The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo)

The Illawarra REZ Community Reference Group

Inaugural meeting

31 August 2026

Acknowledgment of Country

Energy Corporation of New South Wales acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and we show our respect for Elders past and present through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

Opening remarks
The Hon. Paul Scully MP

Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
Member for Wollongong

Welcome to the inaugural Illawarra REZ Community Reference Group meeting

Introductions

Chair and member introductions

Organisations and interests

EnergyCo

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is part of the **Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)**

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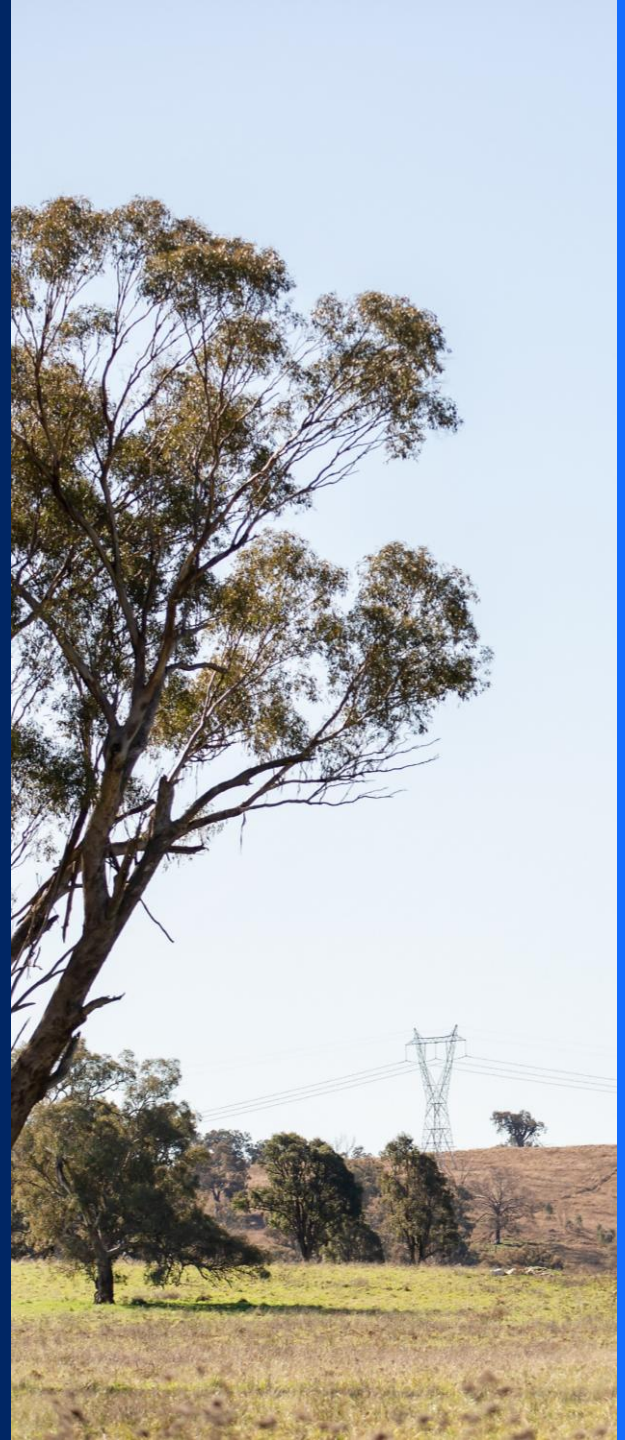
The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo)

Community Reference Groups

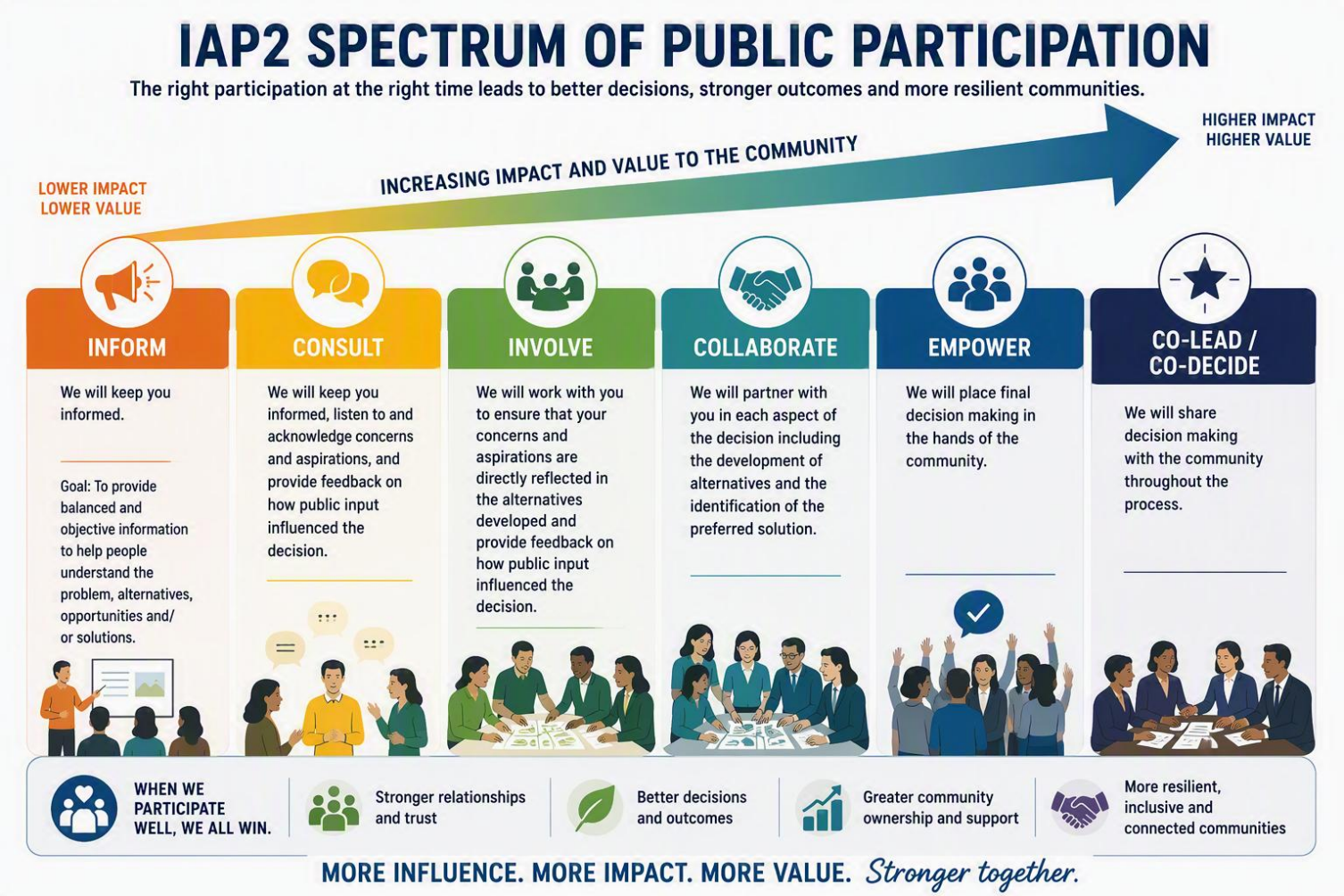
Optimising Regional Outcomes for EnergyCo Projects

