

# Meeting Minutes

## Central-West Orana REZ Steering Committee Meeting No. 13

17 July 2025

1.00pm to 3.00pm

Council Chambers, Mid-Western Regional Council and online

### Meeting Minutes

| Item. | Description                        | Lead                    | Points discussed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| 1     | Acknowledgement of Country         | Brad Cam (Co Chair)     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2     | Introductions                      | Brad Cam (Co Chair)     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 3     | Review of Previous Meeting Actions | Brad Cam (Co Chair)     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The previous meeting actions were discussed.</li><li>- <b>An updated CWO REZ Steer Co Action Register is attached.</b></li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 4     | Co-Chairs Update (20 minutes)      | Yvette Lloyd (Co Chair) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- An update on the Project Groups was provided by the Chairs and is outlined below:</li><li>- <b>Environmental Delivery:</b> Yvette Lloyd provided an overview of the last project group meeting which was held on 1 May 2025. The CWO REZ water study was discussed, and councils requested an update on the Study's progress. DCCEEW outlined next steps within Agenda item 7.</li><li>- <b>Housing and Accommodation:</b> Steven Jennings provided an overview of the last project group meeting which was held on 13 December 2024. The need to finalise the CWO REZ Housing &amp; Accommodation Strategy was discussed. DPHI outlined next steps within Agenda item 7.</li><li>- <b>Social Services (RLE Sub-Group):</b> Melissa Schrader provided an update on the last meeting which was held on 13 May 2025. It was discussed that the group</li></ul> |

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|       |                                       |              | <p>has now adopted a list of strategic priorities and associated outcomes, including the delivery of a CWO REZ Health Services Study which is discussed in Agenda Item 9.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Transport:</b> Damien Pfeiffer provided an overview of the last project group meeting which was held on 25 June 2025. This included an overview of the local road issues, the Port 2 REZ project, and the TfNSW Golden Highway Corridor Assessment Study. Councils indicated their concern regarding renewable projects outside the CWO REZ zone that were putting pressure on local roads. TfNSW indicated that they will work with councils on addressing any issues identified within the Study once it is complete. Mid-Western Regional Council welcomed the Study as a possible way in which to guide contributions to local roads.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 5     | Central-West Orana REZ Project Update | Amer Hussein | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An update was provided on the CWO REZ project and is outlined below:</li> <li>- <b>Transmission Line Project</b> - Construction commenced on 17 June 2025, and work has begun at Barigan Creek Switching Station &amp; Merotherie Energy Hub. Merotherie Road and Golden Highway Intersection Upgrade has commenced.</li> <li>- <b>Port 2 REZ Project</b> – work on several key intersections is underway including Wybong/Golden Highway, Sandy Hollow; Golden Highway/Vinegaroy, Cassilis; Castlereagh Highway/Barney’s Reef, Birriwa; and Golden Highway/Saxa Road, Elong Elong.</li> <li>- <b>Mudgee Maintenance Facility</b> – ACERES is looking to build the Facility prior to the completion of transmission line at 1 March Avenue, Caerleon for use by operations and maintenance teams. The Facility will attract up to 50 FTE positions, with local recruitment strategies proposed.</li> <li>- <b>Industry and Aboriginal Participation Plan (IAPP)</b> – An IAPP has been developed, with quarterly skills and employment reporting</li> </ul> |

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|       |             |      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Social Impact Management (SIM) Plan</b> – A SIM Plan has been developed for the CWO REZ Transmission and is available at <a href="https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo/project-documents">https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo/project-documents</a>. It includes a baseline survey to be completed in late 2025 and annual reporting of the Plan to be completed in mid-2026.</li> <li>- <b>Community Information Centre</b> – ACEREZ is to open a Community Information Centre in Mudgee. The Centre will act as a hub for the community and host meetings as required.</li> <li>- <b>EnergyCo Community Sentiment Tracking</b> - there has been a significant increase in awareness of what a REZ is among people in CWO. Just over half of residents feel positive about their local REZ development, and the benefits of the REZ are increasingly recognized in CWO, especially positive economic impacts for the local area.</li> <li>- <b>Community awareness of planning process</b> - Dubbo Regional Council raised a lack of community awareness of the planning process, and how to participate in it, as an issue impacting community sentiment towards renewables. DRC have recently conducted an awareness raising workshop with its community in this regard.</li> <li>- <b>Conservation Investment Strategy (CIS)</b> – the NSW Government has developed a conservation investment strategy (CIS) has been developed for the CWO REZ to optimize focus on biodiversity restoration in the region. In addition, EnergyCo and DCCEEW are negotiating a Strategic Offset Delivery Agreement (SODA) and councils are being briefed on the SODA and associated opportunities.</li> <li>- A copy of the presentation is attached.</li> <li>- Action: DPHI to report back to Committee on existing simple &amp; easy to understand tools to raise community awareness of, and participation in, the planning system in relation to renewable projects.</li> </ul> |

