

Meeting minutes

Central-West Orana REZ Community Reference Group

Thursday 27 April 2023

11:02am to 1:24pm

Parklands Resort & Conference Centre, 121 Ulan Road, Mudgee

Attendance

Category	Attendees
Independent Chair	Lisa Andrews (LA)
EnergyCo representatives	Adam Clarke, A/Director Planning & Policy (AC) Jamie Fermio, Manager Planning & Policy (JF) Cleo Andrews, CWO Community & Stakeholder Lead (CA) Brian Cullinane, CWO Planning & Environment Lead (BC) (online) Bridget Kelleher, Senior CWO Place Manager (BK) Anna Howard, CWO Place Manager (AH)
LGA Delegates	Mayor Matthew Dickerson, Dubbo Regional Council (MD) Cr Katie Dicker, Mid-Western Regional Council (KD) Cr Kathy Rindfleish, Warrumbungle Shire Council (KR)
Community representatives	Dougald Morse (DM) Colin Kilby (CK) <i>[arrived at 11.06am]</i> Sally Edwards (SE) John Kelly (JK) <i>[arrived at 11.24am]</i>
Stakeholder groups	Kate Hook, RE-Alliance (KH) David Thorne, NSW Farmers (Mudgee) (DT) Beverley Smiles, Central West Environment Council (BS) Rosemary Hadaway, Mudgee District Environment Group & Watershed Landcare (RH) <i>[left at 12.23]</i> Grant Gjessing, Business Mudgee (GG) <i>[left at 11.49am]</i>
Invited guests	Stephen Archer (SA) and Mika White (MW), Lightsource BP Eleanor Cairns (EC) and Darren Chesterfield (DC), RES Group
Observers	Karen Wilson <i>[arrived at 11.24am]</i> Mark Conn <i>[arrived at 11.24am]</i>
Apologies	Mike Young, Executive Director Planning and Communities

Category	Attendees
	Cara Inia, Director Community and Place

Agenda items

Item	Details	Responsibility
1	Acknowledgement of Country	LA
2	Welcome and introductions	LA
3	Apologies	LA
4	Business arising from inaugural CRG	LA
5	Declarations	LA
6	Correspondence report	LA
7	EnergyCo project update and presentation	EnergyCo
8	Questions and discussion	All
9	General business	LA
10	Next meeting	LA

EnergyCo Meeting minutes

Item	Description	Lead	Updates
1	Acknowledgement of Country	LA	
2	Welcome and housekeeping	LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting opened at 11:02am Welcomed observers Karen Wilson and Mark Conn
3	Apologies	LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mike Young, Executive Director Planning and Communities Cara Inia, Director Community and Place
4	Business arising from last meeting	LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EnergyCo to circulate easement acquisition fact sheet with the meeting minutes – closed. Include slide on different stakeholders involved in the REZ and their responsibilities – closed. Include a list of acronyms with the minutes moving forward. RH asked for links to be included to relevant websites – closed. Details to be provided with the minutes on how people can complete EnergyCo’s online survey – closed. January project update to be sent with the minutes – closed. LA to include SE’s questions with the minutes – closed. Invitation to be extended to the Consumer Trustee for a future meeting – Invited, follow up required. ACTION LA to write to DPE raising concern that Solar Farms (SSD developments) don’t require CCC to be established – closed. <i>LA will update CRG when response received from DPE.</i> Project milestones to be provided with the minutes – closed.
5	Declarations	LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No changes.
6	Correspondence report	LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As included in the agenda SE provided several questions which were answered by EnergyCo prior to the meeting.
7	EnergyCo presentation		
7.1	Project update	CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CA provided an overview of activities carried out since the last CRG meeting, including Network Operator tender, ongoing EIS development, continued landholder engagement, land acquisition status of energy hubs and easements, community events and the community benefits survey.

Item	Description	Lead	Updates
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CA provided update on CWO access tender rights. ACTION: Circulate finalised guidelines with CRG members once available.
7.2	Stakeholders in the REZ	CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CA provided overview of key stakeholders in the REZ. ACTION: RH requested a diagrammatic version to help explain key stakeholder relationships.
7.3	Community survey results	CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CA provided brief overview of results received in the community benefit survey. The feedback report is currently in draft and due to be distributed in May. ACTION: Provide to CRG members once finalised. CA offered to provide any specific data to the CRG if requested.
7.4	Upcoming engagement	CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CA advised community feedback report to be released May 2023, implementation plan engaged scheduled for mid-2023. CA advised plan to update CRG on implementation plan at the next meeting.
7.5	Implementing delivery of programs in the REZ	AC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AC provided an overview of the REZ specific implementation plan with three core areas – enabling infrastructure, community initiatives and delivering local outcomes. AC provided an update on initiatives currently under development for CWO REZ which included roads, housing and accommodation, training and skills, energy, waste, social infrastructure, telecom and First Nations and local business.
7.6	Candidate Foundation Generator updates	SA EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA provided project overview of Lightsource BP's Sandy Creek Solar Farm. SA provided an overview of Lightsource BP's cumulative impact strategy in relation to workforce & workforce accommodation, traffic and transport, waste, agriculture and biodiversity and ecology. EC provided an overview of RES's Barneys Reef Wind Farm and EIS timeframes. EC provided an overview of Tallawang Solar Farm and their EIS response to submissions. EC provided information on the Industry & Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP), the Neighbour Shared Benefit Scheme and Community Benefit Fund.
8	Questions and discussion		
8.1	General discussion	ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SE requested questions be issued/published on the website as addendum to the minutes. ACTION SE follow up from submitted questions: Can you advise the CRG when opening letters go out? Yes. ACTION SE follow up from submitted questions: What do pop-ups look like & who attends? BK advised pop-ups are being held monthly on the third week of the month in Gulgong, Dunedoo and Coolah. An Acquisition Manager and Place Manager attend to answer any questions the community might have. Objective is to provide an easily accessible presence in the community.

