

# Landowners and the renewable energy transition

## What you need to know

Webinar 26 June 2024



Energy,  
Environment  
and Climate Action

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



# Welcome

This session will be recorded. The recording, slides and a list of resources will be available on the Energy Smart Farming website: [extensionaus.com.au/energysmartfarming/home](https://extensionaus.com.au/energysmartfarming/home)

Webinar format: attendees have their video off and are muted. We will post messages and links in the Chat function.

Questions? Please type into the Q&A function (bottom of your screen).

Questions will be grouped and put to the panellists towards the end of the session.

Having internet issues?

- Call in: 03 7018 2005, Webinar ID: 852 8063 7578

# Agenda

	Topic	Speaker
1	The renewable energy transition	Eliza Ginnivan, Manager VTIF (Victorian Transmission Investment Framework) Regional Engagement, VicGrid
2	Farmers and the renewable energy transition	Paul Stark, Policy and Farmer Engagement Officer, Farmers for Climate Action
3	Developer best practice and key questions to ask	Nathan Hart, Policy Officer, Clean Energy Council
4	Considerations before entering into an agreement	Jarrold Lenne, Executive Officer, Australian Energy Infrastructure Commission
5	Farmer experience of leasing land to a solar developer	Gayle Lee
6	The Planning Approvals process	Michael Juttner, Manager Development Approvals and Design, Renewables, Department of Transport and Planning
7	Questions and Answers	All

# The renewable energy transition

## Eliza Ginnivan, Manager Victorian Transmission Investment Framework Regional Engagement

VicGrid coordinates the planning and development of Victoria's Renewable Energy Zones and transmission infrastructure to support the transition to renewable energy.

Eliza Ginnivan grew up in Indigo Valley in North East Victoria and worked as a lawyer at the Victorian Government Solicitors' Office before moving into public interest litigation at the Public Interest Advocacy Centre in Sydney. She developed her policy experience as a Senior Policy Officer coordinating access to justice reforms at the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. In 2019 she returned to the Hume region to take up a role as Chief of Staff for Independent Federal Member for Indi Dr Helen Haines. She is passionate about empowering regional communities to be active participants in and meaningful beneficiaries of the energy transition. She lives in Beechworth.



# The renewable energy transition

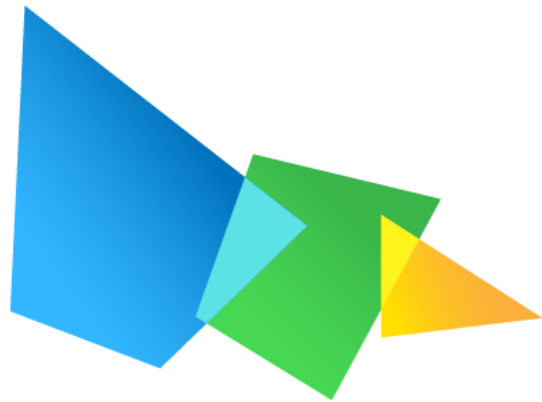
**Eliza Ginnivan**

Manager, Regional Engagement  
Victorian Transmission Investment Framework

26 June 2024



# Who are we?



**VicGrid**



## **Policy**

We provide advice to Government to develop policies that apply to how electricity is transmitted in Victoria.



## **Planning**

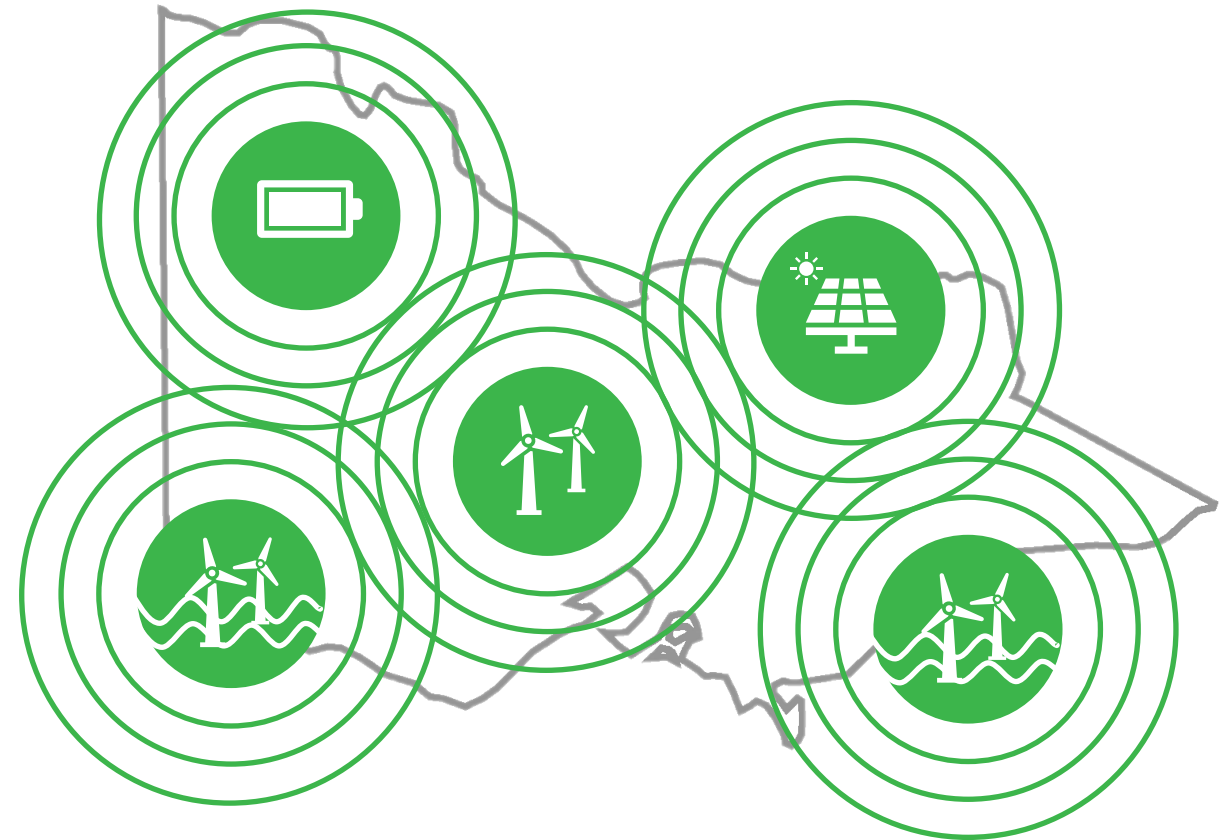
We plan for Victoria's future energy needs through modelling, and detailed engagement with Victorian communities.



