

21 August 2026

By your side



Mikayla Durham
Manager Employee Relations
PO Box 5730, Port Macquarie NSW 2444
E: mikayla.durham@essentialenergy.com.au

Without Prejudice & In Good Faith Consultation

Dear Ms Durham

Re: Essential Energy – Proposed Reduction of Approximately 400 Corporate and Support Roles

The United Services Union (USU) refers to Essential Energy's recent all-employee webinar and announcement that approximately **400 corporate and support roles are proposed to be removed from the structure by the end of December 2026**, as part of a broader program to reduce expenditure by approximately 15 per cent over 18 months.

The scale and timeframe of this proposed change has understandably created significant uncertainty and concern for our members. The USU expects this process to involve **genuine consultation, transparency and meaningful engagement with the Union**, particularly given the potential impact on employees across the business.

Meeting – Monday, 31 August 2026

The USU is seeking a meeting with Essential Energy People & Culture and relevant Management on **Monday, 31 August 2026, at the Port Macquarie Head Office** to discuss the proposed changes, their implications for employees and the consultation process.

The USU representatives attending the meeting will be:

- Craig Diebert – USU Organiser
- Daniel Welsh – Essential Energy Employee and USU President, Energy Branch Committee of Management
- Sandie Morthen – USU Manager, Energy and Utilities, Private Sector & Airlines, who will participate via Microsoft Teams.
- We ask the meeting be in the afternoon to allow relevant travel time & meeting preparation.

UNITED SERVICES UNION

NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT, CLERICAL,
ADMINISTRATIVE, ENERGY, AIRLINES
AND UTILITIES UNION

T 1300 136 604
E united@usu.org.au
www.usu.org.au
ABN 95 571 805 442

Sydney Head Office
Level 7, 321 Pitt St
Sydney NSW 2000
Regional Offices
Newcastle (Rutherford),
Wollongong

Satellite Offices
Bathurst, Canberra, Dubbo,
Grafton, Hay, Port Macquarie,
Tamworth, Wagga Wagga

We request that the appropriate Essential Energy People & Culture and Management representatives attend with the necessary information and authority to meaningfully discuss the matters raised by the Union

Information Requested

To enable the USU to properly prepare for the meeting, we request responses to the following:

1. How many roles does Essential Energy characterise as administration and corporate roles?
2. How many employees are currently engaged on term contracts of less than 12 months?
3. How many employees are currently engaged on term contracts of more than 12 months but less than 24 months?
4. How many contractors are currently engaged across Essential Energy?
5. Essential Energy has indicated that approximately 400 roles will be removed from the structure by the end of December 2026. Will this figure include positions that have been vacant since 1 January 2026 and have not been filled?
6. If so, how many positions have been vacated and remain unfilled since 1 January 2026?
7. Does Essential Energy acknowledge that where a position is vacated through voluntary redundancy, the requirements for a genuine redundancy must still be satisfied, including that the position is genuinely no longer required and is not simply filled by another employee, including through redeployment?
8. How does Essential Energy intend to utilise “Mix and Match” arrangements as part of the proposed organisational changes?
9. How many workplace change consultations are currently underway across Essential Energy?
10. The USU requests copies of all minutes, presentations and relevant consultation documentation associated with those current workplace change consultations.
11. In relation to the apprentice workforce, how many apprentices are currently employed by Essential Energy who are:
 - a. Fourth Year;
 - b. Third Year;
 - c. Second Year; and
 - d. First Year?

The USU also seeks clarity regarding Essential Energy's statement that current apprentices will continue through the program and into roles at their respective depots, while future apprentice intakes are expected to reduce to approximately 40 positions next year.

UNITED SERVICES UNION

**NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT, CLERICAL,
ADMINISTRATIVE, ENERGY, AIRLINES
AND UTILITIES UNION**

T 1300 136 604
E united@usu.org.au
www.usu.org.au
ABN 95 571 805 442

Sydney Head Office

Level 7, 321 Pitt St
Sydney NSW 2000

Regional Offices

Newcastle (Rutherford),
Wollongong

Satellite Offices

Bathurst, Canberra, Dubbo,
Grafton, Hay, Port Macquarie,
Tamworth, Wagga Wagga

The Union needs to understand how the proposed reduction in corporate and support positions will interact with existing vacancies, contractors, fixed-term employees, redeployment opportunities and the broader workforce structure.

Paid USU Member Meeting – Tuesday, 1 September 2026

In addition to the Management meeting, the USU is requesting a **one-hour paid hybrid Union meeting on Tuesday, 1 September 2026**, conducted on Essential Energy premises.

The meeting is to allow **all USU members and potential members** to participate either **in person or online**, with USU delegates and representatives present.

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- provide members with an update following the 31 August meeting;
- explain the information provided by Essential Energy;
- allow the opportunity to raise questions and concerns;
- provide SAFE SPACE opportunity to discuss the proposed changes collectively; and
- ensure & understand the potential implications of the proposed reduction in roles.

Importantly, this meeting is requested **without Essential Energy Management present**, so employees can freely raise questions and concerns with their Union representatives.

Given the scale of the proposed workforce reduction and the uncertainty currently being experienced by employees, the USU considers this meeting both reasonable and necessary.

Response Required

Given the timeframe announced by Essential Energy, the USU requests that the above information and confirmation of the proposed meetings be provided **by close of business Thursday, 27 August 2026**.

This timeframe is necessary to allow the USU to properly consider the information, prepare for the **31 August meeting**, and ensure our members are appropriately informed ahead of the **1 September member meeting**.

The USU expects Essential Energy to engage with the Union in good faith and ensure that consultation occurs before decisions are finalised or implemented, consistent with the consultation obligations applying to workplace change.

UNITED SERVICES UNION

**NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT, CLERICAL,
ADMINISTRATIVE, ENERGY, AIRLINES
AND UTILITIES UNION**

T 1300 136 604
E united@usu.org.au
www.usu.org.au
ABN 95 571 805 442

Sydney Head Office

Level 7, 321 Pitt St
Sydney NSW 2000

Regional Offices

Newcastle (Rutherford),
Wollongong

Satellite Offices

Bathurst, Canberra, Dubbo,
Grafton, Hay, Port Macquarie,
Tamworth, Wagga Wagga

We look forward to receiving the requested information and confirmation of the meetings by the requested deadline.

Should you have any enquiries regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact our Organiser Craig Diebert on 0409 076 633 or cdiebert@usu.org.au

Yours faithfully



Graeme Kelly OAM
GENERAL SECRETARY

Per: Sandie Morthen, Manager Energy, Utilities, Private Sector, and Airlines

UNITED SERVICES UNION

**NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT, CLERICAL,
ADMINISTRATIVE, ENERGY, AIRLINES
AND UTILITIES UNION**

T 1300 136 604
E united@usu.org.au
www.usu.org.au
ABN 95 571 805 442

Sydney Head Office

Level 7, 321 Pitt St
Sydney NSW 2000

Regional Offices

Newcastle (Rutherford),
Wollongong

Satellite Offices

Bathurst, Canberra, Dubbo,
Grafton, Hay, Port Macquarie,
Tamworth, Wagga Wagga