

## Media Release

15 May 2025

### Expressions of interest invited for NSW's largest renewable energy zone

The NSW Government is inviting Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the network operator for the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) – a major step in upgrading the grid to keep the lights on and unlock clean, affordable energy.

The successful network operator will design, construct, finance, operate and maintain the new transmission lines and related infrastructure such as energy hubs, that will connect the state's largest REZ to NSW homes and businesses.

It will boost investment and new jobs in regional NSW needing about 6,000 construction workers, and a skilled workforce ready to take on the job.

We are looking for a network operator that will support regional job opportunities including building new skills and supporting local supply chains.

After seeking registrations from interested parties in March this year, there has been strong market interest and EnergyCo has invited 19 parties to proceed to the EOI stage.

We are looking for a long-term partner with strong experience building and operating high voltage transmission networks, and a commitment to build strong relationships with our communities.

The network operator will also need to maintain working relationships with landowners, work closely with local councils, provide opportunities for First Nations people and have a long-term view on working with the community.

The EOI stage will close on 25 June 2025 with shortlisted applicants to be announced in Q3 2025.

For more details on the network operator procurement process visit [energyco.nsw.gov.au/ne/network-operator](https://energyco.nsw.gov.au/ne/network-operator)

**Attributable to EnergyCo CEO, Hannah McCaughey:**

“This is a significant milestone not just for the New England REZ, but as part of the state's plan to upgrade the grid and unlock NSW's abundant solar and wind resources.

“We’re looking for a partner who shares our commitment to delivering the new renewable energy the people of NSW need, delivering benefits to regional businesses and communities, and in working effectively with the local community and landowners.

“This is about building a reliable energy system with the right infrastructure in the right place at the right time so we can keep the lights on.”

Attributable to New England REZ Project Director, Doug Parris:

“We are pleased to have had really strong market interest in the network operator package which will ensure we can get on with the job and meet our delivery timeframes.”

Further information:

#### Where is the New England Renewable Energy Zone?

EnergyCo is in the early stages of planning the REZ in the New England region, centred around Armidale. New England has some of the best natural energy resources in the country.

The region is also close to the existing transmission lines that connect to the NSW east coast, Upper Hunter and Queensland, which provides opportunities to increase NSW’s energy resilience.

#### What is the New England REZ project?

The project is the core of the New England REZ and the Network Operator’s scope includes new transmission infrastructure, energy hubs and enabling infrastructure.

The project is planned to be delivered in two stages to provide a transfer capacity of 6GW, with stage 1 to deliver 2.4GW by 2032 and stage 2 to deliver an additional 3.6GW by 2034.

#### What happens next?

The procurement process will run through 2025 and 2026 with the formal procurement stage, known as the Request for Proposal, which involves the shortlisted applicants preparing detailed tenders to be assessed by EnergyCo, expected to begin later in the year.

It will take around two years to appoint the network operator, which provides the time for tenders to be prepared, submitted and evaluated, as well as to receive regulatory approvals.

The contract for the network operator is expected to be awarded in 2027, with construction expected to start after that.

ENDS.

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