

## Minutes of Stakeholder Advisory Council Meeting

**Date:** 14 October 2025

### Attendees

Andrew Richards	CEO, Energy Users Association of Australia (EUAA)	Online
Clare Mitchell	Senior Category Manager – Utilities, Queensland Government Procurement, DEPW	Online
Melissa Smyth	Director Procurement, Queensland Government Procurement, DEPW	Online
Chris Hazzard	Volunteer, St Vincent De Paul's	
Steve Bates	Member, Callide Dawson Chamber of Commerce	
Lance MacManus	General Manager – Energy & Infrastructure, Toowoomba Surat Basin Enterprise	
Stephanie McKechnie	Energy Engagement and Education Advisor, Queensland Farmers' Federation	
Kiara Bowles	Manager Project Engagement, Powerlink	Proxy
<b>CS Energy</b>		
Brian Gillespie	CEO	Introduction
Mark Powell	Chief Corporate Services	
Bec Kelly	Head of Corporate Affairs	
Marc Bradley	Employee Communication Advisor	
Alison Demaria	Head of Policy & Regulation	
Lahiru Wimalasuriya	Digital Products and Platforms Manager	
Lisa White	Brand, Media & Digital Strategy Manager	

### Absent

Paul Hodgson	Executive Director Regional Futures – Energy Transitions Director, Centre for Hydrogen and Renewable Energy, CQ University Australia	
Dr Ian Mackinnon	Professor, Centre for Clean Energy Technologies and Practices QUT	
Marion Callope	A/Regional Director, DATSIPCA	
Lynda Crawford	CS Energy	
Nev Hoehne	CS Energy	

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## 1. Welcome and opening remarks

- Meeting commenced with introductions and housekeeping.
- Chair acknowledged previous feedback on agenda structure and confirmed adjustments for this session.

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## 2. New CEO Brian Gillespie

- Brian shared his vision for CS Energy which is to restore our reputation as a safe, financially sustainable, and community-focused energy provider.
- Brian discussed key priorities which include:
  - Maintaining coal assets for reliability.
  - Delivering lowest-cost energy for Queenslanders.
  - Strengthen safety culture across all operations, by ensuring we have the right leadership in place and we pay as much attention to potential incidents as actual.
  - Supporting regional communities (Biloela, Chinchilla) and local supply chains.

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## 4. Previous meeting commitments

- We gave an update on:
  - Work to support vulnerable customers
  - ESG preparations and materiality assessment survey outcomes included as part of the agenda in this session
  - Energy charter joint accountability session change for this year
  - Initial impressions of the Nelson review included as part of the agenda in this session.

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## 5. Policy and regulatory updates

Alison Demaria gave an update on the current policy and regulatory environment CS Energy is operating in. This included an overview of:

### Federal policy

- To achieve net zero by 2050 looking at 43 per cent emissions reduction by 2030 and 62-70 per cent reduction by 2035.
- Discussion about what makes up net zero and how it can be achieved in reality. Net zero discussion is still evolving and there is not a lot of tangible negatives for not meeting it. Other countries shutting off market opportunity is likely to be the first direct impact.
- Main policy drivers to achieve these targets include the capacity investment scheme looking to underwrite 40GW of renewable energy – the current capacity of the NEM is 65GW, which gives a sense of the size of this initiative. Alongside that is investing in transmission to support that rollout.
- Also set to be reviewed in 2026 is the safeguard mechanism applicable to most energy intensive businesses. If your emissions are above a baseline you have to purchase offset. Drives down emissions in intensive industries. Interested in seeing where this goes for our customers.

### **Nelson Review (NEM Wholesale Market Settings Review)**

- Review the settings in the market to make sure fit for purpose and will incentivise right investment to achieve emissions reduction targets.
- Three time horizons:
  - **Real time spot market:** recommending to retain current design; improve visibility of demand-side resources. CS Energy agrees with this position.
  - **Medium term financial markets:** Introduce market-making obligations to buy and sell particular contracts and thus create liquidity. In principle CS Energy agrees with a market obligation however when it is on and who it applies to should be given consideration.
  - **Long term investment market:** There is a tenure gap between what time period buyers are wanting to enter into a contract and what sellers want. Proposed Electricity Services Entry Mechanism (ESEM) for long-term underwriting. In principle, CS Energy is supportive but recognises there are significant details to work through.

