



**MINING &
ENERGY**
RELATED COUNCILS NSW



Strategic Plan 2023-2026

MINING AND ENERGY RELATED COUNCILS NSW



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Vision

As the peak body in NSW, empowering, resourcing
and advocating on behalf of local councils related by
mining and energy production



History

The nucleus of the Association was formed in 1978 at a conference in Wollongong, where it was clearly recognised that coal related local government areas needed to present a comprehensive, co-ordinated and co-operative approach to State and Federal Government. An alliance formed at a conference convened by Wollongong City Council in 1982 saw the birth of the Association of Coal Related Councils.

In 1993, the Association was approached to represent a metalliferous council and it became apparent that the Association could equally represent both interests and subsequently became the Association of Mine Related Councils.

In 1999, the Association expanded its base once again to represent Local Government in all aspects of mining, including extractive industries, gas exploration, quarries and minerals.

In 2013 a new Strategic framework was developed to guide the growth and direction of the Association. During 2014 in response to State Government policy related to Coal Seam Gas the Association developed a comprehensive position paper which outlined the merits and concerns around this industry.

In 2017 the Association adopted a new direction embracing the necessity and opportunities surrounding the growing renewable energy sector. Renaming the Association to reflect this new direction. Mining and Energy Related Councils NSW. This was updated in 2020.



Consultation

The Association through its network of member councils has developed a broad socio-political base. Member councils represent the large regional through to small country shires all with the same interest of addressing the challenges and opportunities mining brings to their local communities.

The Association consults widely through a variety of channels within and across local government associations, Joint Organisation networks, council senior staff associations and local councillors.

The Association has over time developed productive consultative relationships with peak mining & energy production groups and NSW Government departments. The Association has also canvassed the opinion and support from Ministers, Shadow Ministers, other political parties, environment groups, unions and various academic researchers.

The Association is the voice of the community in mining & energy related local government areas. It is apolitical and neutral.

Strategic Directions

Advocacy

Advocacy to ensure member councils are heard

Generating a dynamic and respected voice, effectively representing member councils & their communities affected by mining & energy production.

Resourcing

Resourcing to support member councils

Strengthening the local capacity of member councils through the sharing of expert knowledge and skills to protect the interests of their communities.

Empowering

Develop position statements to empower member councils

Empowering member councils with the tools to design, plan and negotiate effectively for the benefit of their communities.

Deliverables



Advocacy

Advocacy so that member councils are heard

Generating a dynamic and respected voice, representing member councils and their communities affected by mining and energy production.

Foster positive government & industry relationships

Action

Invitations issued to relevant NSW Ministers, Shadow Ministers, other political parties, their senior staff & industry leaders to attend meetings and to meet with Association delegations

Outcome

An ongoing dialogue built on mutual trust and bi-partisanship, based on respect and community enhancement

Communicate with councils and media

Action

Remind, promote & position councils as key to representing community interests for mining and energy developments to add value to their communities

Outcome

The promotion of local councils as key to representing community interests on mining & energy projects in their LGA's

Representation on government committees and taskforces

Action

Encourage Association delegates to be part of relevant government and industry working parties, forums and panels

Outcome

Ongoing positive relationships with working groups to ensure member councils receive strong representation and a fair hearing for their projects and concerns

Deliverables



Resourcing

Resourcing to support member councils

Strengthening local capacity of member councils through the sharing of expert knowledge and skills to protect the interests of their communities.

Closer Collaboration with members & technical staff

Action

Expand the influence of the Association beyond delegates to relevant council staff for the "sharing of lessons learnt" on DA's & council processes

Outcome

A sound working relationship is established with member council's staff on knowledge sharing, policy development & processes

Sponsor, Showcase and Share MERC Expertise

Action

Sponsor & showcase an event to demonstrate a culture of resource sharing across the Association for mining and energy developments

Outcome

Member councils are more informed on best practice in the assessment of DA's, policy development and processes

Marketing the Benefits of MERC Membership

Action

Develop and implement a Marketing Campaign for the branding and ongoing growth of the Association

Outcome

A revised and revitalized campaign will drive council enquiries and increased membership

Deliverables



Empowering

Position Statements to empower member councils

Empowering member councils with the tools to design, plan and negotiate effectively for the benefit of their communities.