Item	Description	Lead	Updates
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SE follow up from submitted questions: How does EnergyCo establish community impacts? In relation to Merriwa OSOM, you state, “Consulting with key stakeholders” CA advised EnergyCo is consulting with generators, Transport for NSW and Councils along the road network. Overview information was provided at community sessions in February. EnergyCo need further scope information from relevant bodies to start more detailed consultation with community - early conversations at this stage. ● SE follow up from submitted questions: EnergyCo is not carrying out a specific review into engagement – Does it matter to EnergyCo if communities are engaged or disengaged? CA advised community consultation is a key consideration and EnergyCo is increasing its presence in the community and will continue to update the CRG. ● RH follow up from submitted questions: We expect EnergyCo to be much more proactive than just providing a media release to radio station. CA advised the project team is not authorised to provide comment directly to media, all requests are managed by EnergyCo’s media unit. ACTION: Provide advice from RH to EnergyCo media team. ● RH: What is EnergyCo’s relationship with Turnpike? CA advised Turnpike is one of the companies contracted by EnergyCo for CWO to provide resources to support the delivery of the project. ● RH commented it is very disingenuous and there is a lack of transparency within this group. RH: Can you identify who is who? CA advised EnergyCo’s staff includes a mix of direct employees and contract staff. This is standard practice for major government infrastructure projects. Several companies have contracts to provide employees to EnergyCo. ACTION: RH requested that EnergyCo provides information on the role of the place managers. ● DT: Why didn’t EnergyCo let private landowners in on their accommodation needs? Why buy land when you can lease from landholders? CA explained the property on Neeleys Lane was on the market and EnergyCo took a considered approach to a strategic acquisition. Purchasing the site on market avoids the need for undertaking compulsory acquisition. CA also advised this is not the only accommodation site the project will require/is looking at and this will be further informed by the appointed Network Operator. In planning workforce accommodation, EnergyCo is considering not only the Network Operator’s immediate requirements but also broader opportunities to provide legacy housing outcomes for communities. ● KH: Has EnergyCo come up with a work camp solution? Is there room for innovative legacy opportunities? Are discussions about opportunities occurring? CA advised there is no one solution to the issue and advised EnergyCo has been seeking input from Councils to understand opportunities and constraints. As discussed, EnergyCo has planned to provide an update on workforce accommodation at the July CRG meeting.

Item	Description	Lead	Updates
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SE commented there is a stark contrast between the community's expectation of consultation and what EnergyCo is doing. SE reiterated the community and in particular this CRG, want to contribute to the planning and design, not be told about EnergyCo's plans after they have been decided. ● SE: Does EnergyCo have plans to discuss and engage about the cumulative impacts? CA advised that was one focus of the community consultation carried out between January and March 2023. This aimed to understand community sentiment about concerns and priorities for the REZ and further work is being developed for the implementation plan. ● KH: Is the Implementation Plan open for feedback? Can we get a draft version before the next CRG meeting? CA advised that EnergyCo can not commit to providing the plan at this stage as it is currently under development, however, if it is ready at that time then it would be shared with the CRG. ● BS: In relation to access fees, do they pay for the upfront cost of the transmission lines before other things? AC advised the access fees include money for delivering community benefits, and generators pay access fees when the line is electrified. EnergyCo understand this does not necessarily align to when communities would like to see the benefits. EnergyCo have applied to the government transmission acceleration fund (TAF) to secure some upfront funding to provide community funding and employment benefits. This will include funding for community grants in the implementation plan. The costs of building the transmission project are financed by the Network Operator and recovered through energy consumer bills. ● SE: Do you have working groups listed for training and skills? AC advised there is a working group established with the Electricity Infrastructure Jobs Advocate and an internal working group with the Department of Education and TAFE. ● SE: Is this on a local level and can we have a list of who is involved? AC advised a meeting was held in Dubbo in February ACTION: Provide a list of who was involved in the working groups for skills and training. ● CK: Upgrades to the highways, does the State Government pay for these? AC advised there are various sources of funding for upgrades and maintenance depending on the road. In regard to upgrades on the State network - some government will pay, other upgrades generators will pay, some might also be community upgrades which the Council will be a part of. ● SE encouraged Telcos to investigate current infrastructure. Batteries do not work on some towers which means there is no service when the power goes out. We would like EnergyCo to push the NSW telecommunications authority. ● BS: Do the generators have to investigate telecommunications? Worker safety is an issue when outside telecommunication range. AC advised EnergyCo is working with NSW Telco to investigate

