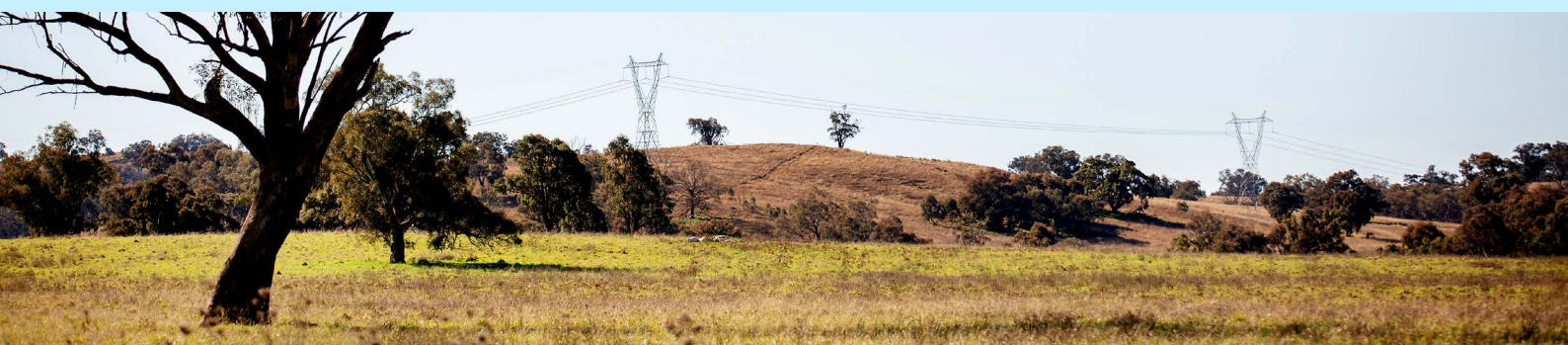


Community Update

Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

November 2025

EnergyCo acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Wiradjuri, Wailwan (also known as Weilwan and Wayilwan), and Gamilaroi (also known as Gamilaraay and Kamilaroi) countries.



A message from Central-West Orana REZ Project Director, Peter Bennett

Construction is now underway on the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) transmission project. This milestone marks a pivotal moment for the future of energy in our state.

We recognise the vital role regional communities play in hosting the power lines and renewables we need. We are committed to working with you to minimise impacts and maximise benefits from this investment in regional NSW.

The Central-West Orana REZ is critical to ensuring the future reliability and security of NSW's energy system. As ageing coal-fired power stations retire and electricity demand grows, projects like this are essential to accelerating our transformation to clean energy.

The pace of securing our energy future and the scale of the challenge means multiple critical State Significant Infrastructure projects must move forward with both urgency and care.

That's why we're deeply grateful to those who have contributed feedback throughout the planning and delivery phases. Your input improves the project, informs decision-making, and continues to shape how construction proceeds.

In partnership with ACERZ, we will continue to engage transparently, seek out your views, and give your feedback full consideration.

Above all, we are committed to delivering this REZ in a way that respects the region and delivers enduring value to the communities who host it. The transition must benefit not only our energy future, but the people and places that make it possible. We are working to deliver real opportunities for local employment, investment in regional development, and ensure ongoing support through the lifecycle of the infrastructure.

Together, we are building the foundation for a cleaner, more resilient energy system — one that ensures reliable, affordable power for everyone across NSW.

Key facts



Unlocking at least 4.5 gigawatts of new network capacity by the late-2020s



New transmission infrastructure will connect solar and wind projects to the grid



Expected to bring up to \$25 billion in private investment to the region

What is the Central-West Orana REZ?

EnergyCo is the NSW Government agency responsible for delivering the transmission infrastructure and access schemes to connect selected generation development projects to the NSW electricity grid.

The state's first Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) is in the Central-West Orana region, chosen for its strong solar and wind resource potential, proximity to high-voltage transmission lines, and considerations of land use and environmental values.

