

Energy Industry Jobs Plan COI Process

Gladstone Power Station

Joint Union Submission
September 2026



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Definitions and abbreviations

Term	Meaning
Authority	The Net Zero Economy Authority established by the Act.
CEO	CEO of the Authority
COI process	A Community of Interest process for the purpose of Part 5 of the Act
COI Application	An application by the CEO pursuant to Section 56 of the Act for a COI Determination with respect to the closure of Gladstone PS
COI Determination	A Community of Interest determination for the purpose of Part 5 of the Act
EIJP	Energy Industry Jobs Plan for the purpose of Part 5 of the NZEA Act
Gladstone PS	Gladstone Power Station
Joint Venture	The joint venture on behalf of which NRG operates Gladstone PS, consisting of Rio Tinto Ltd (42.125%), NRG Energy Inc (37.5%), SLMA GPS Pty Ltd (8.50%), Ryowa II GPS Pty Ltd (7.125%) and YKK GPS (Queensland) Pty Ltd (4.75%).
NRG	NRG Gladstone Operating Services
NRG Agreement	<i>NRG Gladstone Operating Services Pty Ltd (NRGGOS) Enterprise Agreement 2025-2029</i>
The Act	<i>Net Zero Economy Authority Act 2024 (Cth)</i>
Unit 1	The generation unit at Gladstone PS first commissioned in 1976
Unit 2	The generation unit at Gladstone PS first commissioned in 1977
Unit 3	The generation unit at Gladstone PS first commissioned in 1978
Unit 4	The generation unit at Gladstone PS first commissioned in 1979
Unit 5	The generation unit at Gladstone PS first commissioned in 1981
Unit 6	The generation unit at Gladstone PS first commissioned in 1982

Introduction

Gladstone Power Station is located on country of the Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, and Taribelang peoples, collectively known as the Port Curtis Coral Coast (PCCC) peoples.

The Gladstone PS was an early model for the application of public funds to support the concentration of new and expanded industry through the development of cheap and reliable power, supported by long-term power purchase agreements. For fifty years, workers at Gladstone PS have supported and maintained an asset that has made it possible for the Gladstone region to be a heavy industrial hub and centre of mineral smelting and refining, chemical manufacturing, cement production and LNG production; not merely for the primary processing and export of the mineral wealth of Central Queensland.

The power station was built with state and Commonwealth funding, to be publicly owned and operated, for the express purpose of using local coal reserves to supply heavy industry in the region with cheap and reliable power. The first four generating units of the power station was commissioned by the Southern Electricity Authority of Queensland in 1976. Under the Queensland Electrical Generating Board the power station was expanded by the commissioning of new units in 1977, 1978, and 1979. At the time, the power station supported the expanding demand of heavy industry including the Queensland Alumina Limited refinery at Parsons Point in Gladstone. With additional funding from the Queensland government, the power station was ultimately expanded by the addition of new units in 1981 and 1982, for a total of six generators with a combined name-plate capacity of 1680 MW. Additional capital works were completed under public ownership in 1994 to extend the operational life of the generators in anticipation of the privatisation of the power station.

Gladstone PS has come to play a pivotal role in providing guarantee of power supply to operations at the nearby Boyne Island aluminium smelter. Since 1994, Gladstone PS has been operated by **NRG** Gladstone Operating Services on behalf of **Joint Venture** participants, initially Comalco Ltd, NRG Energy Inc, SLMA GPS Pty Ltd, Ryowa II GPS Pty Ltd and YKK GPS (Queensland) Pty Ltd. Sale of the power station to the Joint Venture supported commitments from Comalco Ltd and others to expand operations at the Boyne Island Smelter with the addition of a third aluminium pot line. Comalco Ltd's interests in the Joint Venture subsequently transferred to Rio Tinto Ltd (**Rio Tinto**) in its takeover of Comalco Ltd. It remains the case that Gladstone's largest customer is the Boyne Island aluminium smelter, of which Rio Tinto is the majority owner in joint venture with others. Rio Tinto has contracted over 2.8GW of renewable energy and more than 600MW of storage capacity from local projects for the smelter's operations beyond the closure of Gladstone Power Station in 2029¹.

¹ Rio Tinto, *Queensland and Commonwealth secure long-term future for Boyne aluminium smelter at Gladstone*, 25 March 2026, Accessed Online: <https://www.riotinto.com/en/news/releases/2026/rio-tinto-queensland-and-commonwealth-secure-long-term-future-for-boyne-aluminium-smelter-at-gladstone>

Closure of Gladstone Power Station

Since late 2024, the Queensland government has walked back state guarantees of transition supports, with significant and detrimental effect for transition employees impacted by the closure of Gladstone Power Station. As part of the Queensland Energy Jobs Plan, announced by the previous government in 2022, workers at Gladstone Power Station expected to be supported in their transition by a Job Security Guarantee, backed by a tripartite Energy Workers' Charter. The Job Security Guarantee was to provide \$150m in funding for workers in coal-fired power stations and supplying coal mines to access alternative career paths, retraining, new job opportunities within publicly owned energy businesses, or financial assistance. This was to be accompanied by an investment of \$90m in new regional transmission training hubs, one of which was to be delivered by Powerlink in the Gladstone Region. Those transition supports are no longer available, and now can only be provided through an EIJP funded and facilitated by NRG and the dependent employers.

In November 2024, Minister Janetzki announced new policy of the Queensland government, to support the continued operation of state-owned power plants through an Electricity Maintenance Guarantee of \$1.4bn over five years.² That funding is only available to the publicly owned generators, Stanwell, CS Energy, and CleanCo. The Electricity Maintenance Guarantee does not support maintenance operations or capital expenditure at Gladstone Power Station. It has no impact on the closure date notified to AEMO for 31 March 2029.

Announcement of the Electricity Maintenance Guarantee has caused significant difficulty for the workforce at Gladstone PS as they attempt to plan for their future. Some employees hold a view, notwithstanding the limits of the policy, that the Queensland government may intervene to delay or defer the impending closure of the power station.

