



2022/23  
Energy Charter  
Disclosure Statement



The Energy  
Charter

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## Acknowledgement of Country

Powerlink acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands and waters of Queensland and in particular, the lands on which we operate. We pay our respect to their Ancestors, Elders and knowledge holders and recognise their deep history and ongoing connection to Country.

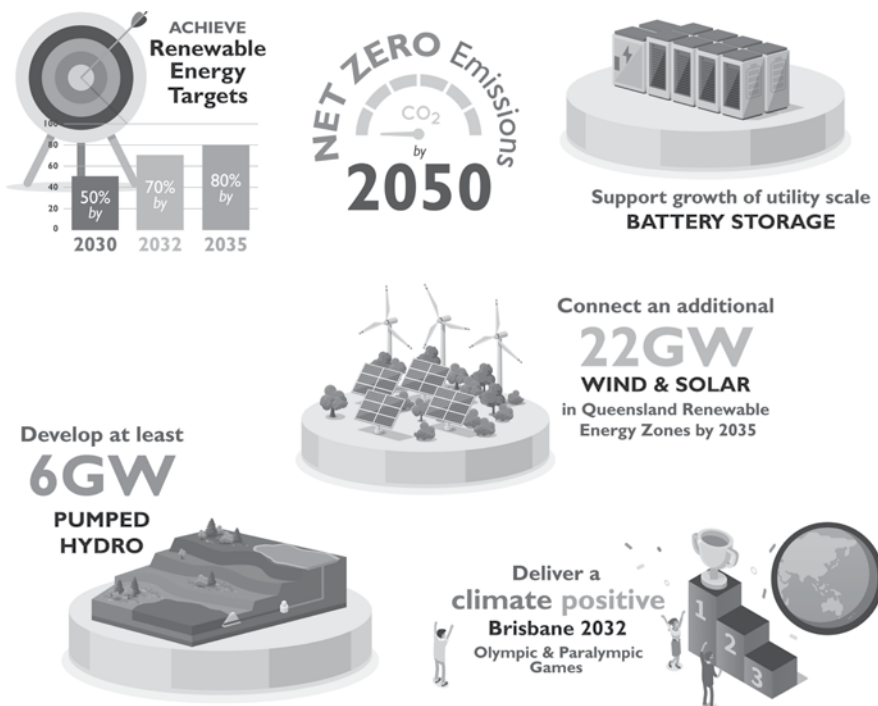
# Introduction and corporate information

## About Powerlink

Powerlink Queensland (Powerlink) is a leading Australian provider of high voltage electricity transmission network services, combining innovation with insight to deliver safe, cost-effective and reliable solutions. We are a Government Owned Corporation that owns, develops, operates and maintains the high voltage electricity transmission network in Queensland. Our network extends 1,700 kilometres from Cairns to the New South Wales border.

Our purpose is to connect Queenslanders to a world-class energy future, providing electricity to more than five million Queenslanders and 253,000 businesses. Through our unique central position in the power system, we are guiding the market to help influence the energy system of the future that effectively balances customer needs, while moving to a low carbon future comprising a diverse array of generation technologies, batteries and storage solutions, new grid technologies, and demand management. Powerlink’s network provides the platform to enable the provision of these and many other energy services while maintaining a sharp focus on safety, affordability and reliability of supply for our customers.

## Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan Targets



## Strategic objectives in action

Powerlink is focused on four strategic objectives to deliver on our purpose of connecting Queenslanders to a world-class energy future:

- 1. Be the renewable SuperGrid**  
We are working to connect large-scale renewable energy projects to the grid, to create Renewable Energy Zones, and to ensure our transmission network can host new sources of renewable energy.
- 2. Guide the market**  
We are guiding industry and governments in how to navigate the energy transition to deliver the best outcomes for Queenslanders.
- 3. Drive value for customers**  
We want to keep electricity costs as low as possible for the people of Queensland by innovating and operating efficiently.
- 4. Unleash our potential**  
In a complex and uncertain environment, we need to get the best from our people by empowering our staff and working collaboratively.



## Message from the Powerlink Chair and Chief Executive

This Disclosure Statement presents a pragmatic assessment of Powerlink's work to deliver better outcomes for customers, with a focus on activities above and beyond 'business as usual'.

We continue to act on our commitment to be a more customer-centric organisation, and to listen and learn from our customers' experiences.

Throughout the year, Powerlink worked closely with generation developers and customer and stakeholder representatives across a number of key projects including our review of the Network Development Process and the Asset Reinvestment Review.

We continue to support Powerlink people to understand and engage with customers across our business. The Powering Ahead workshops engaged our teams to walk in the shoes of our customers with more than 790 employees participating in the program.