Darren Clarke
Director Planning, Environment & Sustainability

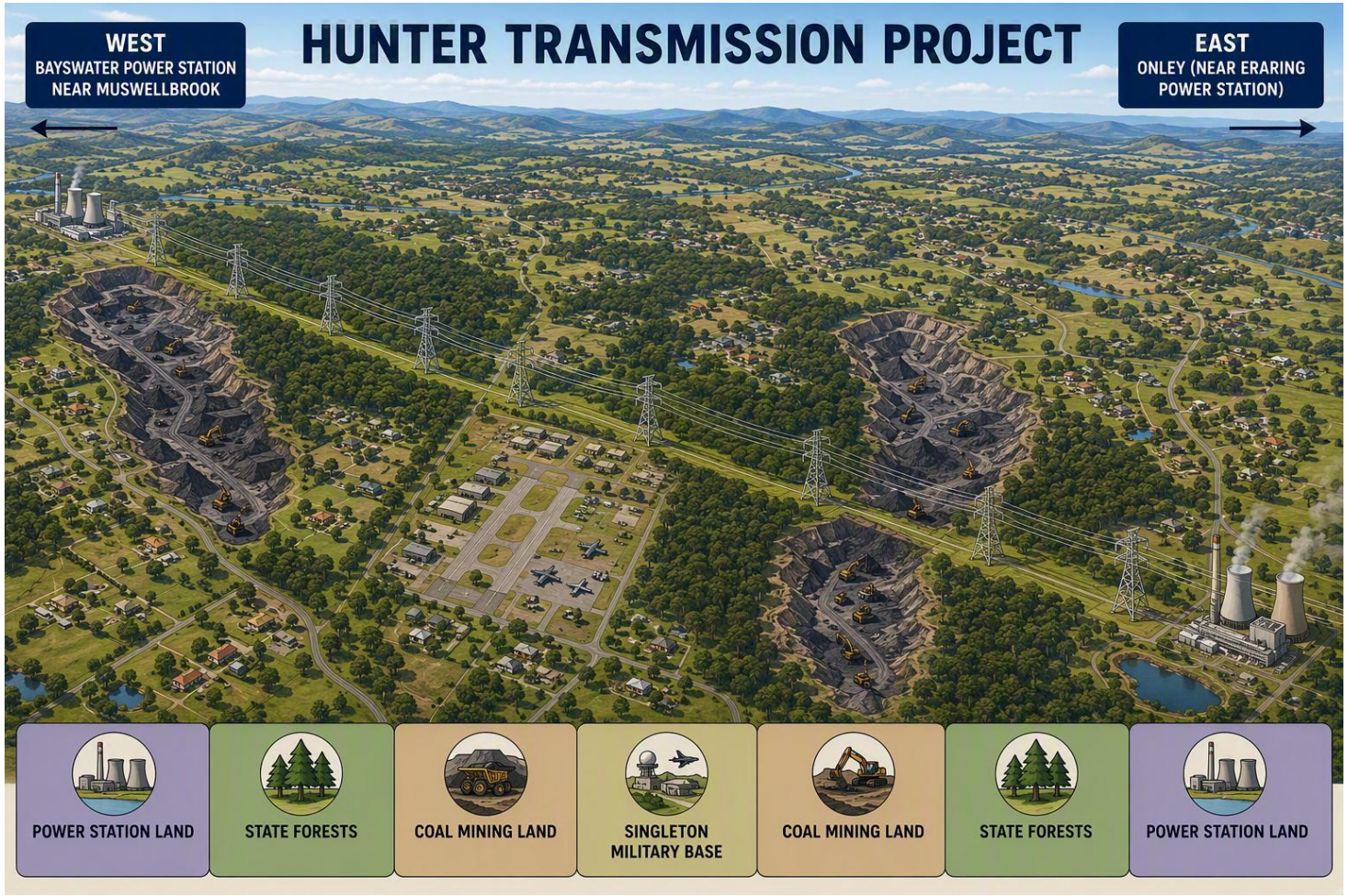
31 August 2026

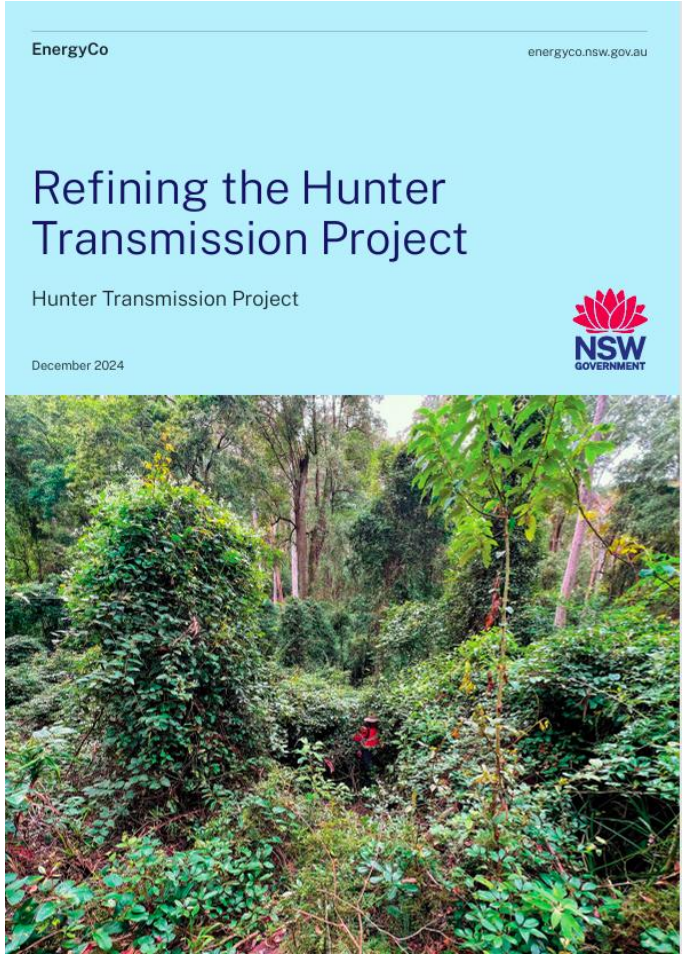


The best outcomes are attained through dialogue



Refining Hunter Transmission Project





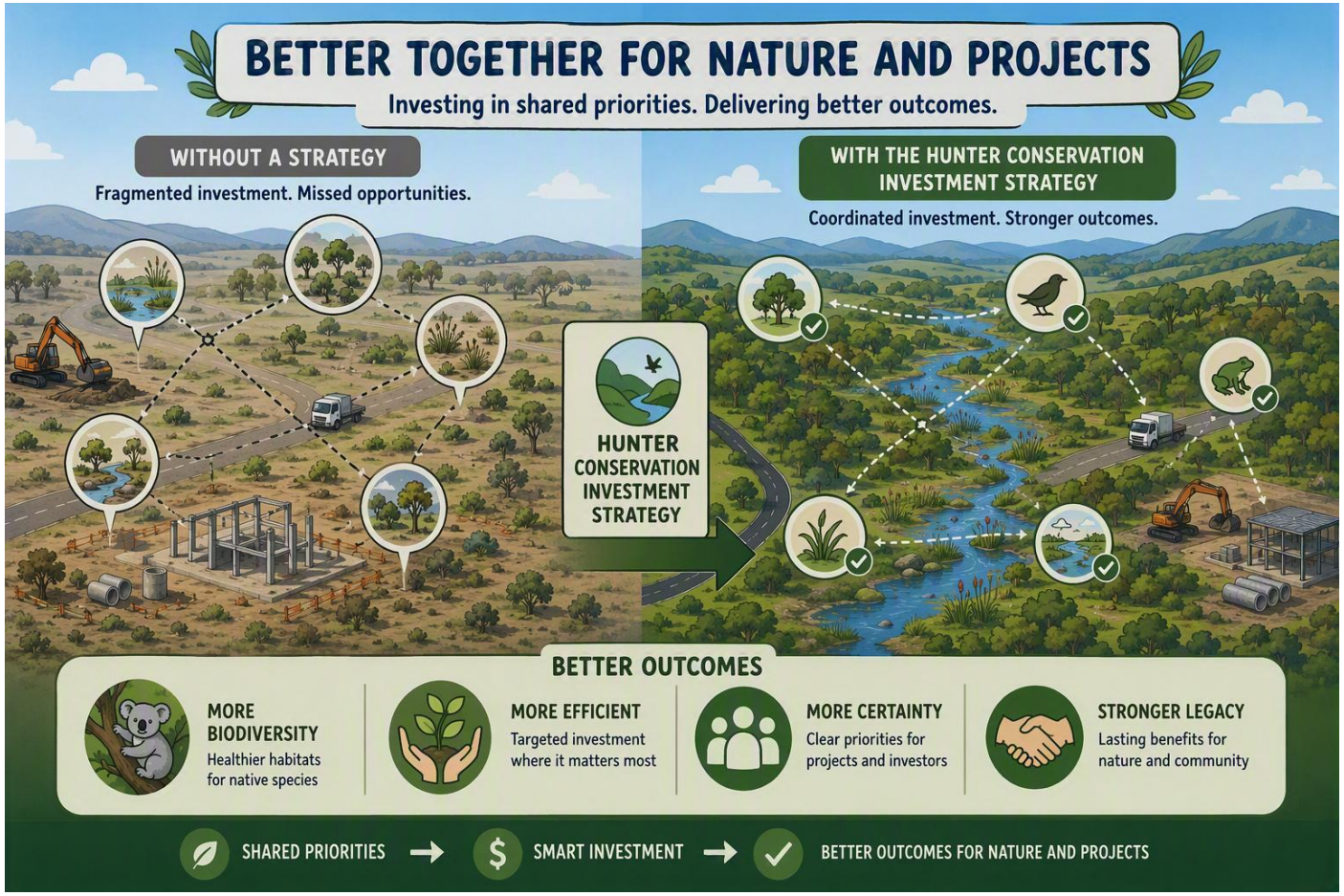
