



EnergyCo

Central-West Orana REZ Update

Orana Outlook Forum

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Director, Planning and Policy

17 November 2024



Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples and Traditional Custodians of Australia, and the oldest continuing culture in human history. We pay respect to Elders past and present and commit to respecting the lands we walk on, and the communities we walk with.

Artwork:

Regeneration by Josie Rose



NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap

- NSW's 20-year plan to transform the electricity system into one that is cheap, clean and reliable
- support the private sector to deliver at least 12 gigawatts of new renewable electricity generation and 2 gigawatts of long-duration storage (e.g. pumped hydro)
- \$32 billion in investment by 2030
- thousands of construction and ongoing jobs
- reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 90 million tonnes by 2030
- enabled by the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020* and Electricity Infrastructure Investment Regulation 2021



New generation to replace retiring coal-fired power stations

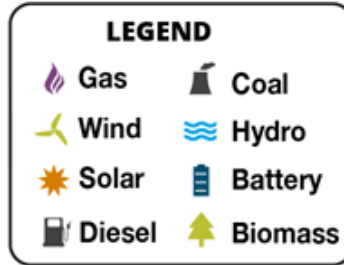


New network infrastructure to deliver energy to consumers



New storage and firming to better respond to our electricity needs and improve reliability of the grid

1927



● SYDNEY

Yass
Tumut  ●
● CANBERRA

Energy Corporation of NSW

EnergyCo is a statutory authority re-established in line with legislative functions under the *Energy and Utilities Administration Act 1987* and the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020*.

EnergyCo's role is to lead the design, delivery and coordination of **NSW Renewable Energy Zones (REZs)** and priority transmission infrastructure in a way that benefits consumers, investors and regional communities.



Coordinate **\$32 billion** of investment in REZs to deliver at least **12 GW** of renewable energy by 2030.



Lead the declaration, coordination and delivery of the State's **first five REZs** in NSW.