Our organisation is acutely aware of the impact of rising power prices and the adverse effects this presents for some of our customers. As an outcome of our 2023-27 Revenue Determination, in 2022/23 Powerlink's portion of the annual electricity bill for the typical residential and small business customer decreased by 2.5 per cent. Based on that, Powerlink's transmission costs represented about nine per cent of the total delivered cost of electricity to a typical Queensland residential and small business electricity customer in 2022/23.

While the transmission portion of the average annual electricity bill decreased in the regulatory period just completed, we know that materially higher wholesale prices are likely to continue for some time. We focus on the long-term interests of customers and are working with all parts of the industry supply chain, policymakers and governments to minimise price rises and provide support to our directly-connected commercial and industrial customers along with the more than five million Queenslanders who rely on us every day.

We have continued our focus on supporting Queensland households experiencing energy vulnerability through our work with Australia's largest non-government provider of community services, Uniting. We have also provided modelling insights to Government on the likely impacts and effectiveness of policy adjustments vis-à-vis vulnerable households and Queensland's electricity concessions framework. We doubled our funding commitment to Uniting to deliver its Energy Support Program, which directly helps support customers experiencing energy vulnerability and hardship.

To meet our priorities and deliver for customers, we must effectively deliver the energy transformation as set out in the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP). This is a central priority for us, requiring significant new activity. As with our existing infrastructure, the delivery of our components of the QEJP requires Powerlink to view the customer as central to our purpose. Notable actions through progress on Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) and the planned SuperGrid transmission backbone investment are detailed in the highlights and throughout the document.

Powerlink has always held a strong view that engaging with local communities is a vital part of providing our transmission services. This focus on effective engagement has increased in line with our growing portfolio of projects. We have expanded our project engagement and community relations teams to allow for more conversations with community and landholders.

To our customers and stakeholders, we hope this disclosure is insightful. We welcome your perspectives and feedback on how we are doing and how we can continue to improve.

