

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

NSW Renewable Energy Sector Board

Sixth Report on Activities of the Board

June 2025





Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past, present and future.

We recognise Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to place and their rich contribution to society.

Artist and designer Nikita Ridgeway from Aboriginal design agency – Boss Lady Creative Designs, created the People and Community symbol.

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1 Chairpersons' overview

The NSW Renewable Energy Sector Board (the Board) plays a key role in providing independent advice to the Minister on how local workers, communities and industries across NSW can reap the economic benefits of the renewable energy transition under the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (the Roadmap).

We have welcomed the opportunity to work with the Minister for Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Heritage, the Hon Penny Sharpe, MLC, since April 2023.

We also greatly appreciate the expertise and knowledge brought by Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) Services, the Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo), the former Electricity Infrastructure Jobs Advocate, Dr Mark Apthorpe, and the Chair of the Local Content and Economic Development Subcommittee, Mr Ian Smith, to our Board meetings this year.

The Board has continued a strong focus on overseeing the implementation of our plan, including improvement of local content commitments made by proponents in Roadmap tenders. This year the Board endorsed the first review of our plan, an addendum to the plan, and a process to increase local content requirements over time.

The Board established an assessment committee to work with the Secretariat to progress the first round of proposals received for the process to increase local content requirements. This work is crucial in addressing the 'chicken and egg' dilemma faced by investors in local supply chains and renewable energy developers.

Although it is still early days, we are confident that with a renewed focus on implementing the recommendations in the plan, particularly around long-term planning for local content, jobs, skills and training, we will see its objectives and recommendations achieved.

We would like to thank all Board members for their significant contributions throughout the year and to particularly thank former co-Chair, Mr Craig Memery, for his leadership and outstanding dedication since the Board was established in 2021. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours.



Allen Hicks
Co-Chair
NSW Renewable Energy Sector Board



Brian Spak
Co-Chair
NSW Renewable Energy Sector Board

2 Introduction

The Roadmap is the pathway to powering NSW with affordable, clean and reliable energy for everyone. Working with communities, industry and First Nations people, the NSW Government is leading a once-in-a-generation upgrade of the NSW electricity network.

As well as delivering affordable, clean, and reliable energy to every household and business across the state, the Roadmap will bring secure, long-term jobs to NSW, create new apprenticeships, empower businesses, and boost economic opportunities in our local communities.

The Board plays a critical role in helping make sure local workers, communities and industries across NSW reap the economic benefits of the electricity transition under the Roadmap.

The Board was established in February 2021 under section 7 of the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020* NSW (the Act). The Minister for Energy (the Minister) must appoint representatives to the Board from the following groups:

- trade unions
- the electricity, manufacturing, fabrication and construction sectors
- the renewable energy industry
- NSW electricity customers
- EnergyCo
- other persons at the Minister's discretion.

During the reporting period the Board welcomed three new members and reappointed six members for a 3-year term. See Section 5 for further details.

Under section 8 of the Act, the Board must prepare a plan for the NSW renewable energy sector, which the Minister published in September 2022. The plan seeks to maximise the use of locally produced and supplied goods and services and employment of suitably qualified workers on new infrastructure projects under the Roadmap. It also aims to foster opportunities for apprentices and trainees.

The Board also provides advice to the Minister and Roadmap delivery entities on how to support the growth and competitiveness of the NSW renewable energy sector and jobs for NSW workers.

This document is the Board's sixth report on its activities, which the Board is required to provide to the Minister by 30 June 2025.

3 The Board’s strategic objectives

The Board has delivered significant outcomes throughout this reporting year, through continued collaboration with key stakeholders. On 4 November 2024, the Board participated in a strategy day to identify key priorities to guide the Board’s future work. The Board’s priorities include:

- *the Board’s process to increase local content requirements* — continue implementation in a simple, fair and transparent way
- *improve local content commitments in Roadmap tenders* - provide advice to the Minister and Roadmap entities
- *improve monitoring and compliance of commitments* - provide advice on implementing Recommendation 7 of the Board’s plan on monitoring, reporting and compliance of commitments in successful tenders to the Minister and Roadmap entities
- *enhance the Board’s Plan and report on the Board’s activities* – continuous improvement of the Board’s Plan through biannual reviews, amendments to the Plan from time to time, and advice to the Minister and report to the Minister on the Board’s activities.

To deliver on these key priorities the Board has developed a forward work plan for 2025 and 2026.

4 The Board’s key activities

4.1 Review of the Board’s plan

Following a request for an early review of the Board’s plan by the former Minister for Energy, with the intent to ensure that it continue to promote the best opportunities for the renewable energy manufacturing supply chain, the Board endorsed the first review of its plan in September 2024.

