

Essential Energy's Agency Information Guide

20 July 2026



Table of Contents

Introduction	2
About Essential Energy	4
Our Structure	5
Our Major Functions	7
Essential Energy's Decision-Making functions that affect the public	7
How Essential Energy engages with the public and its stakeholders	8
Types of Information held by Essential Energy	9
How to Access Essential Energy's Information	9
Feedback and Questions	11
Review	12



Introduction



The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) provides members of the public with a right of access to information held by Essential Energy.

Essential Energy is committed to ensuring the government information it holds can be accessed easily and at the lowest reasonable cost.

This Agency Information Guide (AIG) has been produced in accordance with section 20 of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, and exists to provide members of the public with an overview of:

- who we are
- our structure and functions
- how those functions affect the community
- the ways we engage with the community
- the types of information we hold, and
- how we make information publicly available

Where appropriate, links have been provided to documents, reports, other information and webpages throughout this AIG.

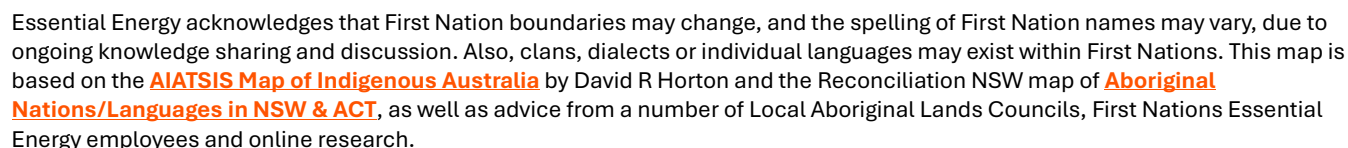
A copy of this AIG is available free of charge by either downloading it from our website at www.essentialenergy.com.au or by contacting our Right to Information Officer.

If you intend to reproduce any part of this AIG, please contact the Right to Information Officer. We ask you to acknowledge Essential Energy as the source of the information.

All enquiries relating to the GIPA Act should be directed to the Right to Information officer at gipa@essentialenergy.com.au.

We live and work on the Traditional Country for 48 First Nations, from Wiljali Country on the plains of Far Western New South Wales (NSW), to Ngarigo Country in the high Snowy Mountains and Bundjalung Country on the sub-tropical North Coast, and many more First Nations across the diverse landscape that is regional, rural and remote NSW and parts of southern Queensland.

First Nations and Our Network Area



About Essential Energy



Essential Energy builds, operates and maintains the electricity network across 9% of New South Wales and parts of southern Queensland – one of Australia’s largest electricity networks. We provide a vital service to more than 900,000 electricity customers including homes, hospitals, schools, businesses and community services across regional, rural and remote communities. Our network traverses 737,000 square kilometres of diverse landscape from the desert to the coast and alpine to sub-tropical.

Our electricity distribution network is funded through a five-yearly distribution network revenue determination made by the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) in accordance with the National Electricity Law and National Electricity Rules economic regulatory framework.

We focus on employee, contractor and community safety and well as the reliability, security and efficiency of the network. We work to keep downward pressure on our customers’ network charges while delivering a satisfactory return on capital employed.

Essential Water, part of our Assets and Operations division, services approximately 18,000 people in Far West NSW. Secure water supply is delivered to around 10,500 customers in Broken Hill, Menindee, Silverton and Sunset Strip, as well as rural customers. Reliable sewerage services are provided to approximately 9,700 customers in Broken Hill. The Essential Water network includes dams, reservoirs, pumping stations, treatment plants and pipelines.

Intium, a wholly owned commercial subsidiary of Essential Energy, incorporated in January 2023, to provide innovative energy solutions that support Australia’s transition to net zero. Intium focuses on business-to-business customers across Australia that need innovative energy solutions, including businesses pursuing energy and complex energy services.