Through the skilled work of maintenance and operating teams, the operating life of critical generation assets at the Gladstone Power Station has been extended repeatedly. Despite those efforts, the rate of unplanned outages has increased markedly at Gladstone Power Station, as critical assets approach the end of their operating life. Reliability Watch reports that over the twelve months to November 2025 Gladstone's average unavailable capacity has been 37%, equivalent to 135 days offline over the year.³ It should not be assumed that closure of the Gladstone PS can be extended, nor that the Joint Venture would go to the expense of replacing or overhauling the generation assets as necessary to extend their operating life beyond March 2029.

Workers at Gladstone PS would benefit from clarity of their entitlement to transition supports, from career and financial planning based on a certain closure date, and from an urgent start to training for their future employment, for all of which they need an EIJP.

² State of Queensland (Queensland Treasury), *Media Statement: A fresh start for Queensland: Electricity Maintenance Guarantee to power Queensland's future*, 28 November 2024, Accessed online: <https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/101647>

³ <https://www.reliabilitywatch.org.au/availability>

Impacts of the closure

Gladstone power station direct workforce

Characteristics of the permanent NRG workforce

NRG employs approximately 200 workers directly and permanently at the Gladstone Power Station. Of those, just over 140 are employed in classifications covered by the *NRG Gladstone Operating Services Pty Ltd (NRGGOS) Enterprise Agreement 2025-2029*. The approximate breakdown of the enterprise agreement-covered employees is as follows:

- Approximately fifty five (55) employees are engaged in mechanical maintenance roles as fitters and turners, boilermakers, riggers and doggers, including about:
 - 8 apprentice fitter and turners
 - 2 apprentice boilermakers
 - 32 fitter and turners
 - 3 boilermakers
 - 10 rigger and doggers
- Approximately thirty (30) employees are engaged in electrical maintenance, including about:
 - 20 electrical tradespersons
 - 10 apprentice electricians
- Approximately twenty (20) licenced boiler operators or power station operators who hold electrical qualifications, having previously worked in the maintenance stream.
- Approximately fifteen (15) further tradespersons in the production stream, including licenced boiler operators.
- Approximately fifteen (15) coal plant operators, responsible for unloading and movement of coal for the power plant.
- Approximately ten (10) cleaners.

The remaining 60 workers are employed as staff on individual contracts, in human resources, procurement, accounting, engineering, managing, and supervising roles.

NRG work is very specialised

Operating a coal-fired power station is highly specialised work. There are a number of interconnected systems and skills including:

- heavy machinery systems—turbines, conveyer belts, rotating equipment and so on,
- high pressure systems—which have to be monitored and maintained within very fine parameters,
- high heat systems and environments, and
- electrical and high voltage equipment and systems which require regular maintenance.

Specialist skills are critical in the industry because there are considerable safety risks associated with moving parts, pressure, heat, and electricity.

Only a portion of the skills and training are typically transferrable to other work environments (including, often, to other power stations) because of the unique skill sets and training required.

For all these reasons, fundamental retraining is often required to give workers a reasonable opportunity to find other employment.

NRG employees require training to find other employment

Most of the trade qualified workers employed by NRG at Gladstone Power Station completed their apprenticeship at the power station. Almost all the boiler and power station operators completed their traineeship at the Gladstone Power Station. Even tradespersons who hold relatively transferrable skills are specialised by their experience working on the plant, equipment, service or installation of the power station. All of the transition employees would benefit from a current skills assessment and further training to facilitate their transition into new work, whether that be:

- Safety tickets and other short high-risk work qualifications necessary to maintain currency of training;
- Vendor training in the maintenance or operation of specific plant and equipment of receiving employers;
- CERT IV qualifications and diplomas to support a transition into different parts of industry or specialised work within an existing qualification;
- CERT III qualifications, advanced diplomas, and university degrees to transition into a new trade or profession.

The need for training to secure suitable future work is particularly acute for employees in operating roles, boilermakers, and fitters and turners specialised in the maintenance of the plant and equipment of the power station.

Gladstone power station has a relatively young workforce, compared with other closing power stations in NZEA regions. A significant number of employees are engaged as apprentices or as trainee operators. Most will complete their apprenticeship or traineeship before the closure, but their capacity to engage in further training in preparation for the transition will be limited by their current training commitments in the meantime.

Deficiency of transition supports at NRG

NRG does not currently have transition supports in place to meet the obligations of Section 59 of the Act and has not undertaken a comparable process to that which would be required under section 58 of the Act to inform workers of its obligations under section 59 of the Act. For example, in the MEU survey of its members⁴ every respondent indicated that it had not used any support offered—presumably because no supports have been offered. Unions understand that NRG has convened a working party to discuss training and other transition supports but has not yet developed a program. There is significant anxiety among

⁴ The MEU survey of its members was conducted between 14 and 17 August, 2026. The MEU has 24 members at NRG of whom 13 responded to the survey (54%).

employees at NRG that suitable transition supports are waiting on the conclusion of this COI Process and a COI Determination, without which supports will not be sufficient or timely.

Feels like all parties are waiting for someone else to make the call / start the process. Other local industries are currently laying off workers – if another 200-plus go at NRG, there will be a huge excess of skilled workers and few career opportunities locally.

– NRG Employee, Electrician.

The *NRG Gladstone Operating Services Pty Ltd (NRGGOS) Enterprise Agreement 2025-2029 (NRG Agreement)* applies to transition employees of NRG across technical services, plant services, coal operations, power station operations, and administrative services. The NRG Agreement contains no provisions for training equivalent to Subsections 59(6) and 59(7) of the Act. The Act provides for transition employees to be provided paid time off for training, and financial contribution toward training, of any kind that would assist an employee to find other employment. Training available under the NRG Agreement is limited to a training and development plan under Clause 4.9, pursuant to which:

- The employer may withhold its agreement to a proposed training plan, at its absolute discretion.⁵
- Paid vocational leave is only available for training required as part of the employee's competency profile (that is, their current qualification and role with NRG) or as part of an agreed training plan.⁶

In practice, training plans approved under Clause 4.9 are not for the purpose of facilitating employees to find other employment, but for the development of skills deemed necessary for the employee's role at NRG or for progression to a higher classification in NRG's operations. Training plans developed and approved under Clause 4.9 do not therefore meet the objectives of the Act or of s.59(6), that training be directed to assisting the employee to find other employment.

No real support has been offered yet. There is some training and up-skilling that could be done. I believe the support will be coming in the future, but nothing as yet.