COLLABORATE

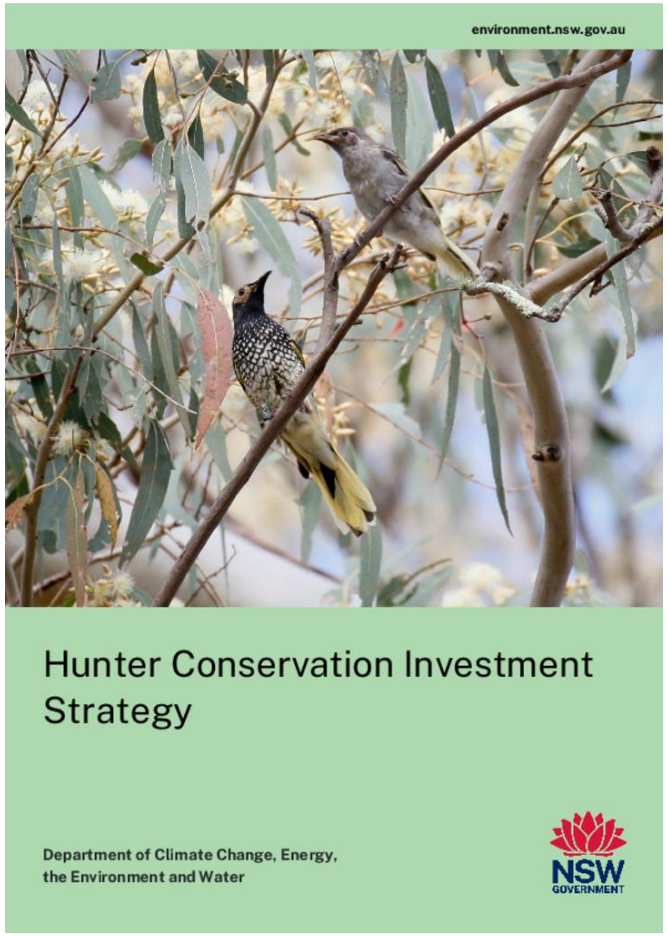
Unlocking legacy outcomes in the region

NSW GOVERNMENT

CONSULT

Delivering Biodiversity Offsets Differently





EnergyCo

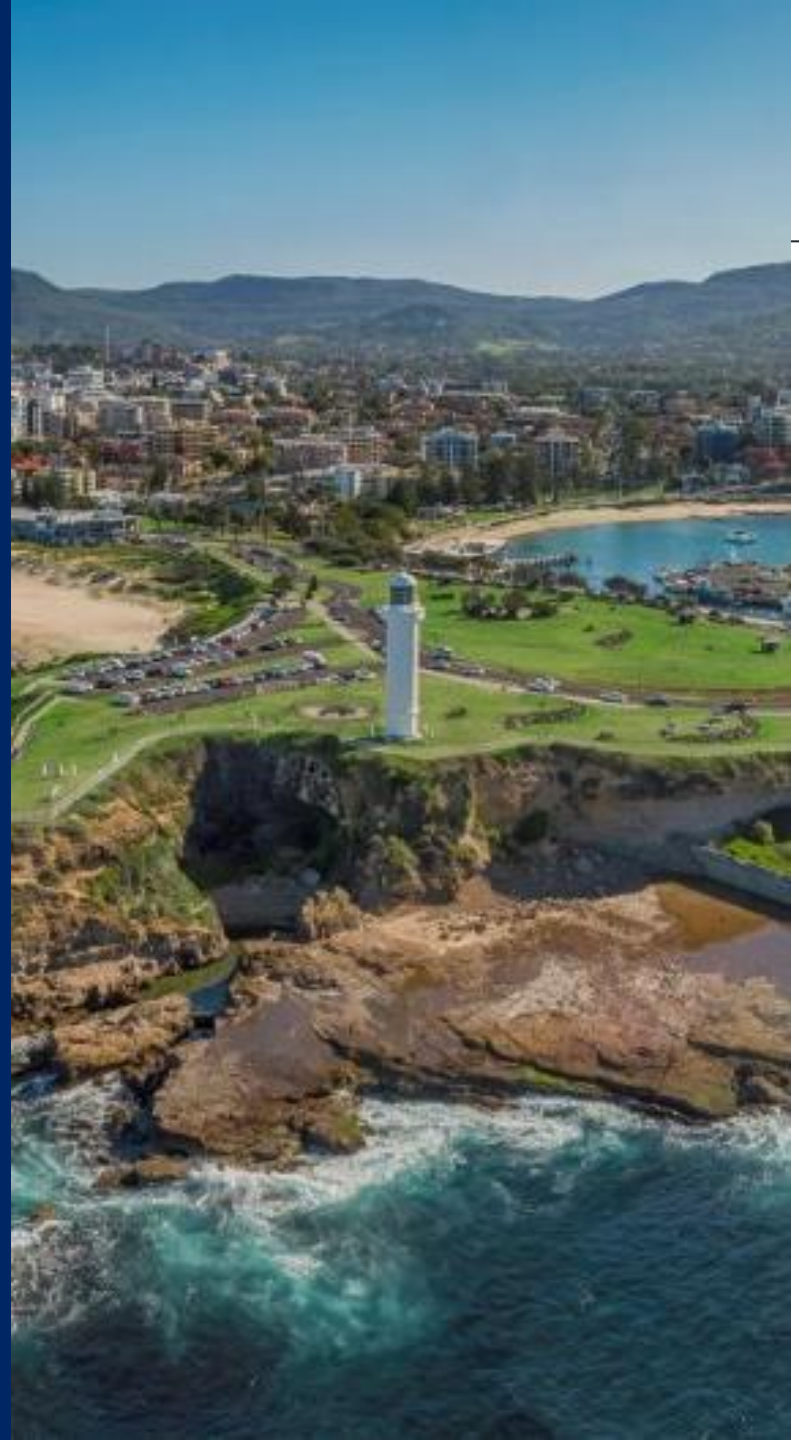
Community Reference Group Overview

Lym Garratt

Manager, Illawarra REZ Regional Coordination

