

2016 Annual Performance Report

Energy Retailers

JANUARY 2017

Economic Regulation Authority

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Economic Regulation Authority
Perth, Western Australia
Phone: (08) 6557 7900

Key Points for 2015-16

This is the latest in a series of annual reports¹ published by the Economic Regulation Authority that examines the performance of energy retailers that supply small use customers² in Western Australia.

The purpose of this report is to bring transparency and accountability to the performance of energy retail³ businesses that supply small use customers, and to benchmark, where possible, performance against similar businesses in other energy markets.

Energy Retail Market

The number of electricity retailers supplying small use customers increased to 10, with AER Retail, Amanda Energy and Kleenheat entering the market in 2015-16. Eight of these retailers supply customers in the south west of the State, supplied through Western Power's South West Interconnected System (**SWIS**).⁴ The remaining retailers, Rottnest Island Authority and Horizon Power, supply customers through their own distribution networks outside the SWIS.⁵

Despite the increase in the number of electricity retailers in the south west of the State the market is still quite concentrated, because legislation gives Synergy the exclusive right to supply customers who consume less than 50MWh of electricity per annum in the south west. In 2015-16 Synergy supplied 100 per cent of residential and 96.9 per cent of business customers.

The total number of electricity customers increased by 4.4 per cent in 2015-16. Residential customers increased by 5.0 per cent, while business customers fell by 0.5 per cent.

Most of the growth in residential customers was in the SWIS. Synergy's customer base increased by 5.1 per cent, compared to a 1.7 per cent increase in Horizon Power's customer base in regional areas. Most of the reduction (86 per cent of the total) in business customers was in regional areas supplied by Horizon Power.

The number of gas retailers (five) supplying small use customers has been unchanged for some time. Four of the five retailers supply natural gas in the south west of the State, and Esperance Gas Distribution Company supplies natural gas in Esperance.

The total number of gas customers increased by 3.5 per cent in 2015-16. Residential customers increased by 3.4 per cent, and business customers increased by 10.1 per cent.

The limited retail contestability in the south west natural gas market⁶ means the market is dominated by two retailers, Alinta Energy and Kleenheat. Since it first entered the market in 2012-13, Kleenheat has progressively increased its share, to 12.5 percent of residential

¹ Each report covers the year ending 30 June.

² Customers who consume less than 160MWh of electricity or 1 terajoule of gas per annum.

³ Electricity retail licensees, electricity integrated regional licensees who retail to small use customers and gas trading licensees.

⁴ The SWIS covers a geographic area from Kalbarri to Albany, and from Perth to Kalgoorlie.

⁵ Rottnest Island Authority is the exclusive retailer on Rottnest Island. Horizon Power is the only retailer currently supplying regional mainland areas of the State outside the SWIS.

⁶ The areas supplied with natural gas through the ATCO Australia Gas distribution systems.

and 15.4 per cent of business customers. The contestability limitations meant Synergy was unable to supply 99.9 per cent of residential and 74.6 per cent of business customers in 2015-16.

Affordability

The deteriorating economic conditions during 2015-16 has seen an increase in electricity and gas customers seeking assistance from their retailer, and more direct debit terminations due to default.

In electricity, 11.0 per cent of residential customers were granted more time to pay a bill (**payment extension**), up from 8.7 per cent in 2014-15. The proportion of business customers receiving a payment extension was also higher, up from 5.0 per cent in 2014-15 to 7.1 per cent in 2015-16.

Billing problems arising from Horizon Power's meter replacement program, and a meter reading issue in Broome, caused above average increases in residential and business payment extensions, at 13.1 per cent and 10.7 per cent respectively.

Alinta Energy granted payment extensions to 16.1 per cent of its residential gas customers and 20.0 per cent of business gas customers in 2015-16, up from 10.9 per cent and 13.0 per cent in 2014-15. Over the same period, the number of business gas customers granted payment extensions by Synergy increased from 17.8 per cent to 67.8 per cent.⁷

The proportion of electricity customers on instalment plans reached a six year peak in 2015-16; 4.7 per cent of residential and 1.5 per cent of business customers were on a plan. Synergy increased the proportion of its customers on a plan, after introducing a new strategy to assist customers experiencing payment difficulties.

The proportion of residential gas customers on an instalment plan has been close to 2 per cent for the past four years, while the proportion of business customers on a plan has risen from 0.4 per cent to 1.5 per cent.

Synergy reported a large increase in the number of residential electricity direct debit plans that were cancelled, increasing from 7,968 in 2014-15 to 11,742 in 2015-16. Business direct debit terminations were also higher, up from 315 to 485.

Alinta Energy's residential gas direct debit terminations were 26.3 per cent higher in 2015-16, reaching a six year peak of 1,128.

Disconnections

Despite the deterioration in economic conditions, the overall proportion of residential electricity customers disconnected for non-payment was almost the same as last year. In 2015-16, the overall residential disconnection rate was 0.96 per 100 customers, compared to 0.97 in 2014-15.

Horizon Power's residential disconnection rate increased from 2.83 per 100 customers to 4.38 per 100 customers. The proportion of its residential customers disconnected more than once in the past 24 months was higher, up from 16.7 per cent in 2014-15 to 27.9 per cent in 2015-16. However, following changes to its hardship procedures, residential

⁷ The reasons for the increase are discussed on page 9.

disconnections involving concession card holders fell, from 26.2 per cent in 2014-15 to 12.6 per cent in 2015-16.

The overall proportion of electricity business disconnections reached a six year peak, 0.70 per 100 customers, in 2015-16. Horizon Power reported the largest increase, up from 0.50 per 100 customers in 2014-15 to 1.63 per 100 customers in 2015-16.

The overall gas disconnection rates, and the disconnection rates of the two largest gas retailers, all reached a six year peak in 2015-16. The overall rate was 2.38 per 100 customers, while individual rates for Alinta Energy and Kleenheat were 2.46 per 100 customers and 1.83 per 100 customers, respectively. The overall residential disconnection rate has been trending upwards since 2013-14, when it was 1.52 per 100 customers.

More of Kleenheat's residential gas disconnections involved customers previously on an instalment plan, up from 8.6 per cent in 2014-15 to 33.5 per cent in 2015-16. The increase was due to changes in its reporting criteria (that captured more disconnections involving customers on instalment plans), and offering more payment options (involving instalment plans) to customers.

Both of the large gas retailers disconnected more business customers. Between 2014-15 and 2015-16, Alinta Energy's disconnection rate rose from 1.89 to 2.42 per 100 customers, and Kleenheat's disconnection rate rose from 1.03 to 2.70 per 100 customers.

Comparing the state-wide residential electricity and gas disconnection rates with that in other states gave a mixed result. Western Australia had the lowest residential electricity disconnection rate (0.96 per 100 customers), but the highest residential gas disconnection rate (2.38 per 100 customers).

Reconnections

The reconnections indicators measure the proportion of customers who are reconnected, in the same name at the same supply address, after being disconnected for non-payment of a bill. A key measure is the proportion of customers reconnected within seven days of disconnection, because it is considered to capture customers experiencing financial difficulties immediately prior to disconnection, or who might have avoided disconnection by engaging with their retailer.

The proportion of electricity and gas disconnections that were reconnected within seven days in 2015-16 were similar to the previous year.

The residential electricity and gas reconnection rates were 65.1 per cent and 43.8 per cent, respectively. Without the seven day time limit increased reconnection rates, to 72.3 per cent for electricity and 67.9 per cent for gas.

The electricity and gas business reconnection rates in 2015-16 were 53.5 per cent and 48.1 per cent, respectively. Without the seven day time limit the reconnection rates increased, to 64.0 per cent for electricity and 62.1 per cent for gas.

Horizon Power's residential electricity reconnection rates were higher, up from 21.3 per cent in 2014-15 to 40.7 per cent in 2015-16. The increase was attributed to the introduction of fully automated processes for disconnection and reconnection in 2015-16.

Complaints

Gas retailers received 50 per cent more complaints from residential customers (see the discussion about Alinta Energy's complaints below). The overall complaint rate increased from 0.18 per 100 customers in 2014-15, to 0.27 per 100 customers in 2015-16. In contrast, the level of complaints from residential electricity customers was slightly lower, down from 0.26 per 100 customers in 2014-15 to 0.24 per 100 customers in 2015-16.

Synergy's residential electricity complaints reached a six year low (0.19 per 100 customers) after it introduced new initiatives that enable its call centre staff to promptly resolve issues that might lead to complaints.

Alinta Energy's residential gas complaints were 57 per cent higher in 2015-16, because it introduced new customer service programmes that record all customer comments expressing dissatisfaction as complaints. The increase in Alinta Energy's complaints accounts for nearly all of the overall increase in residential complaints.

The proportion of residential complaints concluded within 15 business days by electricity and gas retailers gave mixed results. Kleenheat and Synergy reported modest improvements, while Alinta Energy and Horizon Power reported a significant decline in performance.

Horizon Power's complaint conclusion rate fell from 74.0 per cent in 2014-15 to 57.9 per cent in 2015-16, because of the large number of complaints about problems related to its meter replacement project.

Alinta Energy's complaint conclusion rate fell from 96.3 per cent in 2014-15 to 71.0 per cent in 2015-16, because of an increase in complaints about metering and high bills that required investigation with the distributor.

The overall level of complaints from electricity and gas business customers in 2015-16 was very similar to 2014-15. In 2015-16, the electricity complaint rate was slightly higher, at 0.29 per 100 customers, while the gas complaint rate was slightly lower, at 0.20 per 100 customers.

Alinta Energy's electricity business complaint rate fell from 0.98 per 100 customers in 2014-15 to 0.12 per 100 customers in 2015-16. It attributed the reduction to the introduction of dedicated account managers, who provide a direct communication channel for all matters related to an account.

Horizon Power's electricity business complaint rate increased from 0.30 per 100 customers in 2014-15 to 1.46 per 100 customers in 2015-16, because of the problems related to its meter replacement project. There was also a reduction in the proportion of these complaints resolved within 15 business days, down from 60.0 per cent in 2014-15 to 40.9 per cent in 2015-16.

Call Centre Performance

The volume of calls to electricity retailer call centres was slightly lower in 2015-16, continuing the long-term downward trend.

Horizon Power's call centre received 14 per cent more calls in 2015-16. Most of the additional calls were about the problems related to its meter replacement project.

Rottnest Island Authority's call centre received 62.8 per cent less calls in 2015-16, due to a new initiative to improve the service provided to customers.⁸

The volume of calls to gas retailer call centres was 11.2 per cent lower in 2015-16. Most of the reduction was due to Alinta Energy's call centre taking 13.2 per cent less calls.

⁸ The initiatives include undertaking more preventative maintenance, and having an increased presence on the island (called "Island Office") during office hours. The office handles all minor maintenance works that previously had to be logged by the Authority's staff via the call centre.

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About this Report

The Economic Regulation Authority (**ERA**) is the independent economic regulator in Western Australia responsible for administering the licensing schemes for energy retailers.⁹

The ERA reports on energy retailers' performance under its obligation to monitor and report to the Minister for Energy on the operation of the licensing schemes.¹⁰ This is the 10th annual report on retailer performance.

Performance reporting enhances transparency and accountability, and promotes greater integrity in the market. It also provides incentives for retailers to improve performance, and helps to identify emerging issues requiring a compliance response.