| Item. | Description                                                    | Lead                         | Points discussed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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|       | Whole of Government and Regional Steering Committees           | Stephen Wills                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is currently a review of the WofG Governance underway. This could mean changes to the Regional Steering Committee TOR.</li> <li>- <b>Action: PD to provide an update on the Whole of Government and Regional Steering Committees reviews once completed.</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 7     | Cumulative impacts studies and enabling infrastructure funding | Azaria Dobson /Chris Ritchie | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An update was provided on the outcomes of the State government budget.</li> <li>- Cumulative impact studies (including water, waste and housing) have been submitted to WofG Steer Co and WofG Sub Committees for review.</li> <li>- The next step is to conduct consultation with councils on the draft studies, and develop a coordinated approach for their public release.</li> <li>- A prioritization approach for enabling infrastructure funding has been developed. Policy approaches and alternative funding sources are being explored.</li> <li>- <b>Action: EnergyCo (Azaria Dobson), in collaboration with WofG, to brief individual councils on the draft cumulative impact studies and draft prioritization approach for enabling infrastructure and seek further feedback.</b></li> </ul> |
| 8     | CEBP Grants                                                    | Yvette Lloyd                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Three of the four streams of the CEBP Round 1 have been awarded, and the last stream (First Nations) is to be awarded soon. Additional Local Community grants will be announced by the Minister soon following execution of funding deeds.</li> <li>- A process evaluation of Round 1 is underway by DPIRD, councils will be interviewed as part of this review.</li> <li>- EnergyCo aims to launch Round 2 of CEBP by the end of 2025 (pending approvals).</li> <li>- <b>A copy of the presentation is attached.</b></li> <li>- <b>EnergyCo (Yvette Lloyd) to provide Upper Hunter Shire Council with a list of successful CEBP (R1) grants.</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                              |

| Item. | Description                   | Lead                            | Points discussed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| 9     | CWO REZ Health Services Study | Megan Callinan, Marathon Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marathon Health provided an overview of the CWO REZ Health Services Study which has been commissioned by EnergyCo.</li> <li>- The Study aims to provide guidance to renewable energy projects to meet the immediate and long-term health needs of their workforce, particularly those living in Temporary Workforce Accommodation; and to develop solutions to minimise potential impacts on, and where feasible strengthen, community access to local health services.</li> <li>- The Scope of the Study is the transmission line and 10 access right holder projects within the CWO REZ, located within the 4 local government areas: Dubbo Regional, Mid-Western Regional, Warrumbungle Shire and Upper Hunter Shire. It is however noted that outcomes of the Study may benefit other renewable energy projects.</li> <li>- Deliverables of the Study include production of service models that can be used by proponents to guide planning of health services to keep their workforce well; identifying opportunities to strengthen the existing health system in the CWO REZ; and recommendations for further investigation.</li> <li>- A copy of the presentation is attached.</li> </ul> |
| 10    | Other Business                | Brad Cam (Co Chair)             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No other business was recorded.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 11    | Next Meeting                  |                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The next meeting is scheduled for <b>Monday 15 September</b>, from 9.30am – 12 noon, via Teams.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 12    | Meeting Close                 |                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting closed at 2.55pm</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