## **Projects**

We oversee the procurement of new transmission projects required for the energy transition (wiring, substations, and batteries)

# The energy transition in Victoria



**2020s — 2030s**

Coal-fired power stations phased out

**ENERGY  
TRANSITION**

**2030s — 2040s**

Full connection to renewable energy



# Relying on coal...



Increasingly unreliable power to communities



Inability to meet our climate action targets



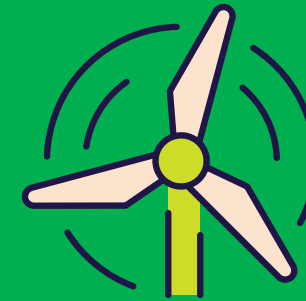
Higher costs to maintain aging power stations

# Towards 2035: our new energy system



## Fossil fuels

coal, gas and oil

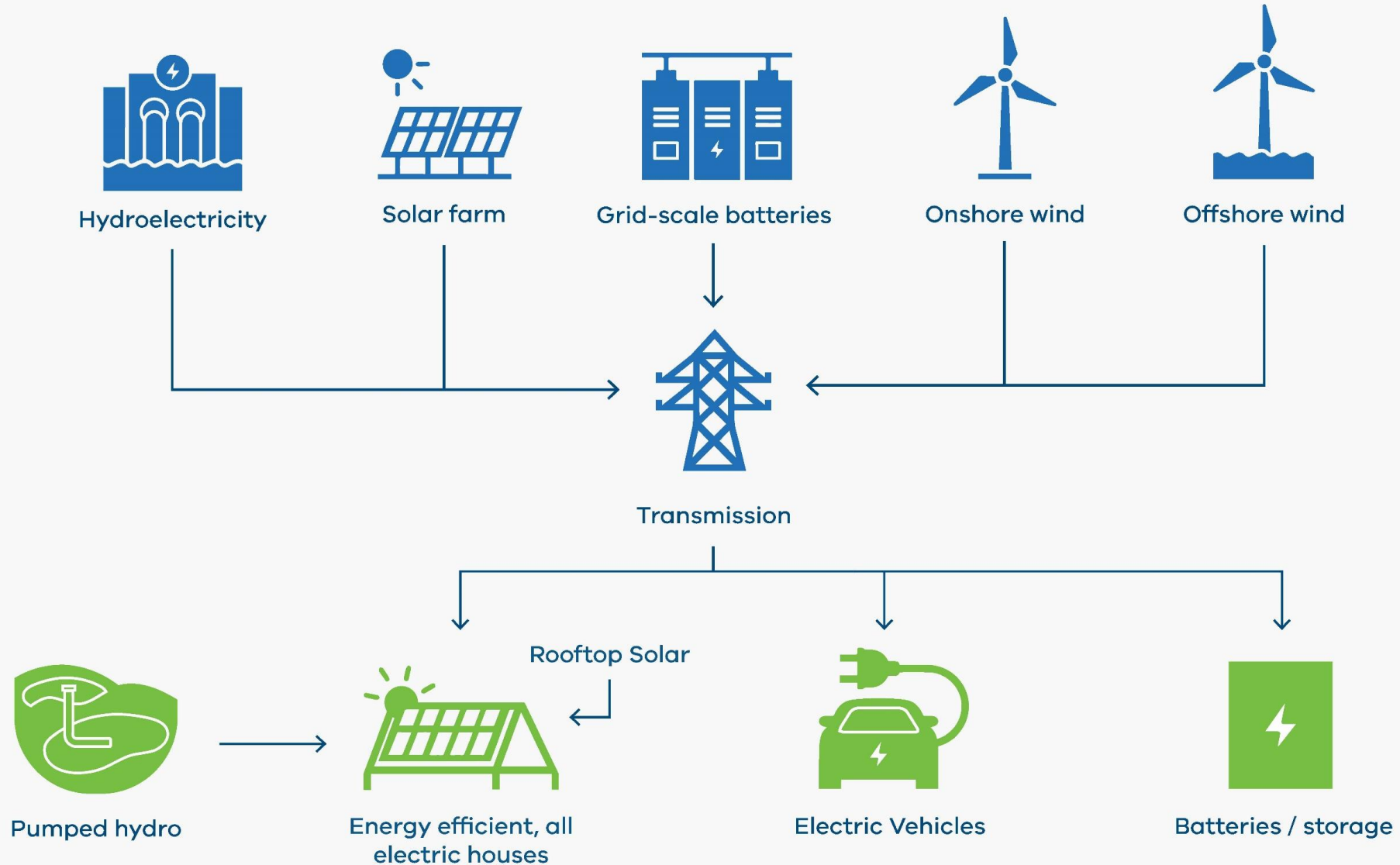


## Renewable energy

sun and wind

By 2035, our goal is for Victoria's electricity grid to be powered by **95% renewable energy**

# What does the energy transition look like?



# Energy and transmission in Victoria



— Existing transmission  
— New/proposed transmission  
 Solar farm resources  
 Onshore wind resources

- |  |                               |  |                                 |
|--|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
|  | Existing interconn.           |  | New/proposed interconn.         |
|  | Existing coal fired plants    |  | New/proposed transmission.      |
|  | Stage 1 Synch. Condr. project |  | Stage 1 Minor augments.         |
|  | Stage 1 Turn-in project       |  | Offshore Wind resources         |
|  | Snowy Hydro supply            |  | Example BESSs                   |
|  | Metro Rooftop solar (DER)     |  | Example Community battery (DER) |

# Paul Stark, Policy and Farmer Engagement Officer, Farmers for Climate Action

Farmers for Climate Action is a movement of farmers, agricultural leaders and rural Australians working to influence Australia to adopt strong climate policies by growing the number of farmers, farming communities and elected representatives championing ambitious action.

Paul is Farmers for Climate Actions Policy and Farmer Engagement Officer, growing up in regional Queensland with family ties to farming he brings a proactive and understanding approach to his work across all matters which aim to bring about climate action, and ensure positive outcomes for Australian farmers.





# farmers for climate action

Paul Stark

Policy and Farmer Engagement

Farmers for Climate Action acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are meeting, and pays respect to Elders past and present, and extends that respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who may be present today



# Landholder Experience - What are we hearing?



*The lack of meaningful engagement has been made what should be a simple task far more complicated and created unneeded frustration in our community*

*Our community has been seeking three-phase power for over a decade. New poles and wires are needed for regional community members too – we don't benefit from (or even access) the new transmission lines with renewable developments.*

*There is a 1km development overlay from the application of a wind farm on my neighbors property, this prevents me from building key infrastructure such as housing for farmworkers. Even if the windfarm doesn't go ahead this damages our business now. Not all land is the same, we believe there is a need for a classification of farm land so we can recognise highly fertile land and prioritize it over infrastructure.*

*Government should legislate so that internal fencing for grazing and water points is incorporated in the construction, having this in the initial planning would save a lot of headache down the track.*