Item	Description	Lead	Updates
			<p>opportunities for legacy infrastructure that provides community benefits outside of the temporary construction periods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CK: Can EnergyCo influence the government to impact the legislation? Could this committee direct EnergyCo to impact legislation? AC advised EnergyCo's remit is not in telecommunications policy which is a Federal remit. ● CK requested it to be noted that, unless there is legislation, improved telecommunications will not occur and requested this to be a part of the conditions of approval. Noted. ● DT: What will happen when 3G is turned off? AC advised that is outside of EnergyCo's remit. ● MD: Advised his biggest concern is any thought, decision or discussion around the survey results are invalid. Self-surveys do not give scientific data. CA advised the survey is one data point of how EnergyCo is informing its decisions and advised other platforms, processes and data are being used in addition to this. ● RH: We need to view an engagement and communications strategy for the REZ. Engagement activities are ad-hoc. RH commented there is no two-way exchange and would like to know the activities planned and their purpose. CA advised EnergyCo holds a range of engagement activities and meets with Council on a range of topics, it will be shared if approved. ACTION: Query if a copy of CWO REZ engagement and communications strategy can be shared. ● DT: How far is Sandy Creek Solar Farm from Elong Elong? SA advised roughly 10kms. ● SE: What stage is the project up to? SA advised they have a SEARS. ● CK: What LGA/s is the project in? SA advised Dubbo and Warrumbungle. Divided nearly 50-50. ● CK: Are there differences in policies from council to council? SA: Yes, there are some differences, but councils are not the consent authority. MD: Commented that councils are along for the ride. ● BS: The outcome of your project going ahead relies on access to the transmission infrastructure? SA: Yes, it is reliant on access to EnergyCo's transmission infrastructure. ● BS: On that map, everything is on top of each other. SA advised projects on the map are the Candidate Foundation Generators (CFGs). AC advised the access rights are granted through a competitive process with the Consumer Trustee beginning in Q2/Q3 2023. ● KD: In relation to the access rights, will we have the first 10 successful CFGs by September? AC advised the access rights is independent of EnergyCo. It would be likely to take a number of months for an announcement. As advised Lightsource BP is putting in a significant amount of investment to commit to a certain point for access rights. Credible entities will meet timelines.

Item	Description	Lead	Updates
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DM: With your studies, is it same pasture next door as the sample for findings? SA advised yes, as close as we could get it. ● DT: What about foxes? Do you have exclusion fencing? Can foxes get through? SA advised they don't have exclusion fencing, but no issues with foxes to date. ● MD: With your initial results and working with CSU & UNSW. Are you going to publish these results? Scientifically valid results? SA advised that they plan to, but there is a two-year process to get controlled samples. 1/8 of the way through with a second study to come. Ongoing process. ● DM: 850MW – 1600HA 2 to 1 ratio. Why this site? SA advised they look at a number of things e.g., proximity to REZ, flat cleared land, avoiding agriculturally valuable land, neighbour proximity. It is a large land parcel, two landowners, tucked away off main road in an area with renewable infrastructure. ● DM commented he is sceptical of the findings. SA advised they need to carry out appropriate scientific studies with specific benchmarking as they want results with value from an agricultural perspective. ● DT: What is the panel gap at Wellington Solar Farm? SA advised 5 metres. DT: Is it the same gap at Sandy Creek? SA advised, no it is proposed to be 6.5m as the panels are larger. ● RH: What are people asking for in the neighbour shared benefit scheme? EC advised RES has a criteria and specific payments which neighbours can put forward their interest for. We have received EOIs to join. The scheme is on our website, and we also contacted people who we think would be eligible. ACTION: Provide neighbour shared benefit scheme website link for minutes. ● RH: Do you need the transmission infrastructure for the project to go ahead? EC advised yes. ● DM: Do landowners sign an NDF? EC: advised no. We have privacy clauses and keep our commercial information confidential. DM: Lightsource BP, do you make them sign NDF? SA: Advised no, we have confidentiality clauses to protect the landowners. ● KR: Have you done a study - if these projects all get up at once? And are we going to cope? CA advised yes recently, and this was included in the CFGs. ACTION: Provide employment histogram in minutes. ● MD: There is a report in most recent council meeting – Dubbo Regional Council specific – Include the future need for 6,000 people, timeline of when jobs are needed. ACTION: Provide report in minutes. ● DM: Where are solar panel fabricated? SA advised China. There is one Australian provider who would take 3 years to fill our order. ● KD: Where are wind turbines coming from? EC advised most likely China, however we have not chosen a wind tower manufacturer.

