

Agenda

Hunter Central Coast Regional Reference Group – Meeting

Monday, 3 August 2026

10:00am – 12noon

Venue: Singleton Council 12-14 Queen Street, Singleton NSW 2330 or Teams

Business items

Item	Lead	Time
Welcome	Chair	1 minute
Acknowledgement of Country	Rodney Groves HTP First Nations Lead	2 minutes
HCC REZ Access Scheme - Pipeline of generators/storage - Consultation update - RRG submission discussion	Stephen Sizer Manager Network Access	30 minutes
Hunter Transmission Project - Conditions of approval - SIM Plan update - SODA update	Stephanie Lewis HTP Comms & Engagement Manager Kelly Carbery Manager Strategic Projects, DCCEEW	20 minutes
AGL Operations and Future Plans in the Hunter	Rob Cooper AGL	20 minutes
Newcastle Logistics Precinct - EIS briefing and key findings - Forward program	Adam Noonan – Environment lead	20 minutes
NSW Government & EnergyCo Social Procurement and Workforce Development (SPWD) expectations	Geoff Dove Senior Project Officer	15 minutes

Item	Lead	Time
NSW & Hunter Central Coast Jobs Guide	Walter Mansfield Senior Advisor Regional Coordination	10 minutes
General Business	Chair	2 minutes

Online	In person	Apology	Name	Represents
☐	☒	☐	Bob Pynsent (BP)	Independent Chair
☐	☒	☐	Sue Moore (SM)	Mayor Singleton Council
☐	☒	☐	Daniel Watton (DW)	Mayor Cessnock City Council
☒	☐	☐	Adam Schultz (AS)	Mayor Lake Macquarie City Council
☐	☒	☐	John Sullivan (JFS)	Singleton community
☐	☒	☐	Phillip O'Neill (PO)	Cessnock community
☐	☐	☒	Diane Crosdale (DCR)	Lake Macquarie community
☐	☐	☒	Craig Anderson (CA)	Regional Environment
☒	☐	☐	Samantha Martin- Williams (SMW)	Regional Business
☒	☐	☐	Ashley Williams (AW)	Regional Aboriginal Rep
☐	☒	☐	Jeffrey Drayton (JD)	Mayor Muswellbrook Shire Council
☐	☒	☐	Amanda Wetzel (AW)	Newcastle Community
☐	☒	☐	Emily Davies O'Sullivan (EDOS)	RRG Secretariat
☐	☒	☐	Sam Harding (SH)	RRG Secretariat
☐	☒	☐	Walter Mansfield (WM)	RRG Secretariat

Visitors

	NAME	POSITION
In Person	Rodney Groves (RG)	First Nations Engagement Lead - HTP Community Team (EnergyCo)
In Person	Kirsten Lees	Manager Project Comms and Engagement (EnergyCo)
Online	Peter Redwin (PR)	Executive Project Director HTP (EnergyCo)
Online	Stephanie Lewis (SL)	HTP Comms & Engagement Manager (EnergyCo)
Online	Kelly Carbery (KC)	Manager Strategic Projects (DCCEEW)
Online	Rob Cooper (RC)	Senior Manager Stakeholder Engagement (AGL)
Online	Adam Noonan (AN)	Planning Manager Roads (EnergyCo)
Online	Geoff Dove (GD)	Senior Project Officer Regional Coordination (EnergyCo)
In person	Stephen Sizer (SS)	Strategic Delivery Manager (EnergyCo)
Online	Rebecca Briggs	Senior Technical Project Officer (EnergyCo)
Online	Liz Sacco	Senior Officer Community Engagement (EnergyCo)

The Chair welcomed members and visitors in attendance both in person and virtually.

RG delivered an Acknowledgement of Country.

Apologies as per the above.

Conflicts of Interest

- Chair asked if any members had any conflict of interest to be declared.
- AW noted she is working with UEG Energy but will be mostly residential projects.

HCC REZ ACCESS SCHEME

Presented by Stephen Sizer

- SS – Happy to extend consultation date for submissions if required.
- BP – Acknowledged that the RRG will make a submission.
- ACTION – RRG members are encouraged to send their inputs to BP directly.
- JS – Queried if the access scheme will impact new operators only?
- SS – Confirmed existing operators won't be impacted.
- SMW – Asked if the projects captured under the access scheme will make contributions to CEBP?
- SS – Yes, there are obligations similar to the CEBP that apply to the access scheme. Clarified the access scheme funds will be in addition to CEBP.
- JS – Queried how EnergyCo will stop access scheme costs be forced onto consumers.
- SS – Projects need to pay costs into CEBP. Access scheme holders make up the minority of the market and as they will be bidding into a competitive market, will keep costs down.
- JD – Raised concerns about CEBP principles and how CEBP money will be distributed.
- SS – CEBP guidelines will be consulted on with stakeholders, but likely funds will be distributed proportionally to impact.
- ACTION – JD – Is aware of other projects in the pipeline which weren't captured in the slides. Will send these through.
- AW – Queried if any of the projects in the pipeline may be underwritten by Government and if so, how many projects might be exempt?
- SS – Might be a few that have an underwritten agreement however that's not by design.
- BP – Asked about consultation received to date on the access scheme.
- SS – Sentiment has been mostly positive.
- BP – Restated the fact that the RRG will pull together a submission before next week. Noted that RRG members can put in individual or organisational submissions also.
- JD – Queried how much money collected from the access scheme will be distributed to the community?
- SS – Some will be allocated to network infrastructure and admin but bulk of it will be distributed through CEBP.