It should be noted that performance reporting obligations only apply to small use customers as defined under the licensing legislation. These are residential and business customers whose annual consumption is less than 160MWh of electricity or one terajoule of gas.

The report is structured as follows:

- **Energy Retail Market Overview:** this section looks at the overall number of electricity and gas retailers, the number of those retailers that supply small use customers, and retailers' shares in the small use customer markets.
- **Affordability:** this sections looks at the assistance given to customers in temporary or longer-term financial difficulties (granting customers more time to pay and offering instalment plans) and customer billing (on-time billing and placing customers on a shortened billing cycle). The number of direct debit plan terminations due to default is also discussed.
- **Disconnections and Reconnections:** this section looks at the rates of customer disconnection for non-payment, and reconnection of these customers. Information is provided about disconnections involving customers who were on instalment plans, receiving a government funded concession or who have been previously disconnected within the past 24 months.
- **Complaints:** this section looks at how satisfied customers are with their retailer, measured by the number of complaints, and the effectiveness of retailers' complaint handling procedures.
- **Call Centre Performance:** this section looks at how easy it is for customers to contact their retailer by telephone using three industry standard key responsiveness measures.
- **Electricity Retailer Service Standard Payments:** this section looks at the number of payments made by electricity retailers for late reconnection, wrongful disconnection and failing to provide a timely response to complaints.

⁹ The licensing scheme for electricity retailers is in Part 2 of the *Electricity Industry Act* (Electricity Act) and the licensing scheme for gas retailers is in Part 2A of the *Energy Coordination Act 1994* (Gas Act).

¹⁰ Section 38 of the Electricity Act and section 11AA of the Gas Act.

Energy Retail Market Overview

This section looks at:

- the total number of electricity and gas retailers;¹¹
- the number of retailers supplying small use electricity and gas customers; and
- retailers' share of the small use electricity and gas markets.

Energy Retailers

Table 1 shows the number of licensed electricity and gas retailers.

Table 1: Number of licensed electricity and gas retailers as at 30 June 2016

| Licensed Retailers | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| All retailers | 16 | 17 | 19 | 24 | 28 | 29 |
| Retailers supplying small use customers | 6 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 10 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |

The total number of licensed electricity retailers has increased each year since 2010-11. In 2015-16 CleanTech Energy Pty Ltd was granted a licence to supply large use customers only.

Three electricity retailers amended their licences to allow them to supply small use customers in 2015-16:

- Premier Power Sales amended its licence and also changed the name on the licence to that of its parent company, Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas Pty Ltd (trading as Kleenheat);
- AER Retail Pty Ltd; and
- Amanda Energy Pty Ltd.

Clear Energy was granted a licence to supply small use customers in 2010, but it has not been active since.

Eight of the 10 electricity retailers supply customers through the South West Interconnected System (SWIS).¹² The remaining retailers, Rottnest Island Authority and Horizon Power, supply customers through their own distribution networks outside the SWIS.¹³

The licensing scheme for gas retailers differs from that for electricity retailers. Only retailers that supply small use customers need a licence.

The number of gas retailers has remained unchanged for the past six years.

¹¹ This includes electricity retailers who only supply large use customers (whose annual consumption is greater than 160MWh).

¹² The South West Interconnected System comprises the transmission and distribution networks operated by Western Power, which covers a geographic area from Kalbarri to Albany, and from Perth to Kalgoorlie.

¹³ Rottnest Island Authority is the exclusive retailer on Rottnest Island. Horizon Power is the only retailer currently supplying regional mainland areas of the State outside the SWIS.

As at 30 June 2016, four retailers were licensed to supply both electricity and gas to small use customers: Alinta Energy, Perth Energy, Synergy and Kleenheat.

Customers

Throughout the rest of this report the term ‘customer’ means ‘small use customer’.

Electricity Customers

Horizon Power and Rottnest Island Authority are the only retailers that do not supply their customers through the SWIS. Both retailers supply customers through their own distribution networks.

Table 2 shows the total number of electricity customers. In 2015-16, a 5.0 per cent increase in residential customers and a 0.6 per cent decrease in business customers combined to give an overall 4.4 per cent increase in customers.

Table 2: Total number of electricity customers

| | Residential | Business | Total | Change from previous year |
|----------------|-------------|----------|-----------|---------------------------|
| 2010-11 | 921,374 | 100,491 | 1,021,865 | 4.1% |
| 2011-12 | 928,841 | 97,131 | 1,025,972 | 0.4% |
| 2012-13 | 930,593 | 107,986 | 1,038,579 | 1.2% |
| 2013-14 | 950,598 | 110,865 | 1,061,463 | 2.2% |
| 2014-15 | 973,016 | 110,790 | 1,083,806 | 2.1% |
| 2015-16 | 1,021,551 | 110,289 | 1,131,840 | 4.4% |

Table 3 compares the number of customers supplied by each retailer in the past two years.

Table 3: Electricity residential and business customers by retailer

| Retailer | Residential | | | Business | | | Total | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Change from 2014-15 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Change from 2014-15 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Change from 2014-15 |
| Alinta Energy | 0 | 0 | | 2,548 | 2428 | -4.7% | 2,548 | 2428 | -4.7% |
| A-Star | 0 | 0 | | 17 | 0 | -100.0% | 17 | 0 | -100.0% |
| AER Retail | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 21 | 100.0% | 0 | 21 | 100.0% |
| Amanda Energy | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 76 | 100.0% | 0 | 76 | 100.0% |
| Horizon Power | 38299 | 38936 | 1.7% | 8,224 | 7873 | -4.3% | 46,523 | 46809 | 0.6% |
| Kleenheat | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 28 | 100.0% | 0 | 28 | 100.0% |
| Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | | 364 | 599 | 64.6% | 364 | 599 | 64.6% |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 0 | 0 | | 26 | 25 | -3.8% | 26 | 25 | -3.8% |
| Synergy | 934717 | 982615 | 5.1% | 99,611 | 99239 | -0.4% | 1,034,328 | 1,081,854 | 4.6% |
| All Retailers | 973016 | 1021551 | 5.0% | 110,790 | 110289 | -0.5% | 1,083,806 | 1131840 | 4.4% |

Horizon Power and Synergy are the only retailers that supply residential customers. Both retailers increased their residential customer base in 2015-16.

Perth Energy increased its customer base in 2015-16 following a number of sales initiatives across its key market segments.

Kleenheat and Amanda Energy commenced supplying small use customers in 2015-16.

A-Star exited the business market in 2015-16. Its customers were transferred to AER Retail.

The other retailers' business customer bases were between 0.4 per cent and 4.7 per cent lower.

In 2015-16, retailers in the SWIS supplied 96.2 per cent of residential, and 92.8 per cent of business customers in the State. Synergy was the largest supplier in the SWIS with 100 per cent of residential and 96.9 per cent of business customers.

Contestable Electricity Customers

In the SWIS, Synergy is the only retailer that can supply non-contestable customers, who have an annual consumption of less than 50MWh.¹⁴ Customers with an annual consumption between 50MWh and 160MWh can choose their retailer.

There is full retail contestability in all the areas outside of the SWIS. In practice customers in these areas are supplied by a single retailer: Rottnest Island Authority is the only retailer on Rottnest Island, and Horizon Power is currently the only retailer supplying small use customers in other mainland areas of the State.

Table 4 compares the number of contestable customers supplied by each retailer in the past two years.¹⁵

Table 4: Contestable electricity customers

| Retailer | Residential | | | Business | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Change from 2014-15 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Change from 2014-15 |
| Alinta Energy | 0 | 0 | | 2,548 | 2,428 | -4.7% |
| AER Retail | 0 | 0 | | 17 | 0 | -100.0% |
| A-Star | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 21 | 100.0% |
| Amanda Energy | 0 | | | 0 | 76 | 100.0% |
| Horizon Power | 38,299 | 38,936 | 1.7% | 8,224 | 7,873 | -4.3% |
| Kleenheat | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 28 | 100.0% |
| Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | | 364 | 599 | 64.6% |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 0 | 0 | | 26 | 25 | -3.8% |
| Synergy | 290 | 292 | 0.7% | 5,947 | 6,261 | 5.3% |
| Total | 38,589 | 39,228 | 1.7% | 17,126 | 17,311 | 1.1% |

In 2015-16, only 0.03 per cent (unchanged from 2014-15) of residential and 9.2 per cent (8.7 per cent in 2014-15) of business customers in the SWIS were contestable.

¹⁴ The *Electricity Corporations (Prescribed Customers) Order 2007* sets the contestability threshold.

¹⁵ Table 30 in Appendix 1 provides details of contestable electricity customers over the past six years.

Electricity Pre-Payment Meter Customers

Pre-payment meter customers are required to pay for their electricity prior to consumption. The regulatory framework governing pre-payment services restricts the use of pre-payment meters to prescribed areas.¹⁶

Until 2010, the deployment of pre-payment meters was restricted to a limited number of Aboriginal and remote communities that are supplied by Horizon Power. Since 2010, Synergy has been supplying pre-payment customers in the Ninga Mia Aboriginal community in the Goldfields.

Table 5 shows the number of pre-payment customers supplied by Horizon Power and Synergy.

Table 5: Electricity pre-payment meter customers by retailer

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Horizon Power | 705 | 784 | 811 | 845 | 1,014 | 1,202 |
| Synergy | 20 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 16 |
| Total | 725 | 801 | 828 | 861 | 1,030 | 1,218 |

The number of pre-payment customers increased by 18.3 per cent in 2015-16. The new customers were all supplied by Horizon Power. Since 2010-11, the number of pre-payment customers supplied by Horizon Power has increased by 70.5 per cent.

Up until 2013-14, the growth in pre-payment customers slowed, because Horizon Power was unable to obtain compliant pre-payment meters.¹⁷ In 2014-15, Horizon Power began installing compliant meters in the Mungallah Community in Carnarvon, which has now been completed. There has also been an increase due to the completion of the AMI¹⁸ meter replacement program in 2015-16.

Gas Customers

Alinta, Synergy and Kleenheat¹⁹ supply customers through the gas distribution networks operated by ATCO Gas Australia (**ATCO**). EGDC²⁰ supplies customers through the distribution network operated by a related company.²¹

Table 6 shows the total number of gas customers.

¹⁶ These areas have been declared by the Minister for Energy, and published in the *Government Gazette*.

¹⁷ Part 9 of the *Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers* specifies the functional requirements for pre-payment meters.

¹⁸ Advanced Metering Infrastructure

¹⁹ Kleenheat supplies a small number of customers on two distribution networks it owns, in Albany (Oyster Harbour) and Margaret River.

²⁰ Esperance Gas Distribution Company.

²¹ Esperance Power Station operates the gas distribution network in Esperance.

Table 6: Total number of gas customers

| | Residential | Non-Residential | Total | Change from previous year |
|----------------|-------------|-----------------|---------|---------------------------|
| 2010-11 | 616,431 | 8,513 | 624,944 | 2.0% |
| 2011-12 | 629,142 | 8,612 | 637,754 | 2.0% |
| 2012-13 | 632,822 | 8,552 | 641,374 | 0.6% |
| 2013-14 | 657,899 | 8,626 | 666,525 | 3.9% |
| 2014-15 | 675,874 | 9,139 | 685,013 | 2.8% |
| 2015-16 | 699,117 | 10,059 | 709,176 | 3.5% |

In 2015-16, a 3.4 per cent increase in residential customers and a 10.1 per cent increase in business customers combined to give an increase of 3.5 per cent in total customers.