Item	Description	Lead	Updates
8	General business		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DT: What is the expected life of the transmission line? AC advised more than 20 years. Question taken on notice. ACTION: Provide information on expected life of the transmission lines. • DT: Why don't landowners get payments for the duration of the line's life? Strategic benefit payments are for a 20 year period. AC advised policy decision was made by the previous Government and it is not within EnergyCo's remit to make changes to the policy, which applies NSW-wide and not just to EnergyCo projects. CA advised that community members are welcome to raise this issue via the Minister for Energy if they are unsatisfied with the policy decision. • BS: Is the social impact assessment ongoing? Were all landowners included? Question taken on notice. ACTION: Provide an update on landowners included in the SIA interview process. • BS: The new substation at Wollar – is it a different project? CA advised no; it is part of the Network Operator scope. ACTION: Provide confirmation that new Wollar infrastructure is part of EnergyCo's EIS and confirm that for any upgrades Transgrid will seek their own approvals. • BS: Is there an EMF Study for double 500kV line? CA advised it will be in the EIS - WSP Australia is preparing the EIS studies on behalf of EnergyCo. • BS: Are there other 2 x 500KV in a 140m easement. BK advised yes on the Great Western Highway coming into Sydney. Could EnergyCo provide examples of where there are 2 x 500kV lines in a 140m easement? ACTION: Provide example of 2 x 500kV lines in 140m easement. • BS: Is EnergyCo aware of an Ausgrid pilot in Merriwa? There is a lot of community interest to progress this idea. AC yes, we are aware of the microgrid trial. • KH: Feedback – Appreciate if EnergyCo can provide the presentation beforehand in the future. • SE: How is EnergyCo addressing the mental health concerns of the community? CA advised EnergyCo has no tangible actions at this stage. SE commented the Coolah information session was traumatic for some community members and would like to see this addressed in the future. • SE: Are there any formal requirements to demonstrate social licence? CA advised social licence is identified as an objective under the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap. DT noted that EnergyCo shifted the transmission route in response to landowner concerns about following the Merriwa Cassilis Plateau. • JK: Adjoining landowners' public liability - Insurance companies will not cover over \$200 million. CA advised this has been raised in the NSW Government's response to the Agriculture Commissioner's review into the relationship between agriculture and renewables. SA advised Lightsource BP's position on insurances which has been provided to neighbours and a copy is to be released at start of construction.

Item	Description	Lead	Updates
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SE asked LA to circulate the NSW Government's response to the Agriculture Commissioner's review. ACTION: Provide with the minutes. JK: The Maryvale Solar project is on prime agricultural land. There has been no consultation with adjoining neighbours. ACTION: Provide information on status of Mary Vale solar Farm if available.
9	Meeting close		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting closed at 1:24pm. LA thanked all for their attendance and contribution Next meeting: Thursday 20th July, Dubbo – 11am start

Action items

No	Action	Responsibility	Due date	Comments/updates	Status
1	Questions from SE be issued/published on the website as addendum to the minutes	CA	12/5/23	EnergyCo will attach the questions from SE to the final minutes published on the website.	To be actioned
2	Advise when Opening letters have been issued	CA	31/5/23		To be actioned
3	Provide description of the CWO REZ place managers roles	CA	5/5/23	Refer to Place Manager position description attached with the meeting minutes. EnergyCo notes that this is an internal EnergyCo document and is not intended for external distribution beyond the CRG.	Complete
4	Follow up invitation extended to the Consumer Trustee for a future meeting	CA	20/7/23		To be actioned
5	Provide finalised CWO Access Rights guidelines once released by the Consumer Trustee	CA	31/5/23		To be actioned
6	Provide update on Neeleys Lane ancillary site when available	CA	20/7/23		To be actioned
7	Provide a list of who was involved in the working groups for skills and training and accommodation	CA	5/5/23	Working group participants include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EnergyCo • NSW Treasury • NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change • NSW Department of Education • Training Services NSW, West Region • Department of Regional NSW • Department of Planning and Environment • Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Far West Orana • TAFE NSW • Charles Sturt University • Association of Independent Schools NSW • RDA Orana • Electrical Trades Union 	Complete

