



## NSW Government Local Jobs First Bill Consultation

### Mining and Energy Union, February 2026

The Mining and Energy Union welcomes the opportunity to provide a short submission in support of the Unions NSW submission on the NSW Government's draft Local Jobs First Bill.

The Mining and Energy Union (MEU) represents more than 25,000 members nationally in Australia's mining and energy industries, predominantly in coal mines and coal-fired power stations. In New South Wales, our Northern Mining and NSW Energy District represents members working in the coal mines of the state's Northern coalfields and in all NSW coal-fired power stations, and our South Western District represents members working in the state's Southern and Western coalfields. We also represent workers in NSW metalliferous mining through the NSW Mineworkers Alliance, a partnership with the Australian Workers Union.

MEU members and their communities will face significant upheaval as the global and domestic energy transition progresses. Members working in NSW's domestic coal-fired power stations, and the mines that supply them, face the scheduled closure of their worksites over the next approximately 15 years.

The MEU has been a consistent and longstanding advocate for coordinated government policy that supports workers and communities affected by the energy transition and ensures no one is left behind to withstand the whims of a disorderly, market-led transition. We welcomed the recent establishment of the federal government's Net Zero Economy Authority to respond to this need, and look forward to the eventual implementation of the NSW Government's proposed Future Jobs and Investment Authorities.

Quality local job creation must sit at the heart of any worker transition plan worth its salt. Comprehensive retraining and career guidance support for displaced workers is critically important but will have limited impact if there aren't suitable jobs for those workers to go to. Active industry policy and support for new projects at both state and federal levels is essential. In supporting local content and local workforces, government procurement can be one piece of the job creation puzzle for our transitioning energy regions.

The MEU supports the recommendations made by Unions NSW in their submission to this consultation. To achieve its objectives, the draft Local Jobs First Bill must be strengthened by:

- Lowering the threshold for applying a minimum 30 per cent local content weighting to apply to tenders valued at more than \$7.5 million. Under the current proposed threshold of \$25 million, the overwhelming majority of government tenders would not be subject to local content requirements.
- Tightening definitions of 'local content' to ensure that it applies to products actually manufactured locally, not just suppliers with local business operations.

- Legislating the Future Skills Guarantee that sets a benchmark of 20 per cent of the procurement workforce to be trainees or apprentices.
- Legislating standards that ensure that jobs created through procurement are safe, secure, and beneficial to communities.
- A transparent compliance regime, with key information made publicly available.

The Local Jobs First legislation has an important role to play in implementing the NSW Government's agenda to support local industry and job creation. Improvements to the draft Bill in line with the recommendations made by Unions NSW are necessary to ensure that it can deliver on its promises.