



# MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 5 July 2019

## **Unions, Essential Energy reach agreement to pause planned job cuts until further information provided to workers**

Power industry unions have reached an in principle agreement with Essential Energy in the Fair Work Commission today that will see the company pause planned job cuts until further information is provided to workers and additional consultation takes place.

The agreement means no jobs will be lost before mid-August, with unions given an opportunity to propose alternative cost saving measures and initiatives that could avert the need for redundancies.

Essential Energy committed to distributing information to all employees by 19 July that includes: the justification for role reductions; the specific impacts of cuts on remaining team members; and details of the tasks or functions that will cease to be performed.

Essential Energy also committed to giving genuine consideration to alternative savings measures before any redundancy decisions are made.

Electrical Trades Union Secretary Justin Page welcomed the outcome, saying it was vital that workers be given the opportunity to identify alternatives to yet more regional job cuts.

“This is a tough time for Essential Energy workers, their families and colleagues,” Mr Page said.

“After four years of deep staffing cuts at Essential Energy — which has not only devastated those workers directly impacted, but has had profound impacts on service delivery and regional communities — today’s reprieve is extremely welcome, but is just the start.

“It is important that Essential Energy have agreed to provide detailed information to workers about the reasons for specific cuts and their impacts on the remaining work groups, but better still is their commitment to seriously consider alternative options for cutting costs that would allow these jobs to be saved.”

Mr Page also welcomed the support of a range of regional MPs, including Nationals leader and Deputy Premier John Barilaro, who have committed to fighting forced job cuts at Essential Energy, saying the union looked forward to working with them to find longer-term solutions.

“The ETU will work in a genuine and meaningful way with all parties and stakeholders to fight to protect these jobs,” he said.

“Essential Energy is still 100 per cent publicly owned, so the NSW Government has the ability to take actions to stop this devastating loss of regional jobs.

“It is great to see so many regional MPs agree with us that these cuts are unsustainable, that they are going to have huge impacts on regional NSW, and that we need to work together to stop them.

“The ETU is in the process of developing a range of proposals that we believe are viable alternatives to slashing jobs and services in the bush.”

*Essential Energy employees or their family members who require crisis support are urged to contact Lifeline (13 11 14 and [lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)) or beyondblue (1300 22 4636 and [beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)).*

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