

Transgrid Advisory Council (TAC) Meeting summary and actions

9 April 2024

Meeting title:	TAC Meeting #2 for 2024		
Location:	Via Microsoft Teams and MR SO180 L01.01		
Chairperson:	Marie Jordan, EGM Network		
Date of meeting:	Tuesday 9 April 2024	Time:	9.30am – 12.00pm
Attendees:			
TAC members	<p>Adrian Dwyer, CEO Infrastructure Partnerships Australia Andrew Richards, CEO, Energy Users Association Australia (EUAA) Brian Williams, Workstream Lead, Snowy Hydro Christiaan Zuur, Director Market Grid and Investment, Clean Energy Council Craig Memery, Senior Advisor Energy, Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) Gavin Dufty, Executive Manager Policy and Research Unit, St Vincent de Paul Iain Maitland, Energy Advocate, Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW (ECCNSW) Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney Liz Ritchie, CEO, Regional Australia Institute Louise Benjamin, Regulatory Consultant and Lecturer Michael Lynch, Senior Policy Officer, PIAC Scott Young, Executive Director, Commonwealth Bank of Australia, (CBA)</p>		
Transgrid representatives	<p>Belinda Ackermann, Stakeholder Relations Advisor Brett Redman, CEO Cassie Farrell, Senior Manager Stakeholder and Corporate Engagement Charles-Edouard Mariolle, Board Director Christian Abran, Network Regulatory Manager Christopher Curtain, Board Director Cristina Cifuentes, Board Director Gordon Taylor, EGM Major Projects Jennifer Hughes, A/EGM Delivery Michael Johnson, Program Director Stakeholder Relations Major Projects Nicole Ryan, GM Community, Stakeholder and Government Sam Martin, Policy Manager Stasha Prnjatovic, Board Director Stephen McSweeney, EGM People, Culture and Safety Zainab Dirani, Policy Manager</p>		
TAC member apologies	<p>Brian Spak, Director Energy System Transition, Energy Consumers Australia (ECA) Leigh Clemow, Policy Manager, Energy Users Association of Australia (EUAA) Maryanne Graham, EGM Corporate and Stakeholder Affairs, Transgrid Tennant Reed, Director Climate and Energy, Australian Industry Group (AIG)</p>		

1. Meeting summary

1.1. Summary of meeting

The meeting opened with an introduction of our new TAC members including Adrian Dwyer, Chief Executive Officer of Infrastructure Partnerships Australia, Regulatory Consultant and Lecturer Louise Benjamin, and Liz Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer of the Regional Australia Institute. A review of action items from the previous meeting followed.

1.1.2 Actions from last meeting and TAC refresh codesign outcomes

The first agenda item highlighted outcomes of the TAC refresh co-design session held on 12 March. The final TAC purpose and objectives, developed in partnership with the TAC, were shared. This was followed by a discussion on the proposed TAC framework consisting of three pillars - *Policy and Innovation*, *Regulatory Projects* and *Customer and Project Review*. Focus area meeting topics will align with these pillars. It was noted that deep dives will no longer be cancelled in the scenario of low attendance.

TAC feedback from this session recognised recent improvements in the way information flows back from the working groups into the TAC, however further improvements could be made in circling back on regulatory submissions. A TAC member noted that involving TAC members in providing updates on the focus area meetings and deep dives at quarterly TAC meetings would be welcome. Generally, the new framework was supported by the TAC.

1.1.3 CEO update and Q&A

Transgrid's CEO provided a general update on the Victoria to NSW Interconnector West (VNI West), HumeLink, EnergyConnect, Hunter Transmission and Waratah Super Battery projects. Our community Engagement month (in April) was highlighted, along with the impending official opening of the Transgrid Discovery Hub in Wagga which was constructed using labour and materials local to that region.

The CEO noted that EnergyConnect is the first electricity transmission project in Australia to receive an official 'Leading' sustainability rating by the Infrastructure Sustainability Council. A discussion on costs of undergrounding transmission infrastructure, cost pressures and financeability followed.

1.1.4 Innovation focus: Challenges of transitioning to 100% renewables

A presentation on the challenges of transitioning to 100% renewables referenced Transgrid's role in the energy transition, capacity and availability for new connections and our key pillars to support Australia's clean energy transition - *Energy Reliability*, *System Security* and *Operability*. A discussion followed on system strength and inertia gaps, and solutions for an efficient effective system.

1.1.5 Customer and project focus: Major Projects update – social licence

A presentation on Major Projects Social Licence followed. This included a summary of the VNI West preferred route report, noting significant community outcomes achieved through consultation on the proximity of the alignment around Moulamein, a key theme of the submissions. A TAC member raised the importance of continued engagement.

Further information on the Transgrid Discovery Hub was presented. The team highlighted that this will be a central hub for the three major projects of HumeLink, VNI West and EnergyConnect and noted that this initiative aligns with recommendations from the *Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner's Independent Community Engagement Review*.

1.1.6 Regulatory Projects focus: Regulatory and Policy update

The final agenda item provided an update on the HumeLink Continent Project Application (CPA) 2. The team outlined the common themes of questions received to date from the Australian Energy Regulator (AER), including risk costs, contingency, delivery delay scenario to 2029, Material Change of Circumstance (MCC), biodiversity and social licence.

This was followed by an update on VNI West CPA 1, which the team explained is at the decision stage. Common themes of AER questions on the VNI West CPA 1 include risk costs, contingency, EnergyConnect enhancement and Gugga Integration, biodiversity and social licence.

The team provided an update on key Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) rule changes and the two Non-network Solutions rule changes being driven by Transgrid. It was noted that an outcome on the value of emissions reduction, a recent topic of discussion with the TAC, was achieved. The team noted that the AER released guidelines of how to apply this to Regulatory Investment Tests (RITs) and that the AEMC published how they will apply this to their rule changes and processes.

The meeting concluded with a short poll to measure our engagement performance at this meeting. TAC members were thanked for their attendance and input.

2. Action items

Action	Responsible	Due date/ status
Provide the original TAC purpose statement and objectives and outline the changes made through consultation with the TAC.	Cassie Farrell	By next TAC meeting
Include national/NSW-based transmission planning and approvals systems as a focus area meeting topic.	Cassie Farrell	To be scheduled at focus area meeting
Arrange another deep dive on the System Security Roadmap which covers the possible contribution from Variable Renewable Electricity (VRE).	Cassie Farrell	To be scheduled at focus area meeting
Arrange a deep dive on how network operations are managing the energy transition, to include how Transgrid's system restart operating procedures are evolving with the transition.	Cassie Farrell	To be scheduled
Provide further detail on biodiversity costs for HumeLink, clarifying if all, or a proportion of costs, will be distributed across the life of the asset.	Christian Abran	By next TAC

3. Next meeting

The next meeting is a focus area meeting to occur on **Monday 29 April from 1.30pm – 3.30pm.**

4. Contact details

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

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