Renewable Energy

Action

Review NSW Government policies and plans on Renewable Energy to inform members of the issues for their determination and actions

Outcome

Association will have provided members with relevant information on Renewable Energy for their individual policy consideration

Emerging Issues

Action

Provide members with information on relevant mining & energy production emerging issues

Outcome

Member councils will have up to date information on emerging issues as they evolve for informed decision making

Research Sponsorship

Action

Research fellowships will be offered to inform Association on relevant areas of concern – socio economic impacts, consultation, rehabilitation, etc.

Outcome

Member councils will have the benefit of expert advice and MOUs with major universities

Performance measures

Advocacy

- ☐ Number of State Ministers, Shadow Ministers, Political Parties, Senior Departmental staff, Industry groups attending Association meetings
- ☐ Number of meetings held by Association per year to review advocacy levels
- ☐ Regular reports by delegates on government working parties to Association meetings

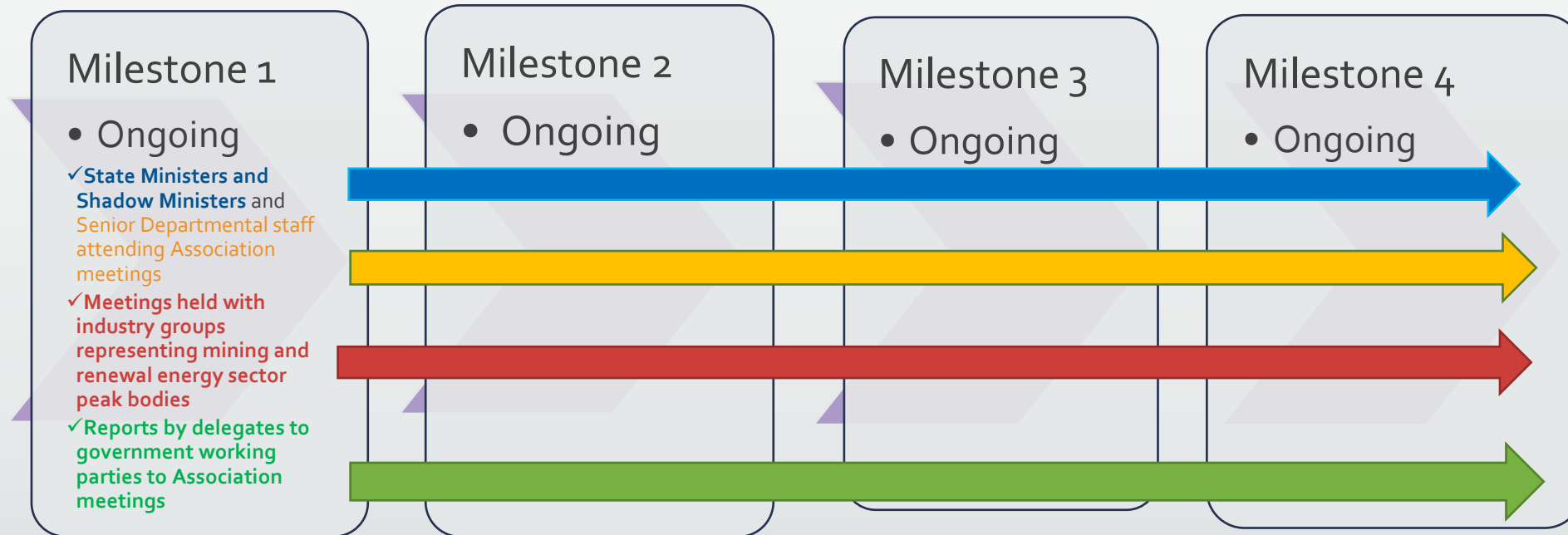
Resourcing

- ☐ Number of events/workshops held to showcase best practice on DA assessments, council policies and processes
- ☐ Establish a “sharing of lessons learnt” culture with staff of the Association
- ☐ A Marketing Campaign is developed and implemented in a timely manner