Hunter Transmission Project

Presented by Peter Redwin, Stephanie Lewis and Kelly Carbery

- PR – Provided an update on EnergyCo organisation model and going forward won't just be looking after HTP but all EnergyCo projects in the Hunter.
- PR – Noted HTP planning approval received last week with construction targeted to commence middle of next year.
- SM – Questioned why EnergyCo didn't have a stall at Singleton NAIDOC week event.
- **ACTION** – RG – to follow up with a response to SM.
- SL – Provided update on HTP community engagement including community pop-ups across the Hunter in May and June.
- JD – Commented on community consultation saying it was focused mostly on the project when the community is just as interested in understanding what jobs will be available and when.
- EDOS – WM to speak to NSW & Hunter Central Coast Jobs Guide later in the agenda.
- AW – Questioned about SIM Plan timing for HTP and expressed concern that it might come too late with construction scheduled for next year.
- SL – Noted that the SIM Plan is a pre-construction requirement. Procurement on the SIM plan recently closed with work to commence shortly.
- PON – Queried about the role of the Hunter Conservation Investment Strategy
- KC – Guiding document that will feed into stewardship support program and offset selection, prioritising areas where support is directed and ensuring offsets align with strategy and priorities.
- AW – Acknowledged the advantages of the SODA, however traditional projects still face being held up trying to find offset credits. Also concerned that SODAs collect a lot of money upfront and the project can then proceed with offsets coming later.
- KC – The SODA allows development to commence but offsets must be delivered within a 3-year timeframe. CWO has made good progress and has achieved 70% offsets with the SODA being signed in September last year. The same approach will be taken in the Hunter and offset development has already commenced.
- PON – Raised a number of key issues that he would like to address including CEBP and SODA as it's been mentioned for many years and still waiting for answers.
- **MOTION:** BP suggested the following motion to the RRG "The RRG calls on the Energy Minister and EnergyCo CEO to explain why the Hunter Central Coast REZ

hasn't received any Community and Employment Program funding at this point". The motion was supported unanimously.

- **ACTION** – BP will pull together a letter on behalf of the RRG to the Energy Minister and CEO of EnergyCo to address these issues. Frustrated that other REZs have CEBP funding and the Hunter Central Coast REZ is still waiting.

AGL OPERATIONS AND FUTURE PLANS IN THE HUNTER

Presented by Rob Cooper

- SM – Queried if community power projects only apply to new developments?
- RC – New and existing. Maitland example is an existing development.

NEWCASTLE LOGISTICS PRECINCT

Presented by Adam Noonan

- BP – Reminded the group of his existing conflict of interest with a family member working at Port of Newcastle.
- JD – Queried how far the EIS stretches beyond the NLP site and if it includes the communities impacted by the OSOM route taken to and from the NLP site.
- AN – EIS focuses on the general locality and considered impacts in the industrial precinct. Broader impacts into the regions were part of the consideration rather than the assessment.

NSW GOVERNMENT & ENERGYCO SOCIAL PROCUREMENT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (SPWD) EXPECTATIONS

Presented by Geoff Dove

- JS – Asked what trades will be required as part of the energy transition.
- GD – Every trade is required, all construction trades and jobs, especially electricians.

NSW & HUNTER CENTRAL COAST JOBS GUIDE

Presented by Walter Mansfield

- JD – Important to know timing so workforce can start reskilling and be ready when the jobs are available.
- BP – Stated the importance of the document and how it will help the workers across the Hunter.
- JD – Expressed concern about the definition of local businesses, with many businesses claiming to be Australian however, the money still ends up offshore.

Needs to be more governance around the definition of an Australian company. Local should be local to the Hunter.

- GD – Agreed and stated that it was a ministerial decision when it came to the definition of ‘local’.
- SM – Noted her agreement and that using Hunter locals would mean fewer impacts on local housing and workforce constraints.

CLOSE AND WRAP UP:

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12:13.

ACTION REGISTER

Action	Raised by	Comment	Responsible	Status
Bob Pynsent on behalf of the RRG will make a submission on the Hunter Central Coast Access Scheme.	Bob Pynsent	RRG members are encouraged to send their inputs to Bob Pynsent directly by next week.	RRG members	Open
Mayor of Muswellbrook is aware of other renewable energy projects in the area which weren't captured in EnergyCo's pipeline.	Jeff Drayton	Mayor Drayton to send these projects through to EnergyCo.	Jeff Drayton	Open
Mayor of Singleton questioned why EnergyCo didn't have a stall at Singleton NAIDOC week event.	Sue Moore	EnergyCo to follow up with a response to Mayor Moore. Response sent to Mayor Moore on 4/8/26	Rodney Groves	Closed
Bob Pynsent on behalf of RRG to pull together a letter to the Energy	Bob Pynsent	BP and RRG are frustrated that other REZs have CEBP	Bob Pynsent	Open

Minister and CEO of EnergyCo to address CEBP concerns.		funding and the Hunter Central Coast REZ is still waiting.		
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