OUR VISION, PURPOSE, VALUES AND OBJECTIVES

OUR VISION Empowering communities to share and use energy for a better tomorrow OUR PURPOSE To enable energy solutions that improve life	OUR VALUES  Make safety your own  Be easy to do business with  Make every dollar count  Be courageous, shape the future  Be inclusive, supportive and honest	OUR BUSINESS OBJECTIVES  Continuous improvements in safety culture and performance  Operate at industry best practice for efficiency, delivering best value for customers  Deliver real reductions in customers' distribution network charges  Deliver a satisfactory return on capital employed  Reduce the environmental impact of Essential Energy where it is efficient to do so
---	--	--

Our Structure

Essential Energy is governed by a Board of Directors, which is responsible for the overall governance, strategic direction and performance of the organisation. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the day-to-day management of Essential Energy and leads the Executive Leadership Team.

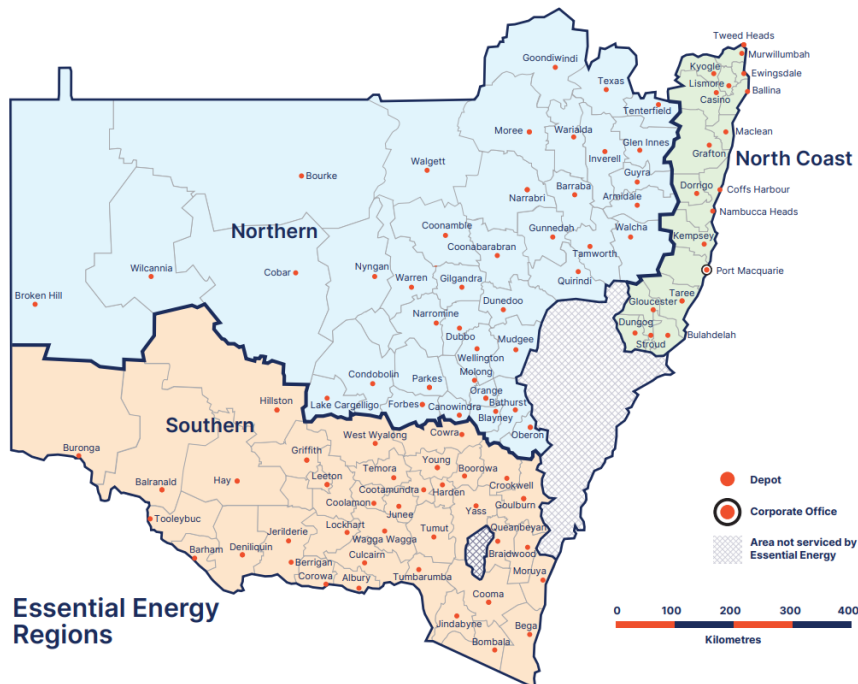
The Executive Leadership Team provides management and oversight across Essential Energy's key business areas, including operations, assets and digital, customer and corporate affairs, commercial services, legal and governance, people and safety, and finance.

Essential Energy's [website](#) provides current information about its [Board](#) and [Executive Leadership Team](#), and access to [Annual Reports](#) that outline the organisation's activities each year.



