



The Energy
Charter

Community Energy Congress

Big Renewables and Communities

7 March 2024

theenergycharter.com.au



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land we gather on, the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation and pay respect to their Elders, past and present.

We recognise and value the continuing rich culture and the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Artwork: Jordan Lovegrove



Congress Theme: Fast, Fair & Vital

1. The speed of transition
2. The values and outcomes that communities want in the energy transition
3. The vital nature of energy to everyday lives and businesses.

Our role is to align the energy sector to deliver these outcomes, through #BetterTogether collaboration.





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Collaboration



Community-led Collaboration



Wimmera South Mallee community

- 54,000 people delivering \$7.4b GDP
- Agriculture over 20% of GDP (national average only 1.9%)
- Predominantly broadacre farming: cereals, oilseeds, pulses and sheep
- 60% crops exported
- Average farm size 880ha
- Family-owned farms are the dominant structure
- Less than 10 private companies have over 100 employees
- 24 towns – largest is Horsham 16,000 pop
- 70% population are in the bottom 30% poorest in Australia





Growing community challenges

Renewable energy projects

- 7 windfarms operating = 150+ turbines
- 9 windfarm projects planned = 500+ turbines
- 10+ solar farms (more in planning phases)
- Mineral sands mining
- Transmission projects north + south

Ongoing regional challenges

- Energy and housing affordability
- Telecommunications
- Access to health and education



Q: How can we collaborate with the Wimmera South Mallee community, across all renewable developments, to genuinely deliver shared value and benefit?

- 10 renewable + transmission businesses + AEMO have agreed to co-design a **Collaboration Framework** led by Wimmera South Mallee Development organisation
- It will address:
 - How will they work together?
 - How will they collectively engage with the community?
 - How will they respond to community calls for energy affordability + and housing affordability?
- The Collaboration Framework may create a precedent for other communities to leverage





Building trust



Community research

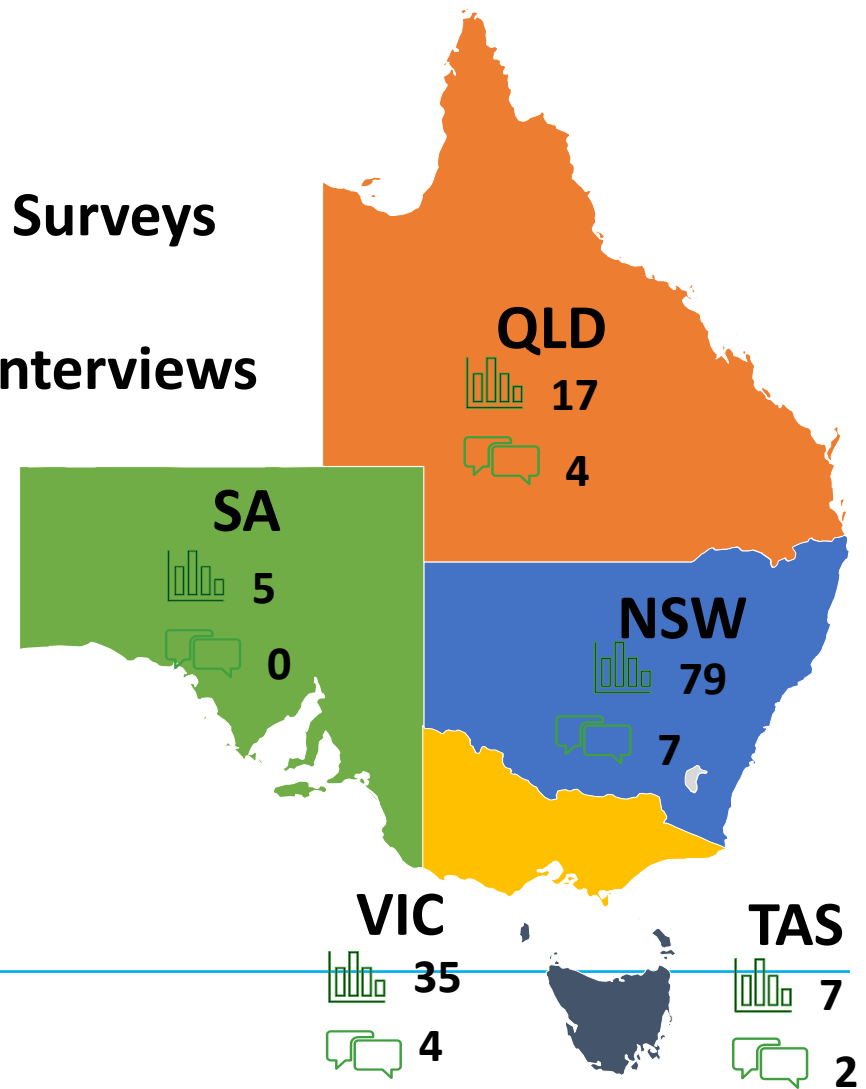
Investigate how renewable energy and agricultural communities can co-exist and create shared value



144 Surveys



17 Interviews



“Huge biosecurity risk to our farming operations and potential to lose everything”

“Biggest impact? Hard to single one out”

“It would make me sick to look at it. My property is my life.”

