

MINUTES

Meeting Name:	NWTD Stakeholder Liaison Group Meeting
Meeting date:	6 December 2021
Meeting location:	Cradle Coast Energy Hub, Burnie
Chairperson	Rodney Greene (RG)
Presenters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damian Verney (DV), North West Transmission Developments Project Director, TasNetworks • Chris Warr, (CW) Community, Communications & Environment Lead, North West Transmission Developments, TasNetworks • Nicola Wass (NW), Director, RPS • Ellen Witt (EW), Project Director, SGS
Notetaker	Lucy Temple-Smith, RPS (LTS)

Attendees

Name	Initials	Organisation	Role
Jacob Batt	JB	AMWU	Member
Andrew Catchpole	AC	TCCI	Member
Sarah Jones	SJ	UTAS	Member
Graham Marshall	GM	YFCC	Member
Helen Truscott	HT	Cradle Coast NRM	Member
Sheree Vertigan	SV	Cradle Coast Authority	Member
Alexis Wadsley	AW	Skills Tasmania	Member

Apologies

Name	Initials	Organisation	Role
Shane Batt	SB	Tasmanian Fire Service	Member
Matthew Dance	MD	TasTAFE	Member
Jackie Harvey	JH	Business Tasmania	Member
Ian Jones	IJ	Business NW	Member
Craig Perkins	CP	RDA Tasmania	Member
Brittany Rubie	BR	TFGA	Member
Tom Wootton	TW	West by North West Tourism	Member