Charlie Wilson

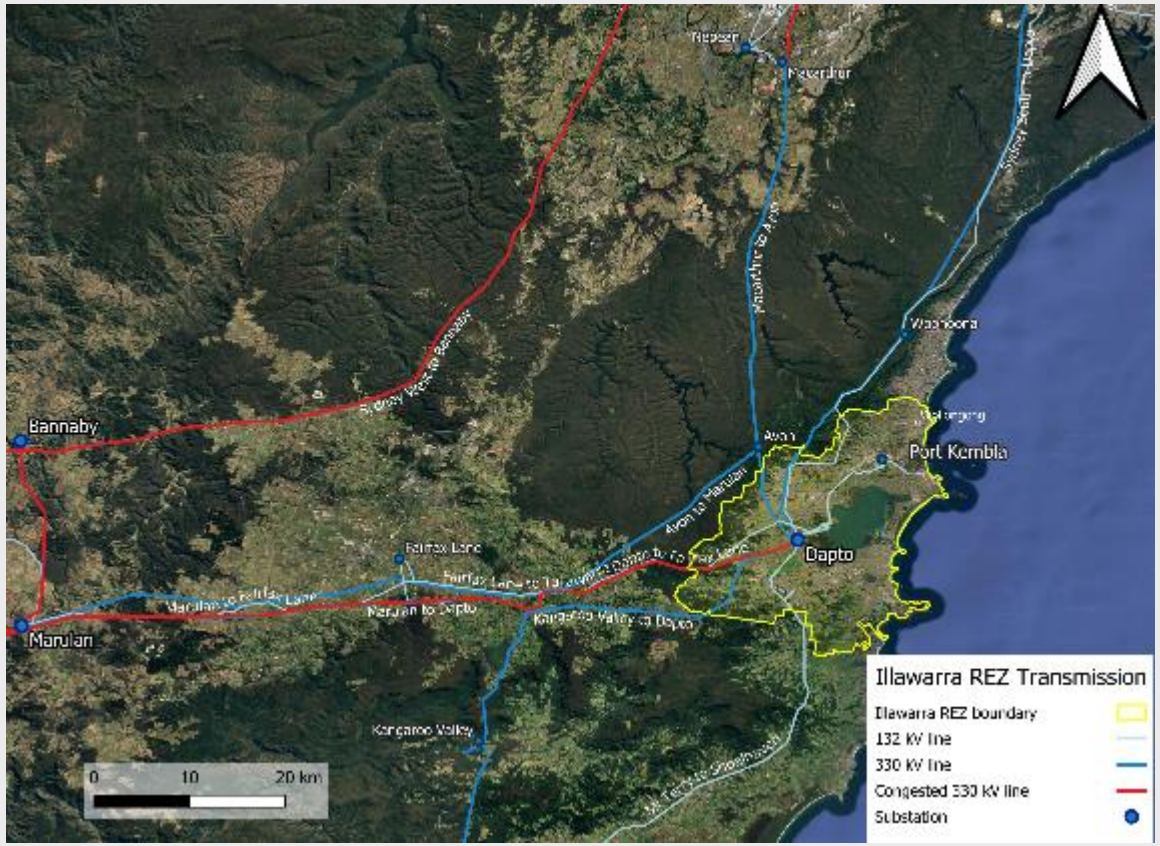
Illawarra REZ Project Lead



NSW GOVERNMENT

Illawarra REZ Overview

Network



People and employment

0.5m people

6% of NSW population

0.2m private dwellings

ABS 2021 Census Data for ILW REZ post codes

Port Kembla produces 56% of all steel produced in Australia, 3.2m of 5.7m metric tonnes

Top 3 employers:
- 8,500 Local Health District
- 7,500 NSW Dept. Education
- 10,000 (3,000 direct) BlueScope Steel

Local generation

Dapto Substation

- Tallawarra A 440 MW combined cycle gas (2009)
- Tallawarra B 320 MW open cycle gas (2024)