– NRG Employee, Trainee Operator

One meeting to discuss what is happening.

– NRG Employee, Shift Coordinator

⁵ Per clause 4.9.1 of the NRG Agreement.

⁶ Per clause 4.9.2 of the NRG Agreement.

The NRG Agreement makes no provision for the funding of training during the employment relationship. To the extent that training provided under Clause 4.9 of the NRG Agreement is at the direction of or primarily for the benefit of NRG, NRG may be required to pay for or reimburse the cost of the training.⁷ The NRG Agreement otherwise imposes no obligation on NRG to pay for all or part of training undertaken as part of a training and development plan.

The NRG Agreement makes no provision for transition employees to receive financial or career advice, or to have paid leave to facilitate such advice.

Pursuant to Clause 4.11 of the Agreement, some employees may later be eligible for an additional payment up to \$10,000 for costs of training, financial advice, counselling or relocation following their redundancy.⁸ Such payments are only available to employees who are made redundant after more than 1 year's continuous service with NRG. Those additional retrenchment payments are only payable after termination and only for training invoiced in the six months *after* termination. In contrast, the actions prescribed by Section 59 are available to transition employees immediately following a COI Determination, months or years before the closure, while the employment continues and are not capped except to the extent the provision of supports would be unreasonable having regard to a range of considerations.

Reimbursement for training undertaken after the redundancy of a transition employee is no substitute for training as part of an EIJP. After redundancy, NRG employees will have no entitlement to paid leave to support their time spent in training and will quickly come under significant financial pressure to find and commence new work with a full-time load as soon as practicable. The scheme under Part 5 of the NZEA Act makes clear that the object of the Act is to deliver transition supports during employment with the closing or dependent employer, not to defer supports to after closure.

The NRG Agreement makes no provision for NRG to engage with receiving employers, or for transition employees to have paid time off work to attend most recruitment activities. Clause 4.11.11 provides limited entitlements to leave for the purpose of attending interviews with prospective employers, but only during the notice period that applies for termination of employment under Clause 4.10 – ranging from 4 weeks to as little as 1 week prior to termination. In the event that NRG elects to give immediate effect to the termination and pay the employee in lieu of notice, the entitlement to leave to attend interviews is entirely defeated. The NRG Agreement makes no provision for other forms of recruitment activities or engagement with receiving employers that may be required under an EIJP pursuant to Section 59 (8) or (9) of the Act, including:

- On-boarding activities, such as site inductions, WHS training, or vendor training.
- Verification of skills, such as copies of training certificates or evidence of required prior learning.
- Facilitation of termination dates that coincide with the acceptable commencement dates for the receiving employer.

⁷ Pursuant to *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth), s.325, provided that it is unreasonable in the circumstances to require that the employee to pay for the training.

⁸ Per clause 4.11.10 (g).

- Other authorisations, such as for the transfer of apprenticeship training contracts between employers.

These significant deficiencies in the transition support provided for under the NRG Agreement should weigh heavily in favour of making a COI Application and specifying NRG in any such application.

Characteristics of the NRG seasonal and casual workforce

NRG supplements its permanent workforce substantially over about 8 weeks per annum during major planned maintenance outages. During a planned maintenance outage, a generating unit is taken out of service, providing an opportunity to perform testing and maintenance of plant and equipment not accessible during the normal operation of the plant.

Over any shutdown period, NRG engages an additional 30-40 mechanical tradespersons comprising fitter and turners and boilermakers, and an additional 10-12 electricians on a casual or fixed-term basis. Most of the electrical workers have a practice of travelling throughout the State or across the Country to work on multiple outages at different power stations throughout the year. Some of the mechanical trades are engaged in a similar itinerant pattern of work, however a larger portion of the mechanical trades are locally based in the Gladstone Region and work primarily in outage maintenance during shutdowns of power stations within the region. In the Gladstone Region and across the country, power stations coordinate planned outages to ensure availability of this itinerant workforce. The same workforce is often engaged by NRG to perform their work during the unplanned outage of a generation unit, especially when the nature of the relevant failure means that the outage is likely to be prolonged. For both cohorts of itinerant employees, work during planned maintenance outages at Gladstone PS account for a substantial portion of their annual income.

Closure of the Gladstone PS will make continued work in the industry untenable for a portion of those seasonal outage maintenance workers. Inclusion of those employees in an EIJP at NRG will be necessary to mitigate the adverse impacts of the closure on the economy and community of the Gladstone Region.

Gladstone power station supplying coal mine

Glencore Australia – Rolleston

Thungela Resources Limited – Ensham

Batchfire Callide Pty Limited – Callide

Gladstone PS is supplied a 70/30 blend of coal at its coal plant (70% Rolleston Coal Mine (Rolleston) and 30% Ensham Coal Mine (Ensham)). The power station is also occasionally supplied coal from Batchfire Callide (Callide), but only if the power station exceeds its forecast burn rate for the year.

The closure of Gladstone Power Station in March 2029 will remove a significant customer for domestic thermal coal produced by the Rolleston Coal Mine (Rolleston). Rolleston is approved to produce up to 2 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) for domestic use, separate to its export allocation. Accordingly, analysis will need to be undertaken as to whether the closure of the Gladstone PS will amount to a substantial cessation of the business operation of each of the supplying mines as a consequence of the eventual closure of the Gladstone PS.

Gladstone power station contractors and supply chain

Unions have heard from members employed at a number of dependent employers who are at risk of redundancy due to the closure of the Gladstone PS and will require the support of an EIJP to find new work. Those employers are:

1. I&C Instrumentation & Electrical Pty Ltd
2. Isenring Motors
3. Cement Australia Pty Ltd
4. ACE Specialised Services Pty Ltd
5. Aestec Services Pty Ltd
6. Civmec Limited
7. Downer EDI Ltd
8. EnerMech Pty Ltd
9. Fenner Dunlop Australia Pty Ltd
10. High Risk Solutions Pty Ltd
11. KNL Engineering and Mechanical Pty Ltd
12. Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd
13. Lee Crane Hire Pty Ltd
14. Rayment Backhoe Hire Pty Ltd
15. REMA Tip Top Industrie Pty Ltd
16. Score Group Pty Ltd
17. Siemens Ltd
18. SRG Global Limited
19. Tasman Rope Access Pty Ltd
20. Universal Cranes Pty Ltd
21. Walz Group Pty Ltd
22. Xtreme Engineering Pty Ltd
23. Jenmick Gear Cutting and Engineering Pty Ltd
24. Projem Pty Ltd
25. Upton Engineering Pty Ltd
26. Aurizon

For the purpose of determining whether an employer is a dependent employer, the CEO must be satisfied that, because of the closure, the employer will or will be likely to cease *either*:

1. A substantial part of its business operations at the power station; *or*
2. A substantial part of its business operations in the same geographic areas as the power station.