The REZ is centred between Dubbo, Dunedoo and Mudgee. It also takes in Gulgong, Wellington, Gilgandra, Coolah and other towns.

The Central-West Orana REZ has two core parts:

Central-West Orana REZ transmission project

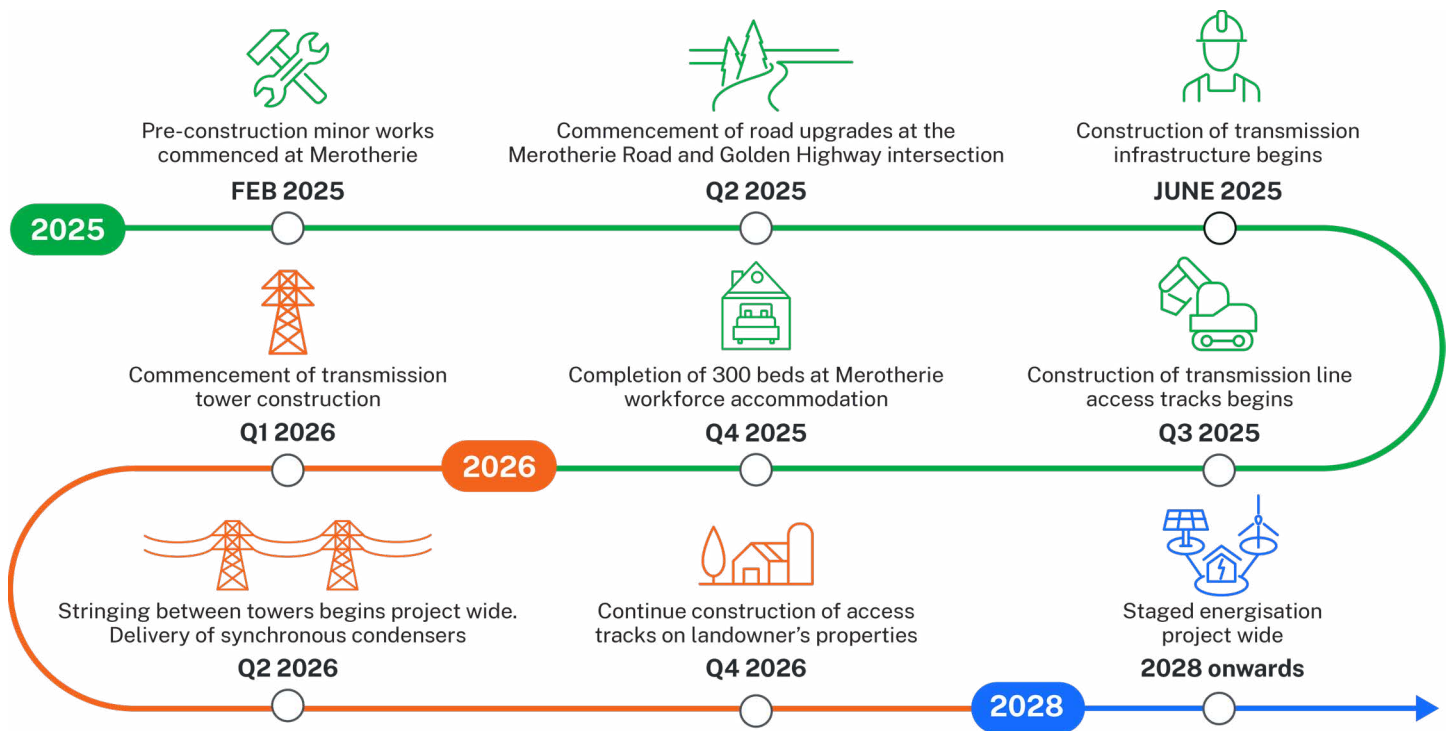
- In April 2025 EnergyCo appointed ACERESZ, a partnership comprised of ACCIONA, COBRA and Endeavour Energy, to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the Central-West Orana REZ transmission infrastructure for 35 years.
- The project includes the new high voltage electricity transmission network, energy hubs and switching stations to connect new renewable energy generation to the NSW electricity grid.
- Construction started on the transmission infrastructure in June this year.
- Unlike any other transmission upgrade, the project was competitively procured.
- This is good news for consumers because it locks in delivery of the project at a fixed price and fixed schedule, unlocking over \$3 billion in net benefits from delivering new generation.

