



Net Zero Economy Authority
Energy Industry Jobs Plan team
Canberra, Australia

Thursday, 13 February 2025

To Energy Industry Jobs Plan team,

Re: Yallourn Power Station Energy Industry Jobs Plan consultation

The Clean Energy Council welcomes the opportunity to make a submission in response to the Net Zero Economy Authority's inquiry on the declaration of an Energy Industry Jobs Plan for Yallourn Power Station. The Clean Energy Council is the peak body for the clean energy industry in Australia. We represent and work with around 1,000 businesses operating in Australia across renewable energy, energy storage, renewable hydrogen and the emerging offshore wind industry.

With the impending closure of Yallourn Power Station in 2028, the need for tailored, well-resourced supports for exposed workers is both essential and timely. An orderly transition empowers workers and their families to plan with confidence and dignity, and recognises they possess skills that are highly sought after by adjacent and emerging industries. Workers should be at the heart of any process, enabled to engage with a broad range of opportunities for retraining, reskilling or redeployment. Among other programs and initiatives, Energy Australia should be commended for their proactive and considerable efforts in highlighting the transitional opportunities for coal workers to the emerging offshore wind industry.

The Gippsland Offshore Wind Zone represents a landmark opportunity for the Latrobe Valley to capitalise on its comparative advantages of strong coastal wind resources, relatively shallow waters, legacy transmission infrastructure, an experienced supply chain and incumbent skills in power generation. Policy support for the industry is strong, with nine active feasibility licenses awarded by the Commonwealth, and the first offshore wind auctions being scheduled for August this year. The state government has legislated targets of at least 2 GW of offshore wind by 2032, 4 GW by 2035 and 9 GW by 2040. This sequencing presents a clear pipeline of construction work for the next 15 years, with ongoing operations and maintenance roles needed throughout the 30 year-plus operating life of an offshore wind farm. This provides prospective workers with confidence in continuity of work during the lifecycle of an offshore wind project.

Achieving the state's ambitious offshore wind targets will require a rapid uplift in the offshore wind workforce. Between 2029 and 2040, the workforce required to deliver the Gippsland Offshore Wind Zone averages 1,200 FTE for both short-term construction and ongoing operations and maintenance. This number grows to over 1,600 FTE by 2040. The workforce is predominantly comprised of Technicians and Trades Workers, with diverse occupations including:

- Fabrication Supervisors – oversee the assembly and construction of wind turbine components, ensuring that quality and safety standards are met.
- Installation/Repair Technicians – responsible for installing wind turbine components, including nacelles, blades, and towers. They also undertake testing and commissioning of the turbines.

- Wind Turbine Technicians – responsible for the routine maintenance and repair of wind turbines and gearboxes. Roles can focus on electrical and mechanical maintenance. Their role is crucial for the long-term operation and efficiency of wind farms.
- Blade Repair Technicians – specialise in maintaining and repairing turbine blades, which are subject to wear and damage over time.

Project engineers, grid and transmission, and SCADA engineers are also critical to the design, installation and operations of projects. Almost 70 per cent of these roles have high or good skills overlap with existing coal workers, demonstrating high potential for workers affected by the impending closure to transition to the emerging offshore wind industry.

This finding is the result of collaborative efforts of industry, the state government, and regional training and education providers. Energy Australia, Star of the South, the Victorian Government, TAFE Gippsland and Federation University have worked together to develop transition pathway frameworks for workers with existing skills in coal power generation to roles in offshore wind. The fruits of their efforts have been a range of publications aimed at educating workers on the opportunities available in the emerging industry and assisting them to identify any upskilling they may require. These publications are the [Offshore Wind Jobs Guide](#), which includes job profiles and case studies for all occupations across the lifecycle of an offshore wind farm, including development, construction and installation, and operations and maintenance. Each occupation describes the qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge, physical requirements, and personal attributes workers require. Other publications include [Making the Move to Offshore Wind: A Guide for Workers](#), which provides pathway information tailored for workers in adjacent industries such as coal, offshore oil and gas, and maritime; and [Transition Opportunities: Coal to Offshore Wind](#), which details upskilling and transitional pathways for occupations covering around half of the workforce exposed to the closure of Yallourn.

Significant investments in local training and education capacity and capability to support the upskilling of workers have also been made. From August, TAFE Gippsland's Clean Energy Centre at the Morwell Campus in the Latrobe Valley will deliver training for up to 200 students from 2026 in onshore and offshore wind. The state government has committed \$4.9 million in funding to establish a Wind Worker Training Centre. Building on their success in Ballarat, Federation University have worked with industry partners to establish an Asia Pacific Renewable Energy Training Centre at their Churchill campus, which is focussed on skilling the wind workforce.

With unparalleled offshore wind resources, policy support, training and education capacity, rapid growth in demand for workers, and a high level of skill overlap, offshore wind presents a natural pathway for coal workers planning a transition following the closure of Yallourn. We thank the Net Zero Economy Authority for the opportunity to provide input on this consultation and welcome the opportunity to provide ongoing input as needed.

Yours sincerely,



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