



ENERGY AND INNOVATION CONFERENCE

An initiative of:

REROC

RIVERINA EASTERN REGIONAL
ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS

Wednesday 13 & Thursday 14

September 2023

*The Range Function Centre,
308 Copland St, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650*



Gold Sponsor:



Silver Sponsor:



Day One.

WEDNESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2023

- 9.00 – 9.30** Registration, Coffee, Visit Trade Stands and Networking
- 9.30 – 9.35** Welcome to Country – Aunty Kath Withers
- 9.35 – 9.45** Welcome – Cr Rick Firman OAM, Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils (REROC) Chairman
- 9.45 – 10.30** **Ashley Wearne**, Neesh. Grounded Technology - Energy for Rural Industrialisation: Decentralised Renewable Energy Projects in Africa
- 10.30 – 11.00** **Dr Rebecca Dunn**, NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change - NSW Government Hydrogen Strategy
- 11.00 – 11.10** Trade Stand Panel
- Alex Manley, SolarWise Wagga Wagga
- Peter Blackmore, Impacts Renewable Energy
- 11.10 – 11.40** Morning Tea, Visit Trade Stands and Networking
- 11.40 – 11.50** **Transgrid** - Gold Sponsor
- 11.50 – 12.20** **Mark Caddey**, NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change - Net Zero Land Program
- 12.20 – 12.50** **Dr Austin Morris**, Lockhart Shire Council - Business Case: EVs in a Rural Council
- 12.50 – 1.20** **Donald Mace**, Indigo Power Services - Creating a 100% Renewable Energy Future
- 1.20 – 1.50** **Simon Wallace-Pannell**, NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change - The Joint Organisations Net Zero Acceleration (JONZA) program
- 1.50 – 2.40** Lunch, Visit Trade Stands and Networking & **REVOLT EXHIBITION**
- 2.40 – 3.00** **Sarah McCabe**, Citizens Own Renewable Energy Network Australia (CORENA) - Reducing Carbon Emissions through Our Revolving Renewable Energy Fund
- 3.00 – 3.10** **Essential Energy** - Silver Sponsor
- 3.10 – 3.20** **Dan Wigmore**, NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change - Net Zero Transport Initiatives
- 3.20 – 3.50** **Steve Lewis**, Evenergi - Zero-Emission Fleet Transitions: A Holistic Approach
- 3.50 – 4.20** **Gordon Hind**, Better Energy Technology - Developing the Lockhart Hybrid Plant - Innovation is Never Easy!
- 4.20 – 4.50** **Paul Darmanin & Evan Darmanin**, Chargeworks - Assessing Feasibility of EV Charging Stations
- 4.50 – 5.20** **Michael Merrylees**, Kurrajong & **Jeremy Grant**, Solar Professionals - Solar Renew (PV Recycling) Wagga Wagga Trial
- 5.20 – 7.00** Cocktail Reception - Held at the Range Bar

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THE RANGE FUNCTION CENTRE, 308 COPLAND ST, WAGGA WAGGA

Day Two.

THURSDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2023

- 8.30 – 9.00** Registration, Coffee, Visit Trade Stands and Networking
- 9.00 – 9.05** Welcome
- 9.05 – 9.45** **Prof Ross Garnaut AC**, Sunshot Zero Carbon Futures and Zen Energy - The Future of Net Zero in the Regions
- 9.45 – 10.15** **Ashley Bland**, Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia - Virtual Net-Metering and Distributed Generation for Rural and Regional Communities
- 10.15 – 10.45** **Louise Bardwell**, Australian National University - Benefits and Barriers facing Community Batteries
- 10.45 – 11.15** Morning Tea, Visit Trade Stands and Networking
- 11.15 – 11.45** **Walter Moore**, Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation & **Mark Raymond**, Flow Power - Community Net Zero Action: Shoalhaven Mid-Scale Solar Farm
- 11.45 – 12.15** **Chris Dahlitz**, Engineers Australia - Australian Standards for EV Operation, Maintenance and Repair
- 12.15 – 12.45** **Alexei Watson**, Essential Energy - Facilitating Electric Vehicles on the Network
- 12.45** Wrap & Close
- 1.00 – 2.30** Light Lunch Provided

