



The Energy
Charter

Better Practice Social Licence Guideline

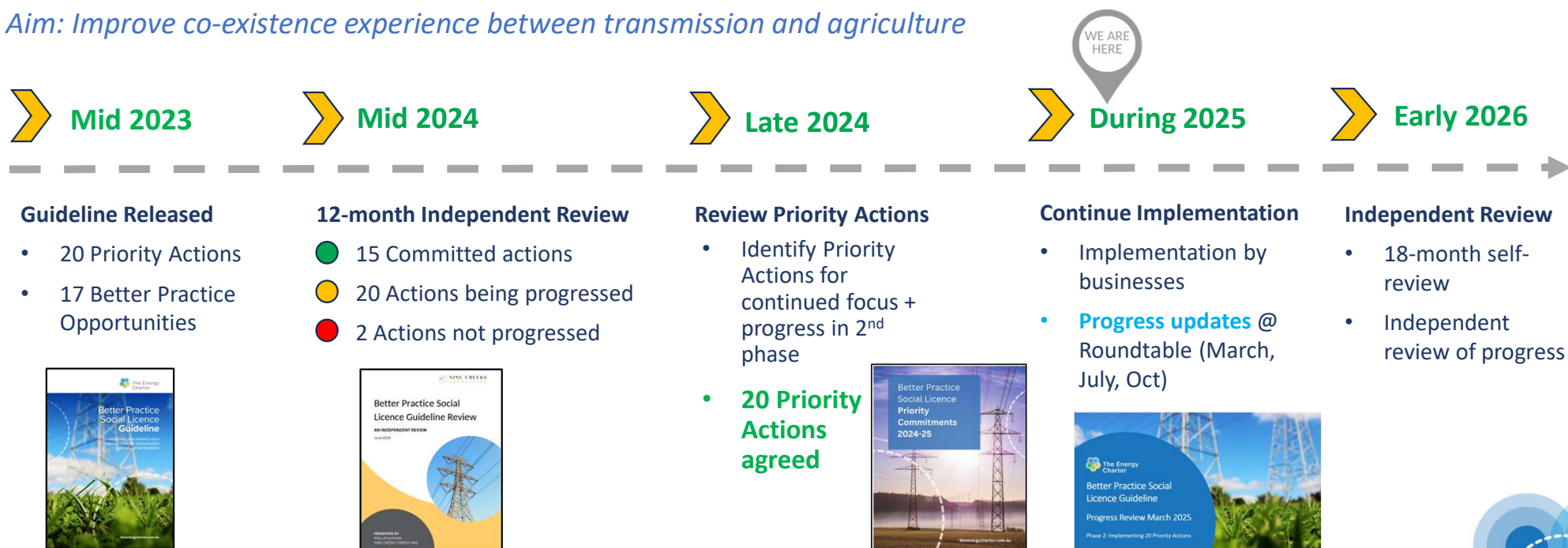
Progress Review March 2025

Phase 2: Implementing 20 Priority Actions



#BT Social Licence Better Practice Guideline + Accountability

Aim: Improve co-existence experience between transmission and agriculture



Documents available <https://www.theenergycharter.com.au/better-practice-social-licence-guideline/>



AusNet | March 2025 Progress Update

Short-term highlights

- Western Renewables Link (WRL) is committed to regional job growth and has expanded the Ballarat office to accommodate increased staff numbers from 4 people in 2020 to 21 at the end of 2024
- WRL launched a new [webpage](#) for neighbouring landholders with information about visual impacts and enabling neighbouring landholders to register their details to receive tailored neighbour updates
- WRL has commenced rolling out community benefit sharing initiatives during project development, acknowledging communities experience impact before construction commences, including working with Ballarat Community Health to undertake energy assessments.
- WRL has commenced developing a Local Industry Development Plan and Procurement Framework to maximise Victorian jobs and regional employment and procurement opportunities.
- WRL is exploring partnerships with local educators to develop tailored apprenticeship programs and ways to support the inclusion of more women in project delivery work.
- AusNet is developing new standardised fact sheets regarding compensation, land access, professional fees and biosecurity for its transmission connection projects.
- For our transmission connection projects, AusNet develops Property Management Plans with each landholder. These remain living documents and are updated by landholders and contractors at regular intervals.
- For our transmission connections projects, AusNet continues to seek project-level benefit sharing initiatives, such as offering excess land surrounding the new Cressy Terminal Station to the Rokewood Football Club to support money making grazing and cropping opportunities.
- AusNet is participating in The Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Energy Collaboration, coordinated by the Energy Charter and Wimmera Southern Mallee Development, with the purpose of creating partnerships to ensure the region benefits from the transition to renewables and a pilot model for regional collaboration to be rolled out more widely.
- AusNet collaborated with The Energy Charter and eight community, agriculture and consumer representative groups on the #BT Undergrounding Initiative. AusNet provided technical and regulatory resourcing to assist in the creation of a Resource Hub for landholders and communities on 'Undergrounding'

Challenges

- Securing voluntary landholder agreements and land access to better understand specific concerns and mitigation options.
- With multiple transmission/renewable projects in development, key partners and stakeholders face resource strain engaging with us on each and every project.

Future Focus

- Following advice from a biosecurity expert, WRL is drafting a risk assessment and undertaking a review of its current biosecurity procedures and communications.
- WRL will continue to prioritise biosecurity during the project's construction phase, creating property specific management plans with ongoing two-way communication, to advise of any changes in land use and requirements.
- WRL is developing processes to oversee property-specific management plans and land use changes from construction through to operations.
- WRL's Construction Project Manager plans to visit properties (that approve) throughout 2025 to explore potential benefits like repurposing equipment or materials or providing labour in kind.
- AusNet's Transmission Connections team is working on a new GIS strategy to include property-specific biosecurity measures to be implemented in 2025.



