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To whom it may concern

Re: Recommendations to inform the 'The Net Zero Economy Authority on the Energy Industry Jobs Plan – Eraring Power Station.'

The ten Member Councils of the Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) welcome the opportunity provided by the NS Net Zero Economy Authority on the Energy Industry Jobs Plan – Eraring Power Station.

The Hunter Joint Organisation is the statutory local government entity established by the NSW Government, through the *NSW Local Government Act 1993*, to support the ten member Councils of the Hunter Region to work together for better rural and regional outcomes, and to enhance the way local and state governments work together to plan and deliver important regional infrastructure and investment.

Member Councils of the Hunter JO include:

- Cessnock City Council
- Dungog Shire Council
- Lake Macquarie City Council
- Maitland City Council
- MidCoast Council
- Muswellbrook Shire Council
- City of Newcastle
- Port Stephens Council
- Singleton Council
- Upper Hunter Shire Council

The core statutory functions established by the NSW Government for the Hunter JO and joint organisations more broadly across NSW include:

1. Strategic planning and priority setting
2. Intergovernmental collaboration
3. Shared leadership and advocacy

The Hunter Region is the largest regional economy in Australia, driving around 28% of regional NSW's total economic output, of which coal exports contribute around a third (\$24 billion) and approaching a population of one million people by 2040. The ten Mayors of the Region, through the Hunter Joint Organisation, are strongly aligned in recognising the economic challenges facing the region, and on the priorities and actions needed to evolve the Hunter's economy toward net zero.

In line with our shared commitment to meet net zero, the Hunter JO welcomes the opportunity to provide the recommendations included in the following submission, summarised below.

Summary of recommendations


The closure of Eraring marks a pivotal moment in the broader Hunter region's economic transition journey. For this reason it must be used as a catalyst to deliver a whole-of-region economic transformation that is inclusive, just and sustainable. Our recommendations are summarised as follows:

1. Support for and expanded EIJP scope to cover all coal-dependent communities and supply chain workers across the Hunter,
2. Investment in skill mapping, retraining, and redeployment support across the region,
3. Utilising Net Zero Economy Authority's leadership role to encourage urgent action from the NSW Government to undertake planning reform of land release processes, unlocking post-mining and former coal-fired power station sites for future employment-generating uses,
4. Early social investment in community services, housing, education and mental health, and
5. Strong place-focused (regional) intergovernmental coordination aligned with existing national, state and regional strategies.

I encourage you to consider our recommendations to inform the focus and scope of the Energy Industry Jobs Plan for Eraring Power Station and would welcome the opportunity to further discuss our ideas with Net Zero Economy Authority, given the enormous opportunities and impacts facing the Hunter region and Australian economies more broadly.

Should you have any further queries please don't hesitate to contact Kim Carland, Advocacy and Government Relations Lead, Hunter JO at kimc@hunterjo.nsw.gov.au or on 0460 034 614.

Yours Sincerely



Cr Sue Moore
Chair Hunter Joint Organisation

Submission to the Net Zero Economy Authority

RE: Energy Industry Jobs Plan (EIJP) – Closure of Eraring Power Station

The Hunter Joint Organisation, representing the ten councils of the Hunter region, welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the consultation on the application of the Energy Industry Jobs Plan (EIJP) in response to the planned closure of Eraring Power Station in August 2027. As a region with a legacy of coal mining and energy generation, this transition marks a critical turning point in our economic evolution.

We support Lake Macquarie City Council's submission, and submit this Hunter regional-wide perspective to reinforce and broaden the call for urgent and targeted support through the EIJP.

The region's communities and economy are deeply interlinked through shared labour markets, supply chains, and infrastructure. An integrated whole-of-region approach is essential to ensure that no worker, community, or local economy is left behind.

1. Hunter Region Context and Importance of Eraring

The Hunter region is one of the most significant contributors to the NSW and national economy driving around 28% of regional NSW's total economic output, with energy production and mining long standing as economic pillars. Eraring Power Station represents about \$4.5 billion in economic activity and 1,800 direct and indirect jobs.

While the closure of Eraring is one of the most immediate and visible milestones in the net zero transition, it is not an isolated event. Multiple mine closures across the Hunter are expected or underway. Each closure will cumulatively exacerbate the economic and social disruption facing the region unless supported by well-resourced, strategic, coordinated, and adaptive transition planning.