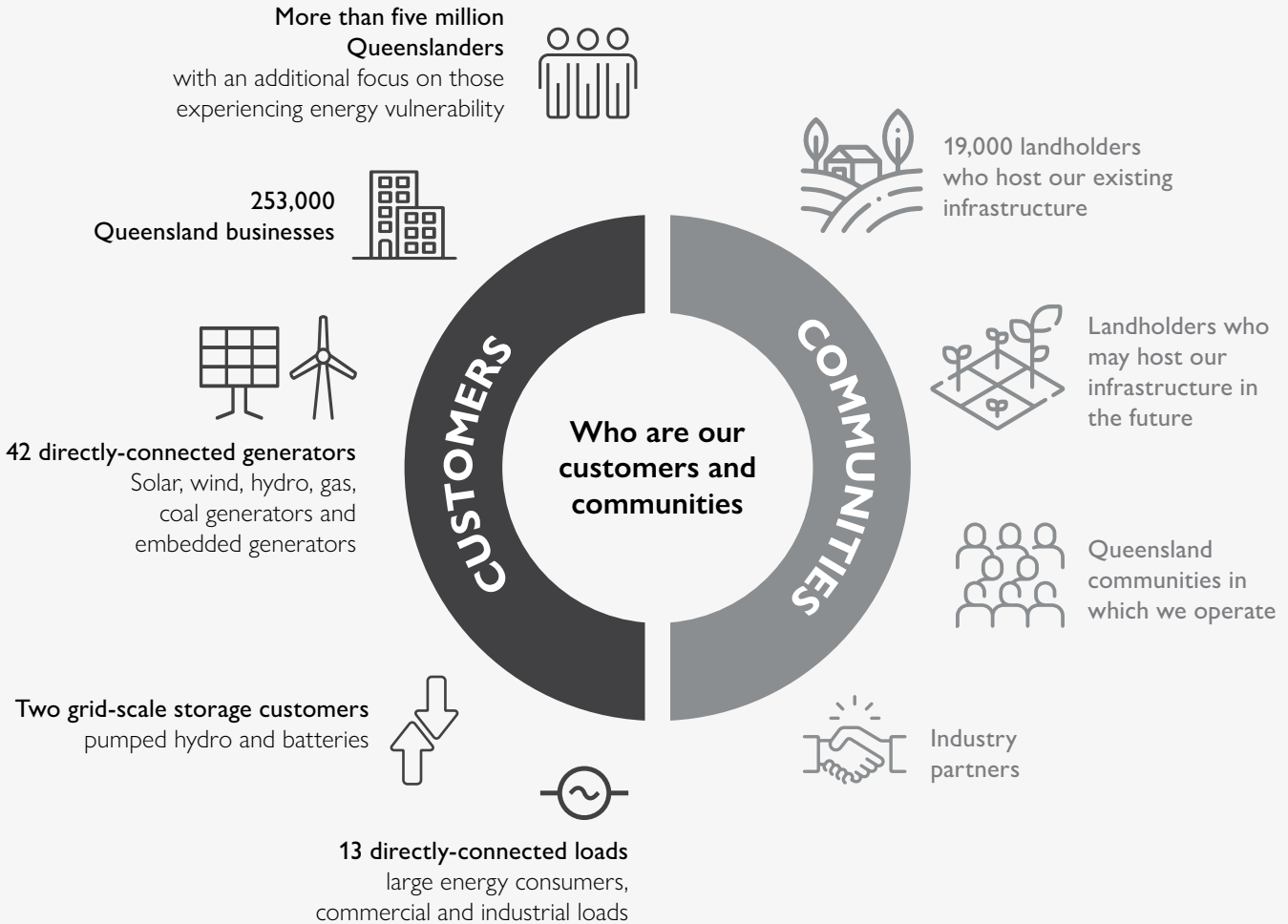


KATHY HIRSCHFELD AM  
CHAIR



PROF. PAUL SIMSHAUSER AM  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

# Our customers and communities



## The voice of the customer in this disclosure process

Powerlink’s Customer Panel has been engaged throughout this disclosure process. Perspectives from the panel have particularly informed aspects of our Maturity Model ratings and our forward-looking priorities. Priorities have also been informed by customer findings from our most recent stakeholder perception survey.

## Our Energy Charter commitment

The Energy Charter is a national CEO-led collaboration that supports the energy sector towards a customer-centric future. By committing to the Charter, Powerlink joins other organisations across the energy supply chain in committing to progress the culture and solutions needed to deliver more affordable, reliable and sustainable energy systems in line with our customer and community’s expectations. This Disclosure Statement has been compiled with input from Powerlink’s Board of Directors, Chief Executive and leadership team.

# Highlights and learnings

## Renewable Energy Zone progress & market-led Renewable Energy Zone model

Our innovative market-led Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) approach will help form the foundations of the energy transformation in Queensland.

Our approach focuses on having a foundation customer to establish the REZ, enabling co-location with other generators to minimise transmission network requirements and impacts on communities and the local environment.

The REZ model forms the basis of the energy transformation outlined in the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP), with Queensland targets of 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030, 70 per cent by 2032 and 80 per cent by 2035. There are currently three REZ developments underway across the state.

By making best use of existing infrastructure and co-locating renewable energy projects, we minimise development costs for Queenslanders as we deliver the energy transformation.

As the Queensland Government puts its finishing touches on the QEJP legislation, Powerlink looks forward to our designated planning role as the REZ Delivery Body, allowing our knowledge and expertise to guide future energy developments across Queensland.

## Network Development Process Review

Powerlink has undertaken a review of the process formerly called the Network Development Process used to secure new easements as part of its project delivery. We established a Stakeholder Reference Group to provide input into the review including the Queensland Farmers' Federation, Local Government Association of Queensland, RE-Alliance and Energy Users Association of Australia.

Over nine months, the reference group focused on key areas to improve the process including engagement, land access and landholder payments. The review changed the focus of the process from formal planning approval milestones to engagement opportunities for landholders and the wider community. The process has been renamed to the *Transmission Easement Engagement Process* to reflect this change.

As part of this review, we also launched a new SuperGrid Landholder Payment Framework that significantly boosts payments to landholders hosting new transmission infrastructure. The increase in payments is based on property-specific values and impacts, as opposed to a flat rate used previously. Powerlink will become the first transmission company in Australia to offer payments to landholders on neighbouring properties adjacent to transmission infrastructure.

## Asset Reinvestment Review

In 2023, Powerlink completed our Asset Reinvestment Review (ARR) with recommendations made for endorsement and implementation in 2023/24.

The ARR focused on how Powerlink makes investment decisions about transmission line refits including when to refurbish or reinvest, and when to bundle works.

The outcomes of this review will lead to more options being considered when planning line reinvestment. This will benefit customers by balancing efficient delivery of projects with delayed expenditure on assets where their future need is uncertain due to the changing environment of the energy transformation.

The review was guided by a working group consisting of 13 members including internal subject matter experts, members of our Customer Panel, the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) and members of the AER's Consumer Challenge Panel subgroup that had been involved in Powerlink's 2023-27 revenue determination process.

## Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

This year saw the completion of Powerlink's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), the first step in our reconciliation journey.

The RAP Governance Group and the Indigenous Partnerships team created an aligned approach for working together to support reconciliation and strategically embedding it into our core business.

This included expanding our Cultural Capability Program from senior leaders to all staff with responsibility for delivering aspects of the RAP. The program delivered a deeper understanding of why reconciliation is important and the advantages of First Nations cultural diversity in our work and beyond.