OUR REGIONAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

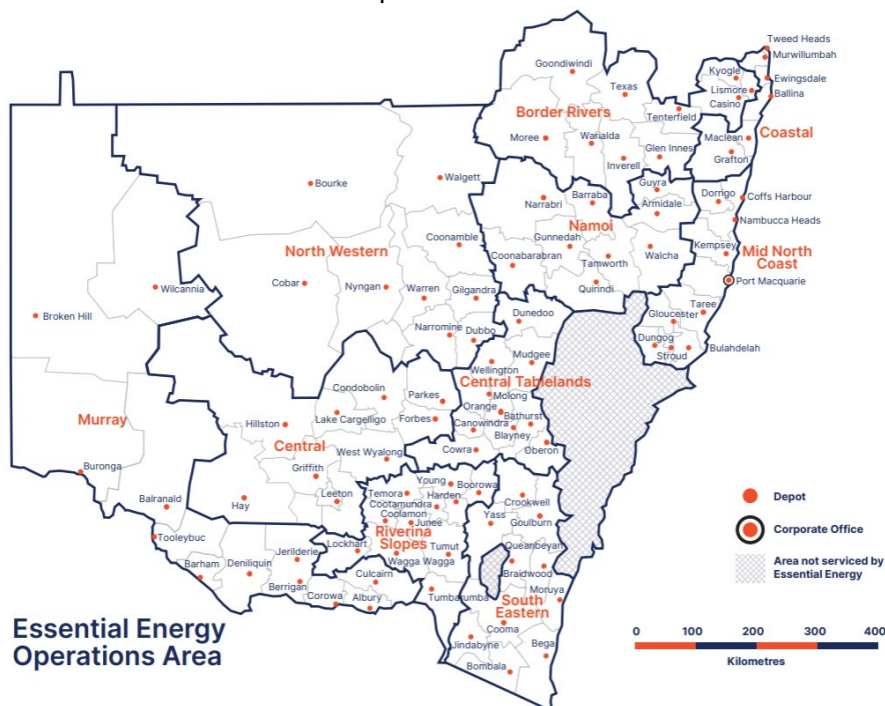
Essential Energy's field operations are divided into three regions, reflecting the environmental and geographic diversity of our network footprint.



We operate under a regional management structure, with ten Operational Area focused on responding to local needs and priorities.

Our Operational Areas are:-

Boarder Rivers, Central, Central Tablelands, Coastal, Mid North Coast, Murray, Namoi, North Western, Riverina Slopes and South Eastern.



Our Major Functions

Our core business activities include:

- The safe and reliable transmission and distribution of electricity
- The provision and maintenance of works for the distribution of electricity
- The protection of the public from dangers arising from the transmission, distribution and use of electricity
- The promotion of the safe and efficient use of electricity and electrical fittings and appliances
- The promotion of energy conservation and of measures to increase the efficiency of energy transmission and use
- Such other functions as are approved by the Minister on the recommendation of the Corporation.
- Operate a network of dams, water treatment plants, sewage treatment plants, reservoirs, water and sewage pumping stations, mains and related infrastructure

Additionally, ancillary functions outlined in the [Electricity Supply Act 1995](#). Essential Energy may:

- Conduct any business and for that purpose, use any property or the services of any staff of the distributor
- Acquire and develop land as necessary for the exercise of its functions, and dispose of land
- Acquire or build, and maintain and dispose of, any buildings, plant, machinery, equipment or vehicles
- Make and enter into contracts or arrangements for the carrying out of works or the performance of services or the supply of goods or materials
- Make charges and impose fees for services performed and goods and materials supplied to it
- Appoint agents and act as agents for other persons.

Essential Energy's Decision-Making functions that affect the public

In exercising its statutory functions, Essential Energy may affect members of the public in its many operations, including:

- The construction of electricity infrastructure, including substations, poles, conductors, transformers
- Routine repair and/or replacement of existing overhead and underground infrastructure
- Inspection of electricity infrastructure
- Unplanned repair and emergency work on the existing overhead and/or underground network
- Construct, maintain and operate water management works
- The acquisition of land and the redevelopment of buildings and land
- Trimming of trees adjacent to distribution infrastructure
- Inspection of customers' premises to ensure compliance with relevant safety standards
- Repair and replacement of streetlighting
- Essential Water services such as building plan approvals and connections and disconnections
- The issuing of invoices
- Approval and certification of customer funded projects
- Complaint handling functions



How Essential Energy engages with the public and its stakeholders

CUSTOMER CONSULTATION

A diverse cross-section of regional community representatives make up the membership of the [Customer Advocacy Group](#) responsible for providing Essential Energy with insight and advice on electricity network issues.

The [Customer Advocacy Group](#) continues to be a proactive forum for consultation, engagement and insight across Essential Energy's customer base, on any matters relating to the supply of electricity and associated services.

