

**5 October 2022**

## **Draft REZ Declaration a step in the right direction for energy certainty**

The region's peak voice for business, **Business Hunter**, has welcomed the NSW Government's draft declaration of the Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone (REZ).

Business Hunter CEO, Bob Hawes said the draft declaration was another step forward to achieving a firmed renewable energy supply in an increasingly uncertain energy marketplace.

"The release of the draft declaration brings us closer to achieving the elusive goal of renewable energy certainty at a time when the only real certainty we have is the retirement dates of major existing coal fired assets, and some of those dates are fast approaching," Mr Hawes said.

"For business and industry, what's important is access to firmed, reliable and affordable energy so they can get on with their core business. Uncertainty increases vulnerability to energy price shocks, which is putting immense pressure on businesses and the community."

"We are pleased to see that the Government has reached this next milestone in proactively planning a pathway to a new energy future in the Hunter. The Hunter region is well-placed in terms of our existing generation and distribution networks, access to the grid, skilled workforce and we're looking forward to the activity and industry growth the new energy economy will generate."

"Last week we participated in an international round table focused on growing bilateral trade and investment partnerships and it was clear there is more than just local interest in renewable energy initiatives in the Hunter."

"The challenge now is to unite the community, all levels of government, investment houses, industry and business to get on with the important job of delivering renewable energy generation if we are to meet the respective production and carbon reduction goals we are setting ourselves."

"We'll be taking a closer look at the draft declaration and the detail of the defined Hunter and Central Coast REZ. It's a broad plan and in consultation with our members and other stakeholders, we'll confirm the intentions of the order."

**Media: Bob Hawes 0418 496 745**