Marinus Link | March 2025 Progress Update

Short-term highlights

- 7. Regional engagement teams
 - Engagement Specialists based in NW Tasmania and Gippsland
- 24. Engage with landholders on soil requirements
 - Land Access Agents developing individual property management plans with landholders
- 30. Advocate for improved access to affordable, reliable energy for host communities
 - Marinus Link is a project of national significance
- 31. Prioritise impact-aware Community Benefit Sharing
 - Community Grant and Sponsorship Program / Burnie City Council Partnership Program implemented prior to project commencement
- 36. Social and environmental criteria in procurement decision-making
 - Developed and implementing Procurement Policy and Sustainability Framework
- 37. Agreements with local businesses for local goods and services
 - Engaging with local businesses through BAU and setting local targets in Balance of Works package

Challenges

- 13. Easy and timely access to records of access on request
 - Continuing to improve processes, based around the Land Access Code of Practice
- 18. Annualised compensation
 - Independent valuations and compensation proposals undertaken and consideration of landholder payment methods

Future Focus

- 3. Upgrades and maintenance activities in construction and operations
 - Land Access Agents developing individual property management plans with landholders
- 26. Engagement with landholder regarding use of scrap materials and equipment
 - Consideration of landholder access throughout construction
- 27. Provide labour and equipment in-kind
 - Consideration of landholder contracting throughout construction
- 29. Develop Community Benefit Sharing programs
 - Community Benefits Sharing Framework to be developed in 2025



Powerlink | March 2025 Progress Update

Short-term highlights

- We established a dedicated Community and Social Performance Team to develop and deliver on community relationships and social performance strategy.
- We increased our regional presence with engagement-focused team members also now based in Chinchilla, Charters Towers and Townsville (Landholder Relations) + Cairns and Cannonvale (Indigenous Partnerships).
- In response to community feedback, we committed to funding vegetation screening activities at our Bouldercombe Substation – mitigating visual amenity impacts for local residents and the wider community.
- We hosted a workshop with key industry stakeholders to explore the potential to develop a Land Access Code for Transmission in Queensland.
- We established a new role (Senior Community Safety Advisor) to help provide advice to landholders and the community on electrical safety, and prepared our Community Electrical Safety Action Plan 2025-2030.
- We shared more than \$320,000 in funding for our 2024 community grants program, with 78 community groups receiving support in 14 local government areas in Southern, Central, North and Far North Queensland.
- We contributed to the Queensland Government's pilot Callide and Central Queensland REZ Assessments to identify local infrastructure for potential community investment support.
- We published a new brochure to summarise the independent analysis into the benefits/trade-offs for undergrounding transmission infrastructure completed by University of Queensland and Curtin University (commissioned by Powerlink).

Challenges

- Our latest community insights research shows communities do not see benefits outweighing the impacts. We need to better develop a local value proposition for communities.
- We are operating in a very complex external environment following the Queensland State election in October 2024, with complexities heightened as we approach a Federal election.
- Our traditional approach to delivering work in a project or property specific capacity creates challenges to making our activities more consistent and repeatable (e.g. upgrades/maintenance in construction and operations, availability of scrap metals and equipment, and agreements with local businesses etc.)

Future Focus

- Finalise our Social Performance Strategy, Community Benefit Sharing Framework, Indigenous Relationship Agreement Framework and Workforce Accommodation Strategy.
- Continue to work closely with Queensland Farmers' Federation through its Energy Engagement and Education Advisor to improve the flow of information between the energy and agricultural sectors.
- Work alongside Queensland Capacity Network (QCN) to progress planning for our Telecommunications Program to improve digital connectivity in regional areas hosting transmission infrastructure.
- Work with CopperString landholders to ensure a consistent approach to easement terms and conditions, land access arrangements and property management planning for greater transparency and shared understanding.



TasNetworks – NWTD | March 2025 Progress Update

Short-term highlights

- Currently approximately 54 per cent options agreements signed
- Commenced development of Property Management Plans
- Award and on-boarding of head contractor (ECI phase) – developing policies and procedures to ensure commitments made in planning and approvals phase are delivered in construction
- Increased local project team members
- Preparation for permit application engagement program
- Team members participated in 26TEN (writing in plain English) training
- Regional biosecurity wash down sites – nearing completion
- Continued partnership with Rural Alive & Well for landholder and community mental health
- Community Benefit Sharing program – stakeholder engagement on governance
- Reviewing NWTD regional economic development plan
- Government endorsement of Strategic Benefit Payment

Challenges

- Finalisation of the Strategic Benefit Payment (annualised payments)
- Final easement options agreements – pending SBP and other matters to be resolved
- Sequencing and scheduling of early works when landholders not engaging

Future Focus








- Engaging with community through approvals process
- Working with local suppliers – meet the head contractor event
- Implementing Community Benefit Sharing program
- Continuing to build relationship with head contractor to reflect aspired and committed outcomes for landholders and community



Transgrid | March 2025 Progress Update

Highlights

Over 19,000 engagements across Major Projects in 2024

	12,603 Emails
	2,656 Phone calls, including 1800 number
	1,465 Letters/ forms/ submissions
	1,260 Community and stakeholder meetings
	738 SMS
	1,000+ Online engagements
	248 Community information sessions

Challenges

- Actively engaging our communities and working with them to deliver positive outcomes which support the sustainable, long-term growth of our communities.
- Using lessons learned on projects to better engage and inform our approach for future projects.
- Earlier engagement on critical decisions like undergrounding and route alignments.
- Advocating for a shared value regulatory instruments with the government and regulators including the DCCEE, the AER, AEMO and EnergyCo.

Future Focus