The test is not, as some employers have argued in earlier COI Processes, whether the employer's operations at the power station are substantial when compared with its broader operations nationally or in the region. Each of the employers listed above is a constitutional corporation, has a commercial relationship with NRG, and will likely cease a substantial part of their operations at the power station due to the closure. The CEO may be satisfied that they are each dependent employers.

The CEO has broader discretion to determine whether it is reasonable to name each dependent employer in a COI Application, having regard to the matters at Section 56(4) of the Act. The weight to be given to each mandatory consideration should be determined in the circumstances by the significance for the objects of the Act – including, to ensure that Australia's regions, communities and workers are supported to manage the impacts of the transition. The mandatory considerations include the number of transition employees of each employer, but do not expressly include the number of transition employees as a proportion of the total employees of the employer or the total employees of the employer in the region. The scope of the employer's other operations, whether measured by revenue or by volume of work, is not a mandatory consideration except to the extent it points to a capacity to redeploy the transition employees. In the Unions' respectful submission, the relative size of a dependent employer's other operations in the region should generally have weight only to the extent that it supports a finding that the employer can guarantee redeployment of all transition employees.

I&C Instrumentation & Electrical Pty Ltd

I&C Instrumentation & Electrical Pty Ltd, of 16 Enterprise St, Boyne Island in Queensland, is contracted by NRG to provide electrical services for capital and maintenance projects, including installations, project work and upgrades at the Gladstone PS. I&C operates out of offices at Boyne Island, within the Gladstone Region. I&C employs electrician tradespersons, a group of which are consistently engaged in work at the power station. Depending on the scope of project work and upgrades on site, the number of I&C employees engaged in work at Gladstone PS ranges from 10 to 20 tradespersons.

It is highly likely that I&C will lose a substantial portion of its scope of work at NRG before the closure, as NRG suspends all capital works that are not necessary for operations to closure and brings as much as possible of that work in-house. That loss of work is directly caused by the closure, a consequence of NRG no longer being required to support or extend the operating life of the generator units and other critical components of the power station beyond 2029.

I&C's work for the Gladstone PS represents a significant portion of its work in the Gladstone Region, assessed by the hours of work. All of I&C's work at Gladstone PS will cease due to the closure. Notwithstanding that I&C has scope of work with other industrial sites in and around Gladstone, Unions assess that 10 or more employees of I&C are at risk of redundancy due to the closure.

I&C does not offer any program of transition supports to its employees.

I&C is covered by the **I&C Instrumentation & Electrical Pty Ltd Enterprise Agreement 2020-2023 (I&C Agreement)**. The Agreement provides no specific and enforceable entitlement to training. Clause 8.3 contains statements of principle, however training under that clause is

provided at the Company's discretion, targeted at employees who need training due to promotion or changing job roles. Training costs and time spent in training are paid by the employer only if the training is required by the employer. Time spent in training outside working hours is not paid. Those conditions do not deliver an enforceable program of training for work in a new industry or part of industry with a future employer, and fall short of an EIJP.

Isenring Motors

Isenring Motors, of 14 Blain Drive, Gladstone in Queensland, is regularly contracted by NRG to service, maintain and repair motors taken from plant and equipment of the Gladstone PS. The work is primarily performed at Isenring Motors' workshop, offsite of the power station. Isenring Motors services approximately 100 motors per annum from the power station. Work for NRG accounts at least one full-time-equivalent role in Isenring Motors' operations in the Gladstone Region.

Isenring Motors has no transition support in place for workers impacted by the closure. On information available, it is not apparent that Isenring Motors can absorb the loss of work for Gladstone PS without one or more redundancies.

I suspect with NRG's closure and Rio Tinto potentially laying off 180 people this year there will be an influx of workers and not enough work for everyone. Most people will need to look elsewhere, potentially take on lower paid work, do FIFO work or even relocate for work. – NRG Employee, Electrician.

Cement Australia Pty Ltd

Cement Australia Pty Ltd of Landing Road, Yarwun, is part of the Cement Australia group, that produces a range of cement products for both industrial and domestic use. There are approximately 150 – 300 people employed at the Gladstone site.

Fly ash is a byproduct of coal combustion at the Gladstone PS. Cement Australia takes the fly ash and processes it to form a lower carbon content component in concrete.

The closure of Gladstone PS will reduce the fly ash available to Cement Australia, which may have an impact on the volume of fly ash related products being produced.

Maintenance Personnel and Equipment Contractors

The following employers provide maintenance services to the Gladstone PS. While some of these contractors are based on-site and provide regular contracted maintenance or deal with specific unscheduled maintenance (such as in relation to conveyor belts), many of them are used extensively during the planned maintenance shutdowns. While some companies provide labour, others may provide equipment that might be required at this time – such as scaffolding and rigging services.

Ultimately the closure of the power station will affect each company's business, as the regular planned outages will not be required after the power station's closure. In addition, for those companies that might also provide ongoing and/or general maintenance outside of

shutdowns, they may face earlier reductions in the need for their services as work may be scaled back as the power stations approaches its closure date.

ACE Specialised Services Pty Ltd

ACE Specialised Services Pty Ltd (**ACE**) of 18 Hills Avenue, Biloela, is a company that provides specialist mechanical and engineering tradespeople and workers to companies that perform mechanical and boiler shut down maintenance. It is based in Central Queensland and its workforce fluctuates between 20 – 100, depending on demand for its services.

Aestec Services Pty Ltd

Aestec Services Pty Ltd (**Aestec**) of 28 Gladstone Bernaraby Road, Gladstone, is a civil construction and maintenance company that employs approximately 300 people. Aestec holds the contract for civil, building, plumbing and lagging sheetmetal works at NPG. There is a team based at Gladstone PS, which delivers both general and project maintenance, including outages.

