

## Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone Regional Reference Group

**Meeting:** Meeting 3  
**Location:** Savannah Room, Taronga Western Plains Zoo  
**Date and time:** Wednesday, 2 June 2021, 9.45 am to 12.45 pm  
**Host:** Energy Corporation of NSW  
**Chair:** Chloe Hicks, Director, Energy Infrastructure and Zones

### Open actions

No.	Issue	Action	Responsible
J1	Sub working group for jobs, skills and training	Sub-working group to be established to explore opportunities for skilled local jobs, workforce development and training pathways for the Central-West Orana REZ	DPIE
J2	Regional Energy Strategy	Due to time constraints during the meeting, DPIE confirmed it will provide a thorough overview of the Regional Energy Strategy at a future RRG	DPIE
J3	Central-West Orana REZ declaration	Consult with Councils not in attendance on the Central-West Orana REZ declaration process	DPIE
J4	Community benefit sharing	Next meeting to include discussion on current community benefit sharing arrangements and REZ opportunities.	DPIE
J5	Next meeting	Secretariat to create placeholder for Meeting 4 on 2 September 2021	DPIE
O3	Wellington Social Study	Dubbo Regional Council to share Wellington Social Study	Dubbo Regional Council

### Closed actions

No.	Action	Responsible	Comments/Updates	Status
F1	TransGrid to confirm the contact at the Upper Hunter Council who is receiving CWO REZ communication	TransGrid	TransGrid to ensure correspondence to Council includes Paul Jakes.	Closed
F2	TransGrid to share feedback from community drop-in sessions and ongoing landowner and community consultation with local Councils	TransGrid	TransGrid provided an update at the meeting on 2 June 2021.	Closed

# Central-West Orana REZ Regional Reference Group



## Meeting 3 Minutes

F3	DPIE to share feedback from the community deliberative forums with the broader group.	DPIE	DPIE provided an update at the meeting on 2 June 2021.	Closed
F4	Regional NSW to facilitate introductions and champion interactions between Energy Infrastructure and Zones team and the Inland Rail project	Regional NSW	Completed by Murray Wood.	Closed
F5	Regional NSW to share information on critical minerals mapping and opportunities	Regional NSW	Completed by Murray Wood	Closed
F6	Essential Energy to share information of the opportunities and constraints on the distribution network as inputs to the REZ Regional Energy Strategy	Essential Energy	Essential Energy have been collaborating with DPIE.	Closed

## Next meeting

Thursday 2 September 2021 – 9:45am- 12:45pm, venue TBC.

## Notes – RRG 2 June, 2021

No.	Description	Speaker
1	<b>Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country</b>	Mr Dugald Saunders MP
2	<b>Introductions and agenda overview</b>	Chloe Hicks
3	<b>Central-West Orana REZ</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See presentation for details.</li> <li>• Emerging issue raised that some existing renewables projects in the region have reputational issues from not paying subcontractors/local companies during construction.</li> <li>• These issues are tied to community support for the REZ and the Energy Corporation of NSW is eager to work with Department of Regional NSW to explore solutions to these issues.</li> <li>• Exploring opportunities for skilled local jobs, workforce development and training pathways is a key objective of delivering the Central-West Orana REZ.</li> <li>• Sub-working group to be established prior to the next meeting to explore these opportunities in detail.</li> </ul>	Chloe Hicks

No.	Description	Speaker
4	<p><b>Central West Orana REZ Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See presentation for details</li> <li>• The Energy Corporation of NSW will explore opportunities for community benefit sharing and different ways of coordinating funds to secure benefits for landowners and communities who are directly impacted by energy infrastructure.</li> <li>• Councils noted that there seemed to be a discrepancy in community funds/VPAs between solar and wind farms, where solar farms have not historically been expected to provide community benefits.</li> <li>• A goal of the Central-West Orana REZ will be to look at coordinating community funds from energy projects that participate in the REZ.</li> <li>• This will include considering schemes/options that would provide funding for bigger projects/programs as well as other benefits at the local level.</li> <li>• The next meeting will include an agenda item for looking at current community benefit sharing arrangements and the opportunities for the REZ to improve outcomes.</li> </ul>	Mike Young/Dan Silburn-Evans/Jamie Fermio
5	<p><b>Central-West Orana REZ Transmission Project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See presentation for details</li> <li>• TransGrid note that new transmission infrastructure is needed to increase capacity on the network and the location of the current study corridor has been informed by the location of potential energy projects. Suitable wind resources, for example, are only found in certain areas in the region.</li> <li>• Augmenting existing transmission lines in the region would not deliver the capacity needed.</li> <li>• TransGrid note that landowner and community engagement is ongoing and there will be consideration of different styles and formats for future engagement activities- such as town hall meetings with an effective facilitator.</li> <li>• Upper Hunter Shire Council provided feedback that the independent facilitator at the meeting in March with the Merriwa Cassilis Alliance was very effective.</li> <li>• TransGrid note that it is understood there may be another opposition group that has been established around the Dunedoo area, however this group has not made contact with TransGrid or Government.</li> <li>• TransGrid note that no issues around decommissioning of transmission infrastructure have been raised to date.</li> </ul>	Michael Lloyd