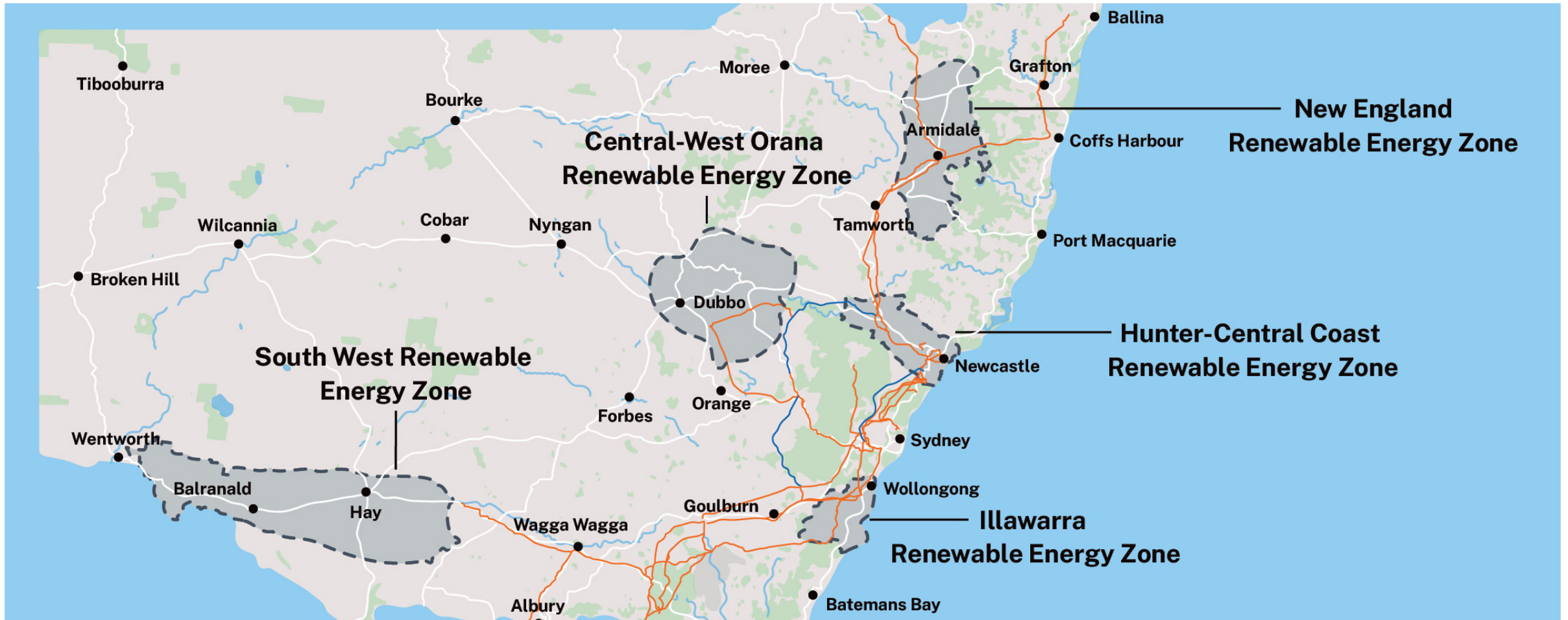


Design and deliver **transmission** network infrastructure projects for REZs.



Work with communities, industry and other stakeholders to **maintain community support** and **maximise benefits for regional communities**.

Five Renewable Energy Zones across NSW



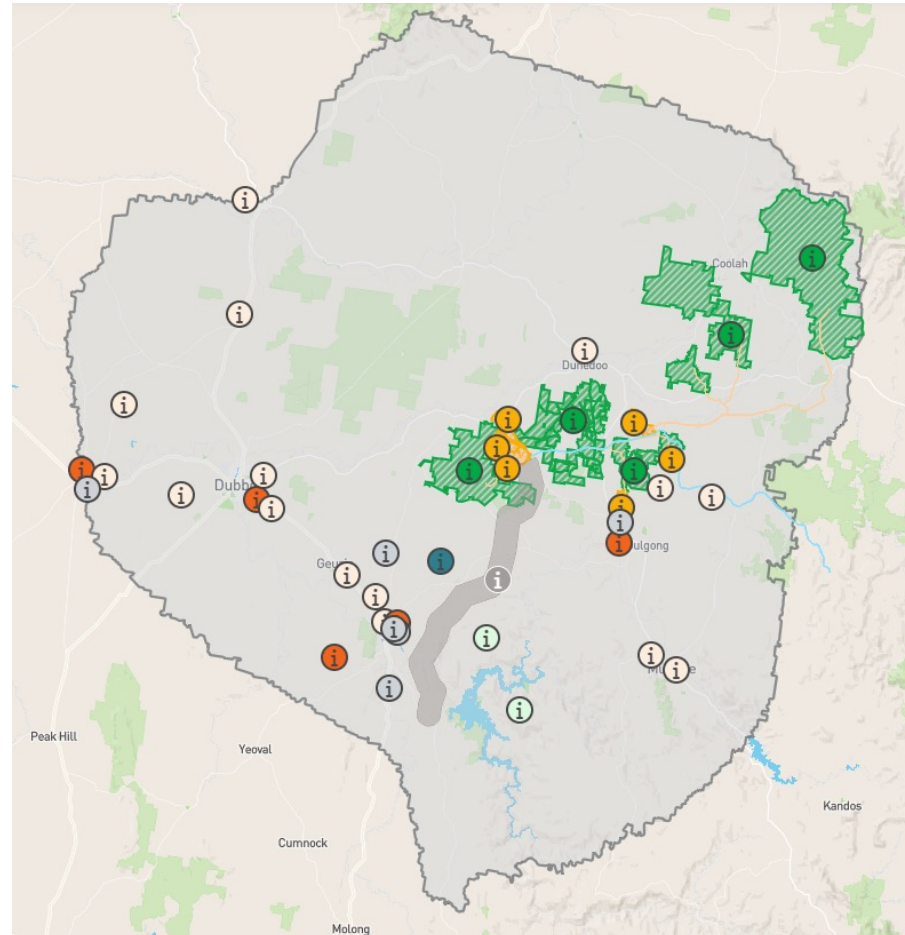
Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

