

Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone Access Scheme Declaration

Position paper on proposed amendments in Q1 2024.

Background

On the 22 January 2024, EnergyCo published a [market information notice](#) outlining reforms to enable the Infrastructure Planner under the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020* (EII Act) to allocate an initial tranche of access rights under the CWO REZ access scheme.

These reforms are intended to fast track CWO REZ access right allocation ahead of financial close of the CWO REZ network project. Following financial close, the Government intends to use a tender process run by AEMO Services, as the Consumer Trustee under the EII Act, for allocation of access rights to the CWO REZ network.

The reforms are technical changes to how access rights can be allocated to generation and storage projects connecting to the network infrastructure. They do not impact how access schemes benefit the local community, for example through the allocation of a portion of access fees for community and employment purposes.

This paper explains proposed amendments to the [CWO REZ Access Scheme Declaration](#) (as published in the NSW Gazette on 23 December 2022) and [Guidelines for Access Scheme Declarations](#) (last published by the Minister in July 2022).

Proposed update to Guidelines for Access Scheme Declarations

Consistent with the market information notice, the proposed amendments to the guidelines provide an additional option to grant the initial allocation of access rights after an application process. These amendments are at page 9 of the guidelines.

The amended guidelines would retain the existing option to grant access rights through a competitive tender process.

Proposed updates to CWO REZ Access Scheme Declaration

The proposed amendments to the declaration are to provide for the Infrastructure Planner to grant or increase the initial allocation of access rights after conducting an application process (clause 7(1)(a)(ii)).

A number of amendments are required to enable the grant or increase of the initial allocation of access rights after an application process. The following amendments are proposed:

- Clause 7(7) is amended to include reference to clause 7(1)(a)(ii)
- Clause 18(4) is amended and a new clause 18(5) inserted to clarify when the Infrastructure Planner is required to consult with the Consumer Trustee to amend the eligibility criteria for the grant or increase of access rights:
 - The Infrastructure Planner must consult the Consumer Trustee on any amendment to the eligibility criteria before a competitive tender.
 - The Infrastructure Planner is not required to consult the Consumer Trustee on any amendment to the eligibility criteria before an application process.
- A definition of 'application process' is added to the dictionary.

Stakeholder consultation

The public exhibition provides an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback to help inform the Minister for Energy's final decision about amendments to the CWO REZ Access Scheme Declaration and the Guidelines for Access Scheme Declarations.

Public submissions are invited from **Thursday 22 February 2024 to Wednesday 20 March 2024**.

To provide feedback on the Draft CWO REZ Access Scheme Declaration and/or the Guidelines for Access Scheme Declarations, please send your submission to roadmap.communications@dpie.nsw.gov.au.

Please include 'Your name/Organisation - Draft CWO REZ Access Scheme Declaration' in the subject line.

EnergyCo will conduct targeted consultation with relevant project proponents on the application process and a guideline is targeted for release in March 2024.