Table 7 compares the number of customers supplied by each retailer in the past two years.

Table 7: Gas residential and business customers by retailer

| Retailer | Residential | | | Business | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Change from 2014-15 | 2015 | 2016 | Change from 2014-15 |
| Alinta Energy | 628,171 | 611,142 | -2.7% | 8,127 | 8,319 | 2.4% |
| Synergy | 0 | 0 | 0% | 107 | 137 | 28.0% |
| Kleenheat | 47,353 | 87,648 | 85.1% | 871 | 1,554 | 78.4% |
| EGDC | 350 | 327 | -6.6% | 34 | 49 | 44.1% |
| Total | 675,874 | 699,117 | 3.4% | 9,139 | 10,059 | 10.1% |

In 2015-16, Kleenheat increased its share of the residential and business markets. It supplied 12.5 per cent (up from 7.0 per cent in 2014-15) of residential customers and 15.4 per cent (up from 9.7 per cent in 2014-15) of business customers. The increases resulted from an ongoing marketing campaign in the areas it supplies.

Synergy increased its business customer base in 2015-16, following a targeted acquisition campaign.

EGDC increased its business customer base.

Table 8 compares the number of residential and business customers covered by the Gas Market Moratorium (**Moratorium**) in the past two years.²²

Table 8: Residential and business customers covered by the Gas Market Moratorium

| Retailer | Residential | | | Business | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Change from 2014-15 | 2015 | 2016 | Change from 2014-15 |
| Alinta Energy | 628,007 | 611,002 | -2.7% | 6,342 | 6,766 | 6.7% |
| Kleenheat | 47,350 | 87,646 | 85.1% | 492 | 735 | 49.4% |
| Total | 675,357 | 698,648 | 3.4% | 6,834 | 7,501 | 9.8% |

Comparing Table 8 with Table 7 shows that 99.9 per cent of residential customers and 74.6 per cent of business customers are covered by the Moratorium.

²² In the areas supplied by Alinta Energy, the Moratorium prevents Synergy from supplying customers who consume less than 0.18 terajoules per annum. The Moratorium does not apply to other retailers.

Affordability

The *Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers* (**electricity code**) and the *Compendium of Gas Customer Licence Obligations* (**gas compendium**) require retailers to offer assistance to residential customers experiencing payment difficulties or financial hardship.

Payment difficulties is where the customer is unable to pay an outstanding amount because of a change in circumstances (i.e. loss of income, unexpected costs, etc).

Financial hardship is where the customer is unable to pay an outstanding amount without affecting their ability to meet their basic living needs (rent or mortgage, groceries, other utilities etc.).

The electricity code and the gas compendium require retailers to offer residential customers in payment difficulties or financial hardship:

- additional time to pay a bill; and
- an interest-free and fee-free instalment plan to pay a bill or to pay arrears (including any disconnection or reconnection charges);²³

Retailers must ensure the instalment plan is fair and reasonable, taking into account the customer's capacity to pay.

Retailers are also required to:

- give reasonable consideration to a request to reduce the customer's fees, charges or debt;
- advise customers about concessions and how to access them;
- advise customers about independent financial counselling services and other assistance services that are available; and
- advise customers of other financial assistance and grants schemes and how to access them.

Retailers must consider any reasonable request for alternative payment arrangements from a business customer who is experiencing payment difficulties. In practice, retailers offer their business customers most of the assistance options that are available to residential customers.

Retailers are also required to report on their on-time billing performance. The electricity code and the gas compendium regulate the minimum and maximum period of time between bills. A retailer may bill customers outside the regulated time limits with their consent.

Customers can enter into a direct debit arrangement to smooth the cost of their energy consumption over the year. Retailers are required to record the number of direct debit plans they have terminated as a result of default or non-payment by a customer covering two or more successive payment periods. The number of direct debit terminations is seen as an indicator of financial stress among the customers who have these plans.

A-Star, AER Retail and Amanda Energy did not provide any assistance to their business customers in 2015-16.

²³ Retailers are only required to offer an instalment plan to customers experiencing payment difficulties if they request one.

Granting customers more time to pay a bill

Granting the customer more time to pay all, or part of, a bill may be a useful approach to addressing temporary financial difficulties, such as short-term cash flow problems.

Electricity customers granted more time to pay

Figure 1 shows the percentage of residential and business electricity customers granted more time to pay a bill.²⁴

Horizon Power has provided adjusted data for 2014-15, which has been included in Figures 1 and 2.²⁵

Figure 1: Percentage of electricity customers granted more time to pay a bill

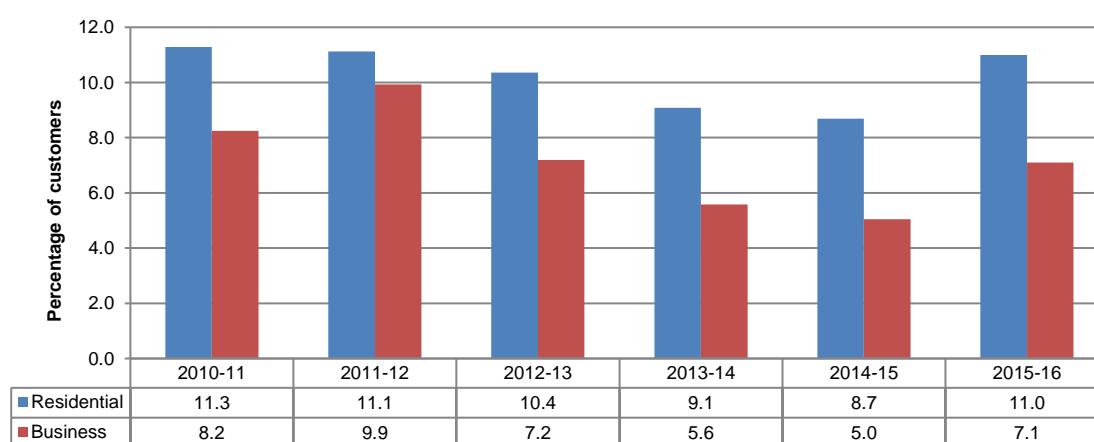
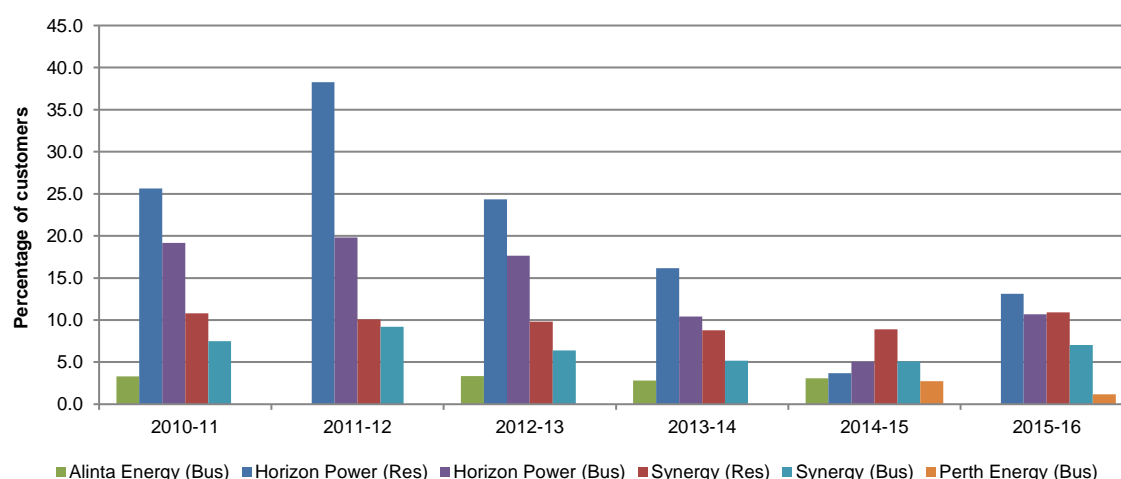


Figure 2 shows the percentage of residential and business electricity customers granted more time to pay a bill by each retailer.

Figure 2: Percentage of electricity customers granted more time to pay a bill by each retailer



²⁴ Kleenheat also granted one customer more time to pay a bill in 2015-16.

²⁵ Horizon Power included customers who were not experiencing payment difficulties or financial hardship in their 2014-15 data. Applying the correction has reduced the number of residential customers from 8,147 to 1,408 and the number of business customers from 1,394 to 417.

The percentage of Horizon Power's residential customers granted more time to pay increased from 3.1 per cent in 2014-15 to 13.1 per cent in 2015-16. The percentage of business customers granted more time to pay also increased, up from 5.1 per cent in 2014-15 to 10.7 per cent in 2015-16.

Horizon Power attributed the increase to a meter reader incorrectly recording meter readings in Broome during December 2015, as well as customers' perception that their new meter has led to higher bills.²⁶ Extreme weather in the Kimberley was also a contributing factor. In Broome, a hot dry summer increased the use of air conditioners.

Synergy reported a higher percentage of customers granted more time to pay in 2015-16. The residential percentage increased from 8.9 per cent to 10.9 per cent, and the business percentage increased from 5.1 per cent to 7.0 per cent. Synergy commented that 2015-16 was a difficult year for residential customers, with increasing demands on their disposable income due to a decline in economic conditions.

Gas customers granted more time to pay

Table 9 shows the percentage of residential and business gas customers granted more time to pay a bill by each retailer.

Table 9: Percentage of gas customers granted more time to pay a bill by each retailer

| Retailer | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Residential | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 9.8 | 11.9 | 10.9 | 16.1 |
| EGDC | 6.8 | 3.2 | 4.3 | 0.0 |
| Kleenheat | 0.0 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.8 |
| Total | 9.7 | 11.5 | 10.1 | 14.2 |
| Business | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 9.0 | 15.8 | 13.0 | 20.0 |
| Synergy | 92.2 | 0.0 | 17.8 | 67.9 |
| Kleenheat | 0.0 | 7.3 | 4.0 | 0.1 |
| EGDC | 5.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 10.3 | 15.3 | 12.1 | 17.4 |

The percentage of Synergy's business customers granted more time to pay a bill increased in 2015-16. Synergy attributed the increase to its enhanced collection strategy, which commenced in May 2014. The strategy uses increased electronic messaging and outbound collection calls to customers experiencing payment difficulties. It also aligned its residential and business payment plan policies, giving business customers greater payment flexibility.

The percentage of residential and business customers granted more time to pay by Alinta Energy both increased in 2015-16. It attributed the increases to new business processes and outbound calling to customers with overdue debt.

