kV network. However, the REZ Access Scheme would **include** existing networks from 132kV and above.
- The network scope for the New England REZ Access Scheme includes:
 - All new REZ network within the REZ geographical boundary.
 - All existing network inside the REZ geographical boundary area at 132kV and above.
 - New 500kV REZ network infrastructure from outside the southern REZ geographical boundary to Bayswater Substation.
- Based on feedback, the **Scheme term** has been extended from 20 to 25 years.
 - The physical limit on generation and storage projects applies for a longer period to reflect feedback from wind developers that an increased scheme term will better align with the operational lifespan of wind projects.
 - Communities will receive annual funds through access fees for a longer period through employment and community purpose funds to deliver important host community benefits.



Solar project near Armidale

New England REZ Access Scheme



- The Draft New England REZ Access Scheme Declaration will be published for consultation in the coming weeks.
- Public webinars will be held during the consultation period to provide an update on **Draft Access Scheme Declaration** and seek your feedback to better reflect the needs of industry and the community.
- Public submissions and feedback will inform the final **Access Scheme**, scheduled for end of **September 2026** (should the Minister decide to make a Final Declaration).

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REZ - First Nations engagement



First Nations engagement

- Working with Property Team and the three LALCs which have existing land claims within the 1km corridor.
- Participated in RFP for potential proponents based upon current scenarios for Aboriginal people and communities within the REZ, challenges faced and submission inclusions.
- Preparing for Aboriginal Focus Group (AFG) meetings regarding the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP).
- Preparing for Community Employment Benefit Program (CEBP) engagement.

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Break

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CRG member updates



Information session at Uralla

What are you hearing from your communities?



As our CRG members, we recognise the strong position you're in to understand the thoughts and sentiments of your communities.

We'd like to take some time in this session to hear from you about:

- Community feedback and sentiment – what are you hearing from your communities?
- Parts of the project you think people don't understand and/or need more information about.
- The levels to which you think people want to be engaged and their preferences for how.
- Any other information you're happy to share with us.

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Uralla Shire Council – Local Housing Strategy

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General business, questions and updates



Walcha Sculpture Walk

General business, questions and updates

- **CRG member requests**
 - Adequacy of consultation
 - Meeting notes format
- **CRG photographs**
- **Future agenda items**

Next meeting

- ✓ Proposed CEBP workshop – Jul
- ✓ Regular CRG meeting – Sep (proposed week beginning 7 Sep)