No	Action	Responsibility	Due date	Comments/updates	Status
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VERTO • ACEnergy • Squadron Energy • Lightsource BP • Iberdrola • ACEN Australia • Acciona Energia • Tilt Renewables • RES Australia • ib Vogt • X-Elio • CWP Renewables • Dubbo Regional Council • Mid-Western Regional Council • Warrumbungle Shire Council • AEMO • Clean Energy Council • Three Rivers Regional Assembly • Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council • Mining and Energy Union South Western District • NSW Farmers Association 	
8	Provide a copy of CWO REZ engagement and communications strategy	CA	20/7/23	<p>A copy of EnergyCo's overarching CSE strategy for the CWO REZ project is attached with the minutes. EnergyCo notes that this is an internal EnergyCo document and is not intended for external distribution beyond the CRG. Since this is an internal working document to guide EnergyCo's CSE outputs, it is not planned to be published on EnergyCo's website.</p> <p>We welcome feedback on the CSE strategy for EnergyCo to consider. Please send feedback via</p>	Complete

No	Action	Responsibility	Due date	Comments/updates	Status
				Lisa Andrews or directly to EnergyCo via cleo.andrews@dpie.nsw.gov.au.	
9	Provide website link in relation to RES Neighbour benefit scheme	LA	20/7/23		To be actioned
10	Provide CWO REZ forecasted employment histogram	CA		The workforce histogram is available on page 15 of EnergyCo's March 2023 research summary report via this link: https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-03/cwo-rez-report-research-impacts-benefits.pdf The workforce histogram has been added as an attachment to the minutes for reference.	Complete
11	Provide link to Dubbo Regional Council Business Paper [Analysis of Short-Term Worker Accommodation Needs]	LA	20/7/23	Page: 62 on this link: https://www.dubbo.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/278/Business%20Paper%20-%20Ordinary%20Council%20Meeting%20-%202023%20March%202023.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y	Complete.
12	Provide information on expected life of the transmission lines	CA	5/5/23	The transmission towers have a specified design life of 50 years. Once they reach 50 years, the towers would have exhausted their design life and are due for replacement. The Network Operator may implement a regime of maintenance and upgrades to allow the practical design life to be extended, such as replacing specific elements once they reach the end of their service life. Transmission easements have no expiry and will remain in place indefinitely or until such time as EnergyCo takes steps to remove it. In short, the useful life of a transmission tower does not impact the life of an easement.	Complete
13	Provide Social Impact Assessment process and provide percentage of impacted landowners included in the assessment	CA	5/5/23	Engagement activities for the SIA consultation program includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An online survey completed by 120 impacted landowners 	Complete

No	Action	Responsibility	Due date	Comments/updates	Status
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six interviews with community groups • 17 landowner interviews • An interview with NSW Aboriginal Land Council (western division) EnergyCo is currently carrying out a second round of SIA interviews with First Nations groups in the REZ.	
14	Provide confirmation that new Wollar infrastructure is part of EnergyCo's EIS and confirm that for any upgrades TransGrid will seek their own approvals	CA	5/5/23	New Wollar substation forms part of EnergyCo's EIS for the REZ transmission project. Transgrid is responsible for complementary upgrades to its existing network, such as Wollar substation. EnergyCo notes that Transgrid withdrew its planning application for the Wollar substation upgrade. See the Planning Portal for details.	Complete
15	Circulate the NSW Agriculture Commissioner's report. [Renewable energy generation and agriculture in NSW's rural landscape and economy – growth sectors on a complementary path]	LA	5/5/23	The NSW Government's response to the Agriculture Commissioner's Report is available to view via this link and attached with the minutes: https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/lup/nsw-agriculture-commissioner	Complete
16	Provide example of 2 x 500kV lines in 40m easement.	CA	20/7/23	Transgrid does not have an example of 2 x 500kV double circuit steel tower (DCST) lines beside each other at present. The Transgrid line from Bayswater to Wollar to Mt Piper to Bannaby is 1 x 500kV DCST. There are however many examples within NSW of adjacent 500kV to 330kV and 330kV to 330kV transmission lines sharing an adjoining corridor across the (Transgrid) NSW transmission system, especially from traditional thermal (coal) power stations which commonly have 3-4 transmission lines connecting them to the NSW transmission system to ensure good resilience and reliability.	Complete

No	Action	Responsibility	Due date	Comments/updates	Status
17	Provide an update on the Maryvale Solar Farm approval if available.	LA	20/7/23	<p>Information about the Maryvale Solar project status and determination is available on the Planning Portal:</p> <p>https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/maryvale-solar-farm</p> <p>According to the Planning Portal, the modification for capacity increase is still at the assessment phase and has not yet been determined:</p> <p>https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/maryvale-solar-mod-2-capacity-increase</p>	Complete