Key findings from the review include:

- the Board’s plan for the sector supports mitigation of supply chain risks
- the changing energy landscape reaffirms the plan and informs its recommendations
- opportunities for the sector must leverage and strengthen competitive advantages
- reinforcing the need to invest in local supply chains supporting Roadmap delivery
- most recommendations directed to NSW Government from the Board’s plan are yet to be implemented particularly for long-term planning for local content, jobs, skills and training.

The review also recommended further actions to renew focus and accelerate implementation of the Board’s plan, see Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of actions to accelerate implementation of the Board’s plan

Local content	Supply chains	First Nations	Workforce
Create a local content policy for the sector	Create a local supply chain directory	Support procurement capability development	Develop a sector skills and training strategy
Amend the Act on financial interests and regulator’s review	Provide tender readiness training and productivity improvement programs to SMEs	Share economic and financial benefits	Operationalise industry run training centres and sector employment body
Enhance WH&S codes of conduct	Enhance compliance, knowledge sharing and reporting	Enhance collaboration and participation	Develop group training organisation model

4.2 Addendum to the Board’s plan

In May 2024, the Board endorsed an update to its plan with an Addendum providing clarifications for the interpretation of particular requirements, and recommending further enhancements to the implementation of the Board’s plan.

When implementing the Board’s plan, AEMO Services reported challenges in translating the Board’s recommendations into contractually binding commitments. To address this situation the Addendum aims to provide the following clarifications:

1. calculation of the denominators for the development, operations and maintenance phases, along with the definition of total project contract value
2. definition for local steel products and components, and clarification of the denominator
3. The need to provide guidance to proponents on alternative approaches that would be acceptable if they are unable to meet quantitative minimum requirements
4. alignment of workforce categories, including for learning workers and apprentices, First Nations participation and underrepresented groups.

The Addendum also increases the First Nations minimum participation requirements from 1.5% to 3% and recommends minimum requirements for employment of women as a sub-criteria.

4.3 Process to increase local content requirements

In December 2024, the Board launched a process to increase its recommended local content requirements over time, to increase investment certainty for renewable energy local supply chains.

The process:

- links future increases in local content requirements with investment decisions
- considers risks to manufacturers and developments as well as to NSW electricity customers.

The process which is designed to be resource efficient, open and transparent, comprises three stages:

1. *Preliminary assessment*: Proponents submit a short, high-level proposal outlining key elements of their project for consideration by the Board, along with the specific increase to a minimum local content requirement being requested.
2. *Detailed assessment*: Proponents successful in Stage 1 will then be required to submit a thorough, detailed project proposal that clearly outlines how the project addresses all assessment criteria.
3. *Approval of change*: The Board updates and publishes its plan with the recommended changes to local content requirements subject to the Regulator's recommendation and Ministerial approval. The increase in local content requirements comes into effect on the day the plan is published and conditional on investment being made for implementation.

An Assessment Committee, a subset of the Board, completed the stage one preliminary assessment. Committee members have included Dr Anita Talberg, Anna Freeman, Mr Bradley Pidgeon and Mr Quentin Hill. The results from the first stage were presented to the Board on 10 June 2025. To further improve the process, the Board agreed to:

- A refined definition of a Small and Medium Enterprise.
- Develop a communications plan for Round 2 of the process.

In the next reporting year, the Board will continue to review and improve the process for future rounds to ensure it continues to remain simple, fair and transparent while providing certainty to businesses investing in local renewable energy supply chains.

5 The Board's operations and performance

5.1 Changes in Board membership

5.1.1 Resignations and reappointments

Between 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2025, the following Board members resigned from their positions on the Board:

- Mr Craig Memery resigned from his position on the Board as a representative for NSW electricity customers and as the Board's co-Chair, effective from 6 December 2025.
- Ms Bridgette Carter resigned from her position on the Board as a representative of employers in the electricity, manufacturing and construction sector, effective from 13 March 2025.

The Minister invited diverse nominations to fill the positions, and for an additional member to represent employers in the electricity, manufacturing and construction sectors under section 7(2)(a)(vii) of the Act. A panel then assessed the nominations and made recommendations for the Minister's consideration.

On 2 May 2025, the Minister approved the reappointment of the following Board members:

- Dr Anita Talberg was reappointed as the representative for persons involved in the planning, design, construction and operation of generation infrastructure.
- Mr Mark Cain was reappointed as the representative for manufacturers of steel, aluminium and other similar materials.
- Mr John Coyle was reappointed as the representative from the Australian Industry Group for the metal fabrication industry.
- Mr Bradley Pidgeon was reappointed as the representative for the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union.
- Mr Dominic Adams was reappointed as a representative under the category of 'persons appointed by the Minister'.
- Professor Heidi Norman was reappointed as a representative under the category of 'persons appointed by the Minister'.