Access scheme renewable energy generation and storage projects

- In May 2025 EnergyCo granted access rights to 10 renewable energy generation and storage projects under an access scheme.
- The 10 projects are being developed by 6 generators – ACEN Australia, Lightsource bp, Pacific Partnerships, Potentia Energy, Squadron Energy, and Tilt Renewables.
- These projects total 7.15 GW of the 7.7 GW generation capacity available in the Central-West Orana REZ. The remaining 550MW will be awarded at a future date.

See page 6 for more information about projects that have been granted access rights and how we are working together.

Transmission project milestones



For further details about construction of the transmission project, please visit the ACERREZ website, including work notifications and construction updates: acerez.com.au/resources



Construction at Merotherie Temporary Accommodation Camp



Network capacity

Network capacity is about how much electricity the network can carry.

- It is the maximum load the system can handle without overloading.
- Think of it like how wide the pipes are that transport water.
- The network capacity for the Central-West Orana REZ is 4.5 gigawatts (GW). This is equivalent to powering around two million homes each year.



Generation capacity

Generation capacity is about how much electricity is produced.

- Like water flowing from a tap – the more you open the tap, the more water you get.
- Renewable energy is variable – the sun sets, the wind slows down. That's why generation capacity is larger than network capacity: not all sources run at once, and some energy is stored in the REZ.
- The generation capacity for the Central-West Orana REZ is 7.7 GW.

Creating value through shared benefits

EnergyCo is working closely with the community, industry partners and government to create shared benefits to the region and NSW.

By connecting multiple solar, wind, and battery projects on a shared network, the REZ can make the most of what each project offers. This planned approach will support the delivery of cheap, reliable, and clean electricity for homes and businesses across NSW, unlocking over \$3 billion in net benefits to NSW energy consumers and local communities.

These benefits, along with the community-led initiatives, public infrastructure upgrades and First Nations projects funded under the Community and Employment Benefit Program will deliver enduring value that we can all benefit from.



What are the benefits?

Improved stability of the grid

A structured and coordinated approach to planning and building renewable energy infrastructure will ensure NSW has a reliable electricity supply, reducing risks of blackouts and fluctuations.

Investment in regional development

Up to \$25 billion in private investment will drive growth in the region. Generators will directly invest \$255 million into communities hosting their projects through Voluntary Planning Agreements with Councils, their own community initiatives and payments to farmers and landholders hosting their projects.

New skills and training pathways

Around 266 apprentice jobs will be created throughout construction. Generators have committed that an average 14 per cent of the workforce constructing these projects will be apprentices, along with First Nations business and employment opportunities.

Opportunities for local employment

The Central-West Orana REZ is expected to support an annual average of about 1,850 direct jobs in the local area during construction, and about 930 ongoing operational jobs from 2034. Additionally, renewable energy projects will require goods and services to build, operate and maintain the projects. There will be opportunities for these to be sourced locally.

Road upgrades

Upgrades will be needed to support the development of the transmission project. Once delivered, the upgrades will benefit all motorists by reducing delay times, easing travel through intersections, and improving road safety.



Minister Sharpe with EnergyCo representatives and First Nation Fund recipients.

Grants awarded

As we build a reliable energy system, the Community and Employment Benefit Program is helping to deliver lasting economic, social and environmental benefits across the Central-West Orana REZ.

The Program includes four grant streams, the First Nations Fund, Local Community Fund, Local Community Small Grants fund and the Legacy Infrastructure Fund.