Wind

- Orana Wind Farm
- Spicers Creek Wind Farm
- Barneys Reef Wind Farm
- Liverpool Range Wind Farm
- Valley of the Winds

Solar

- Sandy Creek Solar Farm
- Cobbora Solar Farm
- Dapper Solar Farm
- Tallawang Solar Farm
- Birriwa BESS / Birriwa Solar
- Stubbo Solar



Planned generation projects

- ✓ Planned wind farm with proposed connection to the REZ transmission network
- ✓ Planned solar farm with proposed connection to the REZ transmission network
- ✓ Planned wind farm with proposed connection to the NSW transmission network
- ✓ Planned solar farm with proposed connection to the NSW transmission network
- ✓ Planned Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with proposed connection to the NSW transmission network

Operational generation projects

- ✓ Existing wind farm with connection to the NSW transmission network
- ✓ Existing solar farm with connection to the NSW transmission network

EnergyCo's approach to fostering community support



Community, landholder and stakeholder engagement and policies

Building a **strong regional presence** with local shopfronts and locally employed staff

Early, ongoing and tailored consultation and engagement activities and communications

Collaboration with **key forums**- Community Reference Group, First Nations Working Group SteerCo (Councils/Gov) and CFGs

Empathy, respect and courtesy for landholders impacted by acquisitions and preference to reach agreements

REZ benefit program

Delivering **REZ community and employment benefit sharing schemes** funded by developer access fees- hundreds of millions of dollars over 20-30+ years

Securing **upfront TAF funds** to deliver benefits early, prior to construction (\$60 million for Central-West Orana REZ endorsed)

Strategic Benefit Payments Scheme for landholders hosting transmission infrastructure- \$10,000 pa per km hosted over 20 years

Regional economic development

Implementing the **First Nations Guidelines** and **Renewable Energy Sector Board Plan**

Securing **local employment and First Nations employment outcomes** through tender processes (e.g. IAPP)

Working closely with **First Nations Working Groups** in REZs to support the delivery of local content/employment outcomes and build community capacity

Funding for employment initiatives in REZs (e.g. training programs, facilities etc.) through developer access fees

Whole-of-government strategic infrastructure coordination

Undertaking and publishing **cumulative impact studies** in Central-West Orana (complete) and New England (underway) REZs

Innovative model being piloted for Central-West Orana - **Steering Committee** and **REZ Master Coordination Plan (RMCP)** to track governance, delivery and accountability across entities

MoUs signed with key Government partners- including Port of Newcastle, TfNSW, NSW Telco Authority, Department of Planning and **MoU negotiation underway** with NSW Health, Department of Education, Crown Lands and Forestry Corporation

Update on the Central-West Orana Transmission Project



Status and next steps

EnergyCo is delivering new transmission network infrastructure in the Central-West Orana REZ, including new overhead transmission lines, energy hubs and related infrastructure

- The public exhibition of the Environmental Impact Statement was completed on 8 November
- A Response to Submissions report is being prepared for the Department of Planning and Environment and is expected to be publicly available in 2024
- NSW and Commonwealth planning approvals are expected in mid-2024 with construction expected to begin in late 2024
- The REZ network is expected to become operational in 2027/2028.

Network Operator update

- EnergyCo is carrying out a competitive tender process to engage a Network Operator who will design, build, operate, finance and maintain the transmission network for the Central-West Orana REZ
- ACERREZ was identified as the first ranked Network Operator proponent earlier this year. ACERREZ is a consortium sponsored by Acciona, Cobra and Endeavour Energy
- EnergyCo is working closely with ACERREZ to finalise and enter into a Commitment Deed in late 2023 at which time they will be confirmed as the preferred Network Operator