The Minister also appointed Mr Brian Spak, a representative for NSW electricity customers, as the Board's new co-Chair in place of the retiring Mr Memery.

5.1.2 New Board members

During the reporting period, the Board welcomed the following new members:

Ms Giselle Coromandel: National Business Development Lead — Energy, BlueScope



Ms Giselle Coromandel is the National Business Development Lead for BlueScope's Energy group. In this role, she developed and is implementing the Renewable Energy Strategy for the Australian Steel Markets business within BlueScope, which has oversight of the sales and marketing of all Australian steel products.

Ms Coromandel works with renewable project owners and the Australian steel industry to fabricate renewable energy infrastructure and support the energy transition.

Ms Coromandel has previously held strategic development roles at Energy Australia and has a background in industrial design, sustainable energy, innovation and business development. She sits on the Board of Directors for Weld Australia, the welding industry's peak representative body.

Mr Quentin Hill: CEO, Advanced Materials and Battery Council



Mr Quentin Hill is the CEO for the Advanced Materials and Battery Council (AMBC), an industry representative body for the battery supply chain sector seeking to grow the local battery supply chain ecosystem to the benefit of the Australian economy through the opportunities presented by the energy transition.

Mr Hill brings significant experience in mineral exploration, project development and business leadership across the resources industry, government and construction having led resources companies, consultancies and industry associations.

Dr Alana West: Policy Officer, Justice and Equity Centre



Dr Alana West is a Policy Officer in the Justice and Equity Centre's Energy and Water Justice team, leading the policy and advocacy on efficient electrification of homes and on the retail market.

Dr West is also currently a member of the EnergyAustralia Customer Advisory Council and Origin Energy's Consumer Advocacy Panel and is the facilitator for the Efficient Electric Homes Alliance, involving over 60 organisations.

Previously, Dr West was a community engagement officer with RE-Alliance, a not-for-profit organisation advocating for regional

benefits from the energy transition focusing on community benefits for the roll-out of the NSW Renewable Energy Zones.

Dr West has a PhD in energy sociology from the Climate, Society and Environment Research Centre at the University of Technology Sydney.

5.1.3 Current Board membership

- Mr Allen Hicks: NSW Branch Secretary, Electrical Trades Union (co-Chair).
- Mr Brian Spak: General Manager, Advocacy and Policy, Energy Consumers Australia, as a representative for NSW electricity customers (co-Chair).
- Mr Dominic Adams: General Manager, Networks at Energy Networks Australia, a person appointed by the Minister under section 7(2)(c) of the Act.
- Mr Ash Albury: Executive Director, Planning and Communities, Energy Corporation of NSW.
- Mr Mark Cain: Chief Executive, Australian Steel Institute as a representative for manufacturers of steel, aluminium and other similar materials.
- Mr Tony Callinan: NSW Branch Secretary, Australian Worker's Union (AWU).
- Ms Giselle Coromandel: National Business Development Lead — Energy, BlueScope as a representative from the Business Council of Australia for employers in the electricity, manufacturing and construction sectors.
- Mr John Coyle: Director, Varley Group as the representative from the Australian Industry Group for the metal fabrication industry.
- Ms Alison Goodwin: National Research and Policy Officer, Mining and Energy Union.
- Mr Quentin Hill: CEO, Advanced Materials and Battery Council as a representative for employers in the electricity, manufacturing and construction sectors.
- Mr Andrew Newman: Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary, Tomago Aluminium as a representative for manufacturers of steel, aluminium and other similar materials.
- Professor Heidi Norman: Indigenous Land and Justice Research Group, Arts Design and Architecture, UNSW, a person appointed by the Minister under section 7(2)(c) of the Act.
- Mr Brad Pidgeon: NSW & ACT State Secretary, Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union (AMWU).
- Dr Anita Talberg: Director, Workforce Development, Clean Energy Council as a representative for persons involved in the planning, design, construction and operation of generation infrastructure.
- Dr Alana West: Policy Officer, Justice and Equity Centre, as a representative for NSW electricity customers.

5.2 Stakeholder engagement

The Board Co-Chairs met with representatives from AEMO Services regularly throughout 2024-25. These meetings provided an avenue for dialogue between the Board and AEMO Services regarding the implementation of the Board's recommendations in tenders for generation, long-duration storage and firming infrastructure long-term energy service agreement(s) (LTESAs).

Board members also attended a deep-dive session with representatives from AEMO Services regarding alternative approaches to achieving the Board's local content targets. Alternative social licence commitments may allow proponents to progress infrastructure development while capacity building to meet the Board's local content targets occurs within the sector. These sessions more broadly supported the Board's focus on opportunities to improve social licence commitments in the Roadmap tender process.