The Program is administered by the NSW Government and will be funded by Central-West Orana REZ access right holders. It reflects a strong partnership between government and industry to create lasting opportunities for the region.

To date, \$66 million in grants have been awarded to projects in the Central-West Orana REZ.

In April, \$60 million in grants were awarded to 54 local projects including \$11.25 million for each of the four Councils hosting the REZ, for legacy infrastructure projects. In September, \$6 million in grants were awarded to eight projects under the First Nations Fund.

Successful projects include:

- Revitalising the Talbragar Reserve with Dubbo Local Aboriginal Land Council.
- Restoring Roofs for local social housing, and the development of community spaces with the Gilgandra Local Aboriginal Land Council.
- Funding the Wiradjuri Aboriginal Youth Connection to Culture program through the Oyster Tribe Aboriginal Corporation.
- Housing for the Aboriginal community of Wellington, restoring the Nanima Village Old School and funding a cultural heritage, and tourism officer with the Wellington Local Aboriginal Land Council.
- Restoring two State Heritage Listed structures on the site of the Town Common and rehabilitating land with the Wiradjuri Wellington Aboriginal Town Common Aboriginal Corporation.
- Installing floodlighting at Dunedoo Sports Club to 2.6 ha of community and sporting space.
- Fitting out a new classroom at Dunedoo Pre-School Kindergarten with a therapy room and specialised equipment to provide health services, inclusion and early education.
- Adding shade sails to each end of Coolah Swimming Pool and providing equipment such as lane ropes to Dunedoo Amateur Swimming Club.
- Funding the Woolly Conversations program to promote mental health awareness and suicide prevention in the shearing and wool community.
- Upgrading kitchen facilities at the Wellington Showground.
- Installing two water hydrants in Elong Elong village.
- Funding the Flying Start Mudgee program to provide early intervention supports for children aged up to 7 years in the Mudgee region who are living with identified developmental concerns.
- Helping Mid-Western Regional Council to construct affordable housing in Mudgee to attract and accommodate essential workers.

For more information please visit

energyco.nsw.gov.au/our-projects/central-west-orana-rez/community-benefits



Access scheme projects for the Central-West Orana REZ

The Central-West Orana REZ access scheme is the first of its kind in the National Electricity Market.