We've now made the first steps towards our next step with our Innovate RAP being submitted to Reconciliation Australia for endorsement with finalisation expected in the next 12 months.

# Priorities for next year

Looking ahead, five priority areas have been identified. These work areas reflect the transformation task at hand, and input from both our Customer Panel and our most recent stakeholder perception survey. We will report on our progress on these in next year's disclosure.

## 1. Renewable Energy Zones

Powerlink is prioritising greater customer focus within the rapidly developing area of Renewable Energy Zones (REZs). For renewable generation owners and developers, we are prioritising this area to strengthen the attractiveness of Queensland for renewable and storage investment, support timely investments and ensure effective communications to customers. We are pursuing ongoing implementation of the market-led REZ model to drive affordability for Queenslanders. We also want to ensure that lasting benefits are created for communities hosting REZ infrastructure.

## 2. Scaling up and readying our organisation to deliver on the Queensland Energy & Jobs Plan

Powerlink is prioritising readiness and resilience activities to deliver an increased work pipeline to effectively deliver the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP).

For customers, we are prioritising this area to deliver the transformation and manage change, to ensure timeliness of service provision and asset readiness, to maintain and strengthen our role as trusted advisor, to maintain service provision in an increasingly complex operating environment, and ultimately to ensure attainment of renewable energy targets.

## 3. Streamlining connections

Powerlink is prioritising its connections services and processes, in particular in relation to development of REZs, pursuing improvement in pace/efficiency/attractiveness of connections service provision.

For renewable generation owners and developers, we are prioritising this area to support Queensland's attractiveness for renewable and storage developer investment, achieving the energy transformation within target timeframes, ensuring we build and maintain a strong reputation for our connections service provision and creating and engendering confidence.

## 4. SuperGrid backbone new transmission investment process and decision making (Priority Transmission Investments)

Powerlink is prioritising its management of new Priority Transmission Investments and the processes of transparency and engagement associated with these investment decisions.

For customers, we are prioritising this area of work to ensure any new transmission investments are efficient, prudent and timely and that we are engaging effectively and sufficiently. There is the overall need to ensure transparency in communicating with customers on the progress of the SuperGrid development and investment, given it is a key driver of the transformation and other decisions are dependent upon it.

## 5. Better partnerships with communities in the delivery of our infrastructure

Powerlink is committed to working with Queensland communities who are hosting our new infrastructure to deliver mutual co-existence, support the sharing of benefits across communities and ensure best approaches to community and landholder engagement.

Please refer to Appendix 1 (page 13) for further information on The Energy Charter's Better Practice Social Licence Guideline Priority Actions Checklist Powerlink is committed to.

## Energy Charter scorecard

The scorecard below was co-designed with our Customer Panel members in 2022. It captures relevant performance measures across the five principles of the Energy Charter, and supports customer evaluation of Powerlink's customer maturity.

Measure	Description	Targets	2021/22 scorecard result	Current result	Commentary
<b>Principle 1: We will put customers at the centre of the energy system</b>					
Staff Understanding of customers Survey score	The extent to which staff feel they know who their customers are. The percentage represents the proportion of staff who scored between 8 and 10. <i>Source: Powerlink Employee Engagement Survey<sup>1</sup>.</i>	>85%	91%	92%	Achieved target
<b>Principle 2: We will improve energy affordability for customers</b>					
Bulk Electricity Price Trend \$/MWh	Three year average of wholesale electricity prices, adjusted for CPI <i>Sources: AEMO; Powerlink; AER; Australian Stock Exchange; Australian Bureau of Statistics.</i>	To demonstrate driving value for customers, bulk electricity prices should be flat or declining in real terms over a 3 year horizon.	N/A	Historical 3 year average as at: June 21: \$89.57 June 22: \$119.86 June 23: \$149.63  Forecast 3 year average (June 23): \$109.28	Not achieved target. Bulk electricity prices rising in real terms over a 3 year horizon.  Forward forecast shows reduction compared to June 22 and June 23 (forecast only)
Unsupplied system minutes Minutes	A measure of performance of the transmission network as experienced by consumers. <i>Measure of energy not supplied in megawatt minutes, divided by historical maximum demand. It is an industry standard measure and is part of the Australian Energy Market Commission's (AEMC's) annual Market Performance Review.</i> <i>Source: AEMC</i>	< +0.58	1.46	0.514	Achieved target
Affordability Descriptive report back	An annual briefing outlining actions to help meet our regulated operating expenditure target for the 2023-27 regulatory period. <i>Source: Powerlink. Network Regulation, Operations and Service Delivery and Finance and Governance.</i>	N/A	N/A 2023 first year of reporting	Scheduled	Briefing will be provided in September Customer Panel meeting. Scope expectations from briefing garnered in June panel meeting.
Non-regulated project delivery on time Percentage %	Powerlink's performance in on time project delivery for non-regulated capital projects. <i>Source: Powerlink Project Management Office</i>	Trend +/- current vs previous	100%	100%	No change
<b>Principle 3: We will provide energy safely, sustainably and reliably</b>					
Renewable generator connections finalised (capacity) MW	A measure of the number of renewable electricity generator projects completed and connected into Powerlink's transmission network. <i>Source: Powerlink</i>	N/A	482MW (during 2021/22)	571MW renewable electricity generator connections 50MW battery storage connection	-