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1.	Welcome and introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RG welcomed all attendees, delivered Acknowledgement of Country.• New members Sarah Jones and Graham Marshall introduced themselves to the SLG.
2.	NWTD recent engagement activities update <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CW and DV provided update from recent NWTD community engagement activities.• Two community pop-ups held on 6 and 7 November at Westbury Show and Upper Burnie Woolworths.• Focus was raising awareness of the project and reaching a wider audience in a public event setting.• Both very positive events. A mix of conversations; good opportunity to speak directly to local landowners and community members about impacts.• Engagement activities at high foot traffic locations / public events seen as very worthwhile; TasNetworks planning more in 2022.• Main conversation themes were ‘what are the opportunities?’ eg jobs; design considerations, why overhead and not underground?; economic opportunity and; the project’s contribution to climate change.• Four 2-hour focus groups recently completed; 24 participants. These built on a previous round of focus groups.• Updates to NWTD project website and engagement platform, collateral, and continuous improvement to the NWTD communications channels.• Formation of the NWTD Community Benefit Sharing Youth Panel continues.• TasNetworks undertook youth networks and stakeholder conversations in October with organisations such as YNOT and Li-Ve Tasmania, refined the Youth Panel program design.• Recruitment will occur in Jan-Feb 2022 for approximately 30 young people, designed to gain a broad representation of youth across NWTD footprint throughout the north and north west.• Member query if community benefits frameworks are new to transmission, are there other examples?• CW explained guidelines do exist in renewable generation but not for transmission. Some examples overseas such as in Ireland but not fully formed yet in Australia.• TasNetworks is undertaking work to define guidelines and establish a framework, one that will demonstrate the genuine commitment to the communities they operate within.• Energy Networks Australia is also doing work in this space.• TasNetworks will be informed by this and is collaborating with other network operators across Australia to establish a consistent approach where possible. NWTD scope update <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DV and CW updated group on recent NWTD scope updates.• Palmerston to Sheffield section; original plan was to widen by extra 20m and retain the existing line.• Following consultation with landowners, TasNetworks is proposing to remove the existing line once the new 220Kv line is built.• During construction the easement will be widened by 20 metres, then reduced back to 60m, an overall reduction of 40m, following the removal of the existing line.• There will be less towers due to greater spans afforded by taller towers. TasNetworks will continue to work with landowners on tower placement to suit their land use requirements where possible.• Landowners in this section requested the existing line be taken down then the new line be constructed in its place, avoiding any temporary easement widening. This is too greater risk to the network as this line is a major connector between southern and northern Tasmania.• In response to the request for the line to be placed underground, TasNetworks commissioned Jacobs to undertake a detailed case study on what that would cost in the Cressy-Sheffield section of the line.• Results showed it would be over seven times the cost and require a five year program to construct compared to around 18 months; land use would still be restricted on underground line easement.•• Staverton to Hampshire Hills NWTD section subject of a recent realignment of 10km section.• Preferred route was released in August 2020. As part of the environmental, planning and heritage assessment process, a range of technical studies were undertaken in 2021.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Studies are undertaken to understand any potential impacts on the environment, land use, local communities etc.• Results demonstrated some ecological and geological features that need to be avoided to reduce impacts, such as areas of native rainforest, karst systems and the risk of landslides.• As a result, a 10km section of the route has been realigned further south to avoid these areas.• This demonstrates a planning and approvals process that minimises impacts, the change is part of this technical process.• TasNetworks has contacted landowners directly impacted by this change either in person, via phone or post, with a preference to engage in person where possible. The wider community will now be informed of the change.• 93 per cent of this section of the NWTD will remain through areas of commercial forestry operations.• Following initial community feedback, TasNetworks will continue to work with landowners and community to provide input into the design and approvals process.• Noted that TasNetworks' CEO Sean McGoldrick meeting with the SOLVE group this week.• Route section realignment will result in a six-month delay to the submission of the Environmental Impact Statement to the Tasmanian Planning Commission due to need for additional field studies.• For towers and visual impact, greatest opportunity to mitigate visual impacts is the design of the line and to use the terrain to advantage.• When line design is complete, landscape and visual impact assessments are undertaken; this process will be repeated for the realigned section of Staverton to Hampshire Hills line.• From a visual perspective, very few effective tower treatments that can be applied to these types of towers, this is also balanced against the need to ensure the project is as cost effective as possible for Tasmanians.• Substantial environmental, cultural heritage process to come including continued community engagement, education and input.• This will enable TasNetworks to work on reducing the visual impacts to the greatest extent possible.• Regarding weed incursion, handing back disturbed land and how it is monitored; TasNetworks continues to work with landowners on biosecurity concerns and will act in accordance with landowner access preferences easement management practices.
3.	<p>Guest presentation – Social Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nicola Wass, Director, RPS presented social research undertaken to inform the NWTD engagement activities. Refer to meeting presentation. Questions followed:• Conflict between building a project that may be perceived to benefit mainland customers and workers, not Tasmanians.• NW confirmed there was concern among research participants that 'ordinary Tasmanians' may not benefit from project.• Those who were most positive were seeing potential as a lever for other jobs; where the project could foster an environment where more jobs are created in the long term.• Lack of alignment between current skills in the region and what is needed, and concern that when project is complete those upskilled for it will not have other opportunities.• Messaging around this should be part of an ongoing process; noted community benefit sharing arrangement holds the key.• CW added the workforce benefits are not only in the construction phase and not only for this project; but in the pipeline of projects that will result from it.• Noted that TasNetworks will work to improve how this pipeline of jobs is demonstrated and communicated, including how the opportunity fits into the wider context of the project.• CW noted the 'who pays?' question still outstanding in the current project stage has potential to lead to cynicism and can impact workforce development planning.• Once this is fully formed, more certainty will improve this.• Training connections to this project is not yet formed. For research participants focused on unemployment, question around where did they view the jobs to be and what were the perceived barriers to becoming job ready.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NW answered there was a strong conversation around education more broadly with access to finishing high school a barrier as well as the mismatch for skills sets and potential skill sets.• Providing the educational opportunity to upskill to make the community ready to get the most out of the project.• Nothing specific in mind from participants; only that project should have that in mind actively working with the industry and training sector to plan.• Trust issue mentioned during the presentation, historical or recent?• NW answered there was general cynicism among research participants about government delivering project of this scale to the benefit of the community.• Possible result of legacy issues around community engagement; level of previous influence around major projects across the State; perceptions around companies coming in then leaving and foreign ownership concerns.• RG thanked NW for the presentation and question and answer session.