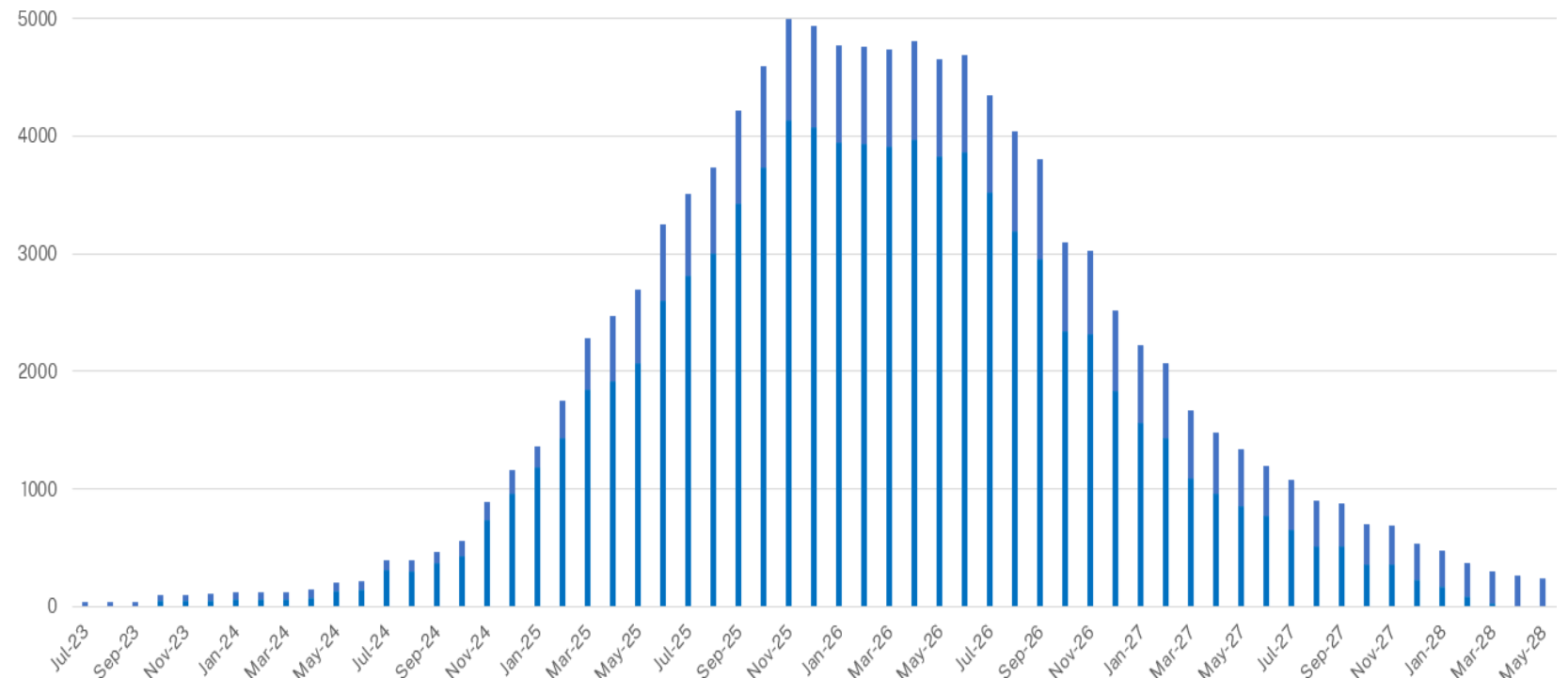
Coordination of cumulative impacts

Coordination of impacts

EnergyCo recognises the cumulative impacts to communities during the construction and operation of the REZ as a whole. While these key considerations represent potential impacts on local communities, they also represent **opportunities for investment and creating long-term, on the ground benefits.**

-  **Workforce accommodation**
-  **Training and skills**
-  **Telecommunications**
-  **Road upgrades**
-  **Waste and circular economy**
-  **Social infrastructure**

Workforce numbers – Transmission project and major generators with proposed connections to the REZ network



Whole of Government response

EnergyCo is coordinating a whole-of-government response to addressing the challenges arising from the scale of development proposed in the Central-West Orana REZ.