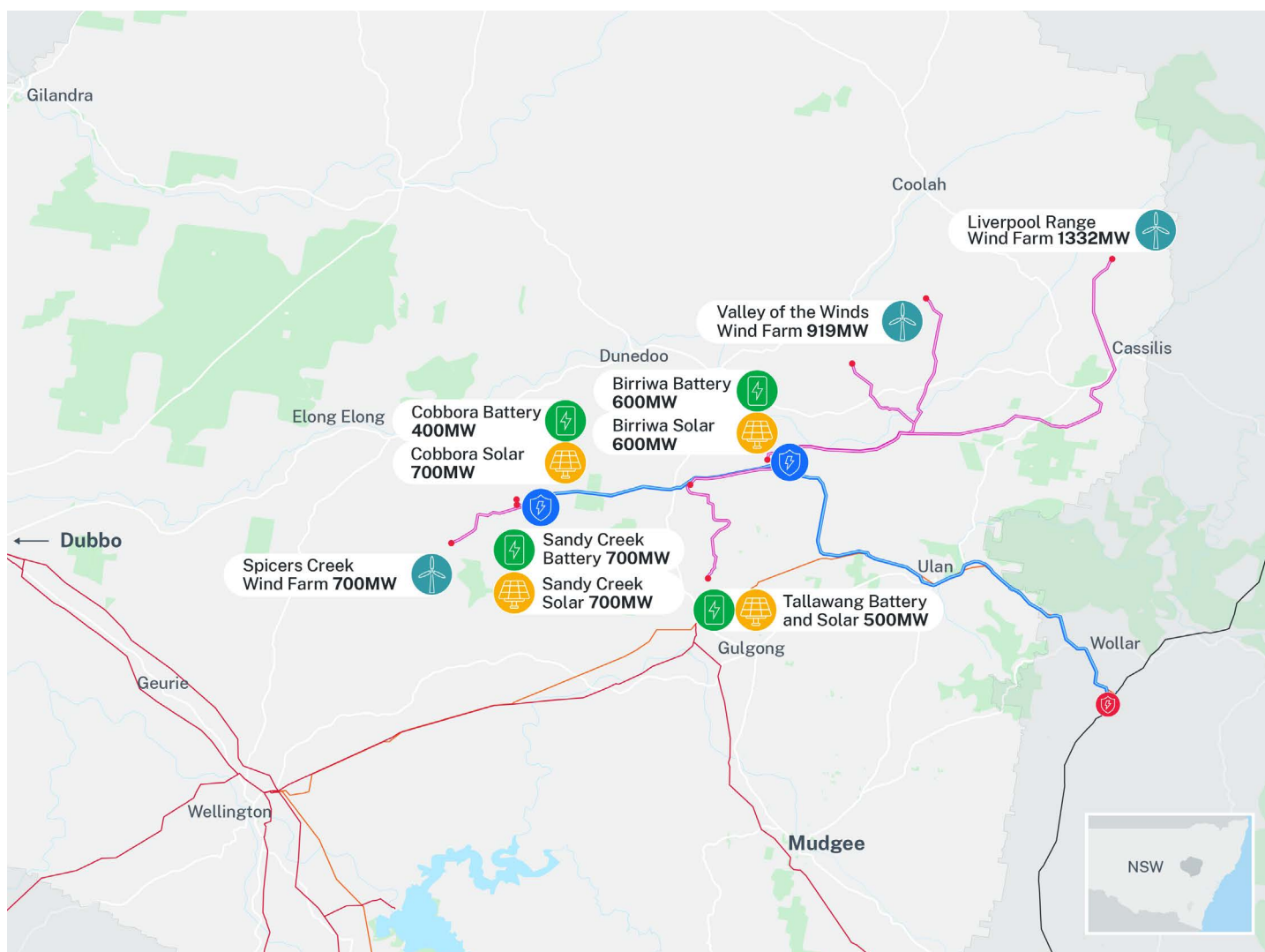
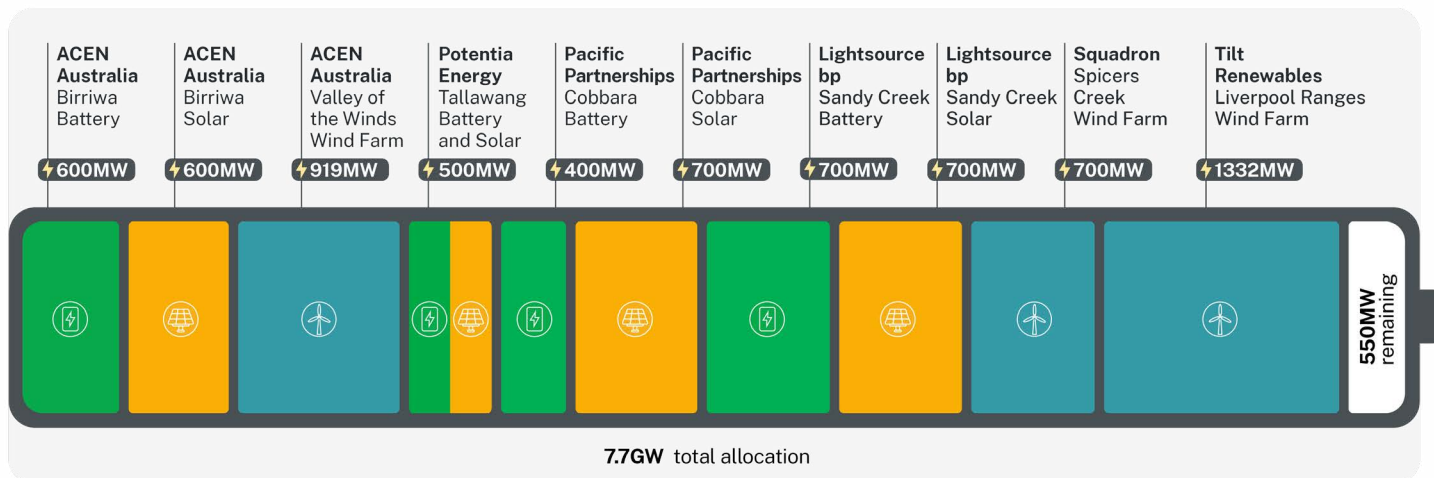
REZ access schemes are a key part in the NSW government's role to coordinate renewable energy and storage investment within REZs.