2. Call for a Region-Wide EIJP Framework

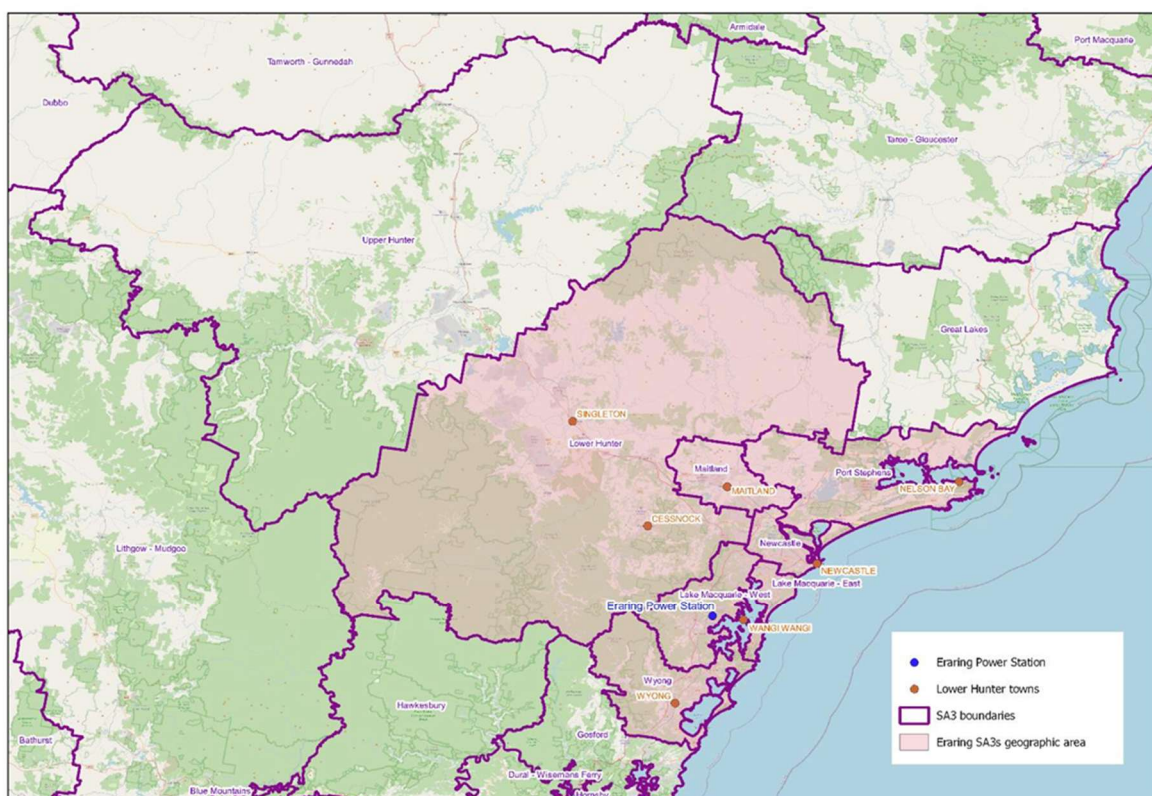
The Hunter region is characterised by deep economic, social, and workforce interdependencies that transcend individual industrial sites. The closure of one major facility inevitably reverberates across the broader regional economy, affecting shared labour markets, supply chains, transport corridors, housing availability, and community services. It is therefore critical that these transitions are not addressed in isolation.

A strategic, region-wide approach, one that is responsive to the cumulative impact of multiple energy and mining transitions and coordinated across all levels of government, is essential to ensure long-term economic resilience, social stability, and just outcomes for all Hunter communities.

While the closure of other coal-fired power stations across the Hunter region may technically fall outside the immediate scope of this submission, they are nonetheless highly relevant to the context in which the Eraring transition is occurring.

We urge NZEA to expand its EIJP implementation to cover a greater area than what has been proposed to encompass more of the Hunter.

Figure 2: Areas for inclusion in the geographic area for Eraring Power Station



We urge the NZEA to expand its EIJP implementation to start mapping all Hunter coal-dependent communities, not just Lake Macquarie and Eraring focussed. including;

- Workers across the full energy supply chain, including contractors, suppliers, and logistics operators.
- Interlinked economic sectors, such as manufacturing and construction, that may be affected by the loss of energy-sector demand.
- Industrial land available now and that could become available in post mining and coal fired power stations.

Key elements of this approach should include:

- A place-focused (region-wide) integrated whole of government approach to the region's transition planning and action that integrates and embeds broader federal and state government planning and policy into a clear strategy for the Hunter region

- Skill mapping and transition planning across the region to anticipate workforce needs and opportunities in clean energy, advanced manufacturing, circular economy, and public infrastructure.
- Hunter region wide focussed personnel offering direct engagement, placement support, and early matching of available skills to future jobs.
- Retraining incentives and reskilling funds, particularly targeted to emerging sectors aligned with the Hunter's renewable energy zone (REZ), green hydrogen opportunities, and defence industries.
- Support for self-employment and local enterprise creation, including accelerator programs for displaced workers to transition into entrepreneurship.
- Business incentives, such as wage subsidies or onboarding payments, for firms that take on transitioning workers or create vacancies via early retirement.

3. Post Mining and Coal Fired Power Station Land Use

The Hunter region faces constraints in providing appropriately zoned employment lands to deliver new job opportunities due to ongoing mining tenure.

All ten Mayors of the Hunter region support a reform of mining license relinquishment processes to make suitable land available more rapidly for industrial reuse, job creation, and clean energy infrastructure.

Limitations in industrial land may inhibit NZEA from meeting the objectives of the EIJP for Eraring Power Station and broader sites across the Hunter that will soon require their own EIJPs.

We urge Net the Zero Economy Authority to use its leadership role to encourage urgent action from the NSW Government to undertake planning reform of land release processes, unlocking post-mining and former coal-fired power station sites for future employment-generating uses.

4. Social Support, Community Resilience and Coordination

Beyond workforce measures, the human and community impacts of these closures demand early investment in:

- Mental health and social services in affected communities;
- Education and family transition planning;
- Transport, housing and digital connectivity, to enable access to new jobs and training across the region.

Strong cross-government and industry coordination will be essential. We urge the NZEA to:

- Maintain regular engagement with local councils, including the Joint Organisation of Councils in the Hunter;
- Integrate transition efforts with existing national, state and regional policies and strategies to deliver a place based planning approach to the Hunter incorporating the

housing targets, Renewable Energy Zones, NSW Hunter Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan and the National Circular Economy Framework to name a few.

5. Final Remarks

The closure of Eraring marks a pivotal moment in the Hunter region's transition journey away from coal. It must be used as a catalyst to deliver a whole-of-region economic transformation that is inclusive, just and sustainable.

We thank the Net Zero Economy Authority for its leadership in this critical process and stand ready to partner in the planning and delivery of a successful transition.