

Transgrid Advisory Council (TAC) Meeting summary and actions

18 October 2023

Meeting title:	TAC Meeting #9 for 2023		
Location:	Via Microsoft Teams and MR SO180 L01.05		
Chairperson:	Maryanne Graham, EGM Corporate and Stakeholder Affairs		
Date of meeting:	Wednesday 18 October 2023	Time:	9.30am – 11.45am
Attendees:			
Transgrid Advisory Council Members	<p>Andrew Richards, CEO, Energy Users Association Australia (EUAA) Brian Spak, Energy Consumers Australia Daniel McEniery, Australian Energy Regulator (AER) – Observer Iain Maitland, Energy Advocate, Ethnic Communities Council Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney Leigh Creswell, Snowy Hydro Leigh Clemow, Policy Manager, Energy Users Association of Australia (EUAA) Michael Lynch, Senior Policy Officer, Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) Mitchell Hume, Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) – Observer Scott Young, Executive Director, CBA Sean Mullins, Australian Energy Regulator (AER) – Observer William Wei, Australian Energy Regulator (AER) – Observer</p>		
Transgrid representatives	<p>Belinda Ackermann, Stakeholder Relations Advisor Brett Redman, Chief Executive Officer Cassie Farrell, Senior Manager Stakeholder and Corporate Engagement Christian Abran, Network Regulatory Manager Harry Mercer, Major Project Delivery Director Hany Todary, Social Licence Lead Jeremy Roberts, Project Director, HumeLink Louise Birkmann, Regulatory Reporting Manager Mark McEneaney, Project Director, Sydney Ring Marie Jordan, EGM of Network Maryanne Graham, EGM, Corporate and Stakeholder Affairs Nicole Ryan, GM, Community, Stakeholder and Government Stephanie McDougall, GM of Regulation Zainab Dirani, Senior Research Analyst</p>		
Apologies	<p>Christiaan Zuur, Director Energy Transformation, Clean Energy Council (CEC) Craig Memery, Senior Advisor Energy, Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) Gavin Dufty, Executive Manager Policy and Research Unit, St Vincent de Paul Josef Tadich, Senior Manager Engineering, Tesla Paul Beaton, Senior Policy Officer, Clean Energy Council Sam Fyfield, GM Grid and SCADA, Goldwind Tenant Reed, Director Climate and Energy, Australian Industry Group (AIG)</p>		

1. Meeting summary

The meeting opened with a review of action items from the previous meeting. This was followed by an update by Transgrid's CEO, referencing the release of the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) draft determination on our Waratah Super Battery (WSB) project and progression of the HumeLink Contingent Project Application (CPA) 2.

It was noted that the Victoria to NSW Interconnector West (VNI West) Project Assessment Conclusions Report (PACR) dispute was not upheld, allowing Transgrid to now lodge a feedback loop request for the VNI West CPA 1 to the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO). The CEO update highlighted continued positive progression with Energy Connect (PEC), VNI West and HumeLink projects.

An Energy Connect (PEC) update discussed progress on the Buronga Substation and the arrival of the synchronous condensers. The team noted completion of 81% of tower foundations, 60% of tower assembly and 35% of towers erected on Line 1 (Buronga to South Australian border), and completion of 80% of tower foundations and 75% of tower erection for Line 4 (Buronga to Red Cliffs). The team shared that applications for the 2025 Charles Sturt University Transgrid Engineering Scholarships were open, along with the latest round of our Community Partnerships Program.

The VNI West project update referenced extensive consultation with community and landholders on the Draft Corridor Report, which was extended by five weeks to allow additional time for consultation (a total 10-week consultation period). 70 submissions from community and stakeholder groups and feedback from 16 community information sessions led to corridor changes allowing for more route options and reduced impact on agriculture and biodiversity. The Preferred Corridor Report was published on 6 October 2023. Establishment of the Community Consultative Group for VNI West was also discussed.

An update on the Hunter Transmission project referenced our continued work with The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) on network planning matters, project development detail and scoping. It was explained that EnergyCo are leading community and stakeholder engagement, land acquisition and biodiversity and environmental approvals. It was noted that this project is a collaboration of NSW contestable and non-contestable processes to ensure the most efficient outcome.

A HumeLink project update detailed that consent to enter was at 95% of target line length (80%), 51% of compensation was agreed in principle and 19% of option deeds were fully executed. The team noted that the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) public exhibition period closed on 10 October and saw 130 submissions across the route. A further deep dive into HumeLink costs provided more detailed analysis of owner's costs, environmental offsets, owner's risk, land and property and Long Lead Equipment (LLE), which saw a detailed discussion and request for a further deep dive on owner's costs and risks.

Our new social licence framework was presented to the TAC. The components for building social licence and our social licence investment, engagement and evaluation and review process were discussed. TAC members were asked if they would like to discuss the high-level framework in greater detail, however the team did not receive any requests for a further discussion. The next update focussed on key elements of the AER's draft decision on the non-contestable elements of the WSB project (2024-2029). Sean Mullins from the AER explained these key elements and sought feedback from the TAC on the two Capital Expenditure Sharing Scheme (CESS) scenarios presented. Due to time constraints, it was suggested that a deep dive be promptly scheduled on this topic.

Due to timing constraints, the final update (Regulatory Policy and Government Relations) was presented as slides. Two key points were referenced in the meeting, including that Financeability is ongoing, and the amendment to the National Electricity Objective (NEO) to include the emissions reduction component has progressed and that guidance on implementing the updated objective is being developed.

2. Action items

Action	Responsible	Due date/ status
<i>VNI West</i> : Provide a progress update including the timeframe for the establishment of the VNI West CCG and First Nations consultative group. Outline the proposed interrelationship between the two groups and advise if sitting fees will be paid to members of the First Nations consultative group.	Nicole Ryan	By next TAC on 16 November
<i>HumeLink</i> : Hold a further deep dive into the HumeLink owners cost/risk to provide more certainty around these.	Jeremy Roberts	By next TAC on 16 November
<i>HumeLink</i> : Provide a summary of lessons learned and value gained on the early works spending to manage the possibility of unforeseen increases.	Jeremy Roberts	By next TAC on 16 November
Contact TAC members to schedule a time to discuss our FY 2023 Energy Charter self-assessment and stakeholder engagement performance.	Cassie Farrell	By next TAC on 16 November
<i>On WSB</i> : Due to time constraints, hold an additional session with the AER on the key elements of the WSB Draft determination.	Cassie Farrell	By next TAC on 16 November

3. Next meeting

The next meeting will occur on **Thursday 16 November**.

4. Contact details

If you require any information on this summary or in relation to TAC meetings, please contact:

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