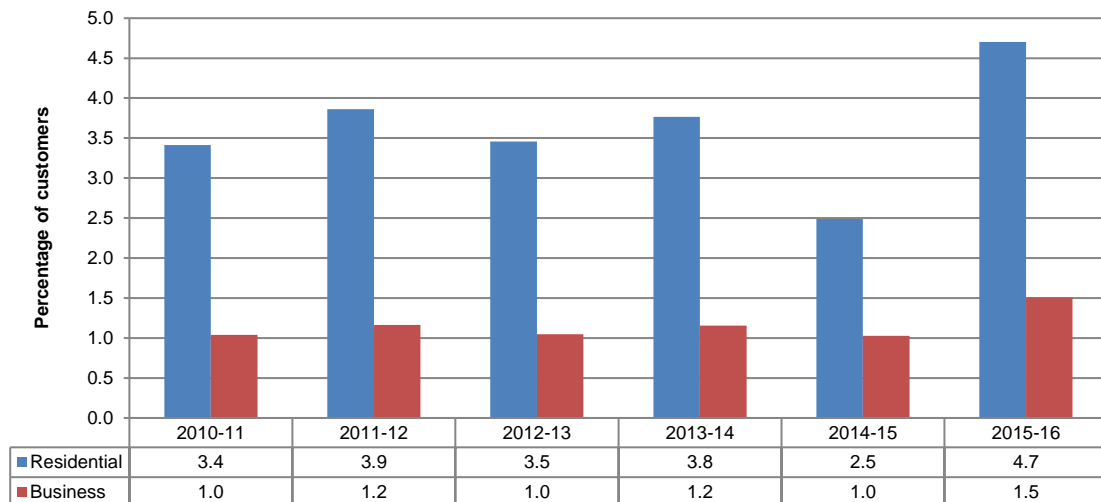
²⁶ During 2015-16, Horizon Power replaced all the meters under their Advanced Metering Infrastructure program.

Instalment Plans

Electricity customers on instalment plans

Figure 3 shows the percentages of residential and business customers on instalment plans.

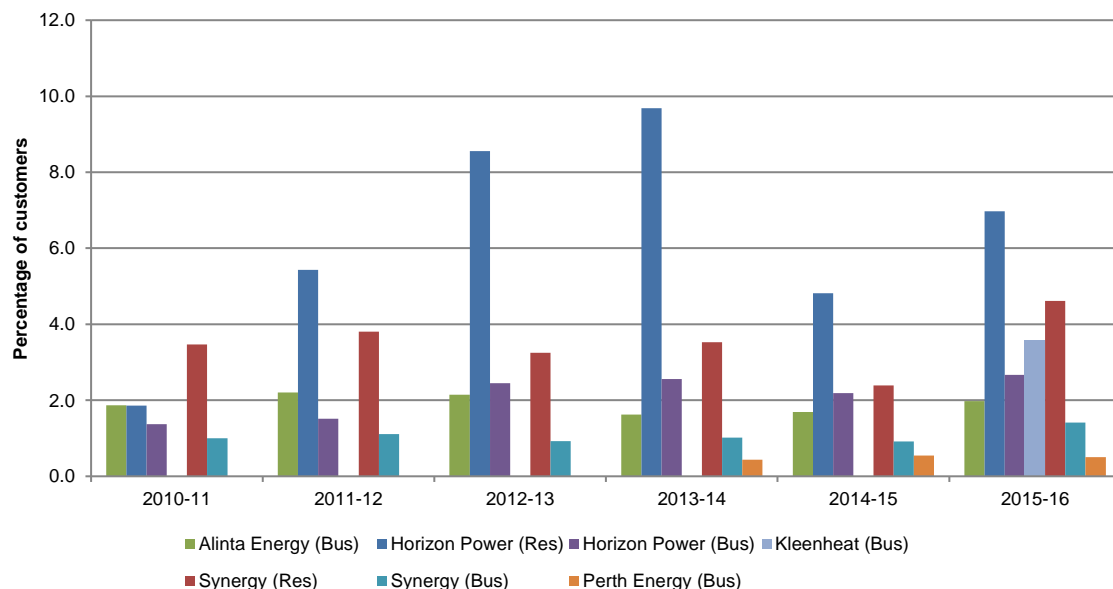
Figure 3: Percentage of electricity residential and business electricity customers on instalment plans



The percentage of residential and business customers on instalment plans were both at a six year peak in 2015-16.

Figure 4 shows the percentage of electricity customers on instalment plans for each retailer.

Figure 4: Percentage of electricity retailers' residential and business customers on instalment plans



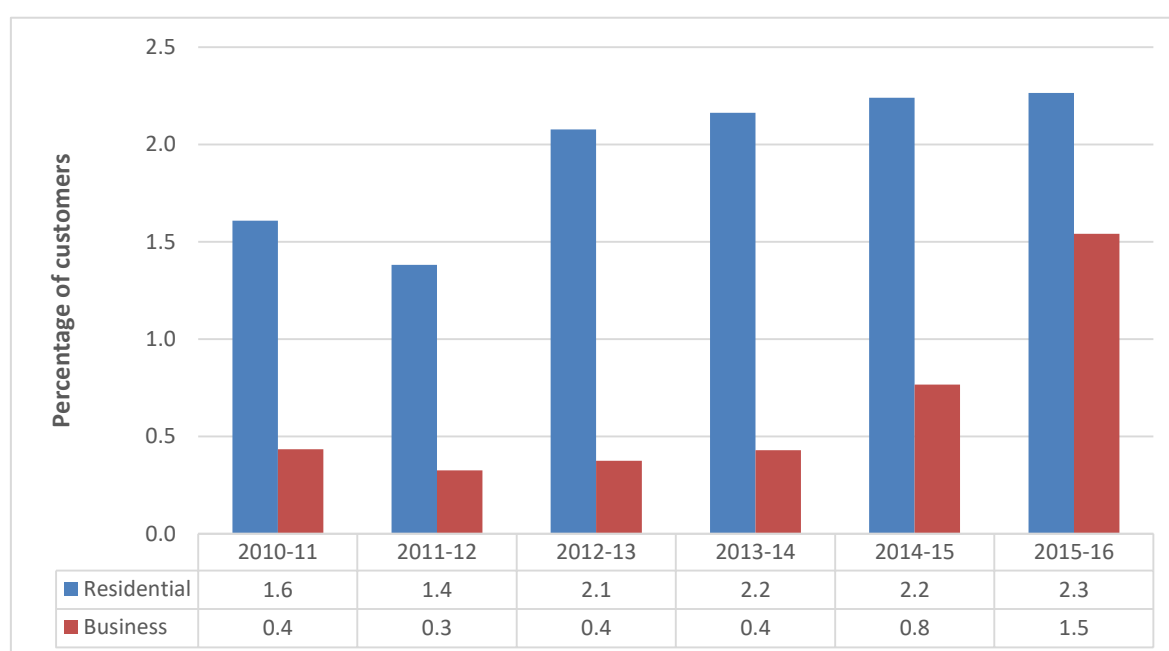
The percentage of Horizon Power's residential customers on an instalment plan increased from 4.8 per cent in 2014-15 to 7.0 per cent in 2015-16.²⁷ The increase was attributed to metering issues.²⁸

Synergy reported an increase in the percentage of customers on instalment plans. The residential percentage increased from 2.4 per cent to 4.6 per cent, and the business percentage increased from 0.9 per cent to 1.4 per cent. The reasons for the increase were due to its new strategy to assist customers experiencing payment difficulties.

Gas customers on instalment plans

Figure 6 shows the percentage of residential and business gas customers on instalment plans.

Figure 5: Percentage of gas customers on instalment plans



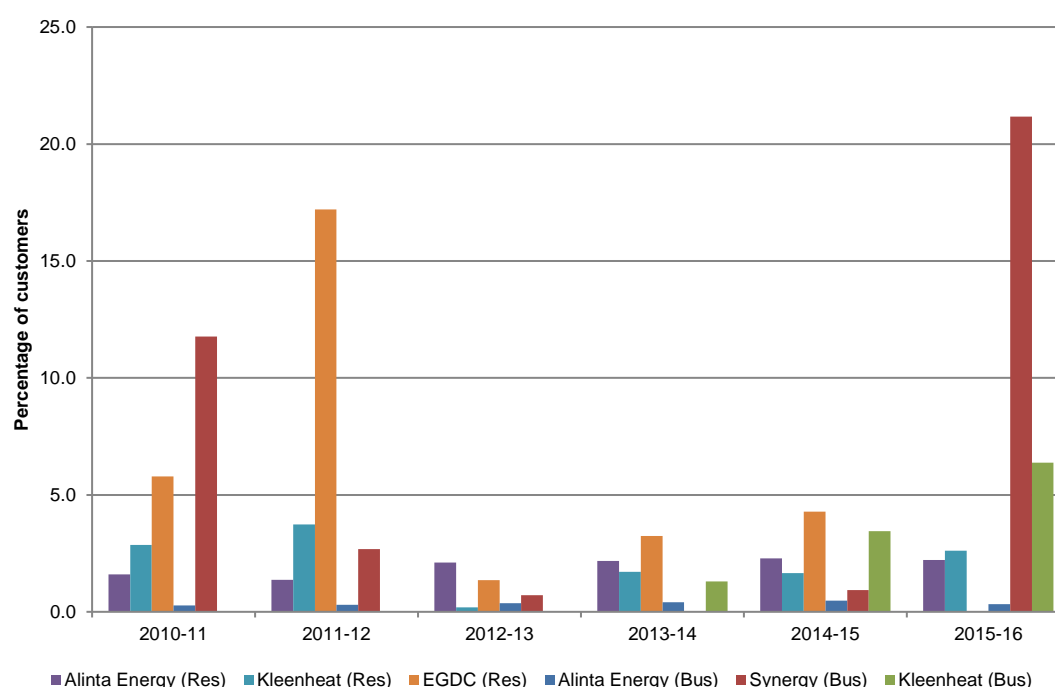
The percentage of gas business customers on an instalment plan increased in 2015-16, while the percentage for residential customers was almost unchanged. The percentage of residential customers on an instalment plan has been close to 2.0 per cent for the past four years.

Figure 7 shows that Kleenheat and Synergy were the main contributors to the overall increase in business customers on an instalment plan. Both retailers cited the recent downturn in economic activity as the main reason for more business customers using instalment plans.

Synergy also explained that, because of the higher risk of payment default among its business customers, it had actively engaged with customers earlier in their debt collection procedure to agree on an instalment plan.

²⁷ Horizon Power provided amended data for 2014-15. The residential customer percentage was adjusted from 7.5 per cent to 4.8 per cent and the business customer percentage was adjusted from 3.2 per cent to 2.2 per cent.

²⁸ For more information refer to the discussion under customers granted more time to pay on page 9.

Figure 6: Percentage of gas retailer's residential and business gas customers on instalment plans

Customer Billing

Electricity Customer On-time Billing

The electricity code prescribes a minimum and maximum interval between bills of one month and three months, respectively.

Retailers are required to report on the number of late bills issued to customers, and the proportion of the late bills that resulted from a fault on the part of the retailer.

Table 10 shows the number and percentage of residential electricity customers that received bills outside the prescribed timeframes (due to the fault of the retailer).

Table 10: Residential electricity customers billed outside prescribed timeframes (due to the fault of the retailer)

| Retailer | Number of customers | | | | Percentage of customers | | | |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Horizon Power | .. ²⁹ | 516 | 108 | 124 | 0.0 | 1.4 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| Synergy | 12,231 ³⁰ | 3,720 | 5,935 | 5,398 | 1.4 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.5 |
| Total | 12,231 | 4,236 | 6,043 | 5,522 | 1.3 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.5 |

Table 11 shows the number and percentage of electricity business customers that received bills outside the prescribed timeframes, for any reason.

²⁹ Horizon Power was not able to report separate values for residential and business customers. The total number of late bills issued in 2012-13 was 19,655.

³⁰ There was an error in the data in the 2013 report, which stated 29,098 customers received late bills.