**farmers for  
climate action**





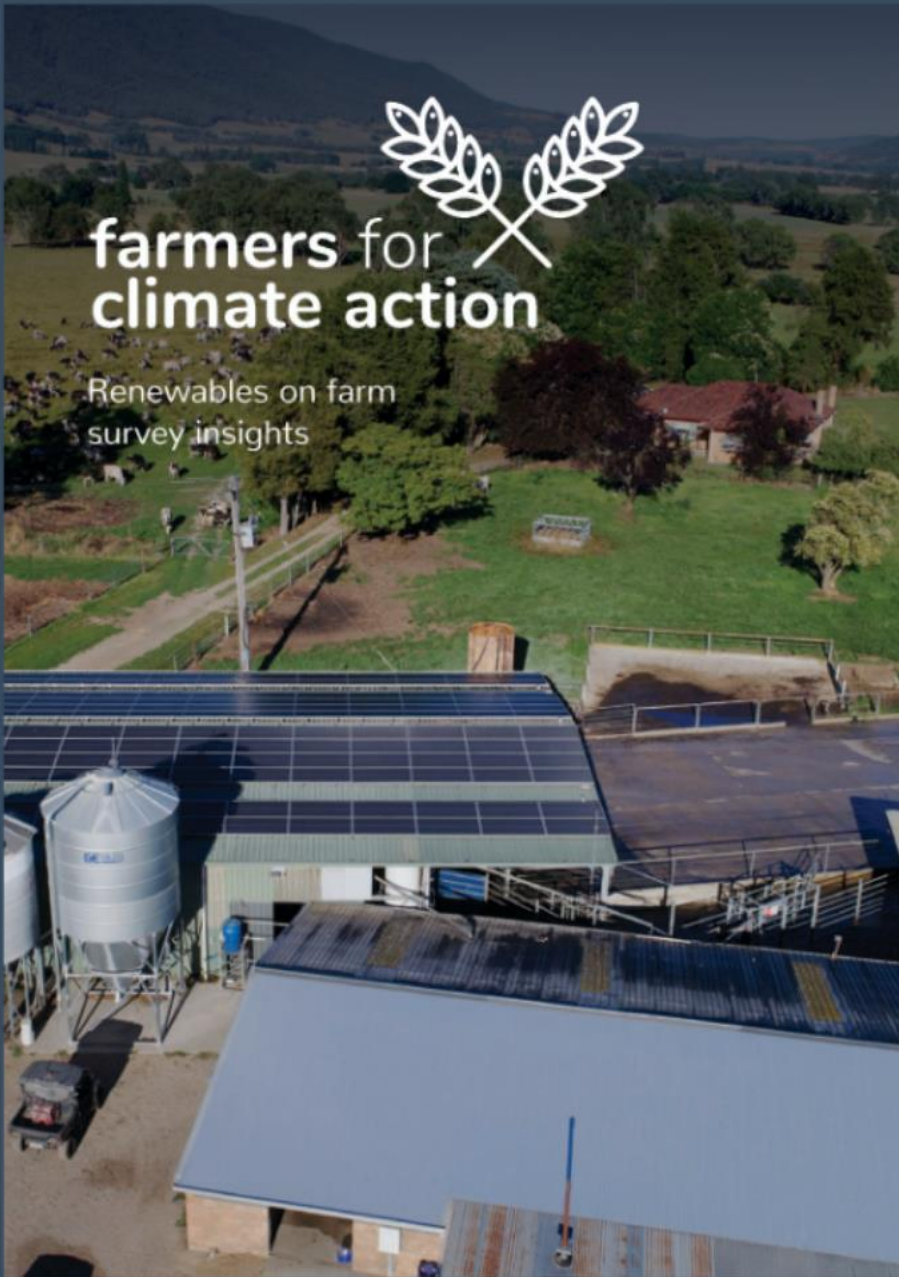
# SUPPORT FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY ON FARMS





# farmers for climate action

Renewables on farm  
survey insights



## Survey Highlights



**92%**  
of farmer respondents  
are supportive of  
Australia's acceleration  
to more renewable  
energy in our national  
grid (with only 3.6%  
saying no)



**64%**  
believe their  
communities are very  
opposed or somewhat  
opposed to transmission  
projects in their region



**44%**  
think more extensive and  
genuine consultation  
around transmission  
projects would lead  
to better community  
support



**95%**  
of farmers with no  
existing renewable energy  
projects are open to  
generating or hosting on  
their property, while 96%  
who already generate  
renewable energy are  
open to doing more

(Farmers for Climate Action, 2023)

## How to better ensure a positive landholder experience?

- Build social license
- Engage in constructive consultation
- Foster understanding and education
- Improve long term community benefit sharing
- Address the energy inequities in regional communities
- Land use and network planning



**farmers for  
climate action**



Our website has further information  
for farmers about on farm  
renewables - under the climate  
smart farming toolkit



**CLIMATE SMART**  
farming toolkit



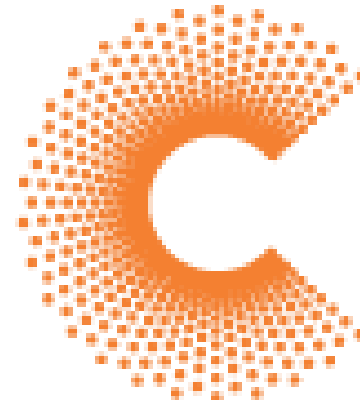
## Renewables on farm

Adding renewables can help keep down energy costs on-farm, improve the reliability of your electricity service, and reduce carbon emissions.

[See More ›](#)

## **Nathan Hart, Policy Officer, Clean Energy Council**

Nathan Hart serves as the Policy Officer for Generation and Storage at the Clean Energy Council (CEC), where he spearheads initiatives in community engagement and leads work on social licence. Nathan grew up on a hobby farm in regional Victoria and is passionate about the energy transition delivering benefits to landholders and regional communities. Before joining CEC, Nathan held roles as a campaigner at the Climate Council and as an advisor to members of parliament. He holds a Bachelor of Communications from RMIT and is currently pursuing a Master of Environment from the University of Melbourne.