Civmec Ltd

Civmec Ltd of 2 George Mamalis Place, Callemondah, is a multidisciplinary constructions and engineering services provider to, among others, the energy and resources sectors. Its facility in Gladstone employs approximately 50 – 150 people, although Civmec has plans to expand its site in the future.

Downer EDI Pty Ltd

Downer EDI Pty Ltd (**Downer**) of 7 Rooksby St Gladstone, provides shut down, turnaround and outage maintenance services to the Gladstone PS, as well as other industrial facilities in Gladstone. It employs approximately 100 – 200 people based in Gladstone.

Employees are covered under the *Downer EDI Engineering Pty Ltd Queensland Maintenance Services and Minor Capital Enterprise Agreement 2025*. There are no specific support for employees affected by transition, outside of the standard supports provided to workers whose positions have been made redundant – provisions to redeploy and time off to look for alternate work.

EnerMech Pty Ltd

EnerMech Pty Ltd of 5 George Mamalis Place, Gladstone, provides shut down and general maintenance services to Gladstone PS. It employs up to 150 workers in Gladstone.

The *Enermech Pty Ltd Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2024* covers these employees. There are no transition supports contained in this Agreement, other than any entitlements contained in the *Manufacturing and Associated Industries and Occupations Award 2020*.

Fenner Dunlop Pty Ltd

Fenner Dunlop Pty Ltd of 7 Bensted Road Gladstone, provides specialist maintenance of conveyor belts used by the Gladstone Power Station. It employs approximately 20 – 50 employees in Gladstone.

The *Fenner Conveyors (Gladstone) Enterprise Agreement 2024* covers these employees. There are no transition supports contained in the Agreement, other than the ability to access job search leave after notice of termination has been given.

High Risk Solutions Pty Ltd

High Risk Solutions Pty Ltd of 46 Hanson Road Gladstone provides shut down support services – both in terms of equipment and personnel – to Gladstone PS. In particular it provides scaffolding as well as rigging services. Up to 50 workers are employed by the company.

KNL Engineering Pty Ltd

KNL Engineering Pty Ltd of 10 Blain Dr, Callemondah provide metal fabrication, welding and repair services for industrial equipment. It is a local company employing up to about 100 people.

Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd

Komatsu Australia Pty Ltd of 20 Blain Drive West Gladstone, is a provider of both equipment and maintenance services to the Gladstone PS. Approximately 50 workers are employed locally.

Employees are covered by the *Komatsu Australia Gladstone Enterprise Agreement 2024*. The Agreement covers a range of access to training, particularly for skills that are relevant to Komatsu's employment but also employee personal development. There is, however, a pro rata cost recovery if workers leave the company within 24 months of the training.

Rayment Backhoe Hire Pty Ltd

Rayment Backhoe Hire Pty Ltd t/a Rayment Excavations of 100 Callemondah Dr, Gladstone provides earthworking services and earthworking equipment hire. Up to 50 people are employed locally at the company.

Rema Tip Top Industrie Pty Ltd

Rema Tip Top Industrie Pty Ltd of 18 Helen Street Gladstone provides specialist belt and conveyor maintenance services. It employs approximately 30 people locally.

Score Australasia Pty Ltd

Score Australasia Pty Ltd, t/a the Score Group of 3 Boowan Ct Gladstone provide valve maintenance services to the Gladstone PS. It employs about 20 – 50 people locally.

Siemens Ltd

Siemens Ltd provides industrial services, particularly shut down maintenance to the Gladstone PS. It employs approximately 20 people locally.

SRG Global Ltd

SRG Global, including SRG Asset Care, of provide a range of asset integrity and reliability services at the Gladstone PS. There are between 150 – 200 workers employed in Gladstone.

At least some of the employees are covered by the *SRG Global Asset Care Qld & NT Agreement 2024*. There are no transition support measures contained in this Agreement.

Tasman Rope Access Pty Ltd

Tasman Rope Access Pty Ltd of 56b Gladstone-Benaraby Road, Tooloolo provides technicians for maintenance being performed at height and in confined spaces. There are approximately 60 workers employed locally.

Employees are covered by the *Tasman Rope Access Pty Ltd Gladstone Regional Area Enterprise Agreement 2025*. There are no specific transition support arrangements contained in the Agreement, however there are provisions where employees can request training and may be supported with leave to attend such training.

Universal Cranes Pty Ltd

Universal Cranes Pty Ltd of 7 Red Rover Rd, Callemondah supplies cranes and rigging equipment to the Gladstone PS during periods of shut down and project maintenance.

Walz Group Pty Ltd

The Walz Group of 17 Garfield Street Gladstone provides contract maintenance for the Gladstone PS. There are approximately 200 workers employed in Gladstone with 10 – 15 specifically dealing with the Gladstone PS.

Employees are covered by the *Walz Group Enterprise Agreement 2026*. Although there are no specific transition supports contained in the Agreement, the employer may agree to pay for training initiated by the employee, subject to the employer's discretion.

Xtreme Engineering Pty Ltd

Xtreme Engineering of 21 Bensted Rd, Callemondah is a local engineering contractor. Seven employees, including one apprentice, provide maintenance services to the Gladstone PS.

Employees are covered by the *Xtreme Engineering Pty Ltd Enterprise Agreement 2024*. There are no specific transition supports contained in the Agreement.

Suppliers of general parts for machine maintenance

Jenmick Gear Cutting and Engineering Pty Ltd of 8 Bassett Street Gladstone, Projem Pty Ltd of 5 Anson Close, Gladstone and Upton Engineering Pty Ltd of 1 George Mamalis Place, Callemondah are local Gladstone businesses who provide parts and equipment to Gladstone PS. As a significant customer, the closure of Gladstone PS will have an impact on their business.

Timing of impacts

The impacts of the closure of Gladstone PS will be felt by transition employees in three overlapping periods:

1. The wind-down of supply operations.
2. The wind-down of onsite maintenance operations.
3. The cessation, or partial cessation, of power generation.

