

T.A.C.C.O

Tamworth Aboriginal Community
Controlled Organisations

5 September 2025

Australian Energy Regulator
Email: AERringfencing@ aer.gov.au

To Whome it May Concern

RE: Support for Essential Energy's Ring-Fencing Waiver Application – Regional Training Academy

On behalf of the Tamworth Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (TACCO), I am writing to express our support for Essential Energy's application for a ring-fencing waiver to establish a regionally-based Training Academy.

TACCO is a coalition of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) dedicated to being a united voice for ACCOs and the Aboriginal community of Tamworth and the surrounding region. We strive to drive change through collective leadership, collaboration, and community-led priorities.

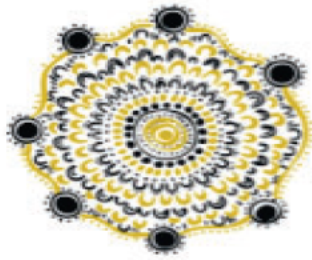
TACCO's Community Development Plan, shaped by extensive community consultation and engagement, identifies capacity building, strengthening partnerships, and enhancing decision-making as critical priorities for the Tamworth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The proposed Training Academy directly supports these priorities in several key ways:

- **Capacity Building & Local Workforce Development:**

The Academy will deliver regionally accessible, high-quality technical training and safety education for electrical apprentices, trainees, and existing workers. This aligns with our Plan's focus on developing sustainable career pathways, building local skills, and creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to participate in the energy sector and broader regional economy.

- **Strengthening Partnerships:**

The Academy will foster collaboration between Essential Energy, TACCO, local government, and other regional stakeholders. This partnership approach is central to our Plan's objectives and will strengthen our collective ability to address workforce shortages and deliver critical infrastructure for the region.



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- **Enhancing Decision-Making & Community Voice:**

By locating training in the region and tailoring programs to meet local needs, the Academy supports our aim to ensure Aboriginal communities have a strong, active, and influential role in workforce development and project planning. This is consistent with our commitment to shared decision-making and community-led solutions.

- **Addressing Unserved Need & Economic Growth:**

The lack of accessible training services in our region has created a significant barrier to employment and project delivery. The Academy will help overcome these barriers, supporting not only project economics but also the long-term economic resilience of our communities.

- **Improving Safety & Workforce Capability:**

Regional training will improve safety outcomes and overall workforce capability, particularly in underserved areas, by ensuring workers are trained to high standards and that safety culture is embedded locally.

The establishment of the Essential Energy Training Academy is a concrete step that implements the objectives and actions of TACCO's Community Development Plan—especially in building capacity, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring community-led, culturally appropriate workforce development.

We urge the AER to approve Essential Energy's ring-fencing waiver application, recognising the substantial benefits this initiative will deliver for regional NSW and Aboriginal communities both now and into the future.

Thank you for considering this submission. If you require any further information or wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Jocelyn Cockbain
Coordinator – Tamworth Place Based Partnerships
Tamworth Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (TACCO)