**CLEAN  
ENERGY  
COUNCIL**





# LANDOWNERS AND RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

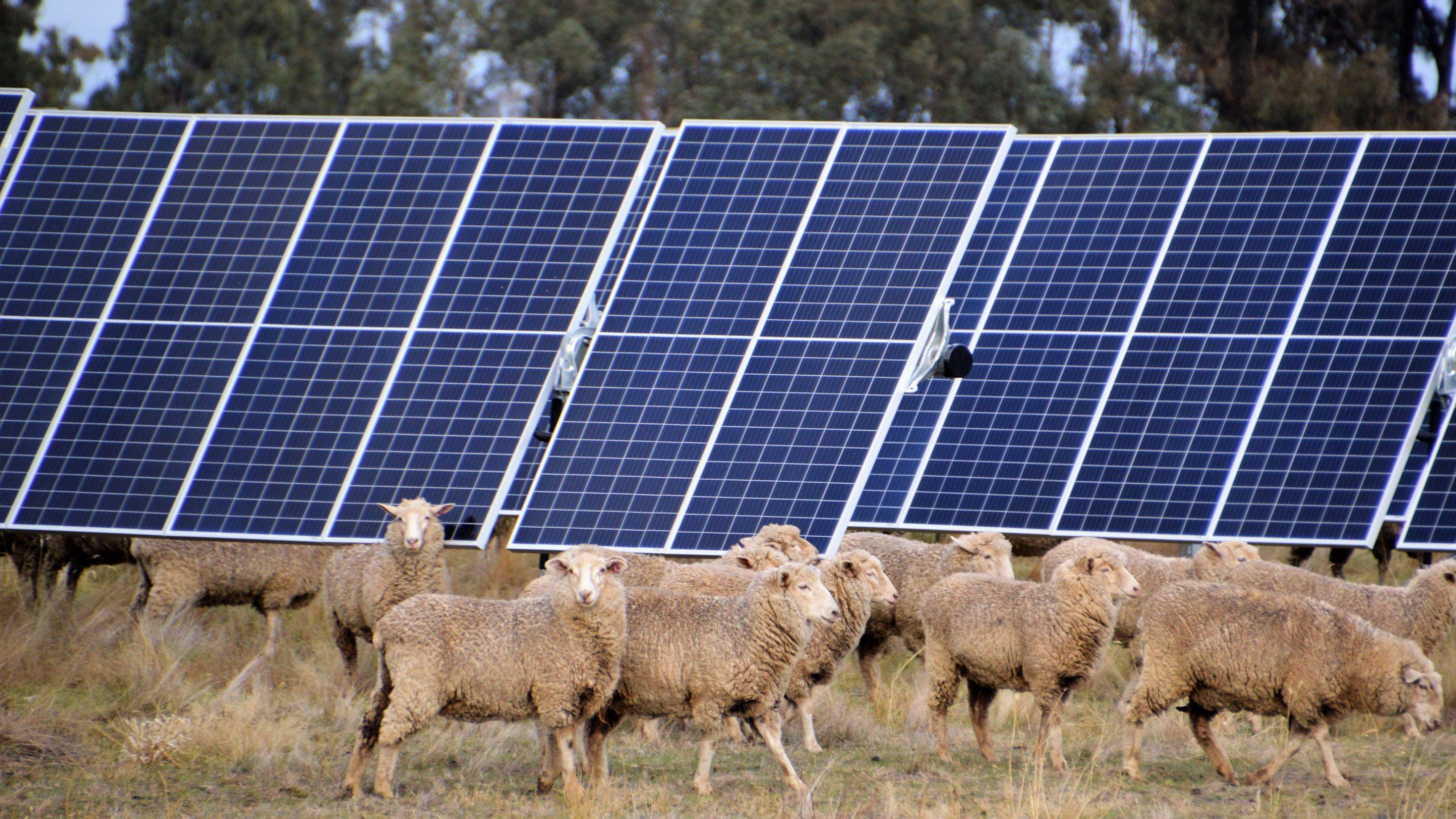
**Nathan Hart**

POLICY OFFICER – ENERGY GENERATION  
CLEAN ENERGY COUNCIL

June 2024



24 Olivers Road







# BEST PRACTICE CHARTER FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

We commit to honouring the Clean Energy Council's Best Practice Charter in our renewable energy projects and associated transmission infrastructure:

- 1 We will engage respectfully with the local community, including Traditional Owners of the land, to seek their views and input before submitting a development application and finalising the design of the project.
- 2 We will provide timely information and be accessible and responsive in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the life of the project.
- 3 We will be sensitive to areas of high biodiversity, cultural and landscape value in the development and operation of projects.
- 4 We will minimise the impacts on highly productive agricultural land and explore opportunities to integrate agricultural production.
- 5 We will consult the community on the potential visual, noise, traffic and other impacts of the project, and on the mitigation options.
- 6 We will support the local economy by providing local employment and procurement opportunities.
- 7 We will offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of the project, and consult them on the options available, including relevant governance arrangements.
- 8 We commit to using the project to support educational and tourism opportunities where appropriate.
- 9 We will demonstrate responsible land stewardship over the life of the project and welcome opportunities to enhance the ecological, cultural and/or agricultural value of the land.
- 10 During the life of the project, we will recycle waste materials where feasible and commit to responsible decommissioning or refurbishment/repowering of the site at the end of the project's life.



# BENEFIT SHARING SCHEMES



Neighbourhood benefit programs



Sponsorship, grant and legacy initiatives



Local jobs, training and procurement



Employee volunteerism



Innovative products



Innovative financing and co-ownership



Beyond compliance-level

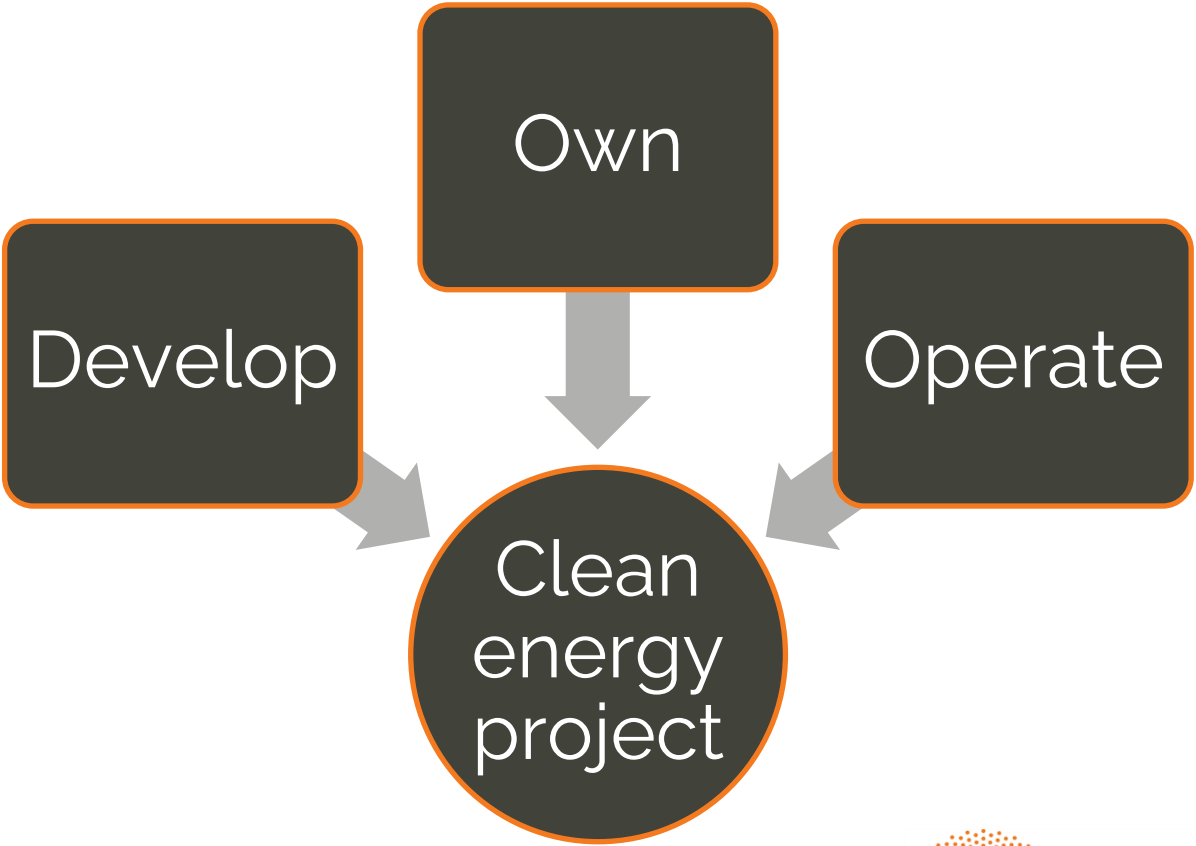
## Case study – Golden Plains Wind Farm Community Energy Program

The Community Energy Program by Golden Plains Wind Farm in Victoria is offering eligible residents \$1,600 off their electricity bill each year.