Measure	Description	Targets	2021/22 scorecard result	Current result	Commentary
Future renewable generator connections (capacity) MW	Renewable electricity generator connections committed for Powerlink's transmission network. <i>Source: Powerlink</i>	N/A	615MW	250MW	Renewables project commitments were reduced nationally in FY23. Cost increases (particularly for wind projects) due to supply chain constraints and higher borrowing costs have hampered projects from reaching close.
Renewable energy in Qld (generated) Percentage %	Queensland's renewable energy generation as a percentage of consumption. Includes generation from bioenergy, hydro, wind, solar and rooftop PV. <i>Source: Qld Government</i>	50% by 2030 70% by 2032 80% by 2035	N/A 2023 first year of reporting	24.9% current as at 5 May 2023	With the release of the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, percentage-based renewable energy generation targets have now been set. Powerlink has aligned its reporting to these.
Network Security Market Notices Number	This is a measure of the number of times AEMO issues market interventions to maintain system security during the equivalent of system normal conditions. <i>Measured as the total count of relevant AEMO Market Notices.</i> <i>Source: AEMO</i>	≥10 Red ≤5 Green	0	3	Within green range of target
<b>Principle 4 : We will improve the customer experience</b>					
Social Licence to operate Number (1-5)	The level of acceptance or approval granted to Powerlink by its stakeholders. Results are on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is full trust. <i>Source: Powerlink Stakeholder Perception Survey<sup>2</sup></i>	Trend +/- current vs previous	3.78	3.98	Up
Reputation Score Number (1-5)	How stakeholders perceive public sentiment towards Powerlink. Results are a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is the highest. <i>Source: Powerlink Stakeholder Perception Survey<sup>2</sup></i>	Trend +/- current vs previous	3.73	3.76	Up
Customer Trust Score Number (1-5)	This is measured as the mean of the promise keeping and listening scores. Results are on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is the highest. <i>Source: Powerlink Stakeholder Perception Survey<sup>2</sup></i>	Trend +/- current vs previous	3.78	4.03	Up
Complaints <sup>3</sup> closed to customer satisfaction	This is measured on a 12month rolling average.	Trend +/- current vs previous	83%	90%	Up
<b>Principle 5: We will support customers facing vulnerable circumstances</b>					
Support for Vulnerable Customers	An annual briefing detailing key outcomes from the Uniting Energy Program. Will also provide a snapshot of the key support undertaken through the Powerlink Employee Volunteer Program	N/A	N/A 2023 first year of reporting	Scheduled	Briefing will be provided in September Customer Panel meeting.

<sup>1</sup>Powerlink Employee Engagement Survey: Independently conducted annual staff survey open to all staff.

<sup>2</sup>Powerlink Stakeholder Perception Survey: Rotating annually between a full survey and pulse survey. Survey includes customers, customer advocacy groups, contractors/suppliers, environmental and community groups, industry associations, landholders, Local and State Government, regulators, unions and utilities. Sample sizes: 74 respondents in 2021's pulse and 108 respondents in 2022's full.

<sup>3</sup>Complaints management reporting: This measure relates to operational complaints which are defined as: An expression of dissatisfaction made to Powerlink relating to services, actions, conduct or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or solution is explicitly or implicitly expected.



## Energy Charter customer maturity model

An annual self-assessment of our customer maturity based on the Energy Charter maturity model has been undertaken. This model supports an assessment of organisational overall advancement towards customer centricity against the five principles of the charter.

