

Getting more out of the Central-West Orana REZ

Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

January 2025

Following consultation, EnergyCo has updated the amount of generation and storage that can connect to the REZ transmission network to 7.7 gigawatts (GW) to get more out of the Central-West Orana REZ.



Renewable Energy Zones expanding our grid

The coal-fired power stations that have provided for our energy needs are old and reaching the end of their production capacity. Three out of our four remaining coal-fired generators are planned to close by 2033.

To replace energy from our ageing coal-fired power stations, meet our growing demand and improve energy affordability for households and businesses, more renewable generation such as wind, solar and batteries needs to be added to the grid.

This will also support our commitment to climate action and reaching net zero by 2050.

As part of the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, the NSW Government declared five renewable energy zones (REZ) and appointed EnergyCo as the Infrastructure Planner to plan and deliver them.

REZs will be our modern-day power stations, grouping renewable energy generators together and upgrading the network to connect them to our existing electricity grid.

Increasing generation capacity

In December 2023, the Minister for Energy increased the intended network capacity of the Central-West Orana REZ from 3 Gigawatts (GW) to 6 GW, noting it will initially operate at 4.5 GW.

In January 2025, EnergyCo formally updated the amount of renewable generation and storage that can connect to the transmission network in the Central-West Orana REZ to 7.7 GW. The decision was informed by consultation with the public and targeted engagement with technical stakeholders in the second half of 2024.

The 4.5 GW network capacity of the Central-West Orana

REZ will allow the access scheme to coordinate 7.7 GW of projects to connect into the network because wind, solar and battery projects can operate at different times of the day and do not all export energy at the same time.

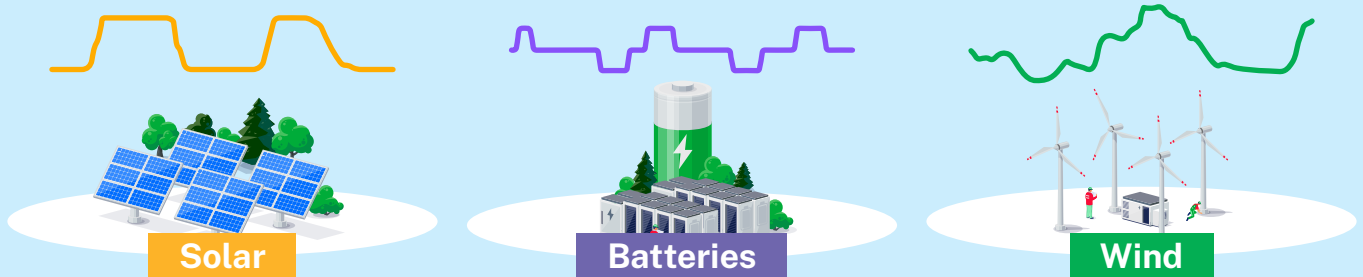
Some of this increased capacity will allow projects listed in the Central-West Orana REZ Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to add battery storage technology to deliver energy even when the wind isn't blowing or the sun isn't shining with minimal changes to the footprint of the REZ.

If the full 7.7 GW of generator capacity is awarded, it would increase the Community and Employment Benefit funding from access fees.

What is the difference between hosting and transfer capacity?

Hosting

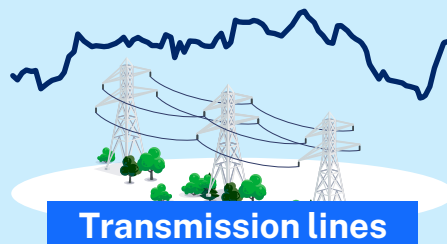
The combination of wind, solar and batteries operating at different times of the day (7.7 GW) that collectively will be able to send out 4.5 GW throughout the day.



7.7 GW of projects connected

Transfer

The amount of energy that can be sent out.



4.5 GW of energy sent out at any given time



Frequently asked questions

Q. What is network or transfer capacity?

Also known as transfer capacity, or the maximum amount of energy can be exported from the REZ into the external network at any given time.

Q. What is generation or hosting capacity?

This refers to how much solar, wind or battery can connect to the REZ network. It is typically higher than network capacity.

Q. What is headroom assessment?

An assessment to check whether there is more generation capacity for generators to connect to a REZ without overloading it.

Q. Will the transfer capacity increase mean an extension of the transmission line?

The transfer capacity increase does not increase the scope of the Central-West Orana REZ transmission corridor. Extensions are not currently proposed and would be subject to separate planning and regulatory approval processes.

Q. What are access rights and access fees?

Generation and storage projects that wish to connect to the Central-West Orana REZ network infrastructure will need to secure an access right. Access right holders will be charged a yearly access fee that includes components to fund community benefit and employment programs. Access fees are set by the Consumer Trustee. Generators would start paying access fees once their projects start the commissioning process.

Q. What is the final transmission capacity of the REZ?

The REZ will initially unlock 4.5 GW and up to 6 GW by 2038.

Q. What will be the final generation capacity of the REZ?

EnergyCo is required to conduct a headroom assessment every two years to identify if the amount of generation or storage that can connect in the REZ can increase. However, any decision to increase the generation capacity of the REZ will be subject to public consultation.

About EnergyCo

The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) is a statutory authority responsible for leading the delivery of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) as part of the NSW Government's Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap.

EnergyCo is working closely with communities, investors and industry to deliver the state's first five REZs.

For more information about EnergyCo, visit our website at [energyco.nsw.gov.au/about energyco](https://energyco.nsw.gov.au/about-energyco).

Contact us

For more information, please visit our website or get in touch with our team.



cwo@energyco.nsw.gov.au



1800 032 101
(9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)



energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo



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