Community benefit sharing involves sharing the rewards of renewable energy development with local communities



# INDUSTRY LANDSCAPE





**Construction of new transmission lines is a different legislative / regulatory environment to clean energy projects that generate electricity.**

# KEY QUESTIONS FOR DEVELOPERS

- Do you intend to develop, own and operate the project?
- Are you signatory to the Clean Energy Council Best Practice Charter?
- Have you got experience with agrivoltaics and how will the proposed project co-exist with my land/farm?
- How will the project deliver lasting benefits to my neighbors and community?
- Can I visit an existing project you developed/own/operate?



# Jarrold Lenne, Executive Office, Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner



**Australian Government**

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**Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner**

Jarrold Lenne is the Executive Officer in the Office of the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner (AEIC).

The Commissioner is an independent role appointed by the Australian Government, reporting to the Minister for Climate Change and Energy. The AEIC exists to support local community residents with their questions and concerns about wind farms, large-scale solar farms, energy storage facilities and new major transmission projects. This work directly contributes to the practical efficacy and social sustainability of Australia's energy transition, both by helping local communities to get practical outcomes at a project-level, and by promoting transparency and best practices across projects, industry and governments.

Prior to joining the Office of the AEIC in June 2023, Jarrold has worked in inter-governmental cooperation and corporate regulation across the Victorian and Commonwealth public sectors, and in energy policy, strategic projects and stakeholder engagement roles in the community sector.



**Australian Government**

**Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner**

**Victorian Department of Energy,  
Environment,  
and Climate Action (DEECA)**

*Hume region webinar:  
Landowners and renewable energy  
developments*

26 June 2024

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**Jarrold Lenne – Executive Officer  
Office of the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner (AEIC)**

OFFICIAL



# About the AEIC

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Independent role – since November 2015

Wind, solar, storage and new transmission

Case-handling, project transparency and sectoral best practice – at both local project-level, and across industry and governments

*More information and resources:*

<https://www.aeic.gov.au/>

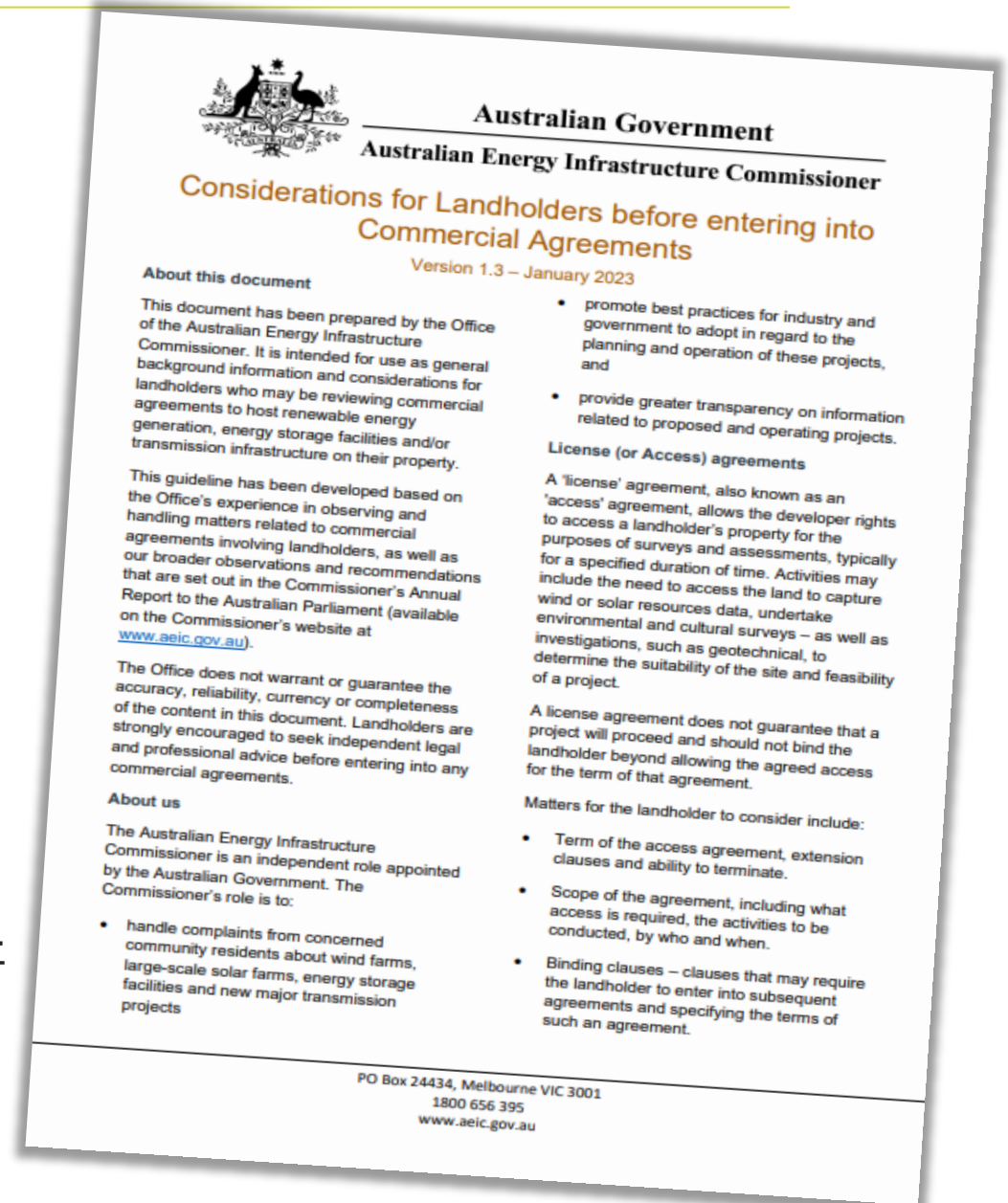
<https://www.aeic.gov.au/making-a-complaint>

# Considerations for Landholders

*Key resource, covering:*

- ✓ Types of agreements
- ✓ Things to consider
- ✓ Across life-cycle

<https://www.aeic.gov.au/publications/considerations-landholders-entering-commercial-agreements>



# Top-line takeaways

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Some simple things to keep in-mind:

- ✓ **Seek facts** – from credible sources
- ✓ **Get help** – and don't be afraid to ask developer to reimburse you
- ✓ **Be prepared** – expect a long journey (and some uncertainty) ... not every proposed project becomes a reality

# Contact and Resources

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## Contact details:

Phone: 1800 656 395

Email: [aeic@aeic.gov.au](mailto:aeic@aeic.gov.au)

Mail:

PO Box 24434

MELBOURNE VIC 3001

## Website:

<http://www.aeic.gov.au/>

(includes AEIC Annual Reports, other resources and links)

<https://www.aeic.gov.au/observations-and-recommendations/chapter-1-host-landowner-negotiations>



# Farmer experience of leasing land to a solar developer – Gayle Lee

Gayle and her husband Tom own a 520ha farm property at Glenrowan West. Part of the property has been leased for a 212ha solar farm. The solar farm has been operational since 2021. Gayle & Tom leased out the farm in 1998 to concentrate on an agricultural contracting business. The current leasee continues to run sheep on the whole 520ha. Gayle and Tom are actively involved in ensuring the interaction between the leasee and the solar farm Operation & Maintenance Team is positive and aims to meet the objectives of both parties.