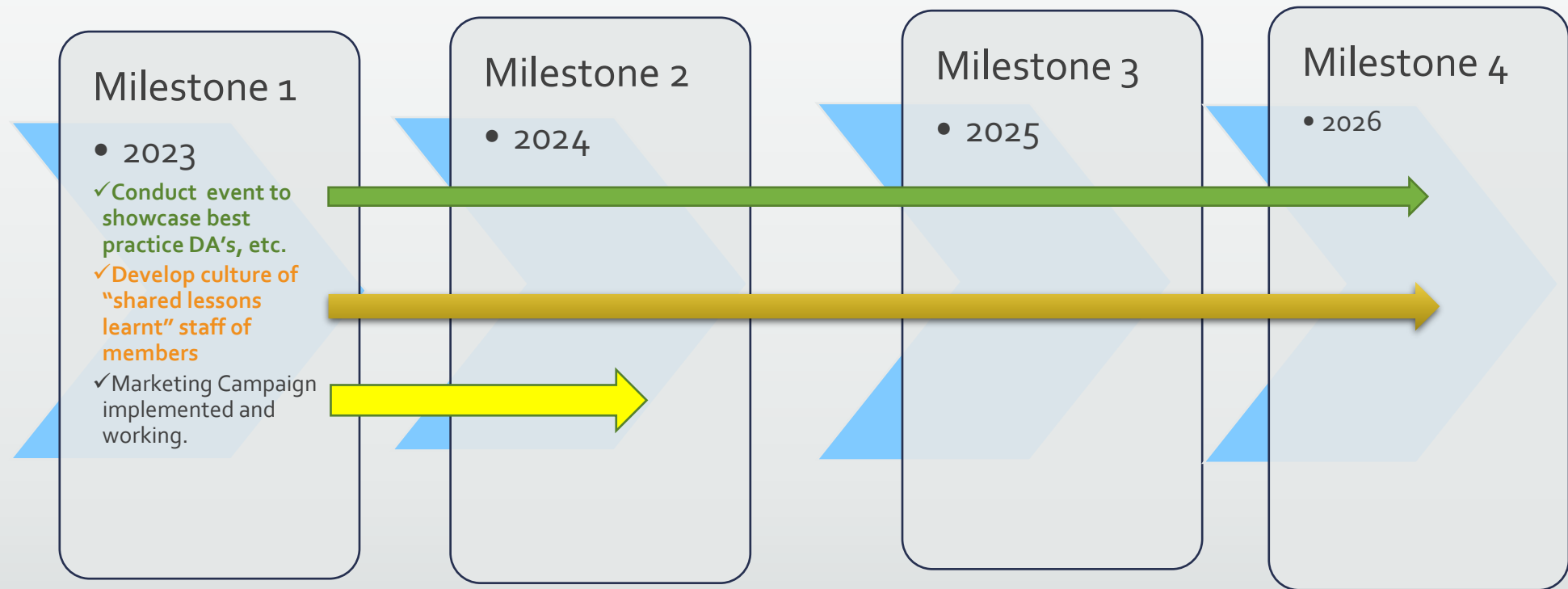
Empowering

- ☐ MOU with Universities in place for research on relevant topics for mining & energy production issues
- ☐ Reports by PhD students are regularly submitted to delegates as part of the sponsorship arrangement with Association
- ☐ Research proposals presented to at least one Association meeting each year for consideration