### Powerlink’s Organisational Customer Maturity Assessment for 2022/23

Maturity levels & definitions		Elementary	Emerging	Evolved	Empowered	Exceeding	Change FY23
		No formal approach to the majority of the Principles in Action	Emerging and repeatable approach to the majority of Principles in Action	Evolved and defined approach to the majority of the Principles in Action	Emerging and repeatable approach to the majority of the Principles in Action	Exceeding all Principles in Action and achieving optimal customer outcomes	
Energy Charter Principles	1. We will put customers at the centre of our business and the energy system				2021/22 2022/23		●
	2. We will improve energy affordability for customers				2021/22 2022/23		↑
	3. We will provide energy:	Safely			2021/22 2022/23		↑
		Sustainably			2021/22 2022/23		●
		Reliably			2021/22 2022/23		
	4. We will improve the customer experience.			2021/22			●
				2022/23			●
	5. We will support customers facing vulnerable circumstances			2021/22	2022/23		↑

Key: ↑ Improving ● Stable ↓ Declining

# Energy Charter Principles

## Principle 1: We will put customers at the centre of our business and energy system

Report back on our committed customer uplift priorities for 2022/23:

<p><b>Develop and implement 2022-25 Customer Strategy</b></p>	<p>The number and diversity of Powerlink's customers and their needs is increasing through the energy transformation.</p> <p>A Customer Strategy and Customer Strategist position have been established to support Powerlink in driving value for customers.</p> <p>The Strategy will support increased coordination on customer value creation across the organisation. It will enable additional pathways for the voice of the customer to inform decisions and provide insights to support priority setting.</p> <p>The Strategy is a living document, anchored to our strategic targets for 2030 in recognition of the key renewable energy target timeframe within the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP).</p>
<p><b>Finalise a co-designed customer metrics and reporting process</b></p>	<p>In 2022 the Customer Panel and Powerlink co-designed a scorecard that included measures aligned to the five principles of the Energy Charter.</p> <p>Following the first report (2021/22 Disclosure Statement) further input was gathered and the scorecard updated, as reflected in this disclosure. Annual reporting on this scorecard has now commenced, and it is anticipated that measures will continue to be revised and refined in collaboration with Customer Panel members as the process is embedded within our devolved accountability approach.</p>
<p><b>Target a 5 per cent improvement in responses to customer focused questions from our 2023 employee engagement survey</b></p>	<p>Customer focused questions are asked each year in our employee engagement survey. These key questions gain understanding on levels of customer understanding, priority to leaders and our coordination effectiveness in serving customer needs. In 2023 across all customer focused questions we saw a 3.8 per cent improvement. A standout result was over 90 per cent of responding employees knowing their customers.</p>

## Principle 2: We will improve energy affordability for customers

Report back on our committed customer uplift priorities for 2022/23:

<p><b>Reduce the number of generation constraint events on our network below 2021/22 levels to minimise impacts on wholesale market prices</b></p>	<p>An ongoing focus of operating the network is to minimise the impact of outages on wholesale market prices. Effective outage coordination ensures the network continues to be appropriately maintained and new connections are facilitated.</p> <p>Powerlink has devoted significant resources, time and planning to managing planned and unplanned outages, however this is occurring in a more complex and dynamic operating environment than foreseeable 12 months ago. This shifts the goal posts and focus areas for ongoing management and improvements.</p> <p>The changing generation and storage mix and energy transition has challenged existing operating processes and outage planning principles. In the reporting period we have seen record-breaking levels of maximum operational Winter and Summer demand, maximum end user demand and minimum operational demand.</p> <p>We are focused on responding and adapting to these new complexities and working with our customers through this changing environment.</p>
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<p><b>Encourage cheaper renewable generation to connect in an efficient and coordinated way to ensure we remain on track to reach the Queensland 50 per cent Renewable Energy Target by 2030</b></p>	<p>With a Renewable Energy Target of 50 per cent by 2030, Powerlink is adapting the way we do business to support the energy transformation.</p> <p>Through the Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) methodology, we've been able to use our existing assets, processes and network resources to deliver additional renewable energy capacity that is market-led in an efficient and cost-effective way. Innovations such as Wide Area Monitoring, Protection and Control (WAMPAC) will enable us to further increase renewable hosting capacity with minimal change to the asset base.</p> <p>The REZ model underpins the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP) and future growth and capacity in the network.</p> <p>We've already worked closely with the Queensland Government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assist with the development of the REZ roadmap to improve community engagement and send signals to proponents</li> <li>• inform legislative change to create the REZ Delivery Body functionality and streamline connection processes</li> <li>• develop the REZ subscription strategy and process to encourage generator connections.</li> </ul> <p>We'll continue working with all stakeholders to ensure we make cheaper renewable energy a reality for the benefit of our customers.</p>
<p><b>Drive productivity and efficiency initiatives to ensure our regulated capital expenditure and operating expenditure are aligned with our AER allowances</b></p>	<p>For the 2023-27 Regulatory Period, Powerlink committed to updating our customers on how we were meeting our commitments and managing our expenditure.</p> <p>For the 2023-27 period, the business is still aligned to the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) Operational Allowance. This is being achieved through initiatives identified across procurement, technology, maintenance and work practices, as examples.</p> <p>Global supply chains are being significantly impacted by external factors, with geopolitical ramifications and supply chain constraints impacting lead times. Powerlink's contracts team have moved from a 'just-in-time' approach to 'just-in-case' to reduce the risk of delays to investments.</p> <p>While this approach has implications on the scale of warehousing and funding, it is aligned to our strategy of meeting the needs of the network and long-term interests of customers as our first priority.</p> <p>Powerlink's capital works expenditure in 2022/23 was \$696.8 million, which was higher than the Statement of Corporate Intent (SCI) target of \$524.2 million. This additional expenditure reflected strong growth in providing connection services to renewable energy generation projects.</p>