# Attendance

| Name                    | Organisation                                                    | Position                                                                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Core Membership</b>  |                                                                 |                                                                                      |
| Brad Cam (Co Chair)     | Mid-Western Regional Council                                    | General Manager                                                                      |
| Yvette Lloyd (Co Chair) | EnergyCo                                                        | Director, Regional Coordination CWO REZ                                              |
| Murray Wood             | Dubbo Regional Council                                          | Chief Executive Officer                                                              |
| Greg McDonald           | Upper Hunter Shire Council                                      | General Manager                                                                      |
| Stephen Wills           | Premier's Department                                            | Executive Director, Regional Delivery                                                |
| Chris Ritchie           | Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)       | Director Industry Assessments                                                        |
| <b>Other Attendees</b>  |                                                                 |                                                                                      |
| Erin Player             | Warrumbungle Shire Council                                      | REZ Coordinator                                                                      |
| Julian Geddes           | Mid-Western Regional Council                                    | Director Operations / Environmental Project Group Chair                              |
| Steven Jennings         | Dubbo Regional Council                                          | Director Development and Environment / Housing and Accommodation Project Group Chair |
| Melissa Schrader        | Premier's Department                                            | Associate Director, Regional Coordination                                            |
| Iwan Davies             | DPHI                                                            | Director, Energy Assessments                                                         |
| Andrew Jordan           | DPHI                                                            | Acting Director, Energy and Resources Policy                                         |
| Simon Mould             | Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water | Water and Energy Coordinator, NSW, Water Strategy, Water Group                       |
| Damien Pfeiffer         | Transport NSW                                                   | Director, Development Service                                                        |

|                   |                                                                   |                                                                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Stephen Guihot    | Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) | Economic Development Manager, Regional Development & Delivery           |
| Lana Hall         | Premiers' Department                                              | Associate Director - Delivery, Infrastructure and Regional Coordination |
| Azaria Dobson     | EnergyCo                                                          | Executive Director Interface & Strategic Coordination                   |
| Amer Hussein      | EnergyCo                                                          | Director, Community and Place CWO                                       |
| Omair Ali         | EnergyCo                                                          | Manager, Cumulative Impacts CWO REZ                                     |
| Michael Tyrpenou  | EnergyCo                                                          | Manager, Strategic Delivery Manager                                     |
| Catriona Jennings | EnergyCo                                                          | Senior Advisor, Regional Coordination CWO REZ                           |
| Megan Callinan    | Marathon Health                                                   | CEO                                                                     |

## Apologies

| Name            | Organisation               | Position                                                                               |
|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lindsay Mason   | Warrumbungle Shire Council | General Manager                                                                        |
| Mathew Pringle  | Upper Hunter Shire Council | Director Environmental & Community Services /Transport & Logistics Project Group Chair |
| Dena Jacobs     | Infrastructure NSW (INSW)  | Executive Director, Strategy Planning and Innovation                                   |
| Erica Friesz    | INSW                       | Director, Strategy Planning and Innovation                                             |
| Craig Jenkins   | DPIRD                      | Director, Economic Development Network                                                 |
| Angela Shepherd | DPIRD                      | Deputy Director, Western Regional Development                                          |
| Gerry Collins   | Premier's Department       | Director, Western Regional Coordination                                                |

|              |          |                                                    |
|--------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Clay Preshaw | DPHI     | Executive Director, Energy, Resources and Industry |
| Ash Albury   | EnergyCo | Executive Director, Planning and Communities       |
| Justin Roach | EnergyCo | Director, Strategic Coordination and Interface     |

## Acronym Reference List

| Term    | Definition                                                |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| CEBP    | Community Employment Benefits Program                     |
| CFG     | Candidate Foundation Generator                            |
| CI      | Cumulative Impacts                                        |
| CWO     | Central-West Orana                                        |
| DPHI    | Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure        |
| DPIRD   | Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development |
| DRC     | Dubbo Regional Council                                    |
| EPA     | NSW Environment Protection Authority                      |
| FAQ     | Frequently Asked Questions                                |
| INSW    | Infrastructure NSW                                        |
| GM      | General Manager                                           |
| LGA     | Local Government Area                                     |
| MWRC    | Mid-Western Regional Council                              |
| NO      | Network Operator                                          |
| PD      | NSW Premier's Department                                  |
| P2R     | Port to REZ                                               |
| REACT   | Renewable Energy Awareness and Career Training            |
| REZ     | Renewable Energy Zone                                     |
| SSD     | State Significant Development                             |
| SteerCo | Steering Committee                                        |
| TfNSW   | Transport for New South Wales                             |
| ToR     | Terms of Reference                                        |
| TWA     | Temporary Workers Accommodation                           |
| UHSC    | Upper Hunter Shire Council                                |
| WofG    | Whole of Government                                       |
| WSC     | Warrumbungle Shire Council                                |