Table 11: Total electricity business customers billed outside the prescribed timeframes

| Retailer | Number | | | | Percentage | | | |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Horizon Power | - | 637 | 220 | 298 | 0.0 | 6.9 | 2.7 | 3.8 |
| Synergy | 6,397 | 1,749 | 1,273 | 967 | 6.5 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 1.0 |
| Total | 6,397 | 2,386 | 1,493 | 1,265 | 5.9 | 2.2 | 1.3 | 1.1 |

The reduction in the number of late bills issued by Synergy since 2013-14 was the result of assigning specialist resources to monitor and resolve bills at risk of being late.

Horizon Power commented:

During 2015/16, Horizon Power replaced virtually all meters resulting in a variety of legacy issues being uncovered, most especially for business customers with more complex current transformer metering installations. These included installations being under billed, for example due to incorrect wiring, blown fuses and incorrect multipliers. Resolution of these issues within the context of a full meter replacement program resulted in a relatively minor increase in business customers billed outside the prescribed timeframe.

Gas Customer On-time Billing

The gas compendium prescribes a minimum and maximum interval between bills of one month and three months, respectively.³¹

Alinta Energy and Kleenheat were the only gas retailers to issue bills outside the prescribed timeframes during 2015-16.

Table 12 shows the total number and percentage of gas residential customers that received bills outside the prescribed timeframes (due to the fault of the retailer).

Table 12: Residential gas customers billed outside prescribed timeframes (due to the fault of the retailer)

| Retailer | Number of customers | | | | Percentage of customers | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 9,256 | 8,080 | 8,213 | 8,478 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.4 |
| Kleenheat | 0 | 220 | 25 | 195 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Total | 9,256 | 8,300 | 8,238 | 8,673 | 1.5 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 1.2 |

The large increase in customers receiving late bills in 2015-16 did not result in a similar increase in the percentage. This was because of the number of customers increased by 85 per cent over the same period.³²

Table 13 shows the number and percentage of gas business customers that received bills outside of the prescribed timeframes, for any reason.

³¹ The 105 day maximum aligns with the billing frequency in ATCO's access arrangement for its distribution networks. ATCO is responsible for reading customer meters and supplying the data to retailers.

³² Refer to Table 7.

Table 13: Total business gas customers billed outside the prescribed timeframes

| Retailer | Number of customers | | | | Percentage of customers | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 271 | 365 | 343 | 394 | 3.2 | 4.4 | 4.2 | 4.7 |
| Kleenheat | 0 | 36 | 66 | 58 | 0.0 | 15.5 | 7.6 | 3.7 |
| EGDC | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 9.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Synergy | 0 | 0 | 0 ³³ | 1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.7 |
| Total | 271 | 404 | 409 | 453 | 3.2 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.5 |

Security Deposits

A security deposit is a refundable advance payment made by a customer to secure connection or reconnection to an electricity or gas supply. A security deposit provides a degree of insurance against default, particularly for those customers with a poor credit history.

Electricity retailers did not require customers to provide a security deposit in 2015-16.

Kleenheat required four gas business customers to provide a security deposit in 2015-16.

Termination of Direct Debit Plans

Electricity direct debit terminations

Table 14 shows the number of electricity residential and business direct debit plans terminated for default by Horizon Power and Synergy.

Table 14: Direct debit plans terminated by electricity retailers

| | Horizon Power | | Synergy | |
|----------------|---------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| | Residential | Business | Residential | Business |
| 2010-11 | - | - | 3,925 | 100 |
| 2011-12 | - | - | 4,164 | 134 |
| 2012-13 | 27 | 1 | 5,093 | 169 |
| 2013-14 | 39 | 0 | 5,707 | 206 |
| 2014-15 | 17 | 1 | 7,968 | 315 |
| 2015-16 | 0 | 0 | 11,742 | 485 |

Horizon Power did not terminate any direct debit plans in 2015-16.

Synergy noted that more residential and business customers were placed on an instalment plan towards the end of 2014-15. Customers experiencing payment problems were offered a direct debit plan linked to an instalment plan. The recent downturn in the economy has resulted in increased default on their direct debit payments, leading to a rise in the number of terminations in 2015-16.

³³ Synergy reported 49 customer accounts received late bills in 2014-15 in error. This has been corrected in Table 13.

Gas direct debit terminations

Table 15 shows the number of gas residential and business customer direct debit plans terminated by Alinta Energy and Synergy for default.

Table 15: Gas Customer direct debit plans terminated

| | Alinta Energy | | Synergy | |
|---------|---------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| | Residential | Business | Residential | Business |
| 2010-11 | 642 | 1 | - | 0 |
| 2011-12 | 512 | 2 | - | 0 |
| 2012-13 | 722 | 2 | - | 1 |
| 2013-14 | 238 | 1 | - | 0 |
| 2014-15 | 893 | 5 | - | 1 |
| 2015-16 | 1,128 | 3 | - | 1 |

There was a 26.3 per cent increase in residential direct debit plans terminated by Alinta Energy in 2015-16. It commented that:

Alinta Energy continued to assist customers experiencing financial difficulties by establishing direct debit instalment plans to maintain customer debt at more manageable levels. However, the deterioration in economic circumstances and customers seeking additional financial support resulted in a marked increase in the default level of direct debit plans.

Disconnections and Reconnections

Disconnections

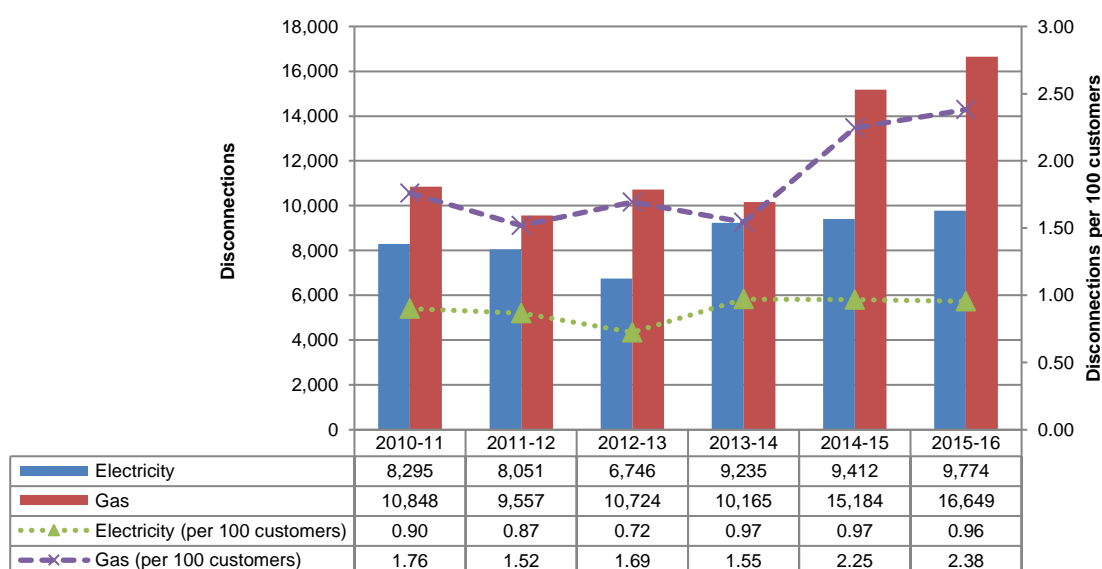
Energy is an essential service. The electricity code and gas compendium require retailers to provide customers experiencing financial hardship or payment difficulties with adequate opportunity to enter into an arrangement to avoid disconnection. Retailers should only disconnect customers when all reasonable attempts to secure payment of an outstanding debt have been exhausted.

The number of disconnections is analysed alongside other measures - accessing a hardship program, receipt of concession payments and prior disconnection within the past 24 months. This analysis provides some indication of how well retailers meet their obligations to help customers manage their debt and stay connected.

Residential Customer Disconnections

Figure 7 shows total residential electricity and gas disconnections.

Figure 7: Residential customer disconnections



The residential electricity disconnection rate (per 100 customers) has been stable for the past three years.

While there was modest increase in the number of residential electricity disconnections in 2015-16, the overall disconnection rate was lower. This is explained by the increase in residential electricity customers.³⁴

The gas disconnection rate has been trending upwards since 2013-14. In 2015-16, it reached a six year peak of 2.38 per 100 customers.

³⁴ Refer to Table 2.

The ratio of the gas and electricity disconnection rates in 2015-16 (2.49) is the widest it has been over the past six years. The ratio has increased since 2013-14, tracking changes in the gas disconnection rate.

Table 16 shows the residential disconnection rates for each retailer.

Table 16: Residential customer disconnection rates for each retailer (per 100 customers)

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 2.19 | 0.96 | 1.18 | 3.03 | 2.83 | 4.38 |
| Synergy | 0.86 | 0.86 | 0.71 | 0.89 | 0.89 | 0.82 |
| Total | 0.90 | 0.87 | 0.72 | 0.97 | 0.97 | 0.96 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 1.76 | 1.52 | 1.72 | 1.56 | 2.31 | 2.46 |
| Kleenheat | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.09 | 1.06 | 1.35 | 1.83 |
| EGDC | 2.70 | 0.0 | 1.69 | 1.94 | 4.29 | 1.53 |
| Total | 1.76 | 1.52 | 1.69 | 1.55 | 2.25 | 2.38 |

Horizon Power's residential disconnection rate was 4.38 per 100 customers in 2015-16, which is much higher than the 2.83 per 100 customers in 2014-15. It linked the increased disconnections to the deterioration in economic conditions in regional areas.

The residential disconnection rates for Alinta Energy and Kleenheat were both at six year peaks in 2015-16.

Alinta Energy commented that:

[It] continued to work closely with customers, with ongoing initiatives and campaigns to assist customers in managing their accounts. Only those customers who failed to respond were disconnected as a last resort.

Kleenheat commented that it had seen a rise in customers affected by the economic downturn in the State during 2015-16. This is supported by the corresponding increase in the number of its customers seeking assistance with their utility bills, including applying for financial hardship assistance.

EGDC's residential disconnection rate continues to be quite variable, because of its small customer base.

Table 17 compares the electricity and gas retailers' residential disconnections by category over the past two years.

Table 17: Residential disconnections by category

| Retailer | Total disconnections | | Customers previously on an instalment plan | | Customers disconnected at the same supply address within the past 24 months | | Concession card holders ³⁵ | |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|--|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | % of disconnections 2014-15 | % of disconnections 2015-16 | % of disconnections 2014-15 | % of disconnections 2015-16 | % of disconnections 2014-15 | % of disconnections 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 1,084 | 1,705 | 34.6 | 36.2 | 16.7 | 27.9 | 26.2 | 12.6 |
| Synergy | 8,328 | 8,069 | 42.4 | 45.6 | 16.8 | 15.5 | 31.2 | 33.0 |
| Total | 9,412 | 9,774 | 41.5 | 43.9 | 16.8 | 17.7 | 30.6 | 29.4 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 14,530 | 15,044 | 12.3 | 9.5 | 20.6 | 24.5 | - | - |
| Kleenheat | 639 | 1,600 | 8.6 | 33.5 | 13.8 | 10.2 | - | - |
| EGDC | 15 | 5 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 13.3 | 0.0 | - | - |
| Total | 15,184 | 16,649 | 12.1 | 11.8 | 20.3 | 23.1 | - | - |

The percentage of Horizon Power disconnections involving customers who have been disconnected more than once in the past 24 months increased in 2015-16. Horizon Power linked the increase to the deteriorating economic conditions in regional areas.

