

MEETING MINUTES

Central North West Stakeholder Reference Group

Meeting #1

Date	27 April 2023
Time	5:30-7.30pm
Presenters	Stewart Sharples (SS) Charlie McAlister (CM) Robbie Casbault (RC)
Location	Cradle Coast Authority Chambers, Burnie

Attendees

Name	Organisation
Romy Greiner	Community Member
Elise Kaine	Community Member
Enya Willis	Community Member
Kate O'Sullivan	Community Member
Greg Fenwick	Kentish and Latrobe Councils
Mathew Skirving	Devonport Council
Karina Dambergs	Northern Tasmania Development Corporation
Iona Flett	Cradle Coast Authority

Apologies

Name	Organisation
Veronica Terry	Regional Development Australia Tasmania
Sandra Ayton	Central Coast Council
Alan Bradford	Advance West North West

Agenda

Ref no.	Item
1	Welcome and Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement of Country Overview of ReCFIT, Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) and Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) Membership Introduction <i>Activity: Ice Breaker – understanding, knowledge and sentiment</i>
2	Renewable Energy in Tasmania <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why more renewables? What we have heard Why Renewable Energy Zones?
3	What is REZ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Activity: What is REZ – benefits, challenges, risks, impacts</i> <i>Activity: FAQ Ideas Board</i> REZ Establishment Process Why the North west region first?
4	Short Break
5	Engaging to Define the Zone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of engagement program and timeline North west SRG objectives and administration <i>Activity: What does success for the SRG look like?</i> SRG meeting schedule
6	Stakeholder Engagement Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft community and stakeholder engagement plan <i>Activity: How are we engaging?</i> Engagement to date and upcoming activities
7	Next Session and Meeting Close <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next session overview: Mapping Important Places Actions for members

Minutes

Ref no.

Item

1

Welcome and acknowledgment of Country

CM acknowledged country.

SS and CM provided a brief introduction of ReCFIT and each presenter's role, before asking each member to provide their name and short brief of why they were interested in attending the SRG program.

Broadly, the reasons the SRG members joined were:

- to further understand REZ's role in economic opportunities
- to learn more about how REZ can address (improve and protect) biodiversity and the environment when addressing climate change through more renewables
- to keep northern Tasmania informed and highlight the importance of ongoing community development
- to progress young Tasmanians' views on climate action, and
- to inform planning mechanisms, transmission and associated infrastructure from a scenic values and landholder perspective

CM briefly provided some expectations around conduct for the group, including:

- active participation and collaboration being encouraged
- all ideas, discussion and contributions being welcomed, in a kind, open-minded, positive and respectful manner.

CM introduced an ice breaker activity by asking the following questions to the group:

- Where do you think you/your community is at on their REZ journey?
- What are you hearing in your community?

Discussion and written contributions from the group, when answering the questions, displayed a range of responses with overall sentiment being neutral. Some key insights from members were:

- concerns about transmission line impacts, environmentally and visually
- concerns about the costs of sharing energy with the mainland
- scenic impacts from infrastructure such as power lines and wind farms
- interests in how REZ aims to interact with local government and state-wide planning schemes
- how will REZ influence increased jobs, housing and manufacturing?
- interests in solar farms, new technology, green manufacturing, export and rapid transition to renewables.

Government's renewables agenda overview

SS described the benefits to the state of increasing renewable energy capacity:

- Tasmania currently leads the way - 100% net renewable generation
- Tasmanian Renewable Energy Target of 200% signifies a much broader and more ambitious vision for Tasmania - beyond electricity
- supports decarbonisation of Tasmania (and Australia's) energy sector
- seeks to create jobs, building skills through training (energising Tasmania)
- low cost electricity generation.

SS emphasised the need to generate more energy to:

- meet growing demand
- continue delivering net zero emissions
- attract new economic growth to the State, and
- contribute to Australia and the world's renewable energy transition.

2

Renewable energy in Tasmania overview

When discussing "Why more renewables?", SS explained the notion of Tasmania currently being in energy balance.

- Whether it is on-island growth, electrification, the growth of a green industry or export of clean energy to help the rest of Australia decarbonise, more energy is needed.

This opened some commentary from the group around the following:

- there are some misconceptions about how Basslink works
- 'green credentials' start to come into question when Tasmania is importing so much energy from Victoria

Some questions and answers were:

- *Could we do without Basslink?*
- SS: In the short term, yes. Mid to long term, no as the Hydro yield consistently changes.
- *Will new generation be used to bring in new industries?*
- SS: The short answer is yes, most likely.
- *The vision shows 4,600 jobs are estimated to be created in Tasmania's renewable energy projects, does this mean that all 4,600 jobs will be for Tasmanians?*
- SS: Not completely. Many roles will be tied to Tasmania. Working people will be spending their money here, however it is not guaranteed that all the roles will be allocated to Tasmanian residents. Some roles are highly specialised and will be sourced from outside of the state.