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MEET THE SPEAKERS

Ashley Wearne, Neesh

Energy for Rural Industrialisation: Decentralised Renewable Energy Projects in Africa

With a background in international economics, Ashley gravitated towards international development, working with the German Technical Cooperation agency in East Timor, Uganda and Mozambique. In 2014 he joined the small community of renewable energy mini-grid supporters seeking a viable alternative for the electrification of Africa's vast unserved areas. After accompanying technical pilots and honing the business model with small experimental entrepreneurs, Ashley and team convinced Germany and the European Union to invest ten million Euros into the establishment of a multi-site tender for renewable energy mini-grids in Uganda, managing the implementation of this project from pre-feasibility through to commissioning. Upon return to Australia, he continues to develop decentralised infrastructure projects with a focus on waste and energy.

With very little in the way of decentralised electrification in Africa pre 2010, it took several years to convince policy makers, regulators and planners to invest their limited resources into technologies other than the national grid and its large-scale generation plants. Mini-grid demonstration sites and technical pilots trialing various energy sources, storage configurations and distribution components gradually changed the thinking of technically-minded policy makers in Africa and the donor countries. While overseeing technical adjustments to enhance operation, Ashley worked with developers, investors and financiers to develop a less risky financing structure. At the same time, developers started to provide feedback on the (lack of) existing regulations and so it became possible to begin designing a regulatory framework and market structure specific to isolated mini-grids, looking at aspects such as tariffs, technical standards, performance and concession exclusivity. One of the biggest challenges for mini-grids has been the rethinking of national integrated system plans, allowing energy planning units to distinguish between grid extension and decentralised solutions. Due to the necessity of finding sites that are relatively low-risk in terms of main-grid interconnection, Ashley found himself involved in the techno-political deliberations of national energy planning, delaying the mini-grid tender by two years. When Uganda finally commissioned the first bundle of 25 mini-grids, rural electrification practitioners elsewhere took note, and Ashley began working with regulators in other countries with low electrification to create regulatory frameworks conducive for decentralised solutions.

Dr Rebecca Dunn, NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change

NSW Government Hydrogen Strategy

Rebecca is Senior Project Officer in the Hydrogen Programs team at the NSW Government Office of Energy and Climate Change. She is at the forefront of helping grow the hydrogen sector in the State, being involved with the co-ordination and administration of Government-funded hydrogen grant initiatives. She has a wealth of experience helping deliver a just renewable energy transition for all Australians. She was a founding member of the energy transition think-tank Beyond Zero Emissions and has a strong power industry background. Prior to working for the NSW Government, Rebecca worked as an Asset Manager at Neoen for NSW solar farms during their operational phase, and previously in the Asset Management team at Windlab. Rebecca grew up in Wagga, and has recently been able to move back here.

The NSW Hydrogen Strategy sets out the State's vision and pathway for developing a thriving green hydrogen industry in NSW. The Strategy includes ambitious policies that capitalise on NSW strengths and aim to:

- Provide up to \$3 billion of incentive to support industry development
- Deliver our 2030 stretch target of 110,000 tonnes of annual green hydrogen production and 700 MW of electrolyser capacity
- Drive decarbonisation in hard-to-abate sectors including energy, transport, and industrial uses (e.g. ammonia and steel production) to help us reach net zero emissions by 2050.

