



Matt Garbutt
Australian Energy Regulator
Level 27, 135 King St
Sydney NSW 2000
By email: AERringfencing@aer.gov.au

RE: Essential Energy waiver application to establish a new training academy

Dear Matt

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Essential Energy waiver application to establish a new training academy. I write to support Essential Energy's initiative to offer electricity supply industry training throughout regional NSW.

The NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap is the NSW government's plan to modernise the electricity network by coordinating development of renewable energy infrastructure. The Roadmap consists of the delivery of five renewable energy zones (REZ) across NSW namely, Central West Orana, Hunter-Central Coast, New England, South West and Illawarra.

To date, there have been challenges in sourcing electricity supply industry training in regional NSW where these REZs are located due to the cost prohibitive nature of offering training dispersed over a large geographical area. NSW Government has identified the need for more REZ related training in a range of publications including:

- The NSW Electricity Supply and Reliability Check-up Report that identifies the need for more electrical skills training to support REZ delivery and network reliability.
- The Consumer Energy Strategy (action 38) that calls for the introduction of new support for industry training and the need for new credentials to respond to skills gaps.
- The 2030 Renewable Energy Workforce Plan that identifies the need for more skilled electrical workers to facilitate the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap.

An Essential Energy training academy that leverages the organisations regional depots to facilitate electricity industry training will provide a much needed boost to bridging the existing skills gap in regional NSW. For the reasons outlined in this letter, we recommend that you accept Essential Energy's waiver application to establish a new training academy.

If you have any further questions about this issue, please contact Andrew Loukopoulos, Acting Manager, Electricity Networks, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water at [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Liam Ryan
Executive Director, Energy Infrastructure
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

18 August 2025

Enclosure

cc: [REDACTED]