FY25

163 MW Solar Capacity

12 MWh Installed Battery Storage

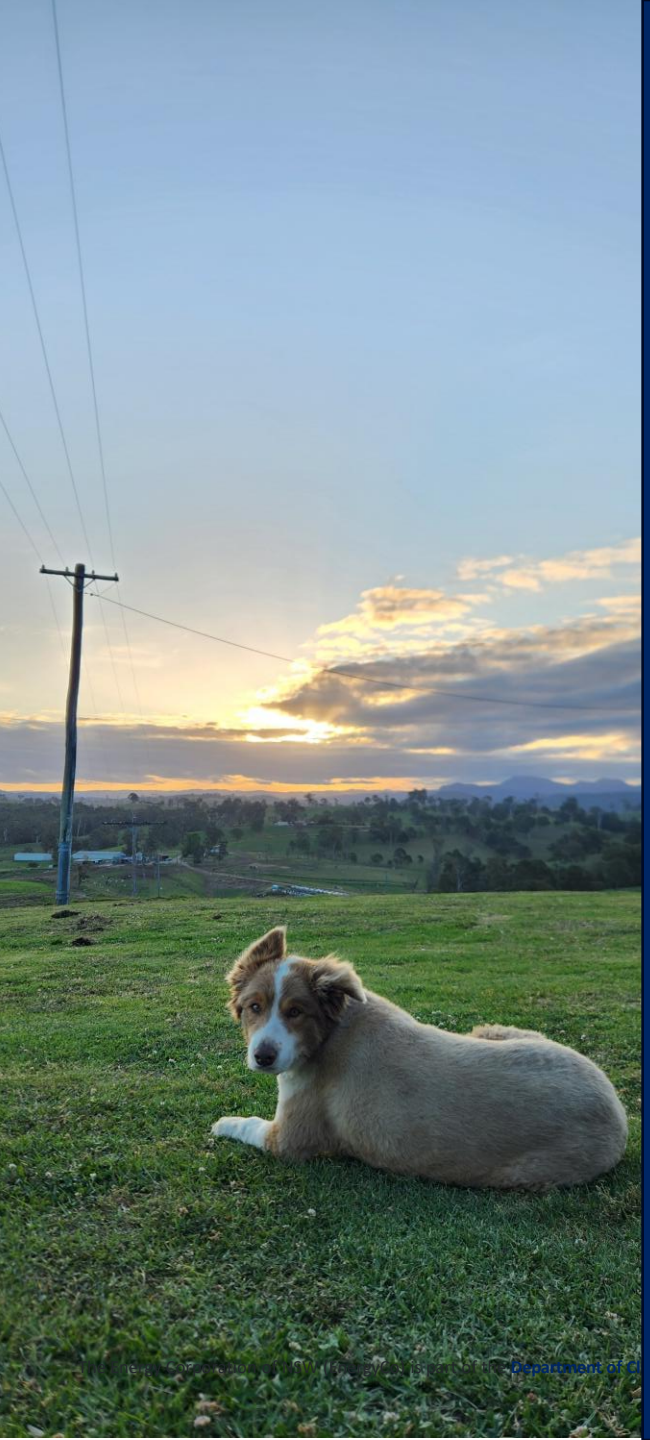
37% houses with installed solar

FY30 Projections

354 MW Solar Capacity

289 MWh Installed Battery Storage

58% of houses installed solar



There is a lot we can leverage in delivering the Illawarra REZ

- The Illawarra region is unlike other REZs:
  - Existing major energy, port, and transport infrastructure
  - Skilled industrial workforce
  - A highly engaged community
  - Rich history in industry, manufacturing and innovation
  - Located near key transmission network supplying Southern Sydney
  - Rooftop PV is growing rapidly (predicted to double by 2030 under BAU).

We have a genuine opportunity to partner with:

- All local communities
- Industry & thought leaders
- Electricity network providers
- Government agencies
- Local government

Together, we can:

- Integrate Consumer Energy Resources
- Leverage innovative energy solutions
- Increase generation and storage capacity
- Maximise opportunities within existing transmission and distribution

What is an “Urban REZ”?

The Illawarra Urban REZ was first announced by Minister Sharpe in May 2025. The announcement stated that the Urban REZ aimed to *“integrate consumer energy resources, community-scale batteries, spare government land and commercial roof space”.*

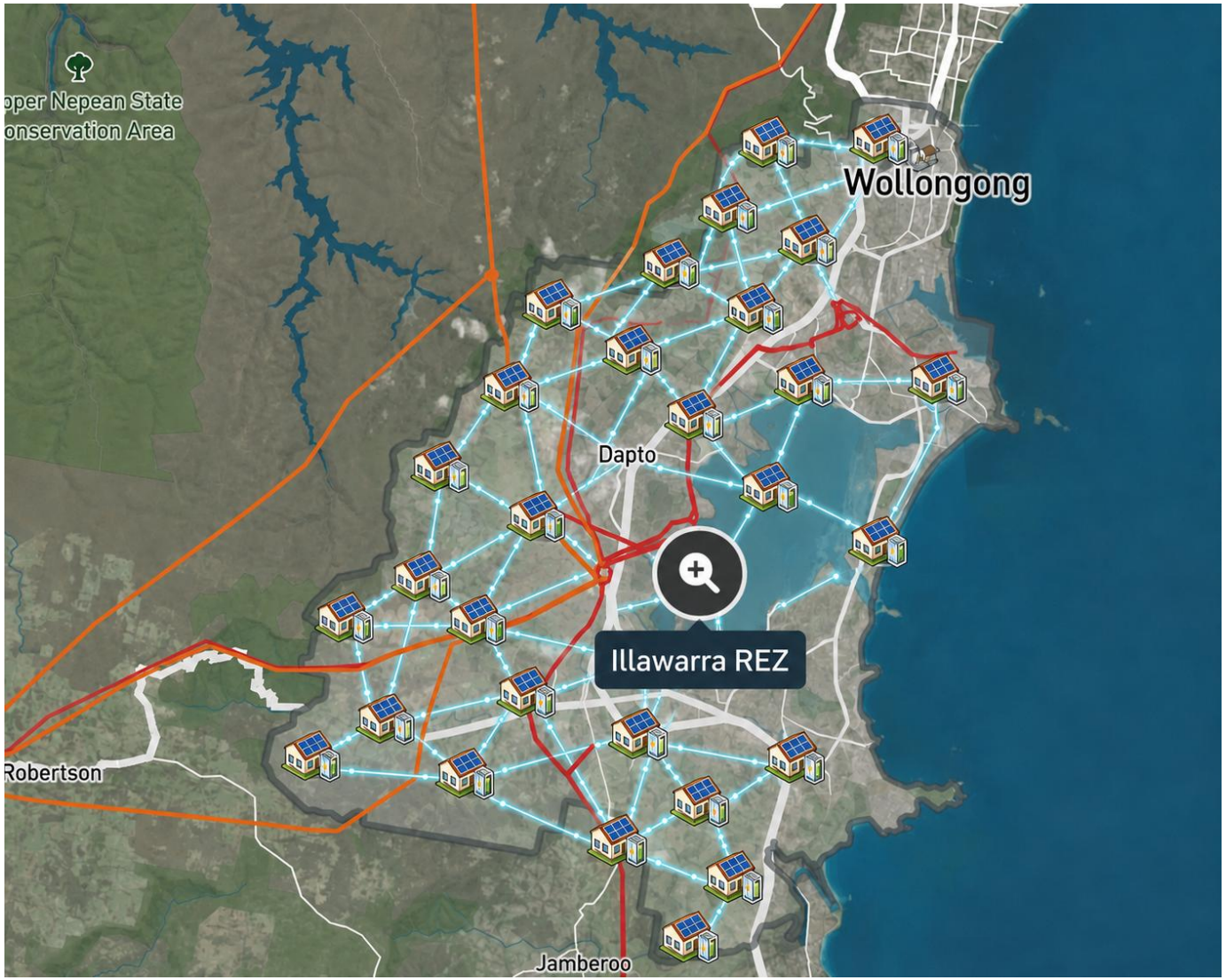
Put simply, an Urban REZ aims to create, store and use energy in the same region, reducing reliance on importing energy from elsewhere.