No.	Description	Speaker
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decommissioning of infrastructure has been raised as an issue for the broader-REZ, particularly for solar farms where panels have an approximate design life of around 25 years.</li> <li>Broadly, Government is investigating recycling and lifecycle opportunities for solar panels and other infrastructure.</li> <li>TransGrid are running a series of workshops with the Merriwa Cassilis Alliance in the coming weeks to explore the study corridor selection process and a range of options/opportunities.</li> </ul>	
6	<p><b>REZ Regional Energy Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See presentation for details</li> </ul>	Chloe Hicks
7	<p><b>Central-West Orana REZ Declaration Overview</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See presentation for details</li> <li>Warren Shire Council note there are number of solar projects in its LGA and the community is broadly on board with renewable energy development.</li> <li>Warren Shire Council would be interested in exploring opportunities for the LGA to be part of the Central-West Orana REZ.</li> <li>Essential Energy note that the existing line in the region of Nevertire Solar Farm in the Warren Shire LGA is near capacity and would need significant investment to add capacity.</li> <li>Note that there is a need to manage community expectations around what benefits the Central-West Orana REZ would provide in the Warren Shire LGA unless the existing line was upgraded.</li> <li>Note that there is not a timeframe or ongoing process of reviewing the Central-West Orana REZ geographic area once it is formally declared.</li> <li>However, the Minister can expand a REZ after it has been declared but cannot make it smaller.</li> <li>The refined geographic area for the Central-West Orana REZ is considered to capture enough projects to meet the 3 gigawatt requirement, but in the future there could be future REZ stages or transmission extensions to add more capacity depending on the success of the current project and energy needs of the State.</li> <li>Note that there will be a competitive process early next year to determine projects that will be part of the REZ.</li> </ul>	Chloe Hicks with Dan Silburn facilitating
8	<p><b>Next steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Next meeting proposed for Thursday, 2 September 2021</li> </ul>	Chloe Hicks

### Attendees

#### Members of Parliament

- Mr Dugald Saunders MP, Member for Dubbo

#### Chairperson

- Chloe Hicks, Director, Energy Infrastructure and Zones

#### NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment

- Dan Silburn-Evans, Manager, Strategic Engagement
- Jamie Fermio, Senior Project Officer, Planning & Communities
- Amanda Bowman, Planning Officer, Local and Regional Planning
- Ethan Hyde, Planning Support Officer, Local and Regional Planning
- Danny Young, Area Manager North West, Crown Lands
- Mike Young, Executive Director, Planning & Communities

#### Warren Shire Council

- Gary Woodman, General Manager
- Cr Karlene Irving, Councillor

#### Dubbo Regional Council

- Steve Jennings, Manager Growth Planning

#### Upper Hunter Shire Council

- Paul Jakes, Manager Waste and Sustainability

#### National Indigenous Australian Agency

- Gargi Ganguly, Senior Advisor

#### Dubbo Local Aboriginal Land Council

- Will Robinson, CEO

#### Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council

- Aleisha Lonsdale, CEO

#### TransGrid

- Michael Lloyd, Community Engagement Manager

#### Essential Energy

- Natalie Lindsay, Manager Network Regulation
- Anders Sangkuhl, Regulatory Strategy Manager

#### Department of Regional NSW

- Amanda Shepherd, Business Development Manager

#### NSW Department of Primary Industries

- Mary Kovac, Agricultural Land Use Planning Officer