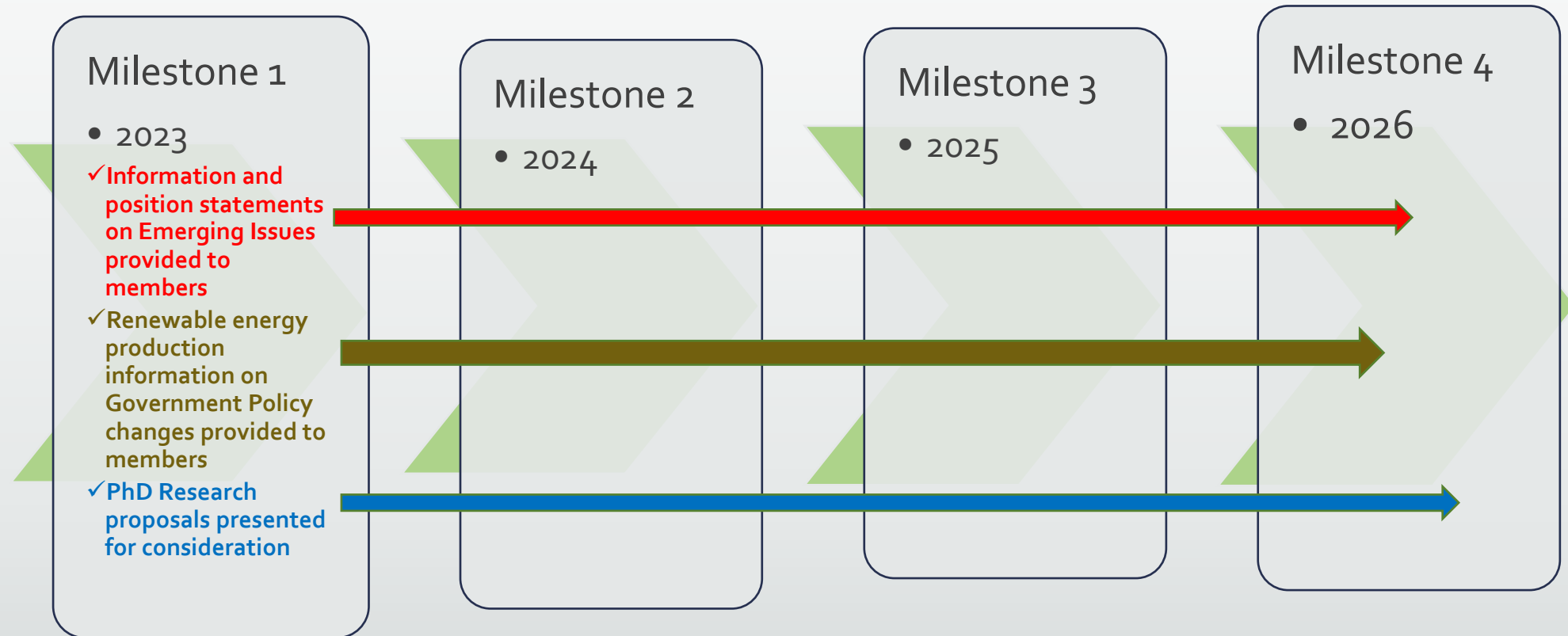
Strategic Direction – **Advocacy** – *Milestones*



Strategic Direction – **Resourcing** – *Milestones*



Strategic Direction – **Empowering**– *Milestones*



Strategic Plan KPIs

Advocacy

- At least one senior level Government or Industry presenter at each Association meeting to discuss priority issues raised by member councils
- Evidence of contact made with renewable energy sector peak bodies and dialogue established with the Association
- Reports from Association delegates circulated to Association members in a timely and accurate manner

Resourcing

- Number of events conducted on best practice for DA assessments, policy development and processes
- Number of expert staff in member councils involved to “share lessons learnt”
- Assessment of the Marketing Campaign is done annually