Membership of the Group represents residential customers, small business customers, industrial and commercial customers, rural and remote customers, primary producers, low-income households, vulnerable customers, senior citizens, people from non-english speaking backgrounds, people with disabilities and local government.

Customers are welcome to contact Customer Advocacy [Group members](#) to provide feedback for discussion at these meetings. Contacts can be found by visiting our website at <https://engage.essentialenergy.com.au/customer-advocacy-group>

ESSENTIAL ENGAGEMENT

We value feedback and input from our customers and look forward to hearing their ideas. Essential Engagement is our online platform for engaging with stakeholders. The platform supports the aim of the Essential Energy Stakeholder Engagement Framework and complements existing engagement processes. It provides a forum for customers to have their say on Essential Energy's current projects and future plans. More information about Essential Engagement can be found [here](#).

ESSENTIAL PEOPLE'S PANEL

Essential Energy is establishing the Essential People's Panel (EPP) to enable direct engagement with a representative group of Essential Energy customers. The purpose of the EPP is to provide a forum for Essential Energy to directly engage with customers on issues relevant to residential and small business customers such as pricing and affordability, reliability and resilience, customer service and communication. The inaugural EPP meeting was held in June 2023.

REGULATORY PROPOSAL ENGAGEMENT

Every five years we present a Proposal to the AER which outlines our investment plans, the costs to deliver those plans and the proposed prices that customers will pay. To develop the Proposal we consult directly with customers in a number of ways including Customer Forums, In-depth Interviews and Surveys, to ensure we capture the diversity of residential and business customers across our regional, rural and remote service area.

COMPLAINTS

The Energy & Water Ombudsman New South Wales ([EWON](#)) provides a free, fair and independent dispute resolution service for all electricity and gas customers in New South Wales, and some water customers. There is no charge to consumers for the service.



Types of Information held by Essential Energy

Essential Energy keeps records associated with its core functions as well as documents dealing with administrative tasks. A number of publications are available free of charge from Essential Energy either by calling 13 23 91 or by visiting our websites at www.essentialenergy.com.au or www.essentialwater.com.au.

Documents held by Essential Energy include the following:

Policies, Procedures, Work Instructions, Guidelines	News and Media Releases
Business papers	Specifications
Instructions to employees	Reports
Employee newsletters/memos/bulletins	Maps, plans and diagrams in relation to electricity works
Notices to external organisations	Registers
Contracts and associated documents	Numerous categories of transactional records related to service provision
Letter and emails	Agenda and meeting minutes
Photographs	Legal Documents

Essential Energy holds information mainly in a Corporate Records Management system, other line of business electronic applications, on our website or in physical files.

When files become out of date or inactive, they are stored at the premises of Essential Energy's records archiving contractor. Any costs for the retrieval of these documents from storage will be evaluated with regard to the individual complexity of each request. After a period of time when records have passed their legislated retention date and are no longer deemed useful to the business, they are disposed of according to the *State Records Act 1998 (NSW)*. Files are 'sentenced' (a minimum amount of time the information needs to be kept before it can be approved for destruction is determined) and retained, destroyed or sent to State Archives in accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998 (NSW)*.

How to Access Essential Energy's Information

Essential Energy welcomes enquiries from its customers. If the information you require is not available on our websites, www.essentialenergy.com.au or www.essentialwater.com.au you can make enquiries by phone, email or mail. We will decide whether the information you want:

- is mandatory release or proactive release information that is readily available. If it is, we will tell you where and how you can obtain the information
- should be made available as part of a 'proactive release' of information
- can be disclosed to you through informal release – for example, where no third-party information is involved
- requires a formal access application – for example, because consultation with a third party is required
- should not be made available due to an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS, PROCEDURES AND CONTACT POINTS

In many instances, customer information relating to a person's own account, or information that is already publicly available may be provided, or access given to documents by simply making a request either in person, by telephone, mail or e-mail.



