

COMMITTEE  
FOR THE  
HUNTER

# HUNTER TRANSMISSION PROJECT PRELIMINARY CORRIDOR

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Submission

Hydrogen  $H_2$   
to emission

DECEMBER  
2023



Energy Corporation of NSW  
[htp@energyco.nsw.gov.au](mailto:htp@energyco.nsw.gov.au)

11 December 2023

To whom it may concern

**RE: Hunter Transmission Project preliminary corridor**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the Hunter Transmission Project (HTP) preliminary corridor.

Home to some of the most energy and emissions intensive and hard-to-abate businesses in Australia, national and State commitments to Net Zero and clean energy depend on actions in the Hunter.

The Committee therefore has a high level of awareness of the project and how it is vital in the delivery of the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap.

The HTP has been referenced as critical shared infrastructure in the industry-led and soon to be released *Hunter Hydrogen Infrastructure Masterplan*. The Masterplan also notes the high clean electricity demand forecast for the Hunter region's burgeoning hydrogen industry which will service domestic industry and export markets. Should the sector scale up as anticipated, this is likely to bring forward the case for future investment in major transmission lines in the region in addition to HTP.

The Hunter is a \$66 billion economy in transition from fossil fuels to a diverse, clean economy. This requires creating business and new jobs in sectors of competitive advantage, and then connecting affected communities and businesses to these opportunities. Clean energy and resources have been identified by the Committee and regional stakeholders as engines of growth.

The HTP forms the backbone of NSW's clean energy grid. Together with the Renewable Energy Zones, the HTP will provide new jobs and economic output capitalising on the region's energy and resource foundations. In providing long-term energy security for industry and business around the State as coal fired power stations retire over the next decade, it will help save jobs including in the Hunter.

The Committee understand the urgency for the HTP to be operational by 2028 and the trade-offs navigated by Energy Co in the selection of a preliminary corridor. This includes a level of impact on local communities and environment in order to protect the long-term State interest, including future generations from damaging levels of climate change and national security.

The logic of the corridor selection is strong on balance of considerations. However it must also be noted that the proposed route has prioritised private land interests over biodiversity impacts with most



of the footprint of the central and southern corridor in State forest or associated nature reserves. Significant tracts of this State forest and resident biodiversity are indistinguishable from their neighbouring national parks. We would request the utmost care be taken to reduce environmental and biodiversity impacts in the planning, construction and operation of the HTP, and that other options to avoid or minimise the disturbance of State forests are explored in full with transparency around decisions.

The Committee will continue to champion the HTP as vital infrastructure for the Hunter region and NSW's future. We commend EnergyCo on engaging with communities and stakeholders at this stage in the project and encourage strong consultation, along with science and expert advice, continue to inform decisions on the final corridor.

Yours sincerely

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### About the Committee for the Hunter

The Committee for the Hunter (the Committee) is an independent and inclusive champion for the people of the Greater Hunter and their enterprises. Representing 70 organisations including the largest employers and institutions in the region, we provide a unified voice for the Hunter.

Our members are drawn from the private and community sectors and all three levels of government. We come together with a shared interest in building a sustainable, prosperous and equitable future for our region. The Committee delivers on that promise through advocacy on regionally-significant priorities, thought leadership and partnerships.

The diversification of the Hunter economy is the most significant priority of the Committee and our members.

More information about the Committee can be found at [www.hunter.org.au](http://www.hunter.org.au)