Mark Caddey, NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change

Net Zero Land Program

Mark's background includes education, sustainability and now climate change. His work with the Department of Education over 25 years included working in schools, and delivering and managing zoo education programs at Taronga and Western Plains Zoos. Moving into the curriculum branch he managed the Sustainable Schools NSW program, assisted in writing the sustainability components of the national curriculum and was senior policy officer, sustainability. In 2015, he moved to the Environment department and has worked in community capacity building, energy efficiency programs with Local Government and is now supporting land managers in NSW with carbon abatement as part of the NSW Net Zero program.

Mark has been active an active vollunteer with the Environmental Education professional association, being on the NSW committee and chair and national president.

The Net Zero Land program is delivering on part of the NSW Climate Change policy, focussing specifically on different land managers across NSW. Given the targets under the Net Zero program and the capacity of various sectors to effectively implement energy efficiency and abatement, there is a high level of expectation on the land management sector to provide a large proportion of this abatement. In the land sector, to date this has come from carbon sequestration in vegetation and soils.

Dr Austin Morris, Lockhart Shire Council

Business Case: EVs in a Rural Council

Austin Morris, PhD, is a registered professional engineer who currently holds the position of Director Engineering & Environmental Services at Lockhart Shire Council. With qualifications in civil and environmental engineering, Austin is passionate about developing sustainable solutions to engineering problems.

Having installed solar on their administration building, Lockhart Shire was seeking to start the transition to electric vehicles. FBT exemptions, a supportive council and an update to Council's motor vehicle policy allowed the transition to start. His presentation will cover the realities of an EV in a rural Council.

Donald Mace, Indigo Power

Creating a 100% Renewable Energy Future

Donald has 25 years of experience in Business working for multinational to small businesses, in Australia and overseas, across many industries. With a strong background in strategy development and execution, finance, and business growth. Donald has a passion for building and strengthening the communities within and around Indigo Power to make a real impact on Climate Change. As General Manager of Electricity Retail, Donald will be looking to grow Indigo Power's customer base through working with communities, business partners and leveraging the renewable projects Indigo Power is working on.

Presented by Donald Mace, this session will delve into the topic of "Creating a 100% Renewable Energy Future". At Indigo Power our purpose is to enable a society that is powered by 100% renewable energy, in a way that supports and empowers communities. We partner with communities to deliver on our purpose and have developed this simple six step blueprint as the roadmap to power a community with 100% renewable energy.

Simon Wallace-Pannell, NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change

The Joint Organisations' Net Zero Acceleration (JONZA) program

Simon Wallace-Pannell is the Program Manager for the Sustainable Councils program at the NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change. He has nearly 20 years experience of working in sustainability, across all three levels of government. His work sees him designing and delivering programs and support to business, local government and the community for the NSW government.

JONZA empowers JOs and non-metropolitan ROCs by enabling the assignment of an in-house expert to drive net-zero outcomes for member councils. This presentation explores the pioneering net-zero projects attempted by the Member Councils. These replicable initiatives not only advance environmental goals but also foster regional resilience and unity. Join us to uncover key insights for future replication, leveraging the JONZA model to amplify sustainable change beyond its borders.

Sarah McCabe, Citizens own Renewable Energy Network Australia (CORENA) - Virtual Reducing Carbon Emissions through Our Revolving Renewable Energy Fund

Sarah holds a Bachelor of Environmental Science and a Graduate Certificate in Carbon and Energy Studies. She has nearly 20 years' experience in mostly local government sustainability roles with a recent focus on climate change, solar and energy efficiency projects. CORENA is a non-profit organisation dedicated to climate action. Their powerful revolving renewable energy fund enables all Australians to help tackle the climate emergency by donating to tangible projects that reduce carbon emissions.

Citizens own Renewable Energy Network Australia or CORENA is a non-profit organisation focussed on helping community organisations deliver projects that achieve immediate reductions in carbon emissions and costs. The public donate the funds and the loan recipients receive independent advice and a zero-interest loan to fund their project. The resultant savings on energy/fuel bills cover the loan repayments into our revolving fund which are re-invested to help other community organisations. Community organisations can apply for a loan for solar panels, energy efficiency, heat pumps, electric vehicles and more. CORENA has been in operation since 2013 and has provided over \$1.17 million to finance 50 completed climate action projects. These projects have avoided approximately 4,300 MWh of grid electricity which equates to 767 average households having switched to using 100% renewable energy instead of grid electricity.

