

Cumulative impacts

Central-West Orana REZ transmission project

September 2023

EnergyCo is delivering the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) to provide a clean, affordable and reliable power supply for energy consumers across NSW. The Central-West Orana REZ transmission project will involve the construction of new transmission lines, energy hubs, switching stations and related infrastructure. The new REZ network infrastructure will enable renewable energy from solar, wind and storage projects to be distributed to energy consumers across the State via the existing NSW transmission network.

Overview

As part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project, EnergyCo has prepared a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) to assess the potential cumulative impacts from the REZ transmission project and other existing and potential future renewable, infrastructure and mining projects in the REZ.

Assessment approach

The CIA was prepared in line with the Department of Planning and Environment's *Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects* (2022) and included a review of the strategic, local and project contexts and available information on other relevant potential future developments in the REZ. Community and stakeholder feedback including consultation with local councils and other government agencies has also been considered.

Understanding cumulative impacts

Cumulative impacts are the result of incremental, ongoing and combined effects of human actions and natural changes over time and can be both positive and negative. They can be caused by the combined effects of one project or many projects in an area.

Within the Central-West Orana region, a significant number of new developments are currently proposed, approved, under construction or in operation. This includes major renewable energy generation and storage projects within the REZ as well as other infrastructure and mining projects.

These developments are expected to benefit the region over the long term through substantial investment, economic benefits and job opportunities. In the short term, these developments may impact communities and the environment during construction, including changes to visual amenity, traffic and biodiversity impacts as well as demand for services such as accommodation, retail and emergency services.

EnergyCo has prepared an EIS for the REZ transmission project. You can find information about cumulative impacts in **Chapter 20: Cumulative impacts** and **Appendix E: Cumulative impact assessment**. For information about the EIS exhibition, including details of upcoming information sessions and how to make a submission, visit energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo.

What cumulative impacts have been identified?

The most significant potential cumulative impacts for the project, in combination with other relevant projects under planning and development or in construction, are outlined below. Mitigation measures to reduce some of these cumulative impacts for the transmission project can be found in the relevant chapters of the EIS.

Cumulative impact



Land use, property and agriculture, including temporary construction impacts such as traffic, noise and dust.



Visual amenity changes where multiple renewable energy projects are in construction or operation.



Biodiversity, including cumulative impacts to local flora and fauna species and habitats.



Aboriginal heritage, including cumulative impacts to Aboriginal heritage sites in the region as well as potential positive impacts from conservation, heritage interpretation and engagement with Aboriginal communities.



Social, such as increased demand for social services and impacts to social cohesion due to differing community views towards renewable energy projects in the area.



Economic, such as direct and indirect economic benefits to the region, increased demand for labour and goods and services and temporary population growth during construction.



Noise and vibration from the transmission project and other nearby projects during construction.

How will the REZ transmission project address cumulative impacts?

Under the NSW planning system, the approach to assessing cumulative impacts acknowledges that each project is required to mitigate its own impacts to acceptable levels and minimise the overall contribution to cumulative impacts. However, EnergyCo also recognises that not all REZ-related cumulative impacts can be addressed through a project level approach alone, requiring a region-wide, collaborative approach between EnergyCo, renewable energy developers, councils and government agencies.

As Infrastructure Planner for the REZs in NSW, EnergyCo has been carrying out extensive ongoing engagement with key stakeholders to inform how REZ-wide cumulative impacts will be managed. For more information, please see the fact sheet on coordinating impacts and benefits in the REZ on our website at energyco.nsw.gov.au.

About EnergyCo

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is a statutory authority responsible for leading the delivery of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) under the NSW Government's Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap. For more information, visit our website at energyco.nsw.gov.au/about-energyco.


Contact Us

For more information about the Central-West Orana REZ project, you can visit our website or contact the project team:

 cwo@energyco.nsw.gov.au

 1800 032 101

 energyco.nsw.gov.au

 If you need help understanding this information, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** and ask them to call us on **1800 061 114**.

EnergyCo wants to hear what you think about our plans. If you have questions or want to give feedback, please get in touch with our team. You can find more information on our website by scanning the QR code or by visiting energyco.nsw.gov.au.