The percentage of Horizon Power's disconnections involving concession card holders more than halved in 2015-16. Horizon Power advised that, following the introduction of remote disconnection, its hardship procedures were amended to allow more flexible instalment plans. The amended procedures were particularly beneficial for customers in receipt of concessions.

The percentage of Kleenheat's disconnections involving customers previously on an instalment plan was much higher in 2015-16. It explained that:

the higher reported figure, and associated percentage, was due to a refinement in reporting [criteria for this indicator], and increasing [the] additional payment options offered to its customers.

³⁵ Because government subsidies and concessions are paid through electricity bills, the gas retailers do not know which customers are receiving a concession.

Inter-jurisdictional comparison of residential electricity and gas disconnections

Figure 8 compares the residential electricity disconnection rate for Western Australian retailers with the disconnection rates for retailers in New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria.

Figure 8: Jurisdictional comparison of residential electricity disconnection rates (per 100 customers)



Western Australia had the lowest residential electricity disconnection rate (0.96 per 100 customers) in 2015-16. The 2015-16 disconnection rates in all four states were similar to the previous year.

Table 18 compares the residential gas disconnection rate for Western Australian retailers with the disconnection rates for New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria.³⁶

Table 18: Jurisdictional comparison of residential gas disconnection rates (per 100 customers)

| | New South Wales | South Australia | Victoria | Western Australia |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 2013-14 | 0.39 | 0.86 | 1.33 | 1.55 |
| 2014-15 | 0.62 | 1.12 | 1.20 | 2.25 |
| 2015-16 | 0.50 | 1.23 | 1.28 | 2.38 |

Western Australia had the highest residential gas disconnection rate (2.38 per 100 customers) in 2015-16. This was almost twice that of Victoria, which had the next highest rate of 1.28 per 100 customers.

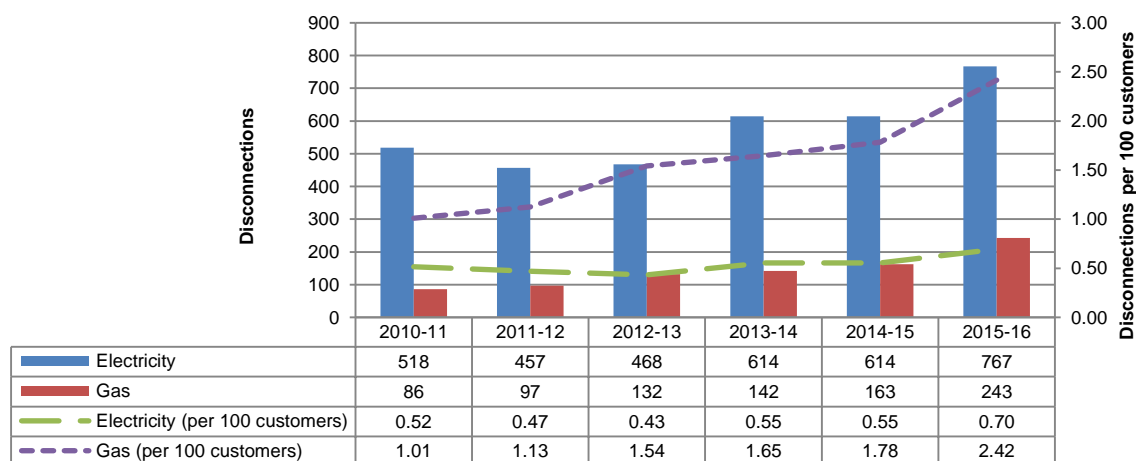
The Western Australian residential disconnection rate has consistently been the highest of the four states over the past three years.

³⁶ 2013-14 was the first year that comparative data became available. The data for Victoria was provided by the Essential Service Commission, while the Australian Energy Regulator provided the data for New South Wales and South Australia.

Business Customer Disconnections

Figure 9 shows the overall electricity and gas business customer disconnections.

Figure 9: Business customer disconnections



The electricity and gas business disconnection rates were both higher in 2015-16. The ratio of the gas and electricity disconnection rates was also higher, up from 3.2 in 2014-15 to 3.5 in 2015-16.³⁷

Table 19 shows the business customer disconnection rates by retailer.

Table 19: Business disconnection rates for each retailer (per 100 customers)

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 0.0 | 0.14 | 0.81 | 0.36 | 0.39 | 0.86 |
| Horizon Power | 0.27 | 0.15 | 0.09 | 0.41 | 0.50 | 1.63 |
| Synergy | 0.54 | 0.50 | 0.46 | 0.57 | 0.56 | 0.62 |
| Perth Energy | - | - | - | 1.75 | 0.82 | 0.33 |
| Total | 0.51 | 0.47 | 0.43 | 0.55 | 0.55 | 0.70 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 1.03 | 1.15 | 1.58 | 1.70 | 1.89 | 2.42 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | 0.43 | 1.03 | 2.70 |
| Total | 1.01 | 1.14 | 1.54 | 1.65 | 1.78 | 2.42 |

Perth Energy was the only electricity retailer with a lower disconnection rate in 2015-16.

Horizon Power's disconnections increased by 226 per cent in 2015-16, mirroring the increase in its residential disconnection rate.³⁸ The increase in disconnections is also attributed to the deterioration in economic conditions in regional areas.

³⁷ Some caution should be applied to interpreting this ratio, because of the large difference in the numbers of business electricity and gas customers (Table 2 and Table 5). However, the ratio does provide a useful comparator of the respective disconnection rates.

³⁸ Refer to Table 16.

Pre-Payment Meter Disconnections

Part 9 of the Electricity Customer Code requires pre-payment meters to incorporate functionality that is capable of informing the retailer of:

- the number of instances where a pre-payment meter customer has been disconnected (i.e. when the meter has run out of credit, including any applicable emergency credit available outside of normal business hours); and
- the duration of each disconnection.

The two measures of pre-payment meter disconnections are:

- The total number of pre-payment meter disconnections per annum.³⁹
- The number of pre-payment meter customers who have been disconnected two or more times in a month (where each disconnection is for longer than two hours).

Horizon Power is the only electricity retailer that is able to report on pre-payment customer disconnections.⁴⁰ Table 20 shows the number of disconnections for the three years since it installed meters with the required functionality.

Table 20: Prepayment meter customer disconnections

| | Horizon Power | | |
|---------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| | Prepayment meter customers | Prepayment Meter disconnections | Customers disconnected two or more times per month (for more than two hours) |
| 2013-14 | 845 | 56 | 7 |
| 2014-15 | 1,014 | 1,193 | 112 |
| 2015-16 | 1,202 | 3,172 | 659 |

The 3,172 disconnections in 2015-16 equate to a disconnection rate of 2.64 disconnections per pre-payment meter customer per annum. This is much higher than the 1.18 disconnections per customer per annum in 2014-15.

The percentage of pre-payment meter customers that were disconnected more than twice in a month was also much higher in 2015-16, up from 11.0 per cent in 2014-15 to 54.8 per cent in 2015-16.

Horizon Power advised that a new pre-payment management system has increased the amount of disconnection data it collected in 2015-16.

³⁹ If a pre-payment meter is disconnected multiple times during the reporting year then each disconnection is counted in the total number of disconnections.

⁴⁰ Synergy is using legacy pre-payment meters that are not capable of providing the required disconnection data.

Reconnections

The two measures of customer reconnection (following disconnection for non-payment) are:⁴¹

- reconnection within seven days of being disconnected; and
- reconnection after more than seven days of being disconnected.

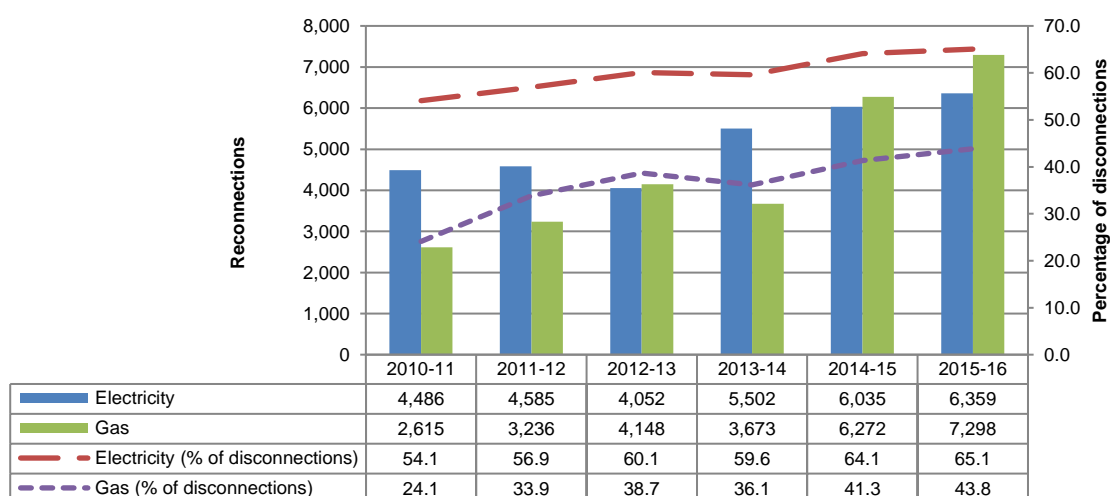
The seven day reconnection deadline is used because it is considered to include customers who were experiencing financial difficulties immediately prior to disconnection, or who could have avoided disconnection by engaging with the retailer earlier in the disconnection process. However, because the financial status of the customer at the time of disconnection is not recorded, it is not possible to separately report on how many of these disconnected there were. The ERA is introducing new performance measures to capture this information, commencing from 2018-19.

The total number of reconnections performed each year captures the customers who needed more time to arrange their reconnection, and also helps to identify the customers who were not reconnected at all.⁴²

Residential Customer Reconnections

Figure 10 shows the overall residential electricity and gas reconnections within seven days.

Figure 10: Residential customer reconnections (within seven days)



The percentages of residential electricity and gas customer reconnections were both at a six year peak in 2015-16.

The percentage of gas residential reconnections has been consistently lower than electricity reconnections. Gas retailers have suggested the difference is because some gas

⁴¹ This measure only applies to the reconnection of a customer in the same name and at the same address as the disconnection.

⁴² A proportion of disconnections involve customers who reconnect in a different name at the same address, often because another member of the household takes over the account from the person who was disconnected. These reconnections do not show up in the reconnections data, even though supply has been restored to the premise.

customers experiencing financial difficulties prioritise staying connected to electricity over restoring their gas supply.

Table 21 shows the percentage of residential reconnections within seven days for each electricity and gas retailer.

Table 21: Percentage of residential customer reconnections (within seven days) by retailer

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 18.1 | 16.8 | 7.1 | 19.6 | 21.3 | 40.7 |
| Synergy | 57.2 | 58.7 | 63.6 | 65.2 | 69.7 | 70.2 |
| Total | 54.1 | 56.9 | 60.1 | 59.6 | 64.1 | 65.1 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 24.1 | 33.9 | 38.7 | 35.9 | 41.3 | 44.3 |
| Kleenheat | 0.0 | 0.0 | 57.1 | 44.1 | 42.7 | 39.3 |
| EGDC | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 60.0 |
| Total | 24.1 | 33.9 | 38.7 | 36.1 | 41.3 | 43.8 |

Synergy had the highest percentage of reconnections within seven days of any gas or electricity retailer in 2015-16.