Under the GIPA Act, Essential Energy is required to release information about its operations and activities unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure, or if the information falls within an exemption category of information under the *State Records Act 1998 (NSW)*. In accordance with this obligation, Essential Energy has established the following methods for releasing information about its operations:

MANDATORY PROACTIVE RELEASE

Certain information must be made available on our website, free of charge. This includes:

- A copy of this information guide
- Policy documents
- [Disclosure log](#)
- [Register of government contracts.](#)
- [Our Privacy Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Complaints and Dispute Resolution Procedure](#)
- [Constitution of Essential Energy](#)
- [Statement of Business Ethics](#)

You can also visit data.nsw.gov.au to help you find NSW Government Data.

AUTHORISED PROACTIVE RELEASE

In addition to open access information, Essential Energy will make as much other information as possible publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure. Such accessible information may include frequently requested information or information of public interest that may already be available. This includes:

- [Annual reports](#)
- [Electricity Network Maps](#)
- [Water Quality reports](#)
- [Drought Management Plan](#)
- [Regulatory reports](#)

INFORMAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Essential Energy welcomes informal requests for government information from the public. Such information could include requests for personal information by the individual concerned.

Specific information can be requested from Essential Energy unless there are good reasons to require a formal application.

ACCESS APPLICATION (FORMAL APPLICATION) FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Specific information that has not otherwise been made available may be formally requested from Essential Energy. In some circumstances, access to information will require a formal access application. Sometimes there is an overriding public interest test against disclosing certain information.

Formal applications for access to documents can be made in writing by completing our [application form](#) and forwarding to our Right to Information Officer. You will need to supply all relevant details and pay the application fee. Applications can be lodged in person, emailed or posted to our Right to Information Officer.

FEES AND CHARGES FOR FORMAL APPLICATIONS



The following fees are applicable for formal applications:

Nature of Application	Application Fee	Processing Charge
Access by individuals to records about their personal affairs	\$30*	\$30* per hour after first 20 hours
All other requests***	\$30*	\$30 per hour*
Internal review	\$40*/**	Nil
Amendment of records	Nil ***	Nil

* Subject to a 50 per cent reduction for financial hardship and public interest reasons.

** Refunds may apply as a result of successful internal reviews and successful applications for amendment of records.

*** No application fees may be charged for internal reviews in relation to amendment of records.

Essential Energy may request an advance deposit by advising of the estimated processing charge and giving at least four (4) weeks for payment to be made.

AMENDING RECORDS RELATING TO PERSONAL INFORMATION

If any personal information held by Essential Energy is incomplete, incorrect, misleading or out of date, you have the right to request that it is corrected. Applications for correction of personal information in a document should be made in writing in the form of a letter. Any information to support the request should be included in the application. Once you have received documents under the GIPA Act, there is no charge to have personal information in the documents amended.

Feedback and Questions

General Enquiries

Mail: PO Box 5730, PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444
Telephone: 13 23 91 (business days between 9:00am and 4:00pm)
Email: info@essentialenergy.com.au

Make a Complaint

Mail: PO Box 5730, PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444
Telephone: 13 23 91 (business days between 9:00am and 4:00pm)
Email: info@essentialenergy.com.au

Right to Information Officer

Mail: PO Box 5730, PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444
Telephone: 13 23 91 (business days between 9:00am and 4:00pm)
Email: gipa@essentialenergy.com.au

Information and Privacy Commissioner

Telephone: 1800 472 679
Website: www.ipc.nsw.gov.au



Review

This Guide will be reviewed at least every twelve months in the absence of any significant changes or more frequently where required taking into account legislative or organisational changes, risk factors and consistency with other policies. The next review is due in July 2027.



-  [essential-energy](#)
-  [EssentialEnergyAU](#)
-  [essential_au](#)
-  [essentialenergytv](#)

[essentialenergy.com.au](#)