

By your side



27 August 2026

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CC: Mikayla Durham (Manager Employee Relations)
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Dear All,

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

The United Services Union (USU) formally advises Essential Energy that the Union is **placing Essential Energy in dispute pursuant to clause 1.14 – Dispute Resolution Procedure of the Essential Energy Enterprise Agreement 2024.**

The dispute concerns all current consultation and workplace change processes across Essential Energy, including but not limited to the following current consultations:

1. **Operations, People & Safety – HR Services Team**
Consultation: 13–20 August 2026.
2. **Operations, People & Safety – People Planning & Delivery Team**
Consultation: 13–20 August 2026.
3. **Customer & Corporate Affairs – Compliance Team**
Consultation: 20–27 August 2026.
4. **Asset & Digital – Works Management Solutions Team**
Consultation: 26 August–2 September 2026.

UNITED SERVICES UNION

NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT, CLERICAL,
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Tamworth, Wagga Wagga

For the avoidance of doubt, this dispute is **not limited to the above four consultations**. It extends to all current, proposed and future restructures, organisational changes, reductions in positions, changes to roles or duties, outsourcing, centralisation, decentralisation, technology-driven changes and any other workplace change affecting USU members.

CEO ANNOUNCEMENT – 400 FTE REDUCTION

The USU is also placing Essential Energy in dispute regarding the announcement by Chief Executive Officer John Cleland that the proposed business reset is expected to result in a net reduction of approximately 400 corporate and support FTE positions, together with a broader reduction in expenditure of approximately 15% over 18 months.

The USU is concerned that the individual consultations currently underway may form part of, or be materially affected by, this broader business reset.

The Union therefore considers these matters to be interconnected and corporate-wide in nature and should be dealt with accordingly under clause 1.14 of the Agreement.

CONSULTATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The USU expects Essential Energy to comply fully with its consultation obligations under clause 1.13 – Consultation and Workplace Change, including providing the Union and affected employees with sufficient information about proposed changes, their likely impacts and measures to avoid or mitigate adverse effects.

The expiry of an individual consultation period does not constitute agreement by the USU to the proposed change or its implementation.

The USU is particularly concerned to ensure that consultation is genuine and occurs before decisions are finalised and implemented, rather than employees and the Union being presented with predetermined outcomes.

Given the scale and interconnected nature of these matters, the USU formally invokes clause 1.14 – Dispute Resolution Procedure, including the provisions dealing with corporate-wide issues.

United Services Union REQUESTS

The USU requests that Essential Energy:

1. Acknowledge this formal dispute notification;
2. Confirm that the dispute will be dealt with as a corporate-wide issue under clause 1.14;

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3. Provide the USU with relevant information concerning the proposed 400 FTE reduction and its relationship to current restructures and consultations;
4. Identify any further current or proposed organisational changes forming part of the business reset;
5. Confirm the appropriate Executive Management and People & Culture representatives who will participate in the dispute process; and
6. Arrange an **urgent Tier 2 dispute meeting** with the USU and relevant Delegates.
Monday 31st August 2026 In Port Macquarie
7. **NOTE: The USU is STILL waiting on Conformation of a Paid 60 Minute Mass Meeting with Members Tuesday 1st September 2026 in a Hybrid Manner at Bulla Street On teams and in Person.**

The USU reserves all rights under the Enterprise Agreement, the **Fair Work Act 2009**, the National Employment Standards and any other applicable industrial instrument, including the right to seek appropriate intervention by the *Fair Work Commission* if the dispute cannot be resolved.

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

We request Essential Energy's response **by close of business Friday, 28 August 2026**.

Yours faithfully



Graeme Kelly OAM
GENERAL SECRETARY

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

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