Central-West Orana REZ Steering Committee

- Established by the NSW Government and impacted councils in mid-2023 to provide coordination on REZ-wide issues
- Five project groups have been established under the steering committee to address specific topics:
 - Housing and accommodation
 - Community infrastructure and services
 - Roads and transport
 - Environmental delivery coordination
 - Economic development and participation

Agency and delivery partner agreements

Memorandums of Understanding have been established with:

- Department of Planning and Environment
- Transport for NSW
- Port of Newcastle
- NSW Telco Authority
- TAFE NSW

Benefits for the REZ for the Central- West Orana

Community and employment benefits for the Central-West Orana REZ

The Minister for Energy announced on 20 October \$128 million is available for community and employment benefits and projects to support the renewable energy zone in the Central-West Orana REZ.

EnergyCo is developing a community and employment benefit program to ensure REZ communities receive benefits from the renewable energy transition.

- Invest millions of dollars into communities in the REZ
- Upfront process for local communities to have a say in how that funding may be invested
- Support communities that receive funding
- Coordinate with agencies and renewable energy industry in delivering benefits.



Community and employment benefits for the Central-West Orana REZ

Community projects include:

- public or community services or infrastructure
- health services or infrastructure
- accommodation or housing
- local or regional energy programs or infrastructure
- environmental programs or infrastructure
- parks and recreation infrastructure
- education programs or research
- arts or cultural programs
- tourism programs or infrastructure
- services, programs or infrastructure for First Nations people
- other services, programs or infrastructure that benefit the relevant local community.

Community and employment benefits for the Central-West Orana REZ

Employment purposes include:

- employment programs and associated services and facilities
- skills and training programs and associated services and facilities
- a program, service or facility that supports the relevant employees to gain employment skills or experience relevant to employment.



Key priority areas identified by community

Since mid-2022, EnergyCo has been carrying out a range of activities to inform how community benefits will be delivered in the Central-West Orana REZ:



extensive targeted consultation with community and key stakeholders to understand the regional context and what is important to people



investigations into priority areas to identify opportunities and constraints and help refine options for initiatives



engaging delivery partners to coordinate funding and delivery methods and finalise the first seven initiatives



- Housing and accommodation



- Social infrastructure



- Training and skills



- Community energy



- Road upgrades for community use



North of Wollar Substation.

Community and employment benefit program



Next steps:

- consultation with local community to verify the projects and funding allocations
- consider other potential projects that would deliver benefits
- publish guidelines on how the community can have a say and play a role in the program
- publish guidelines on funding applications and commence delivery of benefit projects

Funding agreements are expected to commence in 2024 and the delivery of benefits.

Training, employment and business opportunities

Increased need for workers

The increased need for workers was envisaged in the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, which included initiatives and actions:

- **Renewable Energy Sector Board** delivered a plan, which has informed the Roadmap
- **Electricity Infrastructure Jobs Advocate** appointed to advise on strategies and incentives to encourage workforce development and education and training
- **Regulations** made to set minimum access fee contributions paid by energy generators to employment and training purposes
- **EnergyCo** completed a study into training and skills requirements for the Central-West Orana REZ and is due to begin consulting with agencies on implementing recommendations
- **EnergyCo** has required tender responses from Network Operators to include initiatives for workforce training and skills development, including proposals for new training facilities.
- **Long-term energy service agreements** include criteria for energy generators to train new workers and apprentices, First Nations, women and young people.

Training, employment and business opportunities

- REZ-wide program to support new workers into the renewable energy industry
- Utilise existing programs
- Workforce coordination once contractors commence
- Business roadshow and support
- Worker attraction strategy
- Other programs to promote jobs in the renewable energy industry such as micro skill course with TAFE



Opportunities for First Nations communities

Working with First Nations communities

EnergyCo has a role to consult and engage with First Nations communities:

- delivering the REZ
- supporting employment and training opportunities
- informing the types of benefits that may be delivered to First Nations people.

