

**Penny Sharpe**

Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy  
Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage  
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council



## Media Release

# Australia's first Renewable Energy Zone reaches milestone

Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023

The Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) has reached a major milestone with the lodgement of an Environmental Impact Statement for a transmission project which will connect the REZ to the electricity grid. It is the first REZ to reach this stage of development.

Once complete, the Central West Orana REZ will deliver at least 3 gigawatts of transmitted electricity, which is enough to power 1.4 million homes. It will take NSW closer to the target of replacing 12 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy generation, and 2 GW of long-duration storage by 2030. The transmission and generation projects in the Central West Orana REZ will deliver up to \$10 billion in private investment to the region and around 5,000 jobs at the peak of construction.

The Central West Orana REZ is approximately 20,000 square kilometres, and takes in cities and towns including Dubbo, Dunedoo and Mudgee.

The Environmental Impact Statement is the result of more than two years of technical studies and community consultation. This includes detailed assessment of potential impacts on visual amenity, agriculture, roads, noise, biodiversity, water resources and cumulative impacts on community infrastructure and services such as housing supply and health services in the region.

The Department of Planning and Environment will publicly exhibit the Environmental Impact Statement between 28 September 2023 and 26 October 2023. EnergyCo will also be hosting information sessions to help the community learn more about the Environmental Impact Statement.

All stakeholders are encouraged to provide feedback via the [NSW Planning Portal](#) before the Department of Planning and Environment makes a determination.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy Penny Sharpe:

“The lodgement of the Environmental Impact Statement demonstrates our commitment to ensuring NSW households, businesses and industry can access clean, affordable and reliable energy as coal-fired power stations retire.

“It shows the NSW Government is getting the roadmap to renewables back on track, so we can ensure there is enough renewable energy to replace aging coal-fired power stations.

“The Central-West Orana transmission project will be capable of connecting at least 3GW of renewable energy generated by wind and solar projects, which is enough to power a quarter of the state's energy demand, as well as another 2GW of firming storage.

“We will be working closely with communities through the Environmental Impact Statement process.”

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