The percentage of reconnections by Horizon Power and EGDC were much higher than in 2014-15. Both retailers nearly doubled their reconnection rate.⁴³

Horizon Power's reconnections were up from 21.3 per cent in 2015 to 40.7 per cent in 2016. Horizon Power attributed the increase to the introduction of automated processes for disconnecting and reconnecting customers.⁴⁴ Previously, Horizon Power staff had to visit the premise to perform a disconnection or reconnection.

Table 22 shows the overall percentage of residential reconnections for each electricity and gas retailer.⁴⁵

Table 22: Percentage of residential customer reconnections (without time limit) by retailer

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|--------------------|----------|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | - | - | 22.4 | 20.9 | 61.6 | 55.2 |
| Synergy | - | - | 69.5 | 73.6 | 83.0 | 75.9 |
| Total | - | - | 66.6 | 67.1 | 80.6 | 72.3 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | - | - | 75.4 | 63.9 | 68.1 | 70.1 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | 57.1 | 60.3 | 53.2 | 47.3 |
| EGDC | - | - | 0.0 | 83.3 | 66.7 | 80.0 |
| Total | - | - | 75.4 | 63.9 | 67.5 | 67.9 |

⁴³ EGDC's reconnection rates are based on a small number of disconnections, which makes the reconnection rate quite variable over time.

⁴⁴ Horizon Power completed the rollout of its new Advanced Metering Infrastructure project in 2016. The project replaced meters with new advanced meters that can be remotely controlled. The new meter functionality allows the remote disconnection and reconnection of supply to customer premises.

⁴⁵ Retailers commenced reporting total reconnections from 2012-13.

The overall percentage of residential electricity and gas reconnections in 2015-16 was almost unchanged from the previous year. Nearly seven out of every 10 customers were reconnected at some stage following disconnection.

Comparing Table 21 with Table 22 shows that most of the electricity reconnections were completed within seven days. The gap between the rates in the two tables is 7.2 per cent for electricity reconnections, compared to 24.1 per cent of gas reconnections.

Table 23 compares each retailer's residential reconnections by category in 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Table 23: Residential customer reconnections by category

| Retailer | Total reconnections | | Customers previously on an instalment plan | | Customers disconnected at the same supply address within the past 24 months | | Concession card holders | |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------|--|-------------|---|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| | | | % of disconnections | | % of disconnections | | % of disconnections | |
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 231 | 694 | 13.8 ⁴⁶ | 19.7 | 7.6 ⁴⁷ | 17.2 | 7.1 | 6.3 |
| Synergy | 5,804 | 5,665 | 35.4 | 43.9 | 13.5 | 12.4 | 25.7 | 25.3 |
| Total | 6,035 | 6,359 | 31.3 | 39.7 | 12.4 | 13.2 | 23.5 | 22.0 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 5,994 | 6,666 | 5.9 | 4.9 | 5.8 | 9.2 | - | - |
| Kleenheat | 273 | 629 | 8.8 | 45.5 | 7.0 | 7.9 | - | - |
| EGDC | 5 | 3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 13.3 | 0.0 | - | - |
| Total | 6,272 | 7,298 | 6.0 | 8.8 | 5.8 | 9.1 | - | - |

The percentage of electricity and gas reconnections in each category in 2015-16 were mostly similar to the previous year.

Kleenheat reconnected a higher proportion of customers previously on an instalment plan. The increase appears to reflect the higher number of instalment plan customers that were disconnected, rather than any underlying changes to its disconnection/reconnection policies and procedures.⁴⁸

EGDC's reconnections were based on a very small number of disconnections, which makes it difficult to identify any underlying trends.

⁴⁶ Horizon Power has provided a corrected value for this indicator, which was previously reported to be 0.1%.

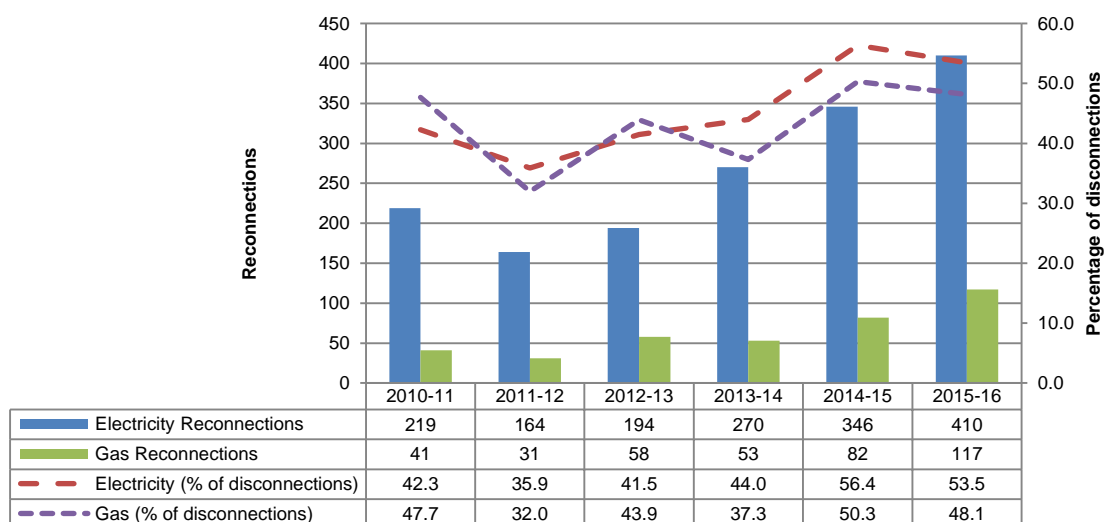
⁴⁷ Horizon Power has provided a corrected value for this indicator, which was previously reported to be 3.6%.

⁴⁸ Refer to Table 17.

Business Customer Reconnections

Figure 11 shows the overall electricity and gas business customer reconnections within seven days.

Figure 11: Business customer reconnections within seven days



The increase in the number of electricity and gas reconnections in 2015-16 did not translate into increases in the corresponding percentages. This is because the total number of disconnections was also higher.⁴⁹

Table 24 shows the percentage of electricity and gas business customer reconnections within seven days for each retailer.

Table 24: Percentage of business energy customer reconnections within seven days by retailer

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 0.0 | 81.8 | 9.1 | 7.14 | 100.0 | 66.7 |
| Horizon Power | 5.3 | 8.3 | 0.0 | 13.2 | 12.2 | 39.1 |
| Synergy | 43.7 | 35.3 | 42.9 | 45.3 | 58.6 | 55.8 |
| Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 42.3 | 35.7 | 41.5 | 44.0 | 56.4 | 53.5 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 47.7 | 32.0 | 43.9 | 37.6 | 51.3 | 43.8 |
| Kleenheat | - | 0 | - | 0 | 33.3 | 69.0 |
| Total | 47.7 | 32.0 | 43.9 | 37.3 | 50.3 | 48.1 |

The overall percentage of electricity and gas business reconnections in 2015-16 was similar to the previous year.

Horizon Power's reconnection percentage was much higher in 2015-16, which coincided with a threefold increase in the disconnection rate.⁵⁰ Horizon Power commented that the

⁴⁹ Refer to Figure 9. The reconnection percentage was lower because the increase in the number of disconnections was greater than the increase in the number of reconnections.

⁵⁰ Refer to Table 19.

increase was likely a result of introducing automated processes for remotely reconnecting customers. Previously, Horizon Power staff had to visit the premise to perform the reconnection.

Table 25 shows the overall percentage of electricity and gas business reconnections for each electricity and gas retailer.

Table 25: Percentage of business customer reconnections (without time limit) by retailer

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | - | - | 9.1 | 71.4 | 100.0 | 66.7 |
| Horizon Power | - | - | 0.0 | 39.5 | 31.7 | 60.9 |
| Synergy | - | - | 49.3 | 57.0 | 78.4 | 64.4 |
| Perth Energy | - | - | 0.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | - | - | 47.6 | 56.4 | 75.7 | 64.0 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | - | - | 72.7 | 58.9 | 72.1 | 60.7 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | 0.0 | 100 | 33.3 | 69.0 |
| Total | - | - | 72.7 | 59.2 | 69.9 | 62.1 |

The overall percentage of electricity reconnections was lower in 2015-16, because the relative increase in the number of disconnections was higher than the increase in the number of reconnections. The overall percentage of gas reconnections was also lower, for the same reason.⁵¹

Caution should be applied when interpreting Kleenheat's business reconnection data, because it is based on a relatively small number of disconnections.

⁵¹ Refer to Table 52 and Table 57.

Complaints

Both the electricity code and the gas compendium require retailers to have an internal process for handling complaints and resolving disputes that complies with Australian Standard AS ISO 10002 – 2014 (Guidelines for complaint management in organisations).

AS ISO 10002 – 2014 defines a complaint as: “An expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its products, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.”⁵²

Retailers are also required to comply with the ERA's *Customer Complaints Guidelines*, which clarifies the distinction between queries, complaints and other customer communications.

Customer complaints are separated into four categories:

- Billing complaints - includes billing errors, incorrect billing of fees and charges, failure to receive relevant Government rebates, high billing, credit collection, disconnection and reconnection, and restriction due to billing discrepancy.
- Marketing complaints - includes advertising campaigns, contract terms, sales techniques and misleading conduct.
- Transfer complaints - includes failure to transfer a customer within a certain time period, disruption of supply due to transfer and billing problems directly associated with the transfer (e.g., delay in billing, double billing).
- Other complaints - includes poor service, privacy considerations, failure to respond to complaints in a timely manner, health and safety issues, and any other matter not covered by the billing, marketing and transfer categories.

Retailers that supply pre-payment meter customers are required to separately record complaints about pre-payment meter services.

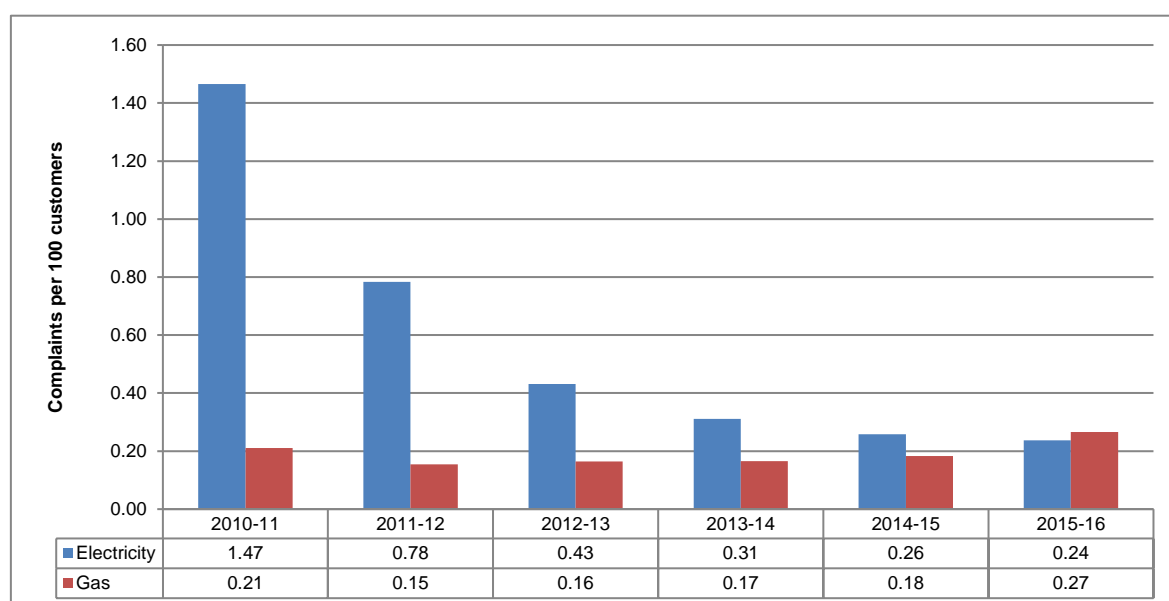
A key measure of the effectiveness of a retailer's complaints handling process is how quickly a complaint is concluded.⁵³ Retailers report on the percentage of complaints that are concluded within 15 business days.