Unions observe that closing power stations routinely amend their maintenance schedules and scope of works, shortening scope of service and supply contracts, in-housing work where possible, and performing major works by risk assessment rather than a regular schedule. As plant and equipment is only required to pass life assessment over the short period to closure, it is increasingly acceptable to run plant to failure, targeting failure just beyond closure, with less routine replacement of components.

At present, Gladstone PS is engaged in a review of its need for further major planned maintenance outages in the lead-up to closure in 2029. While outages have traditionally occurred annually, NRG has indicated to workers in maintenance teams that it will be taking a risk-based approach to outage maintenance. This will involve a review of the equipment and plant ordinarily overhauled or replaced in a major outage, and a risk assessment whether it is necessary to perform that work, or if it can be deferred pending closure of the power station. Risk assessments are largely completed for the scope of work in the next major outage scheduled for June-July 2028. An option under consideration is to extend the period before the following major outage to 18 months (approximately 6 months before closure) and assess at that time whether it is necessary. The schedule is still to be determined in a budget review process.

These changes in the programming of both routine maintenance and major outage maintenance, and deferral of capital works, are likely to impact the work of casual and seasonal workers and dependent employers first, well before the closure. It is the strong recommendation of the Unions that the CEO determine for the closing employer and each dependent employer the earliest time at which adverse impacts of the closure may be felt by one or more employee cohorts. That determination should inform consideration of the capacity of other employers in the same geographic area to offer employment, the capacity of employers to redeploy impacted workers, and whether existing supports are available on a timeline that will in fact facilitate the transition of employees to find other employment.

Transition Employee Profiles

Employees from operating classifications

NRG employees from operating classifications include Control Room Operators, Unit and Plant Operators, and various material handling operators for coal conveyance, ash disposal, and environmental compliance. Within operating streams, there is a significant degree of specialisation through experience, vendor training, formal qualifications and high risk work licences.

Due to their specialisation in maintenance, control and operation of power station plant, and significant tenures in the industry, employees in the operating stream are most in need of training to support their transition to new work. While there are other coal power stations operating in the Gladstone Region, few NRG employees will have the opportunity to take up work in another power station. NRG has not provided specialised career advice to support operating employees to make decisions about the industries to target for further training.

We need a EIJP in place to enable us to get support.

– NRG Employee, Operator

As is outlined in more detail below, projects currently committed in the Gladstone Region are not sufficient nor properly sequenced to provide a clear transition from operating work in a coal power station into sustainable work in the power industry. There are relatively few jobs in grid and battery operations, or in the operation and maintenance of wind or solar generators, when compared to the construction phase. Many employees in operating roles will require support to take up work in a new trade or profession, in a new industry.

Dual trade employees

Some employees engaged by NRG in operating roles hold a mix of electrical, rigging and dogging, boiler-making, and turbine operating qualifications. Unions heard from one NRG employee, responding to an ETU survey, who had been redeployed by NRG to work as a Trainee Steam Plant Operator in a recent restructure that reduced the number of licenced electricians in the maintenance stream. That employee holds a CERT III in Electrotechnology and a CERT III in Instrumentation and Control, alongside short courses for high-risk electrical work. The employee expressed an interest in transitioning to work on LNG Plant if it were not possible to find continuing work in the power industry, requiring further training for a CERT IV in Process Plant Technology and a Cert III in Process Plant Operations.

Unions heard from another NRG employee engaged as a Boiler Turbine Steam Plant Operator, who holds a significant range of qualifications including an Electrical Work Licence, an Associate Diploma Electrical Engineering, competency in EPTs (Explosive Power Tools), and high risk work licences for class Advanced Boiler Operation (BA), Steam Turbine Operation (TO), Basic Rigging (RB), Dogging (DG), and Elevated Work Platform (WP). That employee expressed an interest in transitioning to work on LNG Plant if it were

not possible to find continuing work in the power industry. Despite already holding a significant range of qualifications, that employee's transition into operations and control work in LNG processing would require further training for a CERT IV in Process Plant Technology and a Cert III in Process Plant Operations.

Employees from mechanical fitting and boilermaking classifications

NRG employees from mechanical fitting and boilermaker classifications hold a range of CERT III qualifications in Engineering – Mechanical Trade (Fitting/Machining) or Engineering – Fabrication (Boilermaker/Welding). For some workers this includes additional skills and recognised competencies in hydraulics and pneumatics. Many hold additional qualifications from short courses including forklift licences and tickets in rigging and dogging as well as high-risk work qualifications such as elevated work platforms, working at heights and confined spaces.

A number of employees have expressed interest in developing skills relevant to other aspects of the power and energy sector, such as the oil and gas industry. For those employees a combination of relevant CERT III qualifications, such as Rope Access Training, and courses specific to the Hydrocarbons industry would assist in their transition.

For some workers, who may wish to go into business for themselves, courses in business administration and maintenance management at both the Cert III but also the Diploma level could assist. In particular, for those employees who have supervisory experience, the formal recognition of those skills may assist their employability into other roles both locally and, if necessary, in less preferred fly in, fly out roles.

Regardless of future training, a number of workers also expressed a desire for their existing skills to be formally assessed and recognised as part of any transition. The types of machinery that our workers maintain require skills that are over and above those recognised in their formal Cert III qualification. Such recognition can assist in terms of finding other employment and as recognition of prior learning in future formal qualifications.

Employees from electrical classifications or electrically qualified

NRG employees from electrical classifications in maintenance streams at the power plant hold some combination of a CERT III in Electrotechnology and/or a CERT III in Instrumentation & Control. Many hold additional high-risk work qualifications from short courses in Electrical Equipment in Hazardous Areas (EEHA) and/or High Voltage Isolation & Access (HVIA).

A number of employees with electrical qualifications in both the maintenance and operating streams have expressed interest in developing skills relevant to the operation and troubleshooting of a broader range of complex manufacturing systems. For those employees, a combination of new CERT IV and CERT III qualifications would assist their transition out of the specialised work of operating and maintaining the power station.

The ETU heard from one employee, engaged by NRG as an Electrical Technician in its maintenance stream, who had commenced training for a diploma of electrical engineering, in their own time and at their own expense. The employee holds a CERT III in Electrotechnology Electrician, CERT III in Instrumentation and Control, Diploma of Electrical & Instrumentation, and licences for rigging, dogging, work in confined spaces, working at heights, forklift

operation and elevated work platforms. Despite those highly transferrable skills, the employee expressed concerns about local competition for jobs, lower wages for available jobs, and delays in the development in new local industries. The employee expressed a strong preference for finding local work and was targeting training that could support a transition into work in LNG production or other local heavy industry. Without that transition into a new industry, the employee expressed concern that they may have to transition to less ideal fly-in-fly-out work as an electrician.