Next meeting

Date: Thursday 20 July 2023

Time: 11am to 1pm

Venue: TBC in Dubbo

Future meetings

Date: Week beginning Monday 23 October 2023, Mudgee NSW

Acronyms

Acronym	Definition	Relevant links
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator	aemo.com.au
AEMO Services	Consumer Trustee and subsidiary of AEMO	aemoservices.com.au
AER	Australian Energy Regulator	aer.gov.au
CCC	Community Consultative Committee	planning.nsw.gov.au/Assess-and-Regulate/Development-Assessment/Community-Consultative-Committees
CFG	Candidate Foundation Generator	energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo/renewable-energy-generation-projects
CSU	Charles Sturt University	
CWO REZ	Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone	https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo-rez
HCC REZ	Hunter Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone	https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/hcc-rez
NO	Network Operator	https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo#update-on-first-ranked-network-operator
NE REZ	New England Renewable Energy Zone	https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/ne-rez
OSOM	Oversize and over-mass vehicle movements	
PAN	Proposed Acquisition Notice	
REZ	Renewable Energy Zone	
RNI	REZ Network Infrastructure (the transmission project)	
SBP Scheme	Strategic Benefit Payment Scheme	energyco.nsw.gov.au/community/strategic-benefit-payments-scheme
SW REZ	South West Renewable Energy Zone	https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/sw-rez
UNSW	University New South Wales	

5.2.2 Central-West Orana REZ construction workforce

Figure 5 shows the projected workforce numbers between 2023 and 2028 during construction of the REZ transmission project and major generation projects with planned connections to the REZ network. Workforce numbers are estimated to exceed 4,000 between mid-2025 and mid-2026, with a peak of about 5,000 in late 2025.

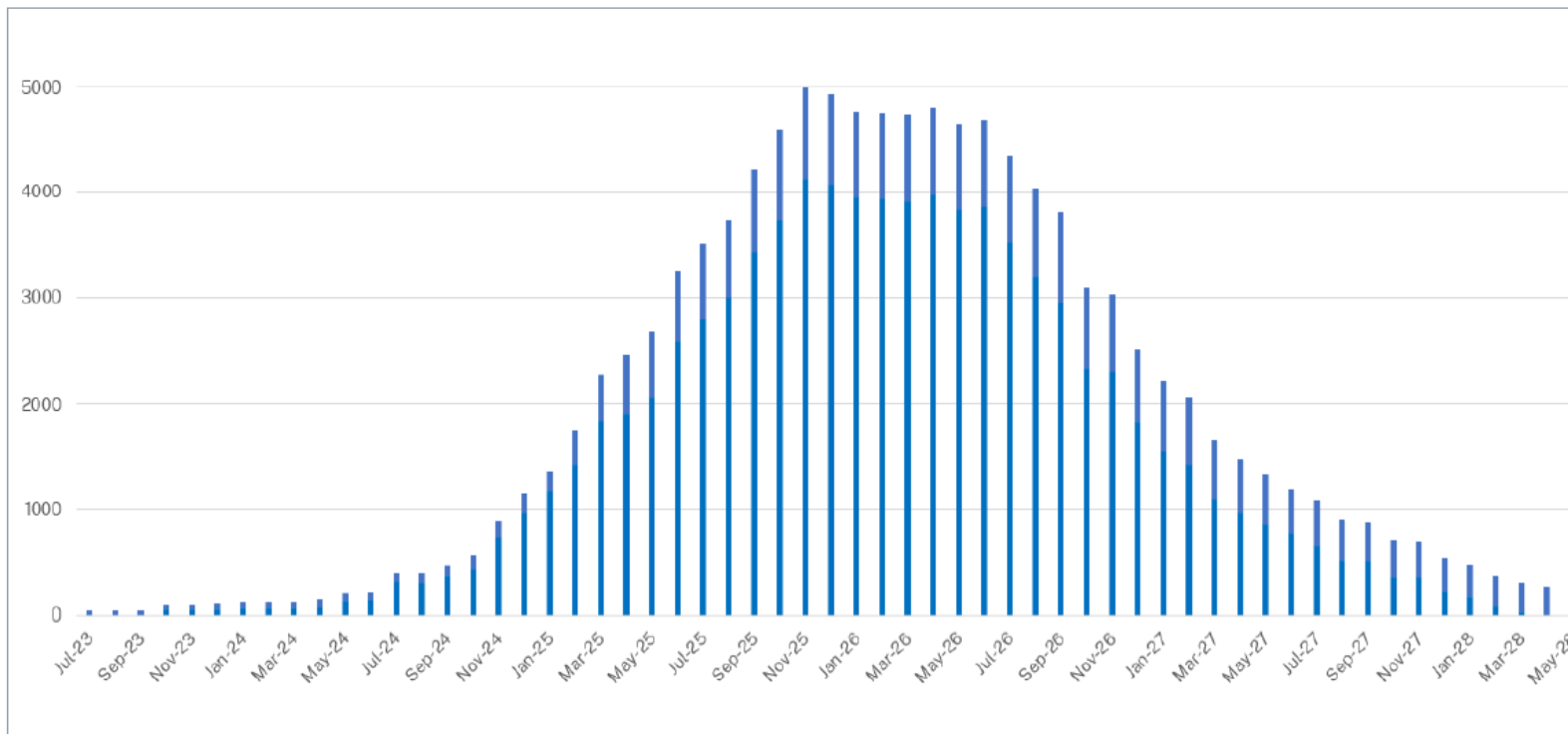


Figure 5: Workforce projection for the REZ transmission project and major generation projects with planned connections to the Central-West Orana REZ transmission network (Candidate Foundation Generators). Source: EnergyCo 2022.