This occurs through regular consultation, key milestones and monthly through the First Nations Working Group and formal project consultation, such as with registered Aboriginal Parties.

EnergyCo is currently recruiting a new First Nations Outcomes team.



The team will also coordinate First Nations outcomes across renewable energy projects and the network so that these are complementary

Our team in the region

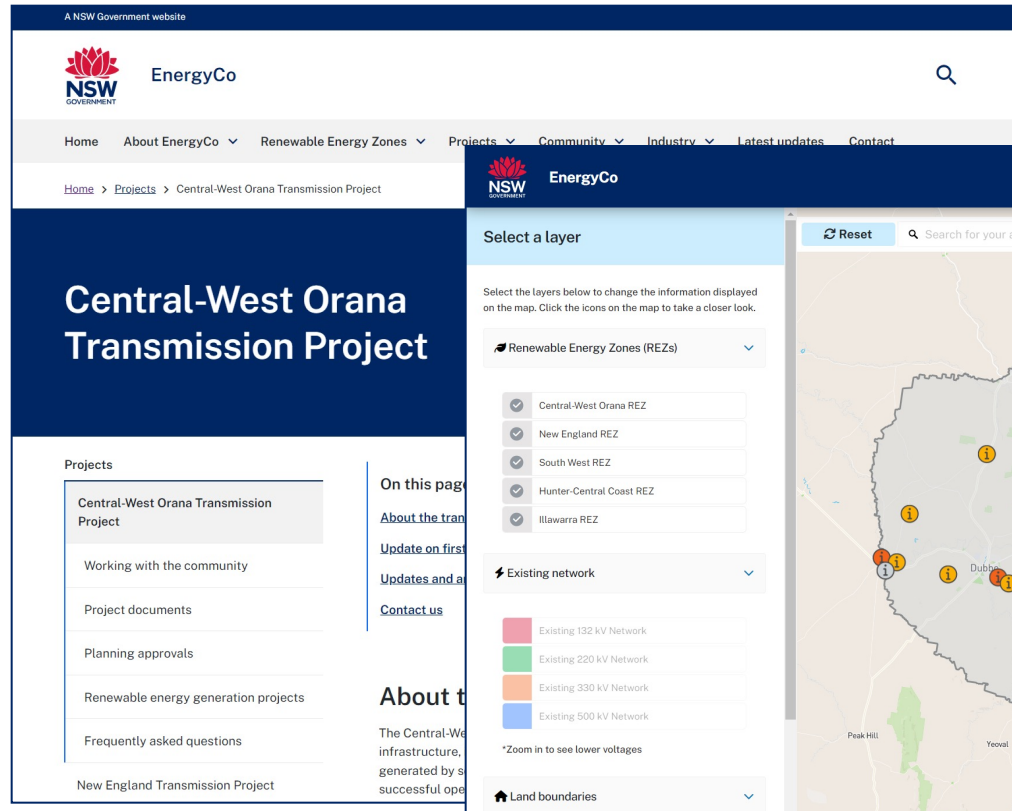
- We have local Place Managers and Land Acquisition Managers based out of Dubbo
- Our team works from EnergyCo's dedicated project office at 155 Macquarie Street, Dubbo
- We run a schedule of monthly pop-up events which is available to view at energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo/working-community



Community pop up session in Gulgong.

Online tools and materials

Project information is available on our website at energyco.nsw.gov.au/cwo, including an interactive map, fact sheets, report, work notifications and more.