By coordinating the planning of generation and storage investment, we will help to optimise the network, reduce bills for energy consumers, and improve coordination of outcomes for local communities.

Under the Central-West Orana REZ access scheme, EnergyCo has granted access rights to 10 generation development projects, allocating 7.15 GW of the 7.7 GW generation capacity available.

The 10 projects which have been granted access rights are shown on the map on the next page.

Access right holder projects for the Central-West Orana REZ



Legend

- Authorised 330kV transmission corridor
- Existing 132kV network
- Existing 500kV network
- ⚡ Energy hub
- ⚡ Authorised 500kV transmission corridor
- Existing 330kV network
- Switching station
- ⚡ Barigan Creek switching station site

Port to REZ road upgrades

In partnership with Transport for NSW, EnergyCo is leading the upgrade of key road infrastructure to support the transportation of large renewable energy components – such as wind turbines and transformers – from the Port of Newcastle to the Central-West Orana REZ.

Construction will be completed at many locations in late 2025, with the remaining upgrades expected to be completed by mid-2026.

The first stage of the project includes 19 upgrade sites along a 320 km route, with construction already underway at several locations.



Oversize overmass vehicle carrying a turbine blade travelling on the New England Highway. Image credit - Transport for NSW



A key feature of the Port to REZ project is the inclusion of 8 new proposed pullover bays along the route strategically located to complement facilities that currently exist along the road network.

These bays are designed to:

- Minimise disruption to regular road users.
- Allow oversize and overmass (OSOM) vehicles to safely pull over.
- Improve traffic flow and safety during transport operations.

Construction of the pullover bays will start in late 2025 and be complete by mid-2026.

We appreciate the patience of the community and motorists as construction progresses.

Visit our website for further information or to read work notifications and our interactive map energyco.nsw.gov.au/our-projects/enabling-projects/port-to-rez



Port to REZ upgrade underway the Vinegaroy Road Golden Highway intersection at Cassilis, June 2025

Considering a job in renewable energy?

The Central-West Orana REZ transmission project and the 10 renewable energy generation and storage projects connecting to it, will provide significant opportunities for individuals and businesses. It is estimated it will support an annual average of about 1,850 direct jobs in the local area during construction, and about 930 ongoing operational jobs from 2034.

To see current job opportunities with our network operator, **ACERZ**, visit acerez.com.au/work-with-us