“We lost a 100 head of calves just due to the timing when they conducted their works, around \$200k of income”

“There will be no benefit to me but massive benefits for the general public.”

“How could there possibly be a benefit to destroy prime agricultural land?”

“No benefits nothing has been invested in the community, no internet upgrade, road, repairs, no remediation etc.”

“I accept this has to happen but I can't see any benefit for me.”

“No benefits, the costs of cheap technology are being paid by us.”

“Get on the ground and learn about the region first... don't just draw a line on a map.”

“Just tell us before you come onto our land.”

“Landholders and agriculturalists were suddenly sitting in the room with global business which was so foreign.”

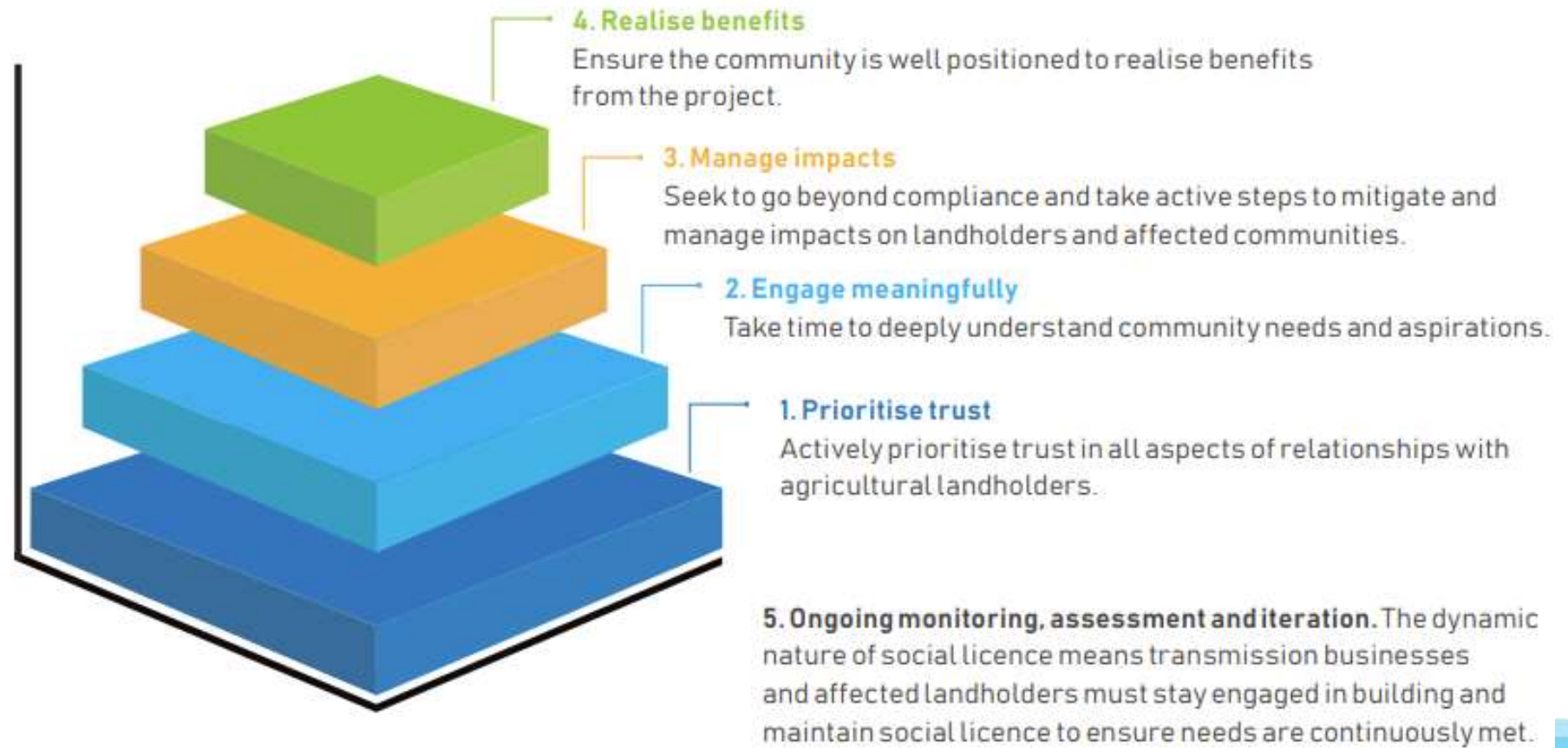
“...you think you can buy your way in to communities...”

“I feel disrespected. I just want to feel respected. This is my land and my home.”





CSIRO based trust model





Criteria for building trust

1. **Procedural fairness:** giving affected landholders and communities reasonable opportunity to engage with decision making that can, or will, impact their lives and livelihoods.
2. **Distributional fairness:** considering equity across tangible and intangible outcomes for affected landholders and communities.
3. **Stewardship:** acting as stewards of land and communities through the planning and development of transmission infrastructure.
4. **Partnership:** working with landholders and their communities in partnership to deliver positive outcomes for people and land.

To get **Fast, Fair & Vital**, we need:

1. Genuine commitments to working together
2. Alignment across the energy sector
3. Listening and engagement with community
4. Delivering benefits



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