Steve Lewis, Everergi Pty Ltd

Zero-Emission Fleet Transitions: A Holistic Approach

Steve is the Managing Partner for Everergi across the Asia Pacific region, and brings over 20 years of experience across Australia, New Zealand, Asia, UK and USA in e-mobility consulting and large-scale project management. Steve has led numerous fleet transition planning projects globally, ranging from small rural and metro NSW councils through to managing the NSW government fleet transition planning project for their fleet of circa 18,000 vehicles.

Presented by Steve Lewis, this session will delve into the topic of "Zero-Emission Fleet Transitions: A Holistic Approach." The presentation aims to highlight the significance of leveraging supporting resources such as the Charge Together program and incorporating these within a comprehensive end-to-end fleet transition framework. By effectively addressing fleet reporting, fleet utilisation, fleet efficiency, technology integration, and EV charging infrastructure, Steve will demonstrate how a system-wide review can yield outcomes that are greater than the sum of their parts. This session will explore the practical benefits and strategic considerations of such an approach.

Gordon Hind, Better Energy Technology

Developing the Lockhart Hybrid Plant - Innovation is Never Easy!

Following a highly successful career in global communications, Gordon became a Professor of Sustainability at Boston University. Through course work, it became evident that a shift in the approach to electricity generation was necessary to address the urgency of climate change. Storing energy is very difficult. Gordon first worked with a leading Professor at MIT in Boston (Prof. Donald R. Sadoway) to develop a new battery chemistry (Liquid Metal Battery). Having been unsuccessful in gaining any support in Australia for co-development of the Liquid Metal Battery back in 2016, Gordon doubled down to create a demonstration town that was 100% powered by renewable energy 24/7 while still being grid connected. The town chosen was Lockhart.

The project is a 10MW solar farm directly linked (AC) to a 10MW/20MWh Battery. The scale was designed to both maximise the output of surplus power into the grid and be able to supply power the town in any weather conditions. It was a design to showcase how country towns could be equity owners and benefit from the renewable energy revolution on their doorstep. Over the six years of development time, the project has pivoted from its lofty ambitions. Lockhart was chosen given its strong community support, good electrical infrastructure and proximity to a major regional centre (Wagga). That was over six years ago. Thinking it was a relatively quick process, with full government support, it was surprising to find push back from government agencies. The project is about to get its connection agreement having secured the all important clearance from the market operator (AEMO) to proceed. The \$40 million build will finally commence construction in the December this year pending final approval from Essential Energy. Once completed it will generate 20,000 MWh of power a year which is about 4 times the town's electricity demands.

Paul Darmanin, Chargeworks

Assessing Feasibility of EV Charging Stations (Joint Presentation)

Paul is an engineering consultant specialising in solar PV, energy storage, energy audits and EV infrastructure. Paul is a qualified mechanical engineer and also has a commerce degree in business strategy and economic management. Paul's work covers all project stages including desktop and site assessments, concept designs, procurement, and implementation.

Paul has managed several large projects with ChargeWorks for the NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change and various Council organisations across the state. Paul has prepared several energy action plans and electric vehicle strategy reports for Councils. Since 2021, Paul has conducted EV charging feasibility assessments at 55 regional Councils across NSW in line with the NSW governments electric vehicle strategy. Paul has also assessed 15 large commercial and residential properties as part of the NSW EV Ready Buildings Program.

Evan Darmanin, Chargeworks

Assessing Feasibility of EV Charging Stations (Joint Presentation)

Evan Darmanin is an alternative energy consultant at ChargeWorks, deeply committed to driving sustainable energy solutions. With a focus on his work, education, and achievements, Evan brings a wealth of expertise to the forefront of the evolving energy landscape.