To find job opportunities with our **access right holders**, visit

ACEN

acenrenewables.com.au/work-with-us/

Lightsource bp

lightsourcebp.com/careers/

Pacific Partnerships

pacificpartnerships.com.au/work-with-us

Potentia

potentiaenergy.com.au/work-with-us/

Squadron Energy

squadronenergy.com/careers-at-sqe

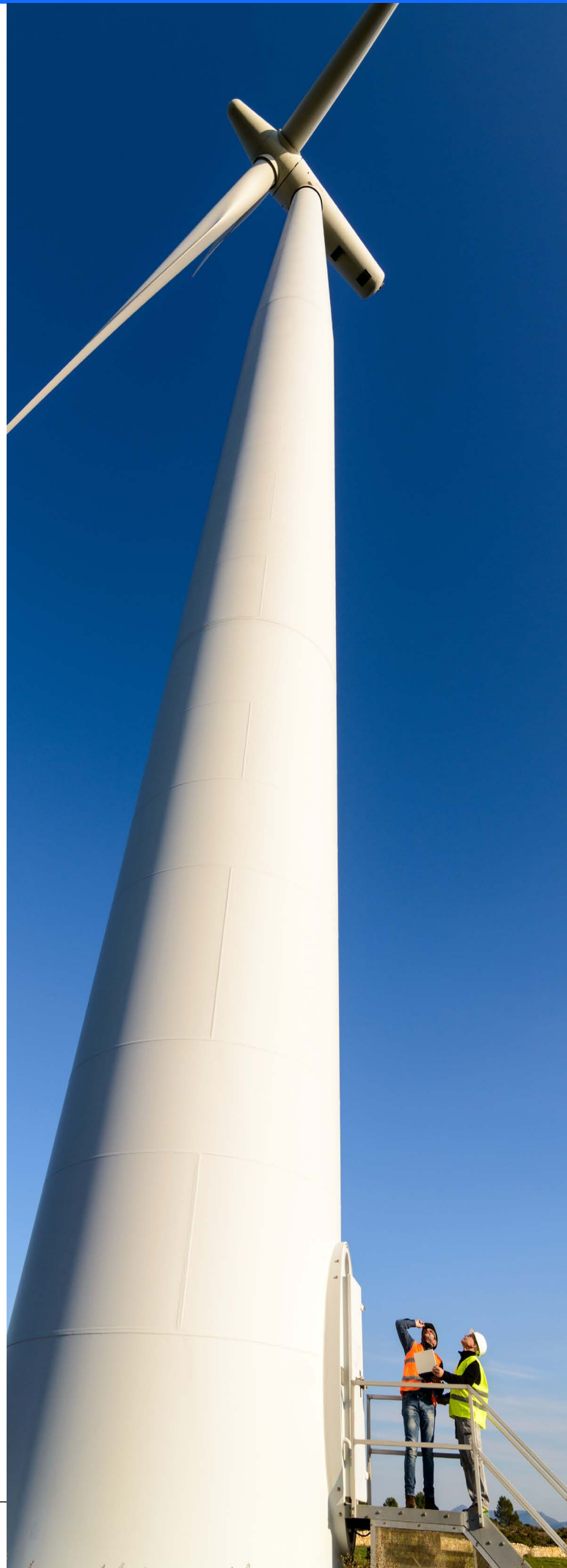
Tilt Renewables

tiltrenewables.com/careers/

Renewable energy projects will require goods and services to build, operate and maintain the projects. There are opportunities for these to be sourced locally.

Local businesses can find opportunities through the Industry Capability Network (ICN) Gateway portal.

To explore opportunities and register your business, visit gateway.icn.org.au/energynsw





New opportunity for women in the Central-West Orana region

We're proud to launch **The Women in Construction Taster Program**, supporting women to build skills and careers in renewable energy and construction.

Delivered by EnergyCo in partnership with the Department of Education, VERTO, SKIVL and Yakka Training this fully funded, accredited two-week program is designed to build confidence, skills and job readiness for women looking to take the next step into construction and energy careers.

Over the course of two weeks, participants will gain practical skills in basic machinery operation, hand and power tools, workplace health and safety and traffic control. They will also attend tailored work preparation sessions covering career planning, resume writing and interview skills.

Upon completion, participants will receive nationally recognised units of competency, including traffic control, white card and first-aid certificates and tailored career advice to support pathways into further training and employment.

The program is open to women 18+ living in the Central-West Orana REZ. The first intake was in November 2025 in Wellington.

For more information, email amcmillan@verto.org.au or call 0429 424 762.