The Board continued its regular engagement with the former Electricity Infrastructure Jobs Advocate, Dr Mark Apthorpe, until his resignation in September 2024. Dr Apthorpe provided regular updates on his activities and stakeholder engagement during Board meetings. The Board acknowledges Dr Apthorpe's valuable contribution as the Jobs Advocate in energising the sector to address critical jobs and skills issues, and looks forward to a replacement being appointed.

The Board also proactively established a working relationship with the Local Content and Economic Development (LCED) Subcommittee of the Whole-of-Government Roadmap Steering Committee. The LCED Subcommittee is chaired by Mr Ian Smith, Executive Director of Regional Economic Development at the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), and its terms of reference include supporting the delivery of the Board's plan. The LCED Subcommittee is supporting the Board's key priority on improving commitments in tenders and a government response to the Boards' review of its plan.

The Board's Secretariat continued to consult with NSW Government agencies and Roadmap entities on behalf of the Board to foster a coordinated approach to implementing the Board's recommendations and exploring opportunities to uplift local supply chain capacity. This includes regular consultation with EnergyCo, Investment NSW, DPIRD and the NSW Department of Education.

5.3 Board meetings

Under section 7(5) of the Act, the Board is required to meet at least once every 6 months. A summary of the Board meetings and outcomes held between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025 is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Board meetings in FY 2024–25

Meeting date	Meeting outcomes
27 August 2024: Meeting No 23	<p>The Board discussed and approved changes to the Assessment Plan and Submission Guide for the Board’s process to increase local content requirements. The Secretariat sought nominations for assessment committee members. The Board agreed members employed by corporations would not be involved in the assessment process including the Assessment Plan and Submission Guideline and were recused from this part of the meeting.</p> <p>The Board discussed the draft review of its plan during the meeting and approved the review by circulation of papers out of session.</p> <p>The Board discussed how to improve, manage and enforce commitments in tenders to the minimum requirements in the Board’s Plan with AEMO Services, the Scheme Financial Vehicle and the former NSW Electricity Infrastructure Jobs Advocate.</p> <p>AEMO Services and EnergyCo provided an update to the Board.</p> <p>The former Jobs Advocate presented on key issues since his last report to the Minister and informed the Board of his resignation.</p>
4 November 2024: Meeting No 24	<p>The Board held a short meeting covering updates on the Addendum to its plan and the process to increase local content requirements.</p> <p>The Board then participated in a strategic planning session to develop its 2-year forward work-plan. The Board reviewed its work to date, including the review of its plan and Addendum, and identified key areas for future consideration. These are reflected in the Board’s strategic objectives in Section 3 of this report.</p>
10 June 2025: Meeting No 25	<p>Representatives from EnergyCo, AEMO Services and the Chair of the Local Content and Economic Development Subcommittee provided updates to the Board.</p> <p>The Board discussed and approved next steps on Round 1 of the Board’s process to increase local content requirements. The Board also discussed options to further improve the process. The Board agreed on a refined definition of a Small to Medium Enterprise and to develop a communications plan for Round 2 of the process to increase local content requirements.</p> <p>The Board discussed the challenge of realising commitments in Roadmap tenders to meet the Board’s recommended minimum requirements, and gaining improved visibility of different levels of commitments. The Board intends to continue working with AEMO Services and the Scheme Financial Vehicle to overcome these challenges and improve local content commitments in Roadmap tenders.</p> <p>The Board agreed to review and vote out of session on their Annual Report to the Minister for FY24/25 before 30 June 2025.</p> <p>The Board reviewed its 2025-26 Forward Workplan which outlined actions to improve, manage and enforce the local content commitments in tenders, working with AEMO Services, the Scheme Financial Vehicle and the Local Content and Economic Development Subcommittee.</p>

5.3.1 Register of attendance at Board meetings

Table 3: Attendance of Board members at Board meetings in FY 2024–25

Member	Meetings eligible to attend	Meetings attended
Allen Hicks	3	2
Brian Spak	3	1
Dominic Adams	3	3
Ashley Albury	2	2
Mark Cain	3	3
Tony Callinan	3	2 (one attended by Emmanuelle Risoldi as alternate member)
Bridgette Carter	2	2
Giselle Coromandel	1	1
John Coyle	3	2
Alison Goodwin	3	3
Quentin Hill	1	1
Craig Memery	2	2
Andrew Newman	3	3
Prof. Heidi Norman	3	1
Bradley Pidgeon	3	1
Dr Anita Talberg	3	3 (two attended by Anna Freeman as alternate member)
Dr Alana West	1	1