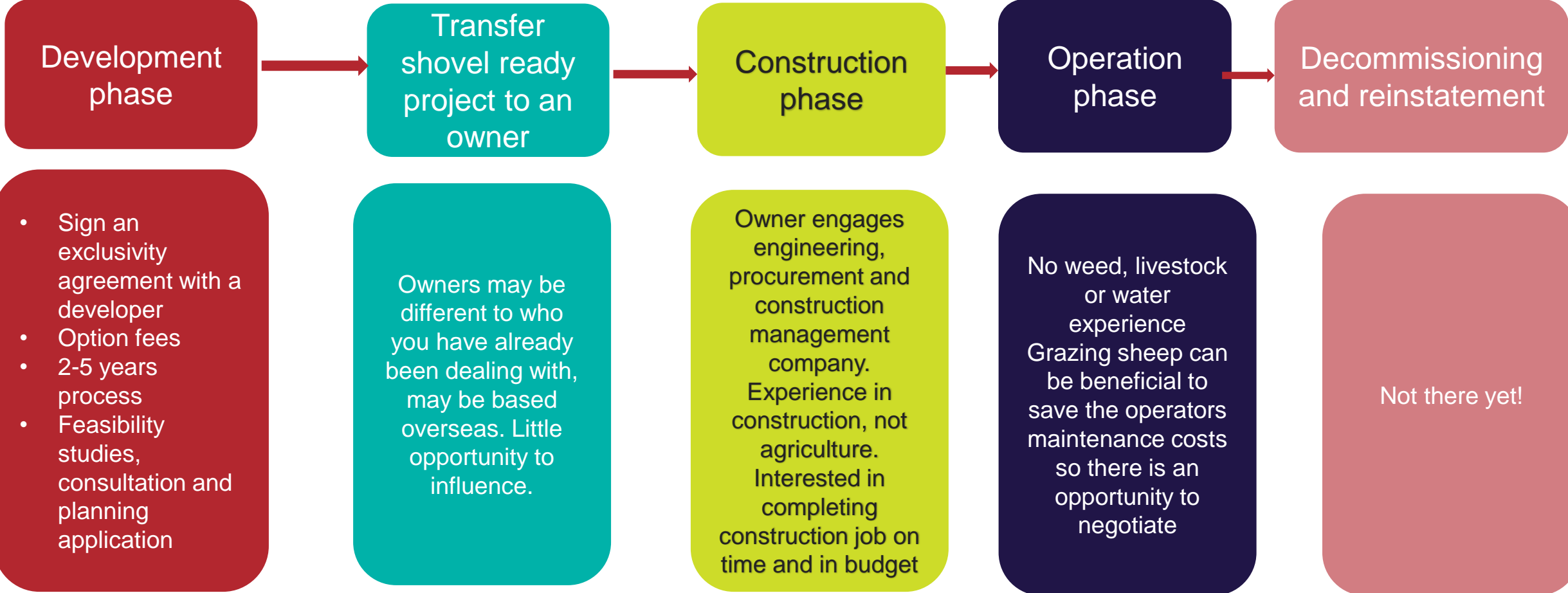
Gayle is a CPA and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She is currently a director of Indigo Power Ltd and Indigo Power Foundation. Her previous directorships include North East Water and Goulburn Murray Water and she is formally a General Manager of a large textile company in Wangaratta and Commercial Manager of a marine engineering company based in Townsville.



# Farmer experience of leasing land to a solar developer – Gayle Lee



# Farmer experience of leasing land to a solar developer – Gayle Lee



# How a landowner can influence improved outcomes:

The **development phase** is when a landowner can have the most influence and impact.

Issues to consider:

- Make sure the area for the solar farm is clearly delineated
- Grazing more efficient and workable in smaller blocks
- Water flows
- Weed management
- Waste management
- Sticky beaks





# **Michael Juttner**

## **Manager Development Approvals and Design, Renewables**

### **Department of Transport and Planning**

Michael Juttner has spent the last 10 years administering the State Government's planning permit application assessments for wind farm projects in Victoria. Solar farms were added in 2019, and all energy generation and storage in 2022. He currently manages a team of six planners that are focused on reviewing the growing number of these renewable applications within the Development Approvals and Design Division in the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). Prior to working in renewables, Michael worked in Victoria's Bushfire response planning unit. Today Michael is going to be speaking about Victoria's planning process for renewable energy projects.

# Overview

- Victoria aiming to achieve a target of 95% renewable energy by 2035.
- Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) - Development Approvals and Design Division has a team focused on processing planning permit applications for renewable energy projects.
- This Renewables Team is currently reviewing nine solar farms, six wind farms, two batteries and three waste to energy facilities.
- These applications are valued at almost \$8B and could generate 3,000MW if approved.

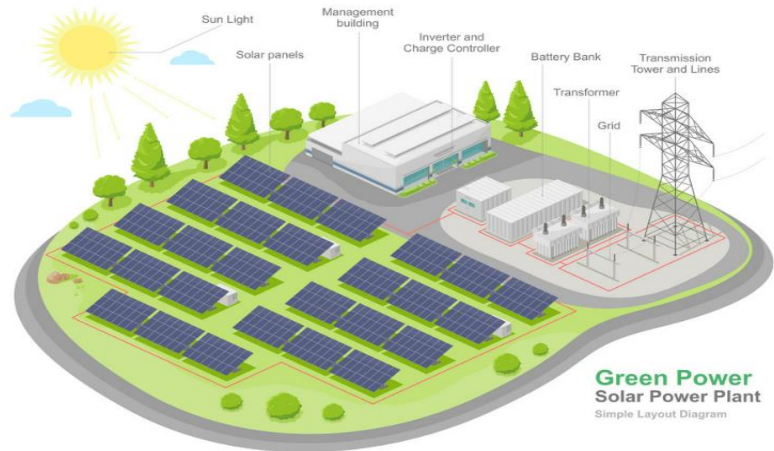
# What is the Minister for Plannings role?