5.	<p>Guest presentation – Economic development research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TasNetworks is currently preparing an Economic Development Strategy for Project Marinus focusing on the North West region of Tasmania; to understand the wider economic benefits and opportunities for communities and local economies that Project Marinus offers.• Ellen Witt, Project Director, SGS presented economic development research undertaken to inform the strategy.• The overall outcome for this Strategy and Action Plan is that the regional economic benefits of Project Marinus are fully realised at each phase of the Project.• A four-stage process will be followed to develop and deliver the Regional Economic Development Plan.• The first stage is building a regional profile through research and statistical analysis.• The second stage aims to identify the regional benefits of the project and how they align with the economic profile of the region.• The third stage involves working with stakeholders in co-design to identify opportunities to leverage economic benefits and barriers within local communities.• The fourth stage, also involving co-design, will identify and implement actions to pursue the opportunities and overcome barriers.• The development of the Strategy and Action Plan will continue in 2022.• Questions and discussion followed:• TasNetworks will take inputs heard from the research and develop a tangible economic development action plan to realise as many of these benefits as possible.• Opportunity to validate or calculate overall benefits generated by the project; noting the input/output modelling produces large numbers, can lead to scepticism, suggested more detail needed.• TasNetworks is working toward action plans and assessing value of these activities; when completed this will provide further detail around how the community is better off; socially, economically.• Actions around applying labour, to where/what and ensure the project is generating obvious benefits to the community.• The community wealth building framework is being used to assist SGS and TasNetworks prioritise actions.• No specific examples from other regions for this type of project.• Parallels with this research and Energising Tasmania work. Tasmania is facing a once in a generation opportunity to draw those not already in the workforce in; range of issues and opportunities around this.• Civil Contractors Federation (CCF) could be a potential partner, civil construction being the area where a lot of the jobs are, linking them into the supply and supporting these organisations to build capacity.• CW noted the procurement strategy for the project will be substantial, covering supplier engagement.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NWTD workforce development and procurement strategy could be an opportunity to seek to address embedded imbalances that exist in the North West community.• A real opportunity to benchmark best practice in developing and delivering benefits for the community, opportunity for TasNetworks to lead in this space.• Direct jobs reference: what percentage of the workers employed by TasNetworks or contractors.• CW answered most will be contractors to construct the project rather than be directly employed by TasNetworks; will build into the procurement strategy the importance to these being local.• Opportunity for local contractors to get involved early, build skills required through support from TasNetworks to have a ready workforce – not rely solely on the industry to do this.• Risk noted in training people before the project has approval, skills will need to be transferrable, and timing is critical.• CW noted these points around skills, industry, and productivity. Next steps in procurement strategy development will be applying this level of strategic thinking.• DV added the procurement strategy will be released in 2022 to begin to get feedback.• ‘Boom and crash’ cycle of building and industry investment in the North West and loss of workforce; great opportunity for TasNetworks to work with construction companies.• TasNetworks could act as an intermediary with government to facilitate training.• RG thanked EW for the presentation and question and answer session.
6.	<p>Upcoming activities - NWTD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CW provided a brief overview of the upcoming community engagement activities• Project timeline ongoing (refer to presentation supplied).• In 2022 TasNetworks will continue with community engagement activities across the NWTD.• Focus on general awareness raising, team currently working on forward six-month plan for engagement.• Specific work will be focused on the two route sections with recent changes (Palmerston to Sheffield, Staverton to Hampshire Hills).• Investigations and field studies will continue in realigned section of Staverton to Hampshire Hills.• Technical report summaries in production; will enable communities to review findings from the lengthy technical reports outside and ahead of the two-week statutory timeframe provided within the planning and approvals process.
7.	<p>NWTD collateral discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members received copies of the <i>Proposed North West Transmission Developments Community Information Pack</i> and <i>North West Transmission Developments - Technical Design</i> to review.• CW noted there is an ambition to simplify messages to help inform different audiences as project moves into 2022, seeking SLG review to add to this process.• Feedback included:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ensuring the information is accessible to all literacy levels- Ensure communications materials do not assume prior knowledge- Use plain English- Use simple infographics wherever possible; offer from SJ to utilise University student skills- Opportunity to develop a high level, big picture cost and benefit infographic – connect people to how the benefits translate to opportunities for them- Focus on what it means for community members to help people see themselves in the project- Consider a two-pager for each section of the NWTD- Include information on compensation and acquisition that is in landowner packs into broader communications materials- Use graphics to help people understand what the line will look like in their area/route section- Upfront information on why the NWTD is being proposed, benefits and positive business case- Provide people with simple information they need to focus on, be interested in now; high level and detailed information available to back this up
8.	<p>Next steps and meeting close</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members indicated an interest in hearing about the Marinus Link scope progress in future meetings.

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- Members indicated interest in receiving copies of external research presentations.
- Chair requested any further comments on collateral or suggestions for meeting topics to go to LTS.
- Next meeting Tuesday 8 February 2022.

Actions

Ref no.	Description	Owner	Date
1.	Copies of external presentations to be circulated to SLG members	LTS	14 Dec 2021
2.	Any further suggestions on NWTD collateral to be emailed to Lucy	LTS	22 Dec 2021
3.	Marinus Link project team to be engaged to provide update to SLG in 2022	CW / LTS	8 Feb 2022
4.	TasNetworks to review and consider feedback for NWTD collateral	CW	Ongoing

Next meeting

Date: Tuesday 8 February 2022

Time: 12:00pm – 2:30pm (Lunch provided)

Location: Cradle Coast Future Energy Hub, 1-3 Spring Street, Burnie

Minutes prepared by: Lucy Temple-Smith

Minutes approved by: Rodney Greene