Avenues to deliver an Urban REZ

There are many different ways to develop the state's first Urban REZ. Feedback from the CRG will be an important touchpoint as future initiatives and programs are progressed.

Some of the initiatives currently being considered are:

- Virtual Power Plant (VPP)
- Large scale storage
- Solar generation on C&I rooftops
- Host generation and/or storage on existing Govt owned land and assets



We've much to do and would value your support

Next 12 Months

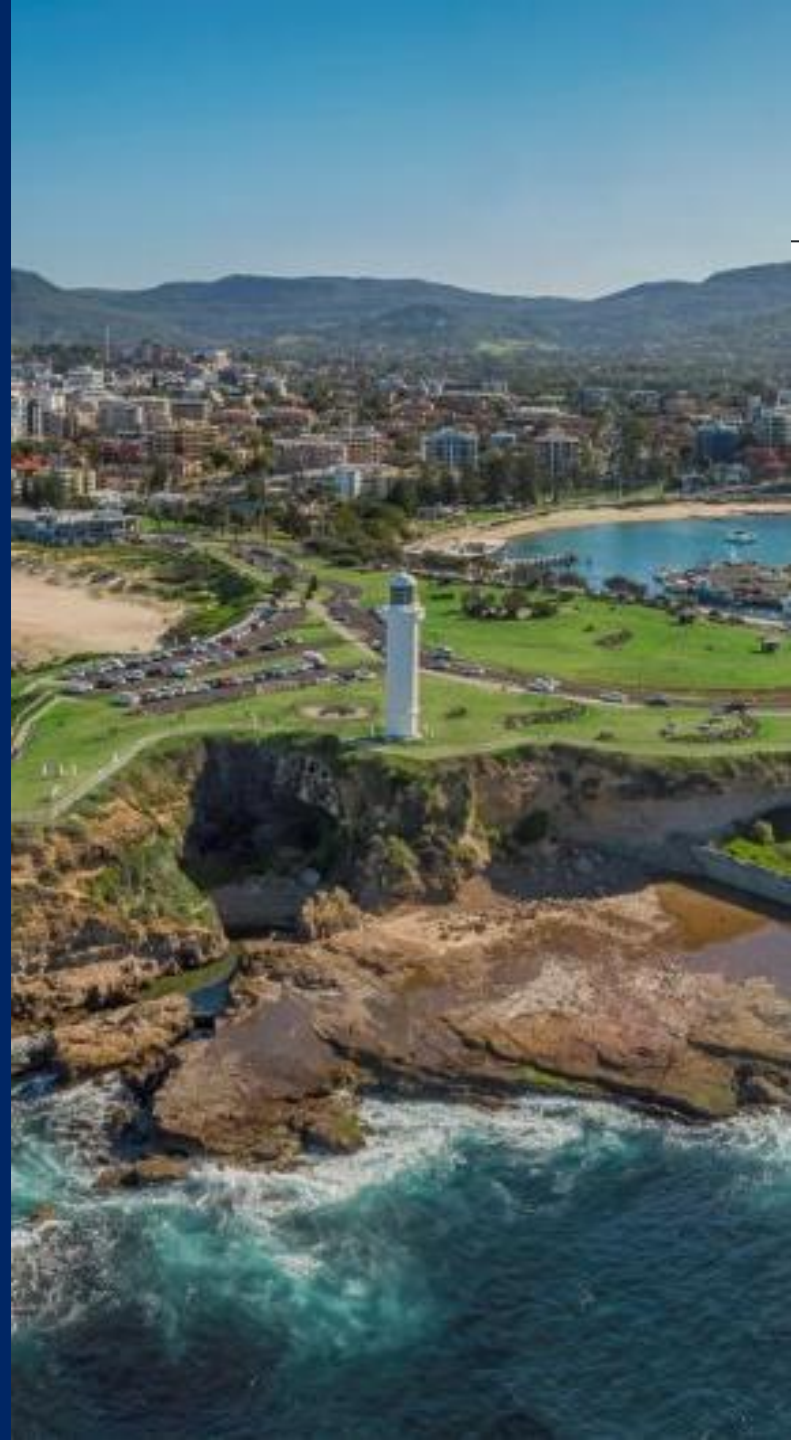
- Announcement of the first Illawarra REZ community-scale initiative
- Targeted engagement with business and industry through i3net partnership
- Supporting DCCEEW with potential Consumer Energy program delivery within the Illawarra REZ
- Continued options development and analysis with Endeavour Energy and Transgrid
- Design of regional benefit initiatives, community engagement