A NSW Government website

EnergyCo

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Home > Projects > Central-West Orana Transmission Project

Central-West Orana Transmission Project

Projects

- Central-West Orana Transmission Project
- Working with the community
- Project documents
- Planning approvals
- Renewable energy generation projects
- Frequently asked questions

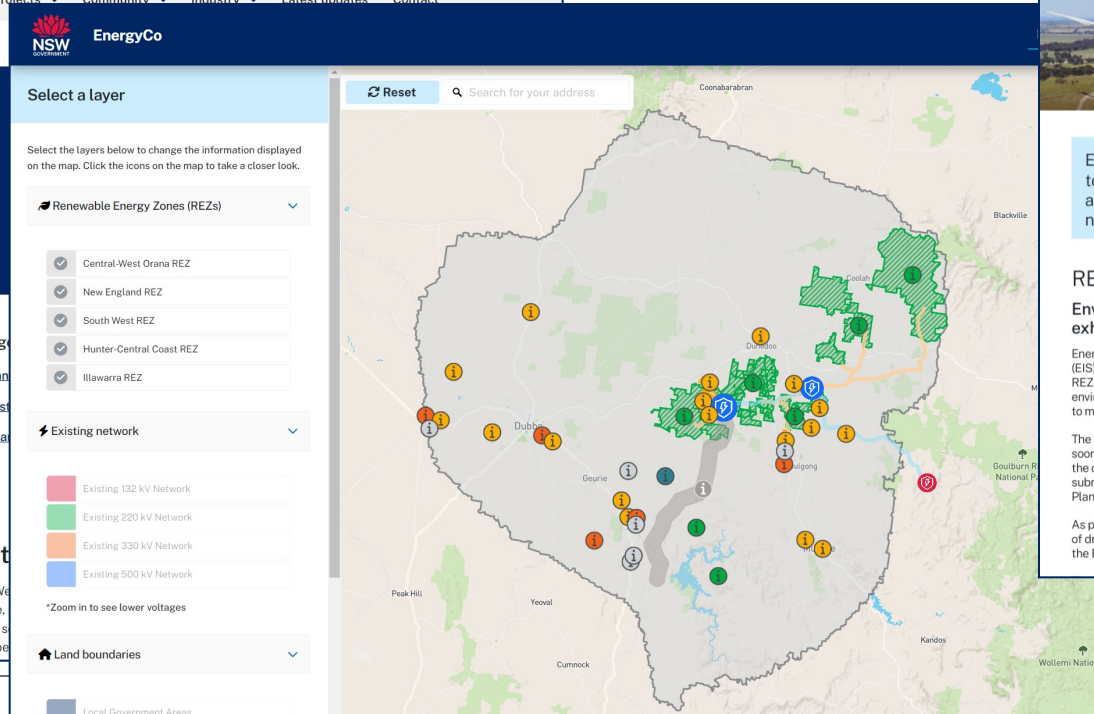
New England Transmission Project

On this page

- About the transmission project
- Update on first transmission line
- Updates and a timeline
- Contact us

About the project

The Central-West Orana transmission project, generated by successful...



EnergyCo

Select a layer

Select the layers below to change the information displayed on the map. Click the icons on the map to take a closer look.

- Renewable Energy Zones (REZs)
 - Central-West Orana REZ
 - New England REZ
 - South West REZ
 - Hunter-Central Coast REZ
 - Illawarra REZ
- Existing network
 - Existing 132 kV Network
 - Existing 220 kV Network
 - Existing 330 kV Network
 - Existing 500 kV Network
- Land boundaries