Social Impact Management Plan – Quarter 1 report now available

The first Quarterly Monitoring Report under the Social Impact Management Plan (SIM Plan) for the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project is now available. Covering June to September 2025, the report tracks social impact indicators grouped into eight key themes.

The SIM Plan, published in June 2025, outlines how EnergyCo and the network operator, ACERZ, will manage the social impacts during construction of the transmission project.

You can view both the Quarter 1 report and the SIM Plan on our website

energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo/project-documents





Mental health and wellbeing

Free mental health services are available for all community members in the Central-West Orana REZ geographical boundary. You can talk to qualified psychologists and social workers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Up to 5 free face-to-face or phone sessions are available. If more sessions are required, your counsellor will request this on your behalf based on their clinical assessment. They will also help establish longer-term support if you need it.

To access this free and confidential service, call **1300 089 551**.

Thank you to Local Government

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Councils for their commitment to working in partnership with us. We understand and respect the crucial role Councils play in the planning and delivery of the Central-West Orana REZ.



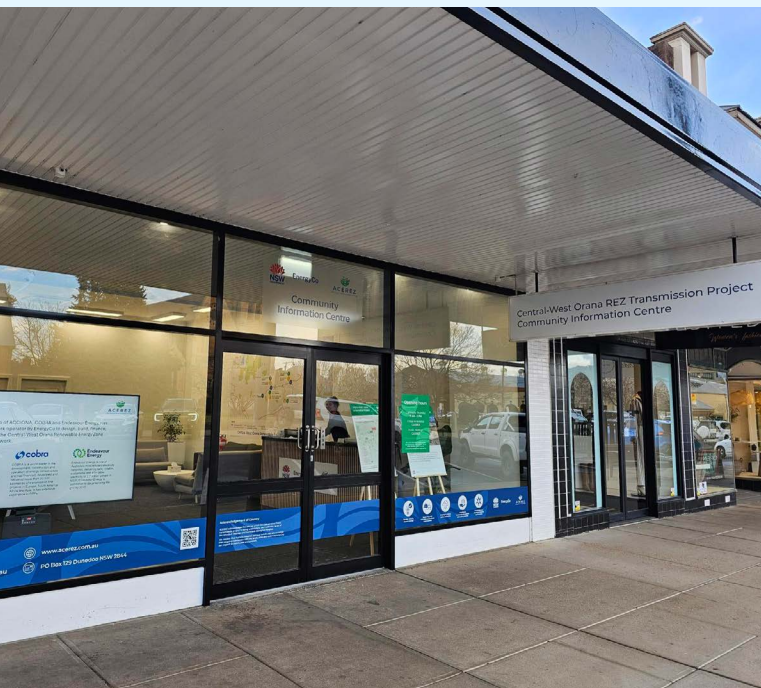
In the community

We regularly attend local events and host coffee catch ups in communities across the REZ. If you would like more information about upcoming activities, are holding an event and would like us to attend, or if you would like a briefing on the Central-West Orana REZ or the transmission project, please contact our team at the details below.

You can also talk to our team at these upcoming events or drop into the Community Information Centre:

14 Nov Coolah community drop-in session

13 Dec Made'n'Grown Market, Dunedoo



Community Information Centre now open!

A new Community Information Centre has opened in Mudgee, giving locals a central place to learn more about the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project and what it means for the region.

The centre is a joint effort between ACERZ and EnergyCo, to help ensure local communities stay informed, supported and involved as the transmission project takes shape.

The centre is run by the ACERZ team at 30-32 Church Street. It is open from Tuesday to Thursday, 9am to 5pm (except on public holidays).

Contact Us

If you have questions or feedback about the Central-West Orana REZ transmission project please contact us:

 1800 849 794 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

 cwo@energyco.nsw.gov.au

 energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo

 Scan the QR code for more information



For construction or out of hours enquiries, please contact our network operator ACERZ on 1800 298 379 or visit acerez.com.au

If you need the Translating and Interpreting Service call 131 450 and ask them to call us on 1800 849 794.



131 450