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ERARING DEAL HELPS ENERGY CERTAINTY

The region's peak business advocacy group, Business Hunter, has welcomed the NSW Government's agreement with Origin Energy to extend the life of the Eraring Power Station until August 2027.

Business Hunter CEO, Bob Hawes said this was a wise insurance policy on the government's behalf.

"Unfortunately, renewables are not being commissioned fast enough, and the risk of disruption to supply across this period was significant, with potentially catastrophic consequences for some users. We welcome this step as a sensible step to providing comfort for business and the community," said Mr Hawes.

"The timing of when we will achieve our renewable energy future is at times speculative, and this will hopefully embed some certainty."

Mr Hawes said getting to net zero was a priority goal for the region, and that won't be achieved without providing affordable and reliable energy.

"There's no doubt the region is keen to embrace renewables and there are many exciting examples of how business and industry are participating and driving innovation, but these efforts for a number of complex reasons including approvals and investment, are long-range."

"With the enormous ambitions in manufacturing and infrastructure that lie ahead of our region and the state more broadly, our energy demand curve is only going to increase. Having blackouts and energy cost blowouts will cripple these initiatives."

Closing the Lake Macquarie facility, which accounts for about 25 per cent of NSW's total power needs, would drive up the wholesale cost of electricity and potentially increase the chances of blackouts.

"Keeping Eraring open will give NSW more time to build the renewable energy infrastructure required to account for some of that shortfall, while also expanding the state's capacity to supply gas."

“The big pieces of the infrastructure road map are falling short and energy dependent business and industry would be in the bulls eye should brown outs and black outs occur.”

Along with Business NSW, Business Hunter is calling on the NSW Government to:

- Ensure that energy consumers don't carry the cost of keeping Eraring open in their bills;
- Remove planning barriers presently hindering the delivery of new energy infrastructure;
- Introduce a simple and accessible energy advice program for small businesses to help them reduce their costs and support them to get to net zero; and
- Ensure that gas supplies are brought online promptly to provide cleaner alternatives to burning coal.

For interviews please contact Bob Hawes: 0418 496 745