Addendum: Questions from Sal Edwards

April 2023 CRG Meeting Questions from Community, via Sal Edwards	Answer
<p>EnergyCo Website: There are two main sections of the EnergyCo website applicable to the CWO REZ, the CWO REZ Section (Under Renewable Energy Zones) and the CWO Transmission Project (Under Projects). Much of the information included under the <i>Transmission Line Project section</i> SHOULD be under the REZ Section Eg. CRG Minutes, Project updates etc. The CRG is not a Transmission Line Project CRG, it is a REZ CRG. Access to information for community is difficult due to the scale of the project and the lack of collaboration between REZ Stake-Holders for providing this information, it is vital that all REZ information is easily accessible. Q: Could EnergyCo please review the structure of the Website and placement of associated information, having these TWO separate sections of information is confusing. And incorrectly placing information and updates is also preventing this from being accessible. The Transmission Line Project information, should all be located under the REZ page, and all REZ information should be located under the REZ section, not the transmission line project page.</p>	<p>Unfortunately, these two sections of the website are unable to be integrated at this time. There may be future revisions to the website however none are planned in the short-term. This feedback will be considered for future website changes.</p> <p>In the meantime, EnergyCo has updated the CWO REZ page to include information about the Community Reference Group under the heading 'community consultation'. There are new links added to help direct users to the relevant information.</p>
<p>Conflicting Maps of Corridor: Having had conflicting maps of corridor location online and on the iPad at Community Info Sessions, could EnergyCo please step out the communication process and timing of communications in regards to potential acquisition for landholders that may have been included on those maps?</p>	<p>Consultation with affected landowners has been ongoing since early 2022 when EnergyCo announced a revised study corridor for the REZ transmission project. EnergyCo initially contacted landowners via letter, with subsequent engagement being managed via our dedicated Land Acquisition Managers based in the region.</p> <p>In the scoping report released in September 2022, there was a deviation in the corridor in the vicinity of Ulan Road at Turill. The most up to date version of the study corridor was presented in the maps shown at EnergyCo's September information sessions and on our online interactive map. This amendment was done to align with the previous alignment planned by Tilt Renewables for the development of the 330kV transmission line to the Liverpool Range Wind Farm. EnergyCo's land team contacted impacted landowners prior to the scoping report being released. It is important to note that the corridor has been subject to ongoing development and refinement since this time and there may be further changes as a result of ongoing design investigations and landowner consultation.</p> <p>We expect to begin the process of acquiring transmission easements over the coming months (Q2 2023). This will include issuing opening letters to affected property owners as the first step in the formal acquisition process.</p> <p>The final transmission route will be presented in the Environmental Impact Statement which is planned for</p>

	<p>public exhibition in Q3 this year. The alignment will take into account a range of factors, including landowner feedback, distance to dwellings, geography, design constraints, environment and other impacts.</p>
<p>Detailed findings of Cumulative impact studies (6): When will the detailed findings of the cumulative impact studies be released to community? Noting that the content of the <i>Coordinating community impacts and benefits in the REZ</i> report released March 2023 is primarily a summary and contains key findings in a very broad context and details where EnergyCo is continuing consultation or consolidating information etc but lacks detailed specifics in regards to the impacts identified and solutions being acted upon.</p>	<p>Further information about proposed initiatives resulting from EnergyCo's research will be provided later this year via an Implementation Plan (mid-2023 TBC). We will notify the community once this is available.</p> <p>A further update on this topic will be provided in the CRG presentation.</p>
<p>EnergyCo announcement of land procured for Worker's Camps: Is it true that EnergyCo has been in contact with neighbouring landholders to land that EnergyCo has acquired for Worker's Camps to advise of purchase and purpose for land? If yes, would this not be helpful information to advise CRG member's of? I have received two phone calls asking me of my knowledge of this, to which I have replied – nothing?</p>	<p>EnergyCo has purchased, on-market, a block of land at 118 Neeleys Lane, Cassilis. EnergyCo is developing plans for the proposed ancillary site which will be subject to assessment and approval as part of the Environmental Impact Statement. Neighbouring residents have been informed of the purchase, however no public announcement has been made. EnergyCo is carrying out further investigations to confirm how the site will be used prior to carrying out further engagement with the community.</p>
<p>Workers Camp strategy and Plan of Delivery: As with previous question regarding detail around cumulative impact findings and solutions, could EnergyCo provide information regarding the Worker's Camp strategy for the Transmission Line project and the Plan of Delivery? And also clarify, how this Worker's Camp strategy has been evaluated from a REZ perspective on Workforce Accommodation?</p>	<p>The transmission Network Operator is expected to require multiple temporary workforce camps to support construction of the REZ transmission network. While land has been purchased at Cassilis for potential use as a temporary work camp (subject to planning approval), we need to carry out further investigation work over the coming months to confirm the overall strategy for workforce accommodation and other proposed camp sites. The Environmental Impact Statement will provide a detailed assessment of proposed workforce accommodation camp sites for the transmission project. The EIS will be displayed for public exhibition in Q3 this year.</p> <p>In terms of workforce accommodation across the REZ, EnergyCo is continuing to consult with Candidate Foundation Generators and the Department of Planning and Environment to investigate potential joint workforce accommodation solutions. There are a number of constraints being assessed including planning regulations, industrial relations, commercial risks and other issues. EnergyCo will provide a detailed update on temporary workforce accommodation at the July CRG meeting.</p>
<p>In regards to OSOM traffic and Merriwa and the Golden Highway, could EnergyCo list the community stakeholders they working with in Merriwa and the Upper Hunter?</p>	<p>Community consultation has not yet been carried out on oversize and over-mass (OSOM) vehicle movements between the Port of Newcastle and the REZ. For context on timing, OSOM movements are expected to start from 2025. We are still in the initial planning stages for OSOM deliveries and we are consulting with</p>