### **Queensland Energy Roadmap**

- Key themes: “Improve existing assets while building for the future.”
- **Announcements:**
  - Coal assets retained based on system need, asset integrity and economic viability. Queensland Government will maintain 100 per cent ownership and will also welcome private investment in new projects.

- A clear role for gas. For CS Energy this means progressing with our 400MW Brigalow Peaking Power Plant.
  - Pumped hydro projects to progress under QIC oversight.
  - Transmission upgrades: CopperString Eastern Link is to progress at 330kV rather than 500kV, network reinforcement in Gladstone and Central Queensland, and part of this will include synchronous condensers.
  - To attract private investment and better coordinate benefits a QIC Investor Gateway for renewables has been established. Part of this includes a \$400M Energy Investment Fund.
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## 6. ESG and Materiality Assessment

- Survey results:
    - **Environment:** Emissions, energy, waste, water, biodiversity.
    - **Social:** Occupational health and safety, employment, diversity, Indigenous rights.
    - **Governance:** Anti-competitive behaviour, privacy.
  - Next steps: Climate-related financial disclosures by FY25; partnership with BDO for compliance.
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## 7. Energy Charter Report

- A shift in how we presented the report, focusing on case studies that told stories. This will be the last year of a disclosure report and in future the focus will be on 'Better Together' initiatives.
- CS Energy will integrate this into our standard annual reporting.
- Highlights:
  - Supporting the decarbonisation needs of our customers and announcing retail agreement with QLD Airports Ltd.
  - Commissioning of Chinchilla and Greenbank batteries.
  - Cultural heritage agreement with Gangulu people at Callide and financial support for a keeping place network.
- Challenges:

- Electricity Maintenance Guarantee (EMG) KPIs not fully met.
- Ongoing PFAS remediation at Callide.

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## 8. White space

### **There was significant discussion about community consultation fatigue and duplication**

- QFF highlighted that they will participate in consultations on the Code of Conduct and provide feedback to government. Suggested the Code should cover all energy technologies, not just renewables, because engagement issues exist across the sector.
- There was discussion in this section and across the meeting about community and industry consultation fatigue and duplication.
- Lack of coordination among developers; need for cumulative impact assessments. Consultants are often not local and the investment that the community is putting into this consultation is not being returned.
- QFF are managing their energy information service with initial response from members that they are looking for affordable energy and don't necessarily mind where it comes from.
- Neighbour payments for energy projects was discussed and the importance of sharing the benefits of the transition equably.
- Dispute resolution across the industry is also an issue.
- Lack of coordination and the time it takes to get fact based information back from entities means there is opportunity for misinformation to marinate.
- Powerlink shared recent efforts to boost local supplier participation, including hosting supply chain sessions in partnership with the Callide Dawson Chamber of Commerce.
- Powerlink are working on frameworks for community benefits and social performance to ensure projects deliver tangible outcomes.
- TSBE asked what is the future direction for continuing to collaborate with other providers now that the joint accountability forum is not going ahead. CS Energy advised we are looking at ways to stay connected. Noted they want opportunities to speak with CEOs that are not scripted.
- Discussion that communities don't forget statements and asked that corporates make themselves accountable to delivering what they announce.
- Callide Dawson Chamber of Commerce discussed importance of stability for the local community and other options for the region.

## **9. Site visit proposal**

- Plan to host a Council meeting at Lotus Creek Wind Farm in 2026 for on-site engagement.
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## **10. Closing remarks**

- Chair thanked participants for robust discussion.
- Actions:
  - Circulate updated contact list.
  - Provide out-of-session update on financial counselling partnership.
  - Share Energy Charter feedback before end of November.