Another respondent to the ETU survey was engaged by NRG as an Electrical Technician, with a CERT III in electrotechnology, CERT III in instrumentation & control, and competencies in EEHA and High Voltage Switching Operations (HVSO). Despite highly transferrable skills, the employee raised concerns about a lack of secure employment opportunities, and a need to retrain to find local work. The employee was targeting a transition into manufacturing and chemical processing, requiring additional safety certifications, and vendor training in relevant control systems.

Safety training

With respect to safety tickets, holders of EEHA and HVIA may benefit from further training in the full CERT IV qualification (for example, a CERT IV in Hazardous Areas – Electrical) relevant to that part of industry that the employee is targeting for their transition. The costs of such training will be reduced for existing holders of the equivalent short course and may be further reduced for those eligible for government funding. The cost for a CERT IV in Hazardous Areas – Electrical can be as much as \$3,200.00, but can be reduced with recognised prior learning (RPL) for holders of a CERT IV in Instrumentation or existing EEHA holders, and can be as little as \$645 for those employees eligible for Commonwealth or Construction Skills Queensland funding.

Coal/fuel handling

MEU members at NRG primarily are in coal handling and related operations. Workers typically have a skills profile which includes short courses, tickets and licences supplemented with in-house training.

Respondents to the MEU survey had age profiles generally evenly distributed between working-age cohorts. The typical worker has been employed for between 6 and more than 30 years at the worksite. The majority of workers intended to stay in the region after the closure of the Gladstone PS. 72% of workers were either not at all confident or neutral as to their prospects of finding suitable employment. There was an overall strong desire for training support including paid time off work to improve future job prospects and, as noted above, all workers in the MEU survey indicated that they had received no transition support from NRG.

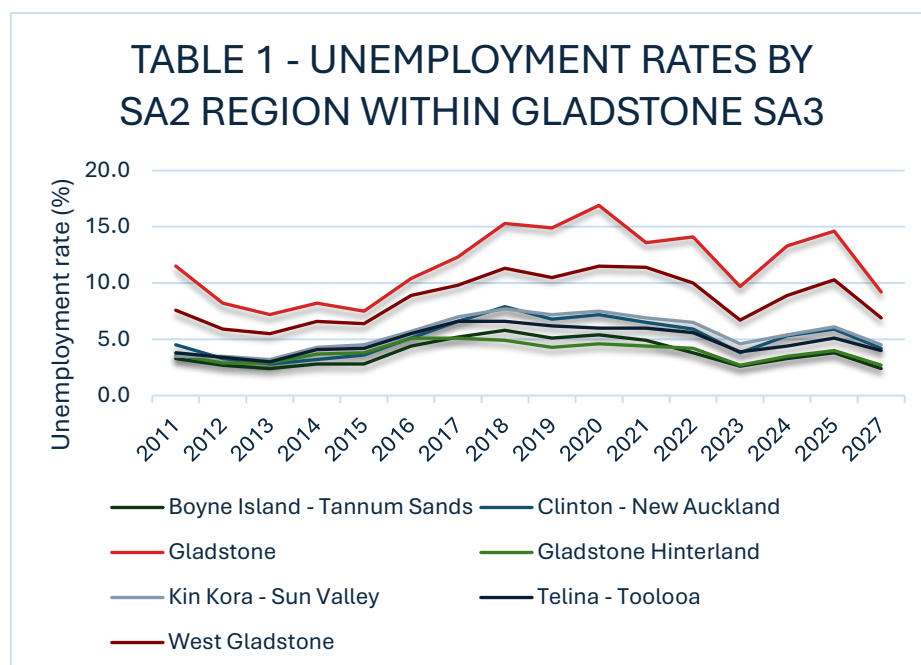
Employment in the Gladstone Region

Regional employment

The Gladstone Region is already facing structural challenges that will affect its capacity to adjust to the economic shock of the closure of Gladstone PS. Unemployment across the Central Queensland SA4 region in June 2026 was 4.6%, higher than the Queensland average of 4.2%. Within the Gladstone SA3 region, unemployment is higher in and around the central areas of Gladstone and Gladstone West, at a sustained high of 9.2% and 6.9% respectively (Table 1). As is identified in the Labour Market Snapshot, the region is characterised by elevated unemployment, weak population growth, a high dependency share, greater reliance on income support and weaker job matching.⁹

While significant projects are announced for the Gladstone Region those projects will, as we outline in more detail below, be delivered to a timeline that does not provide a clear transition pathway for Gladstone PS workers. Moreover, jobs delivered by those projects are concentrated in parts of the construction industry for which most transition employees would require significant retraining and which would involve a fundamental shift in modes of work and travel and a significant loss in job security. More action is necessary to secure a sustained pipeline of development, and to build on those local developments in renewable energy to deliver an expansion in local manufacturing and heavy industry.

Most transition employees would require some degree of retraining, some very substantial retraining, to take up one of the relatively few new permanent roles in operation and maintenance of new transmission, BESS and renewable energy assets.



⁹ https://storage.googleapis.com/files-au-netzero/netzero/p/prj3df3db900d7452ae9afa8/page/fil3ed17d6938aa8202d264e_NZEA_Labour_Market_Snapshot_for_the_EIJP_Gladstone_Power_Station.pdf

Committed Projects

The Labour Market Snapshot for the Central Queensland SA4 region points to the scale of prospective investment in the region as an indicator of economic resilience, though not a direct measure of employment outcomes for transition workers. However, the CEO should be cautious not to infer from substantial investment in renewable energy projects in the region to date either:

1. That a pipeline of renewable energy construction work will continue at the same rate beyond the closure of Gladstone; or
2. That transition workers engaged at Gladstone can take up that work without substantial training as part of an EIJP.