Evan's tenure at ChargeWorks has been marked by this work conducting various training seminars and workshops, tailored to address the unique requirements of governmental bodies and businesses. Additionally, his insightful consultations have empowered diverse organisations to embrace pragmatic alternative energy strategies, fostering economic benefit and environmental stewardship.

Evan holds a Bachelor of Mechatronics Engineering (Honors) and Bachelor of Commerce (Management/Economic Strategy) from the University of New South Wales. This dual proficiency uniquely positions Evan to bridge pioneering technology and strategic business implementation.

In June 2021 the NSW Government published its NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy detailing a commitment to accelerate the uptake of EVs in NSW. This strategy identifies a \$171 million investment over 4 years to develop a world-class charging network across the state.

Since 2021, ChargeWorks has conducted feasibility assessments for public EV charging at 55 Councils across the state including REROC, RAMJO and CNSWJO. These projects were funded by the NSW OECC Sustainable Councils team.

Michael Merrylees, Kurrajong

Solar Renew (PV Recycling)Wagga Wagga Trial (Joint Presentation)

Kurrajong Recycling is a commercial enterprise of Kurrajong – a not-for-profit organisation based in Wagga Wagga, Narrandera and West-Wyalong NSW. Kurrajong's recycling program grew from a one-off paper drive in 1962 to the establishment of our Chaston St recycling facility and being contracted by local businesses and six councils to process their recyclable materials.

Jeremy Grant, Solar Professionals

Solar Renew (PV Recycling) Wagga Wagga Trial (Joint Presentation)

Jeremy has 20 years of financial and project services experience in the energy industry - mainly with the construction services for upstream and downstream energy providers. Jeremy's work for Solar professionals has been pivotal to the development of Solar Renew. Solar Professionals was founded in Wagga Wagga in 2010, and is regarded as one of Australia's leading and most innovative solar providers.

The Solar Professionals and Kurrajong have formed a joint venture named Solar Renew which is in the business of recycling solar panels. The trial is underway here in Wagga Wagga. The project has recently received funding of almost \$1 million to support the development of a solar recycling facility which will convert solar waste into reusable and new products, reducing the growing PV solar waste stream. It is a NSW Environmental Protection Authority initiative, with the grant funded from the Circular Solar Trials program.

Solar Renew will future-proof the management of the growing waste stream in Australia which is estimated will be 100,000 tonnes of PV panels into the waste stream by 2035, including approximately 30,000 tonnes in NSW. Together they are co-developing this first-of-its-kind automated recycling facility with the objective of recovering all raw materials and components from ageing solar panels without cross contamination.

Professor Ross Garnaut AC, Sunshot Zero Carbon Futures and Zen Energy

The Future of Net Zero in the Regions

Professor Ross Garnaut AC is a distinguished economist and influential figure in the fields of climate change and energy policy. He is an Emeritus Professor in Economics at The Australian National University and an Emeritus Professor in Business and Economics at the University of Melbourne. Over the past fifty years, he has held many senior roles in business and as a policy advisor and diplomat. Ross was the senior economic policy official in Papua New Guinea's Department of Finance in the years straddling Independence in 1975, principal economic adviser to Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke from 1983 to 1985, and Australian Ambassador to China from 1985 to 1988. He was awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) in 2017 for work on climate change and energy, and an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 1993 for services to education and international relations.

As the author of the influential Garnaut Climate Change review under the Rudd Government and a vast collection of other acclaimed publications over the past 50 years, Ross has shaped global discourse on sustainable development and has cemented his reputation as a leading voice in the field. He is the author of numerous publications in scholarly journals on international economics, public finance and economic development, particularly in relation to East Asia and the Southwest Pacific. His recent books include *Superpower Transformation: Making Australia's zero-carbon future*, *Black Inc* (2022), *Superpower: Australia's low carbon opportunity*, *Black Inc*. (2019) and *RESET: Restoring Australia after the Pandemic Recession* (2021).