### Principle 3: We will provide energy safely, sustainably and reliably

Report back on our committed customer uplift priorities for 2022/23:

<p><b>Help deliver detailed studies for the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project, on time and budget, to allow for investment decision by the Queensland Government in 2023</b></p>	<p>Powerlink has been involved since the beginning of this project, undertaking feasibility work before handing the project over to the newly formed Queensland Hydro. Formed in September 2022, the entity will assist the Queensland Government with feasibility studies for a series of vital pumped hydro projects including the Borumba and Pioneer-Burdekin projects.</p> <p>The total Borumba Pumped Hydro Project cost is estimated to be \$14.2 billion. The Queensland Government will commit \$6 billion in equity funding over the project's construction period and the rest will come from borrowing from Queensland Hydro.</p> <p>The Borumba Pumped Hydro Project will be capable of dispatching 2,000MW and storing up to 24 hours of energy. When generating, the project will have the capacity to supply electricity to up to two million Queensland homes.</p> <p>Powerlink has undertaken extensive community engagement as part of the process for identifying two transmission corridors to connect the pumped hydro project to our existing network.</p> <p>Since December 2021, Powerlink has held 44 community information sessions, attended by more than 2,100 residents. Engagement with landholders will continue as we work towards final alignments in mid-2024.</p>
<p><b>Increase the generation capacity across multiple Queensland REZs</b></p>	<p>Powerlink is proudly leading the way on the market-led Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) model, having worked closely with the Queensland Government in the release of the draft 2023 Queensland REZ Roadmap in July 2023.</p> <p>Work is progressing on three in-flight REZ projects across Queensland.</p> <p>The Far Northern Queensland REZ will provide an extra 500MW capacity in the network by the end of 2023. Work includes permanently upgrading one circuit of Powerlink's existing 132kV transmission network between Townsville and Cairns to 275kV. These works will improve network resilience and system strength while unlocking additional renewable capacity in the region.</p> <p>The Southern Downs REZ is currently the state's largest REZ, unlocking an additional 2,000MW of renewable generation capacity. Our construction work on the MacIntyre Wind Precinct has now progressed past the halfway point in delivering 65km of 330kV transmission line, with completion of the 100th tower in mid-2023.</p> <p>Preparatory works for the Western Downs REZ – with the Wambo Wind Farm Connection Project as its foundation customer – are well underway with construction crews mobilised. A project office has been established at Dalby with warehousing and dedicated project space. This new connection will provide an additional 2,000MW of renewable generation capacity.</p>



<p><b>Other noteworthy activities</b></p>	<p><b>Biodiversity</b></p> <p>Powerlink is working with key environmental groups and other energy providers across the state to reduce the impact of construction and operations on areas of high biodiversity and environmental value.</p> <p>We're committed to finding a way to make biodiversity mapping more accessible which will inform a better practice guideline for the placement of renewable generation assets.</p> <p>Our goal is to make the transition to renewable energy as positive as possible for all impacted.</p> <p>We are doing this important work as part of an Energy Charter #BetterTogether collaborative innovation project.</p> <p><b>Sustainable maintenance</b></p> <p>Vegetation management is a key part of maintaining our assets and keeping the power on. Powerlink is moving towards satellite imagery technology that will allow us to take a whole-of-state perspective on vegetation density and model growth rates more accurately to reduce risk and better manage essential works.</p> <p>Procurement is underway for long-term engagements with aerial and vegetation service providers to provide a more cost-effective approach to vegetation management.</p> <p><b>Phase lifter pilot</b></p> <p>Safety around the network is our number one priority. This year, Powerlink has trialled a 'phase lifter' an innovative piece of equipment from the United States to improve safety and reduce network downtime.</p> <p>A large part of Powerlink's capital works program is refurbishing ageing transmission lines, including a large number of structures that need sandblasting and painting.</p> <p>The phase lifter lifts phase conductors so insulators and hardware on structures can be safely changed while the conductors remain energised. The phase lifter allows routine and unscheduled maintenance to occur without interrupting the power supply or diminishing system strength and offers new opportunities for replacing towers in situ as an alternative to tower refit projects.</p>
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**Principle 4: We will improve the customer experience**

Report back on our committed customer uplift priorities for 2022/23:

<p><b>Community Social Licence to Operate:</b></p> <p>Complete the Queensland Renewable Energy Zone (QREZ) Community Engagement Pilot and implement lessons learned to deliver local benefits for communities impacted by our infrastructure and operations</p>	<p>Powerlink is committed to engaging with and supporting the communities we're working in. As part of that commitment, we're expanding our resources to better support community engagement as part of our project portfolio.</p> <p>We're creating a better social impact assessment model, so we understand our communities more and using interactive tools like Social PinPoint to support our community engagement efforts. We've also matured our community relations functions and are implementing a community investment approach to on-the-ground funding.</p> <p>We also played a key role in the development of the Energy Charter Better Practice Social Licence Guideline released in May 2023. This work was completed within an Energy Charter #BetterTogether collaborative innovation project. This guideline is all about identifying impacts and opportunities for the communities affected by the energy transformation.</p> <p>The SuperGrid Landholder Payment Framework that significantly boosts payments to landholders hosting new transmission infrastructure has come from that work and will be implemented in 2023/24.</p> <p>We have attached as Appendix 1 (page 13) an overview of how Powerlink is progressing against the Better Practice Social Licence Guideline Priority Actions Checklist.</p>
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<p><b>Complete our community sentiment research in Central and Northern Queensland by December 2022 to better understand community needs and concerns associated with renewable development</b></p>	<p>Powerlink completed the most comprehensive community sentiment research about renewable development undertaken by a transmission business in Australia to date.</p> <p>The research indicates that there is broad support for renewable energy targets and commitments, and the need for transmission infrastructure to be developed within specific communities.</p> <p>The research also showed that there are three main drivers of trust and acceptance across all three regions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distributional fairness: the perception that the community is receiving its fair share of the benefits generated by the project</li> <li>• Procedural fairness: the extent to which the community feels appropriately involved in decision making and that Powerlink is responsive to community concerns</li> <li>• Confidence in governance: what checks and balances are in place to ensure that Powerlink does the right thing for the community.</li> </ul> <p>This feedback is invaluable going forward as it helps to plan our engagement activities in a targeted way across these regions.</p>
<p><b>Embed new account management and information management functions, to provide a more streamlined experience for new and existing directly-connected customers</b></p>	<p>For our directly-connected customers, Powerlink has conducted a small pilot of a customer relationship management (CRM) system. While this approach is in a trial phase, it has been considered a success with the lessons learned guiding future enterprise-wide customer management systems.</p>

## Principle 5: We will support customers in vulnerable circumstances

Report back on our committed customer uplift priorities for 2022/23:

<p><b>Finalise Powerlink's employee volunteer program which will allow all employees one day a year to volunteer their time to support communities and customers in need</b></p>	<p>This year, we launched the Employee Volunteer Program which supports staff to take a day of leave to give back to their community through volunteering.</p> <p>We know that community organisations often struggle to attract volunteers and with so much happening at work, it can be hard for our people to find the time to give back. This program benefits the community and our employees who get to make a difference.</p> <p>While this program is still in its infancy, we're pleased with the initial uptake by staff and look forward to seeing it grow.</p>
<p><b>Double the number of vulnerable customers we support through our initiatives with Uniting</b></p>	<p>We know that a number of our customers are feeling the impact of cost of living pressures. To support them during this challenging time, Powerlink is making practical contributions to help our most vulnerable customers.</p> <p>We've contributed financially to an awareness campaign to ensure that customers eligible for concessions are accessing them. These concessions can make a significant difference to electricity bills.</p> <p>We doubled our funding commitment to Uniting, Australia's largest non-government provider of community services, to deliver its Energy Support Program, which helps support customers experiencing energy vulnerability and hardship.</p> <p>These programs were delivered as part of the #BetterTogether cost of living supports initiative.</p>

# Appendix 1

## Better Practice Social Licence Guideline Priority Actions Checklist

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Participation fees	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consideration and communication around undergrounding	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Upgrades and maintenance activities in construction and operations	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Addressing power imbalances between transmission businesses and landholders	
<input type="checkbox"/>	A designated person, 24/7 contact number and facilitated engagement	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regional engagement teams	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Placement of towers to minimise impacts	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Provide clear schedules, detailing requirements for access	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Easy and timely access to records of access on request	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clear steps and contacts for complaints	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transparent, plain English information regarding compensation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Annualised compensation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Easy and timely access to compensation for professional costs	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proactive, tailored education programs on safety	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strong, tailored biosecurity management plans	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Engage with landholders on soil requirements	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Protect soil from compaction, erosion, or other damage	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Develop Community Benefit Sharing programs	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Preference procurement from local suppliers	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Social and environmental criteria in procurement decision-making	

# Contact us

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