Of the projects highlighted in the Labour Market Snapshot that have reached final investment decision, most are scheduled for delivery in or before 2029. A substantial portion of those projects are in the power industry, including solar farms, wind farms, battery energy storage systems (BESS) and expansions or upgrades to electrical transmission networks. Work in those projects is concentrated in the construction phase, with relatively few ongoing roles in the operation and maintenance of the infrastructure.

Transition into power generation and storage construction work would require substantial retraining for most employee cohorts, especially among power station operators who do not have qualifications in CERT III Electrical (Electrician). Moreover, such a transition would involve a change from permanent to project-based employment and will be unattractive if there is not a reasonable expectation of a consistent pipeline of renewable energy construction work in the Gladstone area beyond the closure date.

Transition into transmission construction work would require travel for work a significant distance from where most transition workers are based, in and around Gladstone. Such a transition would require retraining or bridging competencies in CERT III ESI (Power Systems) and CERT III ESI – Transmission Overhead for most employee cohorts, and additional high risk work licences in dogging and rigging and elevated work platform (EWP) for any employee who does not already have those licences.

There is an urgent need to expand existing industry and develop new manufacturing and heavy industry in and around Gladstone to support the transition of workers from the Gladstone Power Station.

Projects deliverable by 2029

The Upper Calliope Solar Farm, Mount Hopeful Wind Farm Stage 1, Specimen Hill Wind Farm, Central BESS, Smoky Creek and Guthrie's Gap Solar Farm, and Callide Wind Farm are all scheduled for delivery in or before 2029. The majority of jobs created by those projects, concentrated in the construction phase, will be filled if not complete at the time Gladstone closes. A smaller number of new jobs will be created in the operation and maintenance of each project, comprising of licensed electricians, mechanical fitters and some trade assistants and labourers.

The Gladstone Project (Queensland SuperGrid), a significant expansion of transmission infrastructure proposed by PowerLink, is presently scheduled for delivery in 2029. The majority of jobs created by the Gladstone Project, concentrated in the construction phase,

will be filled if not complete at the time Gladstone closes. A smaller number of new jobs may be created in the operation and maintenance of the new transmission line over 95km between Bouldercombe and Larcom Creek. Most of those would be highly specialised roles for holders of an Electrical Linesperson Licence, requiring a CERT III in ESI – Transmission Overhead (UET30521), as well as high risk work licences for dogging, rigging and operation of elevated work platforms (EWP).

Forecasting projects beyond 2029

It is difficult to project the pipeline of new projects and new or expanded industries in the Gladstone region beyond 2029. Some of the projects highlighted in the Labour Market Snapshot for likely commencement after 2029 are likely to reach final investment decision in the intervening years, but not all.

In its most recent *Electricity Statement of Opportunities*, the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) forecast that committed and anticipated developments are sufficient for the reliability standard to be exceeded in Queensland from 2032-33.¹⁰ In that context, AEMO has not identified any reliability gap as a result of the closure of Gladstone Power Station in 2029 and has not sought to impose Retailer Reliability Obligations to accelerate delivery of additional generation or storage. Continued development of energy projects at the same or similar scale beyond the closure of Gladstone Power Station may require the creation of new demand through the electrification of local industry and the expansion of new industry.

Applying strict commitment criteria to exclude projects with a higher degree of delivery uncertainty, AEMO's forecast of 'committed' and 'anticipated' developments across the National Energy Market (NEM) over 10 years from 2026-27 points to a plateau of new investment after 2031-32.¹¹ Again, those figures may change as more anticipated projects progress through planning and approval processes. However, the CEO could not be satisfied on the information presently available that energy projects in the Gladstone region will continue to be developed at a rate to sustain the current pipeline of project work.

Against this background, Unions caution against a finding that the current project pipeline will deliver suitable job opportunities for transition employees. Employees will require the support of an EIJP, firming of project commitments beyond 2029, and targeted support for an expansion of manufacturing and heavy industry in the region to achieve a just transition.

Green Hydrogen

Plans for an expanded industrial and manufacturing base in and around Gladstone, supported by significant local developments in renewable generation and battery storage, have been materially set back by cancellation of the Central Queensland Hydrogen Project (CQ-H2). The CQ-H2 project comprised a hydrogen production facility at Aldoga, 20km West of Gladstone, a 23km hydrogen pipeline to the Port of Gladstone, a liquefaction facility, an ammonia synthesis plant, and ship-loading infrastructure at the port. The project promised a

¹⁰ https://www.aemo.com.au/-/media/files/electricity/nem/planning_and_forecasting/nem_esoo/2026/2026-electricity-statement-of-opportunities.pdf?rev=4f2e73fbd906456288198fdbc24b335a&sc_lang=en&hash=8BC15B81DC0725EA49821C9D301AAB9E

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 6-9; Figure 1.

significant pipeline of local construction for staged expansion of electrolyzers through to the early 2030s, from a base of 740MW to an eventual 2880MW. It also promised a significant number of new, permanent, roles in the operation and maintenance of the production facility and expanded port operations.

Notwithstanding the withdrawal of the intended anchor off-taker, Kansai Electric, in November 2024, the CQ-H2 project was on track for final investment decision in Q2 2025.¹² In February 2025, the Queensland government withdrew its commitment to match \$1.4bn in federal funding for the project,¹³ leading to the exit of project partners Iwatani and Stanwell, and ultimately withdrawal of the project.¹⁴ Production credits in the first round of ARENA's Hydrogen Headstart Program, for which the CQ-H2 project was competing, have since been awarded to Orica in connection with its Hunter Valley Hydrogen Hub.

There is an urgent need to develop new projects, supported by sustained development of new renewable generation and storage capacity, that can support a similar expansion of manufacturing in the region to that which was promised by the CQ-H2 project.

¹² Stanwell, CQ-H2 deputation to Gladstone Regional Council (council agenda attachment, 2025). https://www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/council/meetings/agendas-and-minutes/documents/2025/special-budget-meeting-2025-07-03/item_31__attach_01__stanwell_cqh2_presentation.pdf

¹³ <https://reneweconomy.com.au/australias-most-advanced-green-hydrogen-project-hangs-in-balance-after-state-lnp-pulls-support/>

¹⁴ Stanwell, 'Statement regarding the Central Queensland Hydrogen Project', 29 June 2025. <https://www.stanwell.com/info-hub/article/statement-regarding-the-cqh2-project>