Ross is a Distinguished Fellow of the Australian Economic Society, Distinguished Life Member of the Australian Agricultural and Resources Economics Society, Fellow of the Australia Academy of Social Sciences and Honorary Professor of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Ross is Director at ZEN Energy and Chair of Renergi.

In this session Ross will delve into "The Future of Net Zero in the Regions" and provide invaluable insights into the challenges and opportunities of achieving net-zero emissions in regional areas. Drawing from his recent influential work on "Superpower Transformation: Making Australia's zero-carbon future" (2022), Ross will shed light on the crucial role regional communities play in the transition to a sustainable future. Don't miss this thought-provoking keynote address from a leading voice in Australia's sustainable development.

Ashley Bland, Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia (SEGRA) Foundation

Virtual Net-Metering and Distributed Generation for Rural and Regional Communities

With a farming background and formal training in Engineering, Ecology and Rural Leadership, Ashley has worked in the mining, agriculture, conservation, water, waste, and energy sectors. His holistic approach and capacity for creative thinking has led to the development and delivery of many high impact innovative projects for both government and private industry. Ashley is a Fellow of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation, a Director of the SEGRA Foundation, Associate Partner to the Green Homes International Group and Director of his own consultancy firm, Constructive Energy. He is passionate about the alignment of environmental, social and economic goals in Regional Australia and the need to maximise the local impact of emerging technologies and business models.

This session will delve into the topic of "Innovation and Transformation in the Energy Sector and impacts for Local Government." Through work and networks in the regions, Ashley has extensive knowledge of how renewable energy and associated innovation is rolling out in the regions and specifically how it is impacting local governments. For discussion:

- The emergence of virtual net metering and energy sharing
- Renewable Energy Zones
- Councils and '100% renewable energy' via mid-scale and distributed approaches
- Smart energy, metering, demand control, microgrids and storage
- Funding (T-corp) and procurement limitations
- Distributed generation for farming communities
- Decarbonisation of the regions.

Louise Bardwell, Australian National University

Benefits and Barriers facing Community Batteries

Louise Bardwell is a research assistant in the Battery Storage and Grid Integration Program (BSGIP) in the School of Engineering at the Australian National University with a background in renewable energy engineering and Pacific/Asian studies. She is interested in transdisciplinary research pursuing the rapid but fair decarbonisation of our energy systems through the use of renewable energy technologies. Louise's work at BSGIP has focused on the technical, economic, and environmental impacts of neighbourhood batteries as part of the Neighbourhood Battery Initiative for the Victorian Government DEECA. For this project, she co-created the Neighbourhood Battery Knowledge Hub and the ANU neighbourhood battery impact framework.

Neighbourhood batteries (also known as community batteries) are one of the latest energy technologies being trialled to support the clean energy transition in Australia, with the Federal Government recently allocating funding for 400 of them. Their potential benefits are often cited, ranging from their ability to provide network services, provide resilience, reduce emissions, localise energy use and allow community benefits. The implementation of community batteries, especially in terms of their economic viability, however, is still a significant barrier to their scalability. The impact community batteries may have, is also strongly dependent on factors like its business model, how the battery is operated, where it is located, and how its benefits are shared.

Walter Moore, Illawarra-Shoalhaven Joint Organisation

Community Net Zero Action: Shoalhaven Mid-Scale Solar Farm (Joint Presentation)

Walter has a wealth of experience delivering environment protection projects across the water, waste and clean energy areas including the innovative Shoalhaven Water recycling network and the Nowra Bio-Energy project. Walter has recently joined the NSW Net Zero Acceleration network as regional program coordinator for the Illawarra-Shoalhaven. He is also a member of Repower Shoalhaven, a community group that has delivered numerous solar energy projects including the NSW south coast's first solar farm.