Minister for planning is the decision maker for all planning permit matters for:

- **Energy generation and storage projects** with a capacity exceeding 1 megawatt (wind farms, solar farms, gas-fired power stations, waste to energy, battery storage)
- **New power lines** to connect generation facilities to the electricity network.
- **Hydrogen generation facilities** with a minimum production capacity of 410 kilograms of hydrogen per day.
- **Major transmission lines** with a capacity exceeding 220,000 volts
- **Substations** exceeding 66,000 volts



# Solar Farms



- Planning control **VPP Clause 53.13 Renewable energy facility** facilitates the establishment of renewable energy facilities in appropriate locations, with minimal impact on amenity.
- **16 solar farms operating in Victoria**
- **86 approved solar farms (not yet operational).**
- **Considerations:**
  - Noise
  - Glint and glare
  - Bushfire management
  - Impact on agricultural land
  - Protection of irrigation districts.



# Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)

- Large shipping containers filled with thousands of AA batteries.
- They charge when electricity is cheap and discharge when demand is high – providing greater grid stability and maximum profits.
- Can be used to energy generation facilities (most commonly solar farms) developed as standalone infrastructure or as ancillary.

## Considerations:

- Noise
- Visual impact
- Environmental impacts
- Fire safety



# Wind Farms

- Generate electricity through wind power
- Currently 35 wind farms operating in Victoria which equates to approximately 3600MW maximum energy capacity.
- a wind farm generally has a 30% 'capacity factor', i.e., they do not operate at 100% capacity all the time

## Considerations:

- Flora and fauna
- Noise
- Aviation safety
- Visual impact
- Active opposition movement



# New planning pathway for renewable projects

- Amendment VC261 was gazetted on April 4, 2024.
- It updates Clause 53.22 to expand the Development Facilitation Program (DFP) to include renewable energy projects.
- Key changes from DFP pathway are:
  - Commitment to prompt processing of applications (aim for 4 months).
  - Removal of third-party appeal rights to VCAT.
- There have been no changes to:
  - Public notice / referral processes.
  - The planning assessment process other than removal of third party appeals
  - Environmental Effects Statement (EES) processes.
  - Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) processes.

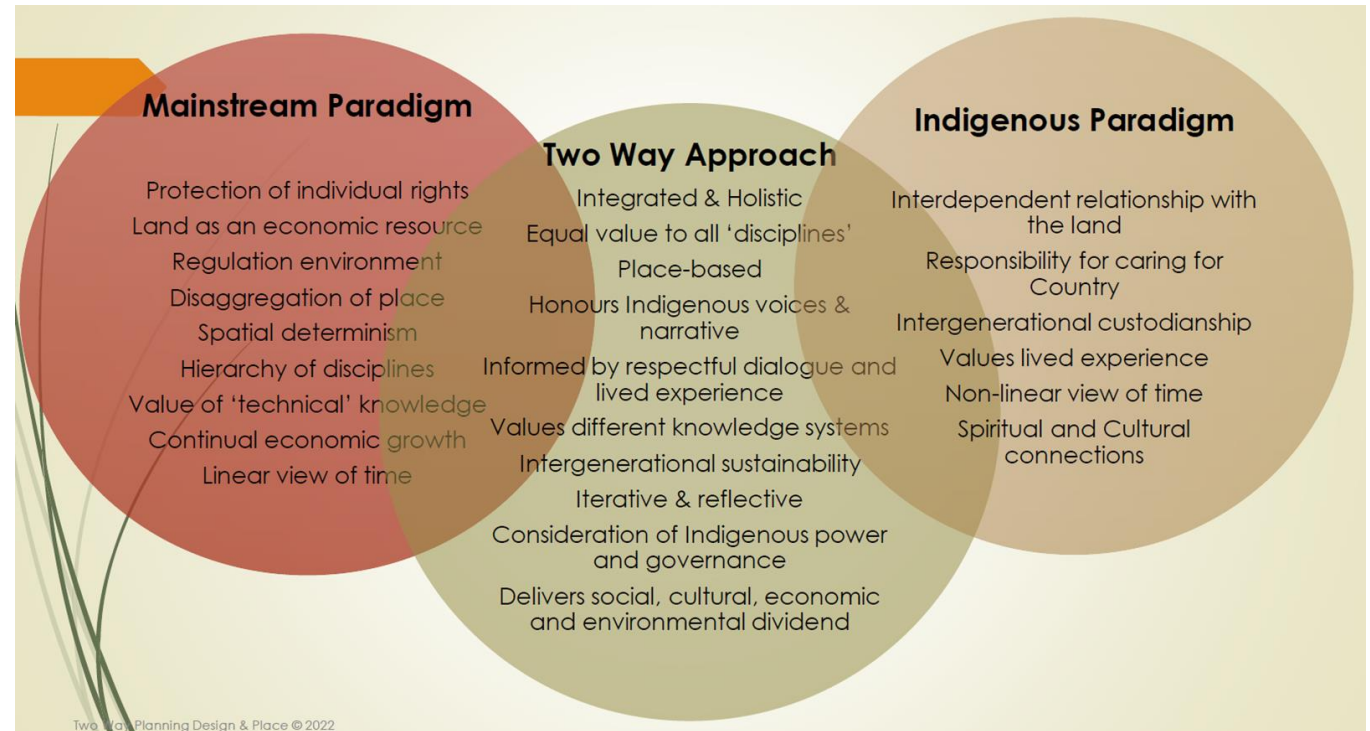
# Renewables Planning Processes

- Engage many organizations as project undergoes planning approvals:
- Generally, engage these parties both before and once an application is lodged to maximize their input and expertise.
  - Local councils
  - Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)
  - Country Fire Authority (CFA) or relevant fire authority
  - Department of Transport
  - Environment Protection Authority (EPA)
  - Work Safe Victoria
  - Traditional Owner groups
- Public notice ensures neighbours and community members can review and/or lodge an objection.



# Engagement with Traditional Owners

- Providing opportunities for the voices of Traditional Owners to be heard throughout the planning permit application process and treated the same as any other stakeholder / subject matter expert.