	<p>key stakeholders to understand the community impacts from these activities.</p> <p>Discussions are in progress with Transport for NSW, the Department of Planning and Environment and Candidate Foundation Generators to confirm the scope, approval pathway and delivery of this work. Consultation will be carried out with affected communities once further details are confirmed.</p> <p>We encourage community members to contact us at any time if they would like to discuss the current status of this work.</p>
<p>Community Access to EnergyCo: Would EnergyCo consider a regular presence at say a project proponent’s office in community to answer community questions in person? Eg, Tilt or ACEN office in Coolah, once a month or once a fortnight for a day? Also, question for both EnergyCo and Proponents, would you consider regular interview times on Local Radio for the sharing of information etc. Eg. Three Rivers Radio</p>	<p>EnergyCo is not considering a presence at proponents’ offices at this time.</p> <p>However, we recently implemented a schedule of monthly pop-up events at local venues so people can speak with our team face-to-face. Upcoming events are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 29 April, Gilgandra Show • Saturday 13 May, Wellington Show • Monday 15 May, outside Dunedoo Newsagency, 10am to 2pm • Tuesday 16 May, outside Coolah IGA, 10am to 2pm • Wednesday 17 May, outside Gulgong IGA, 10am to 2pm • Monday 19 June, outside Dunedoo Newsagency, 10am to 2pm • Tuesday 20 June, outside Coolah IGA, 10am to 2pm • Wednesday 21 June, outside Gulgong IGA, 10am to 2pm <p>If the CRG can share an email address for Three Rivers Radio, we will add them to EnergyCo’s media distribution list to ensure they receive future media announcements about the project. In addition, we would also be happy to add any local media outlets to our e-newsletter distribution list to ensure they receive our latest project updates via email.</p> <p>Local media outlets are welcome to pass on interview requests and we will forward them to EnergyCo’s media unit to coordinate a response. For context, the project team is not authorised to provide comments directly to the media, so any requests must be managed via the media unit.</p>
<p>Request an update from EnergyCo on the Community Info Webinar that was postponed? Is this to be rescheduled? Will this include information on impacts as well as community benefits?</p>	<p>EnergyCo has no plans to reschedule a community webinar at this stage, however we will consider webinars for future rounds of engagement.</p> <p>For context, at the time of cancellation, there were 38 webinar registrations and about two thirds of these were from industry stakeholders such as renewable</p>

	<p>energy developers rather than members of the community.</p>
<p>Request an update from EnergyCo on their review into how they engage with communities eg. Coolah</p>	<p>EnergyCo is not carrying out a specific review into how communities are engaged in the REZ. However, we welcome ongoing feedback to help improve our engagement activities.</p> <p>As an example of how we are listening to community feedback on our engagement, we have recently started a program of pop-up events to increase our presence in local communities.</p>
<p>How and what the IPC decision process might look like for projects that are required to be reviewed by the IPC, inc time-lines etc?</p>	<p>The Independent Planning Commission (IPC) is an independent body which operates separately to the Department Planning and Environment and other NSW Government agencies. The IPC review would not apply to the REZ transmission network because the Minister for Planning is the consent authority SSI / CSSI projects. The IPC process would apply to SSD projects where there are more than 50 public submissions objecting to the application, or where the Council within whose are the application is located objects to the project, or where the applicant makes a reportable political donation.</p> <p>The IPC has information available on their website to explain their role and the process they follow in planning decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IPC’s responsibilities • Their role in the planning system • Their decision-making process • Frequently asked questions <p>EnergyCo understands the timing of the IPC process can vary depending on the complexity of the project. However, because the IPC review typically involves holding a public meeting, and in some cases a public hearing, including the requirement to publicly notify these events, it may add 2-3 months to the process.</p> <p>Further advice can be requested by contacting the IPC on 02 9383 2100 or by emailing ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au.</p>