Mark Raymond, Flow Power

Community Net Zero Action: Shoalhaven Mid-Scale Solar Farm (Joint Presentation)

Mark is an electrical engineer and project manager with a decade of experience in renewable generation across all project stages, from development to operations.

He currently leads development of new utility projects at Flow Power, an electricity retailer on a mission to reshape the industry and transform the energy market. Key projects and clients in the region include the Bomen Solar Farm (100MW), Jemalong Solar Farm (50MW), Cootamundra Solar Farm (5MW), Riverina Oils and Forestry NSW.

Prior to joining Flow Power, Mark worked as an electrical engineering design consultant, designing renewables, storage, microgrids and UPS systems.

Repower Shoalhaven is a not-for-profit community group with the aim 'to facilitate the development and implementation of renewable energy to deliver positive outcomes for local communities on the South Coast and Southeast of NSW. Given the urgency to decrease carbon emissions, RS began investigating options to develop a regional solar farm. RS also participated in an ARENA study looking at pathways to create a social access/solar garden type scheme. RS engaged with Shoalhaven City Council and Endeavour Energy to identify several promising sites and develop a solid conceptual model for a mid-scale solar farm. RS then partnered with Flow Power, a renewable energy developer/retailer to drive the project forward. Flow Power shared RS's commitment to developing community-based renewable energy projects.

Chris Dahlitz, Engineers Australia

Australian Standards for EV Operation, Maintenance and Repair

Mr Chris Dahlitz has over 44 years' experience in the Electricity Supply Industry in NSW having recently left the employment of Essential Energy, NSW where he was the Electrical Safety Manager for the past six years. Previous roles at Essential Energy (and its predecessors) included renewable energy connections, distribution planning and power quality. Chris is a current active member of the Australian Electric Vehicle Association (AEVA), the Tesla Owners Club of Australia (TOCA), and founder of the Dubbo Electric Vehicle Interest Owners Users and Supporters (DEVIOUS) and the Riverina Electric Vehicle Owners Likers Testers (REVOLT). Chris is a member of several Standards Australia committees (representing Engineers Australia) including EM001 – Electric Mobility where he was the drafting lead of the 2022 review of AS-5732 Electric Vehicle Operations – Maintenance and Repair AND is also a member of committee IT-269 Smart Cities Electro-Tech Systems.

Presented by Chris Dahlitz, this session will delve into the topic of “Innovation and Transformation in the Energy Sector and impacts for Local Government” in a very practical and frank conversation about the EV transition. Standards Australia committee EM-001 Electric Mobility last year (2022) undertook a review of AS 5732 Electric Vehicle operations - maintenance and repair. The original version was published in 2015 and the EV industry and electrical safety requirements have developed significantly since then. Chris Dahlitz is a permanent member of EM-001 representing Engineers Australia and was the lead author of the update to AS 5732. In this presentation, Chris will also present a summary of the main changes to the Standard as well as an overview of the other activities of the EM-001 Committee.

Alexei Watson, Essential Energy

Facilitating Electric Vehicles on the Network

Alexei Watson has been an electric vehicle owner since 2012, with his first electric vehicle comprising of his own conversion. He is a power engineer and has been with Essential Energy for 17 years, working across a range of areas in the business including network planning and connection innovation, Alexei is currently part of the Essential Energy leadership team enabling Electric Vehicle adoption. He is passionate about renewable energy, sustainability and electrifying transport.

Essential Energy builds, operates and maintains the electricity distribution network across 95 per cent of New South Wales and parts of southern Queensland – one of Australia's largest electricity networks.

A key pillar of Essential Energy's Corporate Strategy is to Facilitate Electric Vehicle Adoption and we are committed to playing an active role in driving the uptake of electric vehicles across in regional, rural and remote NSW.

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