# GIS Mapping

## Renewable Energy Projects Victoria



Summary
Solar
Wind
Battery
Bioenergy

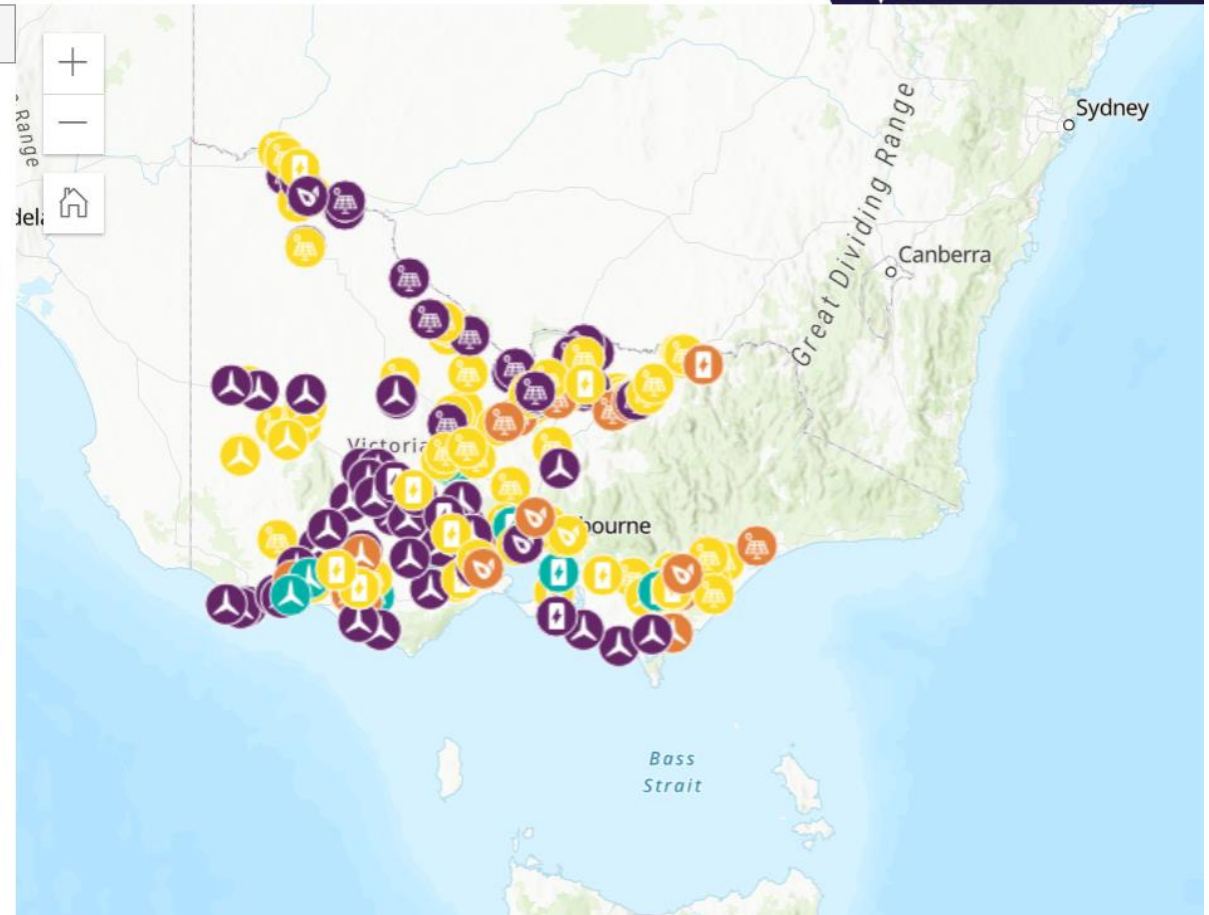
### Summary

A summary of the energy generation facilities in Victoria that are operational, approved, in process and under construction.

Note: this does not include existing gas and coal generation.

STATUS	TOTAL CAPACITY (MW)	SOLAR CAPACITY (MW)	WIND CAPACITY (MW)	BATTERY CAPACITY (MW)	BIOENERGY CAPACITY (MW)
Operating	5846	1079	4409	355	3
Approved (not operational)	10943	5536	762	4642	3
Planning permit application lodged and process underway	3154	1594	989	500	71
Under construction	3355	95	1660	1600	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23298</b>	<b>8304</b>	<b>7820</b>	<b>7097</b>	<b>77</b>

The government endeavours to ensure that this information is up to date. Please contact [development.approvals@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:development.approvals@delwp.vic.gov.au) if there is information on this page that you believe needs to be updated.



# Questions and Answers



# Resources

Resource	Website
Energy Smart Farming website	<a href="https://extensionaus.com.au/energysmartfarming/home">Extensionaus.com.au/energysmartfarming/home</a>
Clean Energy Council	<a href="https://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au">www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au</a>
Clean Energy Council – Best Practice Charter	<a href="https://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/advocacy-initiatives/community-engagement/best-practice-charter">https://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/advocacy-initiatives/community-engagement/best-practice-charter</a>
Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner	<a href="https://www.aeic.gov.au/">https://www.aeic.gov.au/</a>
Department of Transport and Planning – renewable energy facilities planning guides	<a href="https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/guides/all-guides/renewable-energy-facilities">https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/guides/all-guides/renewable-energy-facilities</a>
Queensland Renewable Energy Landholder Toolkit	<a href="https://www.qff.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/QFF-Renewable-Energy-Toolkit-June23_web-1.pdf">https://www.qff.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/QFF-Renewable-Energy-Toolkit-June23_web-1.pdf</a>
Law Institute of Victoria – Find a lawyer referral service	<a href="https://www.liv.asn.au/Web/For_the_Public/Find_a_Lawyer_Referral_Service/Web/Content/For_the_Public/Referral/Referral_Search.aspx">https://www.liv.asn.au/Web/For the Public/Find a Lawyer Referral Service/Web/Content/For the Public/Referral/Referral Search.aspx</a>
A Guide to Benefit Sharing Options for Renewable Energy Projects	<a href="https://assets.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/documents/advocacy-initiatives/community-engagement/guide-to-benefit-sharing-options-for-renewable-energy-projects.pdf">https://assets.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/documents/advocacy-initiatives/community-engagement/guide-to-benefit-sharing-options-for-renewable-energy-projects.pdf</a>

## Resources – Continued

Resource	Website
Victorian Transmission Investment Framework Final Design Paper	<a href="https://engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-transmission-investment-framework">https://engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-transmission-investment-framework</a>
Victorian Farmers Federation land access information sheet	<a href="https://www.vff.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Land-Access-Information-Sheet-v2.pdf">https://www.vff.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Land-Access-Information-Sheet-v2.pdf</a>
Land access code of practice, Essential Services Commission VIC	<a href="https://www.esc.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/Fact%20sheet%20-%20Land%20Access%20Code%20of%20Practice.pdf">https://www.esc.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/Fact%20sheet%20-%20Land%20Access%20Code%20of%20Practice.pdf</a>
Australian Guide to Agrisolar for large-scale solar – for proponents and farmers, Clean Energy Council	<a href="https://assets.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/documents/resources/reports/agrisolar-guide/Australian-guide-to-agrisolar-for-large-scale-solar.pdf">https://assets.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/documents/resources/reports/agrisolar-guide/Australian-guide-to-agrisolar-for-large-scale-solar.pdf</a>
Farm Insurance and Energy Infrastructure – Insurance Council of Australia	<a href="https://insurancecouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Updated-ICA_Briefing_Farm-Insurance-and-Energy-Infrastructure">https://insurancecouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Updated-ICA_Briefing_Farm-Insurance-and-Energy-Infrastructure</a>
Mental health resources – National Farmers Federation	<a href="https://nff.org.au/mental-health-resources/">https://nff.org.au/mental-health-resources/</a>

## Before you go...

Please help us plan events that meet your needs by completing this short survey:

Click: <https://forms.office.com/r/7Jh174fDqp>

Or scan on your phone's camera:



Thank you