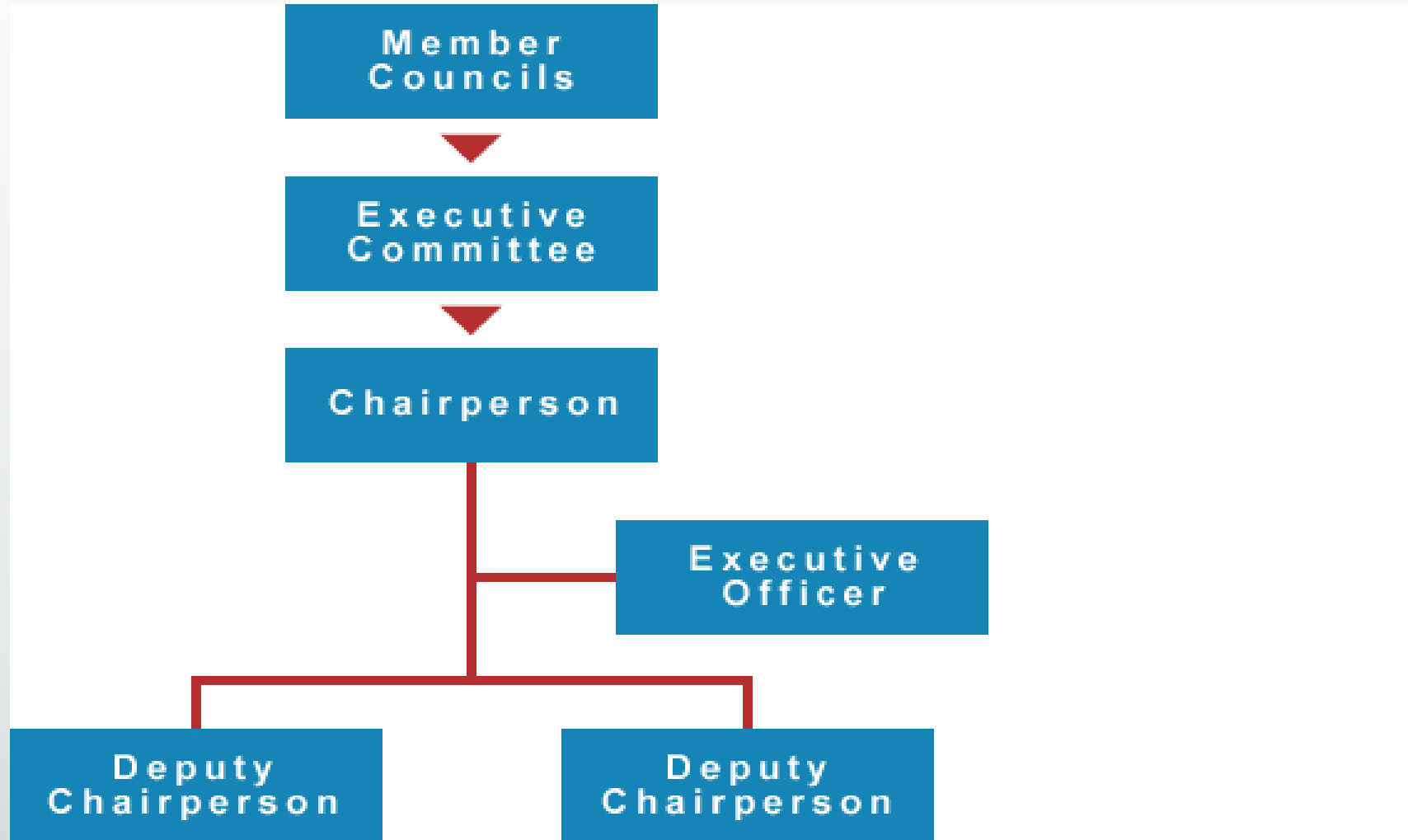
Empowering

- Position papers developed and submitted on Government renewable energy policies and plans and copies distributed to members
- MOU's signed with universities to research specific issues
- PhD Research students present to at least one Association meeting each year

Quarterly and Annual Reviews

- The Association will receive quarterly reviews from the Executive and Executive Officer on the progress of Milestones against Performance Measures
- An Annual Report will be provided by the EO, endorsed by the Executive Committee describing the Associations progress towards its Strategic Directions
- At the Association's Annual General Meeting Milestones and KPIs will be endorsed for the following year.

Organisational Structure





Mining and Energy Related Councils (MERC) represents 18 local government councils in NSW...with more intending to join.

Bland Shire Council, Blayney Shire Council, Broken Hill City Council, Cabonne Shire Council, Cobar Shire Council, Dubbo Regional Council, Forbes Shire Council, Gunnedah Shire Council, Lachlan Shire Council, Mid-Western Regional Council, Orange City Council, Parkes Shire Council, Upper Lachlan Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council, Walgett Shire Council, Warren Shire Council, Wollondilly Shire Council and Wollongong City Council.

The Association of *Mining and Energy Related Councils* NSW INC

2023 - 2026 Strategic Plan

