

2nd September 2025

Letter of Support to Establish a Training Academy in Regional New South Wales

Dear AER Ring-fencing Team,

As a part owner of a regional renewable energy EPCM company of 16 years and a landowner to a project whose company is delivering utility-scale projects across regional New South Wales—including within Essential Energy's distribution footprint—we strongly support Essential Energy's request for a ring-fencing waiver to establish a Regional Training Academy.

From a business owners perspective, we have first-hand witnessed skill shortages, and inconsistent access to accredited personnel and lost talent to larger companies that can remunerate higher packages. The Academy will materially improve our ability to attract talent and complete our projects on schedule, to standards and help Australia meet our renewable 2030 targets.


From our perspective Academy will assist with our project delivery in:

1. Greater availability of skilled crews - Regional projects commonly compete for the same limited workforce. A reliable pipeline of job-ready apprentices, accredited electricians and engineers will de-risk labour availability
2. Better Asset performance (O&M) - Availability of locally trained technicians improves our schedules maintenance execution, and post-event restoration—directly supporting project availability guarantees and revenue certainty for renewable assets.
3. Regional capability for the energy transition -The Academy's focus on renewables-relevant skills will build regional resilience and capable skilled workforces, as we transition towards a electrification environment.
4. Inclusive workforce development - We want to build on our work experience of 16 years of renewable projects, enabling structured pathways for First Nations people, women in trades, and local school leavers will broaden the talent pool and embed long-term community benefits where our projects are hosted—essential for a durable social licence.

We recognise the importance of ring-fencing in maintaining competitive neutrality. In this case, allowing Essential Energy to provide training through a Regional Training Academy—subject to appropriate cost allocation, transparency and non-discrimination safeguards—is in the long-term interests of consumers. It will lower delivered energy costs by reducing project delays, increasing network hosting capacity more quickly, and improving safety and reliability outcomes across the distribution network.

We commend Essential Energy's leadership in progressing this solution and respectfully endorse for the AER to approve the waiver. The Academy will be a practical, near-term lever to unblock skilled labour constraints and materially improve the probability of on-time, safe and compliant delivery for project executions like ours across regional NSW.

This submission contains no confidential material and may be published by the AER. We would be pleased to provide further detail, including recent examples where we have struggled to attain and retain skilled labour.



Jeremy Grant
Director
JLG Enterprises (Aust) Pty Ltd