A group member added that there seems to be some disconnect between a small number of highly specialised skills that fly in versus the many supporting roles that can be filled by Tasmanians.

What is REZ?

The group began an exercise by discussing and recording some different views on potential benefits, challenges, risks and impacts of a future REZ.

Some common themes around benefits began to form around:

- legacy infrastructure
- education, training, and employment for locals
- cheaper energy and more reliable power
- opportunities for new industries, and
- lifting the understanding of REZ.

Some topical challenges brought forward by the group consisted of:

- how does REZ overcome scenic loss, noise pollution, heritage and biodiversity risks?
- how does REZ engagement overcome being tokenistic?
- can current planning frameworks accommodate REZ and major projects?
- getting community, industry and government to work together and the complexity of the energy market is of concern
- a concern was highlighted regarding local land stewardship and connection to place is often ridiculed as 'NIMBYism' (not in my back yard), which tends to undermine the genuine concerns and values of the community.
- furthermore, there a group member suggested there is a level of skepticism surrounding the government's renewable energy agenda, and that is important to acknowledge and address these sentiments to foster a more inclusive and informed dialogue around the topic.

North west REZ program 2023

Stewart described the work over the nine months to December 2023 and why the North west region was announced as the first to focus on:

- provides for the largest potential transfer capacity,
- the lower cost per MW of new transmission capacity augmentation
- high levels of existing commercial interest due to proximity to marinus and high quality wind resources, and pumped hydro potential etc.
- concessional finance announced by the Commonwealth for the North West Transmission Development - suppresses cost impacts on Tasmanian customers.

What the next steps look like:

- a range of technical studies relating to transmission and design of the offering for proponents who may wish to locate in the REZ (costs and other features like access, connection processes)
- a dedicated community engagement program which aims at educating and providing opportunities for community to participate, including SRG-establishment and in-region targeted sessions, pop-ups, forums etc.

4

15 min break

5

North west Stakeholder Reference Group

CM provided an overview of the SRG's role, that is:

- to inform and guide REZ processes, ensuring lasting local community benefits
- encouraging a cooperative and regionally consistent approach
- council and community representation
- continued and open collaboration with your community

Members of the SRG were asked, what does success for the SRG look like?

A brief discussion on this raised the following:

- SRG-success would allow for the group to evolve from being consultative and involved, into community collaboration and empowerment
- reaching more people with REZ information and communicating this information appropriately, in many cases that is less words and more visual information
- ability to influence land use and planning frameworks from SRG outcomes
- ability to move past the current 'consultation fatigue' that many community members are feeling
- it was suggested to invite a UTAS observer to attend future SRG workshops, to study the engagement process

	<p>Terms of reference & code of conduct</p> <p>CM requested the following regarding group administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SRG code of conduct to be signed by all members by close of session • it was agreed that the Terms of Reference (ToR) will be amended based on feedback from SRG members and the final ToR will be circulated for endorsement post-session.
6	<p>SRG meeting schedule, engagement plan and overview</p> <p>CM provided a proposed overview of the SRG engagement schedule and timing, including key SRG-session milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May - Mapping Important Places • June - Community benefit schemes, Local procurement, skills and jobs • July - Assessment Criteria • August - Future Directions Paper (Will take inputs from SRG and provide a public facing document for broad community consultation on shortlisted REZ and proposed market offering) <p>CM asked the group to offer additional input into the schedule and provide suggestions on how the group would like to be engaged in future sessions, including ideas on other topics to cover, in relation to REZ.</p> <p>Members agreed to provide some input on this prior to the next SRG meeting.</p>
7	<p>Next Session Overview: Mapping Important Places</p> <p>SS briefly provided the purpose of the next SRG session and other work occurring supplementary to the SRG, with regards to 'mapping', which aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek input from the community on important places & values • consider places of value to the north west community, in the context of hosting energy transmission infrastructure, renewable energy generation and storage • seek input from government agencies on values for which they are responsible (i.e. heritage/environment/forestry/mining/agriculture) <p>A member suggested the Mapping exercise to include both SRG groups as one group, to encourage diversity of views and discussion during the exercise.</p>

Actions

No.	Action	Owner	Due
1	Send presentation slide deck to members	Robbie Casbault	10/05/2023
2	REZ team to amend TOR to reflect proposed changes	ReCFIT	Next meeting
3	Prepare for next session – mapping important places and values to the north west community and identifying places where renewables would best be located	All members	Next meeting
4	Identify additional events for ReCFIT to attend, additional stakeholders to add to the Plan, suggest communication channels and networks to increase reach	All members	Next meeting