EnergyCo

CRG Chair

Adam Zarth – Independent Chair

David Petrie – Deputy Independent Chair

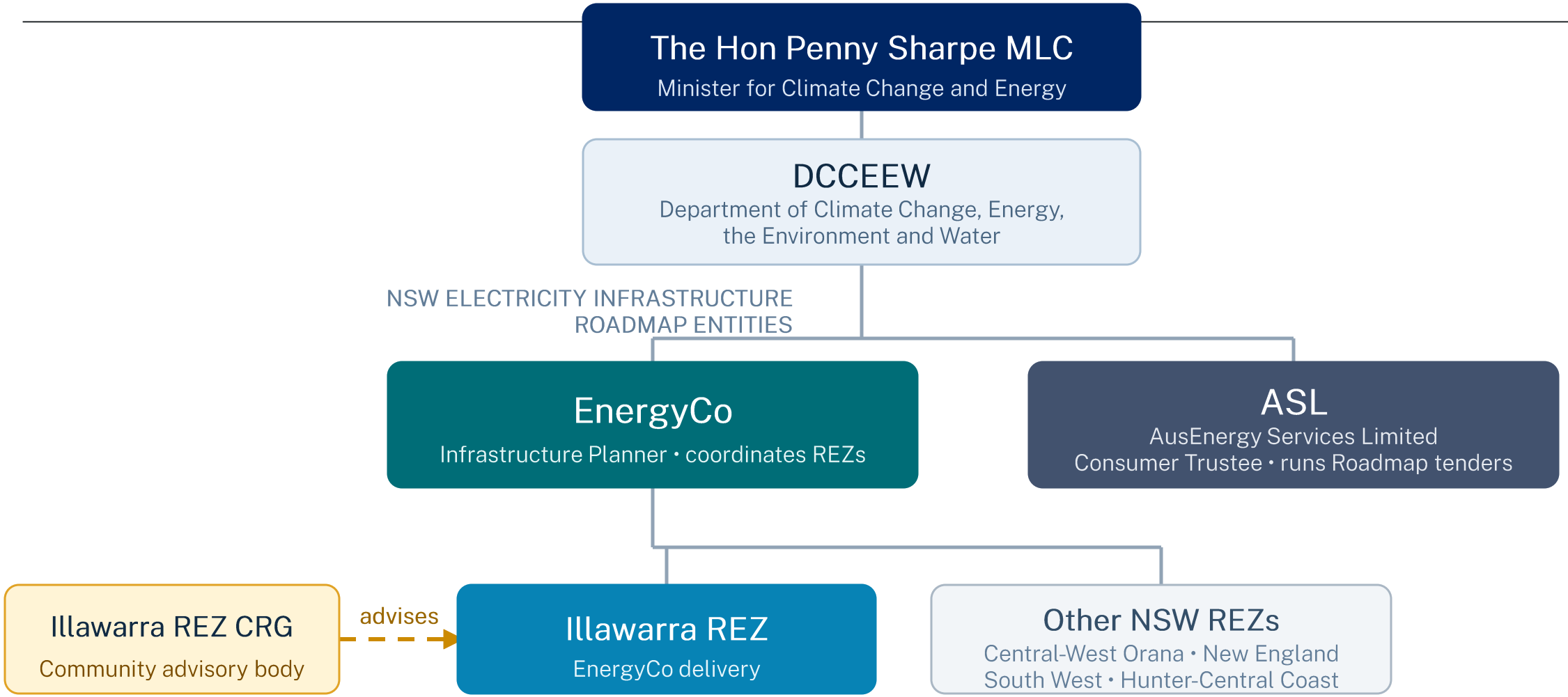


NSW GOVERNMENT

ILW REZ CRG forward plan – *for discussion*

	2026			2027				2028
	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
CRG Group Phase	Establishment Phase			Development and codesign			Refinement and planning	
Meeting focus	Establishment – Chairs stood up	First CRG meeting - Purpose and direction - SHEPI VPP	Priority issues, Risk and opportunity identification	First Nations engagement	Community Benefits framework	Project design options	Review and planning for 2028	
Inputs	Draft ToR, proposed membership	Intro to Illawarra REZ, proposed priorities, REZ narrative	Community insights and feedback	Engagement to date, cultural considerations	Community feedback and expectations, EnergyCo frameworks	Identified risks and trade offs, emerging options	Outcomes from engagement and CRG advice	
Advice sought	Membership, purpose, direction of group.	- Early questions - SHEPI expansion design	Priority issues, expectations, key local risks/opportunities	Is a Working Group needed? How to best engage?	What would a tailored benefits approach look like in the Illawarra?	Key scope issues and considerations	Key issues and considerations	
Outputs	Chairs endorse approach/changes captured	- First advice for project design - Expansion options for early initiatives	Agreed priority issues, action log	Informed First Nations engagement approach	Suggested legacy benefits for Illawarra context	Documented CRG advice	Agreed priorities and forward plan for 2028	

Governance



The CRG provides advice and local perspectives. Decision-making remains with EnergyCo and the NSW Government.

Declarations of interest

Declaring an interest does not automatically mean there is a conflict. It allows the CRG to manage matters openly, fairly and proportionately.

1 DECLARE

Tell the Chair about any financial, professional, organisational or personal interest relevant to the CRG or the agenda.

2 ASSESS

The Chair considers whether the interest could affect or reasonably be perceived to affect, participation in the discussion.

3 MANAGE & RECORD

Agree a proportionate action. This may include recording the interest, limiting participation or withdrawing from the discussion.

Declare interests at the start of each meeting and whenever a relevant matter arises.

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Open to the floor

ACTIONS

DECISIONS

NEXT STEPS

ANY QUESTIONS?

Next meeting

What members can expect before the CRG meets again

NEXT CRG MEETING

Date to be confirmed

ACTION: Set and hold the date

1

CALENDAR INVITATION

Meeting details and attendance request issued to all members.

2

PRE-MEETING PACK

Agenda and supporting information provided two weeks before the meeting.

3

COME PREPARED

Review the pack, identify questions and bring perspectives from your community or organisation.

CONFIDENTIAL MATERIAL

Any confidential or not-for-distribution material will be clearly identified in the pack and at the meeting.

Questions or apologies can be sent to the EnergyCo CRG secretariat before the meeting.

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Thank You