*Zoom in to see lower voltages

Local Government Areas

Reset Search for your address

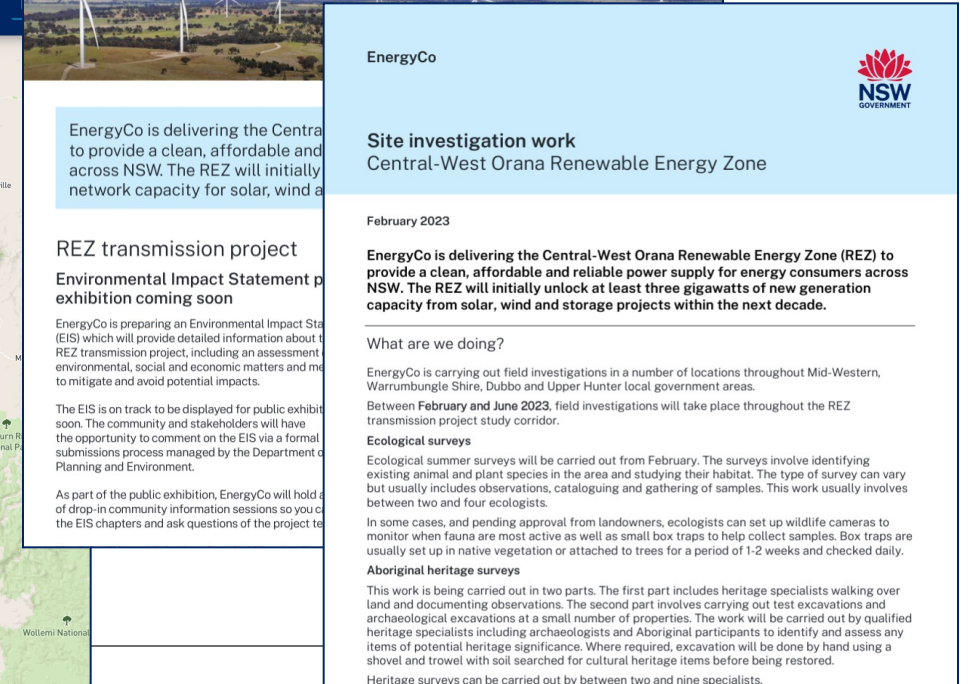
Coonabarabran, Blackville, Dubbo, Geurie, Yulgong, Peak Hill, Yeoval, Cummoock, Karidoo, Wollumbi National Park, Goulburn R National Park



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Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

August 2023 Project Update



EnergyCo

Site investigation work

Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

February 2023

EnergyCo is delivering the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) to provide a clean, affordable and reliable power supply for energy consumers across NSW. The REZ will initially unlock at least three gigawatts of new generation capacity from solar, wind and storage projects within the next decade.

What are we doing?

EnergyCo is carrying out field investigations in a number of locations throughout Mid-Western, Warrumbungle Shire, Dubbo and Upper Hunter local government areas.

Between February and June 2023, field investigations will take place throughout the REZ transmission project study corridor.

Ecological surveys

Ecological summer surveys will be carried out from February. The surveys involve identifying existing animal and plant species in the area and studying their habitat. The type of survey can vary but usually includes observations, cataloguing and gathering of samples. This work usually involves between two and four ecologists.

In some cases, and pending approval from landowners, ecologists can set up wildlife cameras to monitor when fauna are most active as well as small box traps to help collect samples. Box traps are usually set up in native vegetation or attached to trees for a period of 1-2 weeks and checked daily.

Aboriginal heritage surveys

This work is being carried out in two parts. The first part includes heritage specialists walking over land and documenting observations. The second part involves carrying out test excavations and archaeological excavations at a small number of properties. The work will be carried out by qualified heritage specialists including archaeologists and Aboriginal participants to identify and assess any items of potential heritage significance. Where required, excavation will be done by hand using a shovel and trowel with soil searched for cultural heritage items before being restored.

Heritage surveys can be carried out by between two and nine specialists.

REZ transmission project

Environmental Impact Statement public exhibition coming soon

EnergyCo is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which will provide detailed information about the REZ transmission project, including an assessment of environmental, social and economic matters and measures to mitigate and avoid potential impacts.

The EIS is on track to be displayed for public exhibition soon. The community and stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on the EIS via a formal submissions process managed by the Department of Planning and Environment.

As part of the public exhibition, EnergyCo will hold a series of drop-in community information sessions so you can view the EIS chapters and ask questions of the project team.

Conclusion

EnergyCo is committed to providing lasting, positive outcomes for regional communities that are hosting new infrastructure for the NSW energy transition.

- EnergyCo is developing projects and initiatives to ensure communities share in the benefits of the once-in-a-generation economic opportunity presented by the transition.
- We are working to ensure benefits are delivered early while REZ projects are in construction.
- Community and stakeholder consultation has played a key role in developing benefit initiatives to date. We will continue to tailor initiatives to the unique needs and priorities of communities where new energy infrastructure is built.





Thank you



Contact our team



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