Residential Complaints

Figure 13 shows the total complaints per 100 customers made to electricity and gas retailers by residential customers.

⁵² The electricity code and the gas compendium have slightly modified this definition by adding the words “or services” immediately after “products” because energy retailers provide a service rather than a product to their customers.

⁵³ A complaint is concluded when all of the relevant parts of the retailer's complaints handling process have been exercised in an attempt to resolve the complaint.

Figure 12: Total residential complaints (per 100 customers)

Residential complaints made to gas retailers increased by 50 per cent in 2015-16, while complaints made to electricity retailers were slightly lower.

Table 26 shows the residential complaints per 100 customers made to each electricity and gas retailer.

Table 26: Residential complaints by retailer (per 100 customers)

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 0.33 | 0.39 | 1.06 | 0.72 | 0.57 | 1.40 |
| Synergy | 1.50 | 0.80 | 0.41 | 0.30 | 0.24 | 0.19 |
| Total | 1.47 | 0.78 | 0.43 | 0.31 | 0.26 | 0.24 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 0.21 | 0.15 | 0.16 | 0.14 | 0.16 | 0.26 |
| Kleenheat | 0.00 | 0.37 | 0.54 | 0.91 | 0.51 | 0.33 |
| EGDC | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Total | 0.21 | 0.15 | 0.16 | 0.17 | 0.18 | 0.27 |

Synergy's residential complaints were at a six-year low of 0.19 per 100 customers in 2015-16. Synergy attributes the most recent reduction in complaints to an initiative that empowers call centre staff to resolve issues that cause complaints, using a variety of tools that include having greater authority to resolve financial issues with customers.

Horizon Power's residential complaints were much higher in 2015-16, at 1.40 per 100 customers. The increase was attributed to metering issues.⁵⁴

Alinta Energy's residential complaints were 57 per cent higher in 2015-16. The increase followed the introduction of new customer service programmes. The programmes involved ensuring all customer comments expressing dissatisfaction about Alinta Energy or its

⁵⁴ For more information see the discussion under customers granted more time to pay on page 9.

products, services or staff were captured and recorded as a complaint. This helped it to analyse the root cause and seek opportunities for improvements.

The number of complaints received by Kleenheat increased by 19 per cent in 2015-16.⁵⁵ However, the 85% increase in its customer base over the same period meant the equivalent number of complaints per 100 customers fell.⁵⁶

Table 27 compares the retailers' residential complaints by category over the past two years.

Table 27: Residential complaints by complaint category

| Retailer | Percentage of complaints in each category | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---------|----------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| | Billing complaints | | Marketing complaints | | Transfer complaints | | Other complaints | |
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 68.5 | 74.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 31.5 | 26.0 |
| Synergy | 87.4 | 90.2 | 8.9 | 7.0 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 2.8 | 2.5 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 66.4 | 80.1 | 6.8 | 7.0 | 1.1 | 0.4 | 25.7 | 13.0 |
| Kleenheat | 71.2 | 70.3 | 7.4 | 0.7 | 4.5 | 6.6 | 16.9 | 22.4 |

Consistent with previous years, the majority of residential complaints received by electricity and gas retailers were about billing.

Residential complaint conclusion

Table 28 compares the percentage of residential complaints concluded by each retailer within 15 business days, in 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Table 28: Residential complaints concluded within 15 business days

| Retailer | Complaints resolved within 15 days | | % of complaints received | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 162 | 316 | 74.0 | 57.9 |
| Synergy | 2,186 | 1,852 | 95.5 | 98.6 |
| Gas | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 960 | 1,114 | 96.3 | 71.0 |
| Kleenheat | 235 | 284 | 96.7 | 97.9 |

The percentage of complaints concluded within 15 business days by Alinta Energy and Horizon Power were both lower in 2015-16. Horizon Power attributed the reduction to an increase in complaints, most of which were about metering issues.⁵⁷

Alinta Energy advised that the key driver for the reduction was primarily an increase in complex issues, such as metering and high account issues. These issues required detailed investigations, including site visits to be undertaken by the distributor (ATCO), which normally take more than 15 days to resolve.

⁵⁵ Refer to Table 59.

⁵⁶ Refer to Table 7.

⁵⁷ For more information see the discussion under customers granted more time to pay on page 9.

Business Complaints

Figure 13 shows the total complaints (per 100 customers) made to electricity and gas retailers by business customers.

Figure 13: Total business complaints (per 100 customers)



The level of complaints made to gas and electricity retailers was almost unchanged from 2014-15.

Table 29 shows the business complaints made to each retailer.⁵⁸

Table 29: Business complaints by retailer (per 100 customers)

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 0.41 | 0.11 | 0.96 | 0.51 | 0.98 | 0.12 |
| Horizon Power | 0.41 | 0.05 | 1.08 | 0.58 | 0.30 | 1.46 |
| Perth Energy | 0.00 | 0.14 | 0.58 | 0.00 | 0.27 | 0.17 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 0.00 | 0.40 | 0.00 | 23.08 | 3.85 | 0.00 |
| Synergy | 2.03 | 1.35 | 0.43 | 0.35 | 0.24 | 0.21 |
| Total | 1.90 | 1.24 | 0.49 | 0.38 | 0.26 | 0.29 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 0.06 | 0.17 | 0.39 | 0.07 | 0.26 | 0.18 |
| Kleenheat | | | | | 0.00 | 0.00 ⁵⁹ |
| Synergy | 0.84 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.32 |
| Total | 0.07 | 0.16 | 0.39 | 0.07 | 0.23 | 0.20 |

Complaints received by Horizon Power were much higher in 2015-16. Most of the complaints were about the same issues that caused the increase in residential customer complaints - meter reading problems in Broome, and customers linking the installation of new meters to higher bills.

⁵⁸ A-Star, AER Retail and Amanda Energy have been excluded from the table, because they did not receive any complaints.

⁵⁹ Kleenheat received a single complaint in 2015-16.

Rottnest Island Authority's complaints have been highly variable over the past six years. This is because its relatively small customer base means a small change in the number of complaints translates to a large change in the number of complaints per 100 customers.

Alinta Energy's electricity business customer complaints (per 100 customers) were much lower in 2015-16. It attributed the reduction to the introduction of dedicated account executives, who provide their customers with a direct communication channel for all matters related to their account.

Table 30 compares each category of the retailers' business complaints in 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Table 30: Business complaints by complaint category

| Retailer | Percentage of complaints in each category | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------|----------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| | Billing complaints | | Marketing complaints | | Transfer complaints | | Other complaints | |
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 68.0 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.0 | 0.0 | 28.0 | 33.3 |
| Horizon Power | 72.0 | 73.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 28.0 | 27.0 |
| Perth Energy | 100.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Synergy | 84.6 | 86.3 | 9.2 | 9.8 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 3.8 | 2.0 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 60.0 | 93.3 | 5.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 35.0 | 6.7 |
| Kleenheat | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

Consistent with previous years, the majority of business complaints received by electricity and gas retailers were about billing.⁶⁰

Business complaint resolution

Table 31 compares the percentage of business complaints concluded by each retailer within 15 business days for the past two years.

Table 31: Business complaints concluded within 15 business days

| Retailer | Complaints resolved within 15 days | | % of complaints received | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|
| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 25 | 3 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Horizon Power | 15 | 47 | 60.0 | 40.9 |
| Perth Energy | 1 | 1 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 1 | - | 100.0 | - |
| Synergy | 230 | 202 | 95.8 | 99.0 |
| Gas | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 20 | 14 | 95.2 | 93.3 |
| Kleenheat | - | 1 | - | 100.0 |

Horizon Power was the only electricity retailer to report a deterioration in complaint resolution performance in 2015-16. It explained that the delays in concluding complaints

⁶⁰ Table 60 includes the number of complaints by category for the past six years.

resulted from a higher volume of complaints, and the extra resources needed to resolve the complaints related to metering issues.⁶¹

⁶¹ For more information see the discussion under customers granted more time to pay on page 9.

Call Centre Performance

A significant proportion of customers' interaction with their retailer is by telephone. Retailer's responsiveness to telephone calls from customers is an important measure of customer service.

Larger retailers operate call centres which employ multiple customer service agents to handle customer enquiries and complaints. These call centres may have sophisticated systems to monitor and report on key responsiveness indicators, specifically:

- Percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds.
- Average duration before a call is answered, measured in seconds.
- Percentage of unanswered calls.

Some call centres handle calls about gas and electricity retail services, as well as other services provided by the retailer, or a related business. Therefore, it may not always be possible for retailers to separately report on their performance for gas and electricity retail calls. In these circumstances the reported performance will be for all the calls handled by the call centre.

If the call centre uses Interactive Voice Response equipment⁶² to handle calls then the responsiveness measures only apply to those calls where the customer has selected an option to speak with an operator.

Smaller retailers offer a more simple telephone service, which is often based on the customer calling a switchboard operator, who connects them to the appropriate contact person. This type of telephone service is not capable of producing responsiveness data.

Electricity Retailer Call Centre Performance

Of the nine active electricity retailers covered by this report, A-Star, AER Energy, Amanda Energy and Perth Energy do not operate call centres.

The Rottnest Island Authority call centre handles calls for both retail and distribution customers, and also calls related to other areas of their business. Horizon Power's call centre handles calls for both its retail and distribution services.

Table 32 shows the total volume of calls to electricity retailer call centres.

Table 32: Volume of calls to electricity retailer call centres

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Alinta Energy | 2,452 | 2,426 | 2,728 | 2,828 | 3,342 | 2,997 |
| Horizon Power | 71,215 | 82,587 | 103,301 | 99,347 | 95,203 | 108,497 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 14 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 5,272 | 5,840 | 6,173 | 4,850 | 5,250 | 1,955 |
| Synergy | 1,439,432 | 1,315,881 | 1,223,000 | 1,132,395 | 1,072,272 | 1,058,008 |
| Total | 1,518,371 | 1,406,734 | 1,335,202 | 1,239,420 | 1,176,067 | 1,171,471 |

⁶² Interactive Voice Response equipment allows a call centre telephone system to detect voice and keypad tone signals and then respond with pre-recorded or dynamically generated audio to further direct callers to the service they require.

The total volume of calls to electricity retailer call centres in 2015-16 was slightly lower than the previous year. This continued the downward trend over the past six years.

In 2015-16, a reduction in calls to Alinta Energy, Rottneest Island Authority and Synergy was almost offset by an increase in calls to Horizon Power.

The 14.0 per cent increase in calls received by Horizon Power's call centre was because of metering issues.⁶³

Rottneest Island Authority attributes the 62.8 per cent decrease in calls to its call centre to a number of initiatives to improve its service.⁶⁴

Figures 14, 15 and 16 show each electricity retailer's performance against the three key responsiveness measures.

Figure 14: Percentage of electricity retail calls answered within 30 seconds

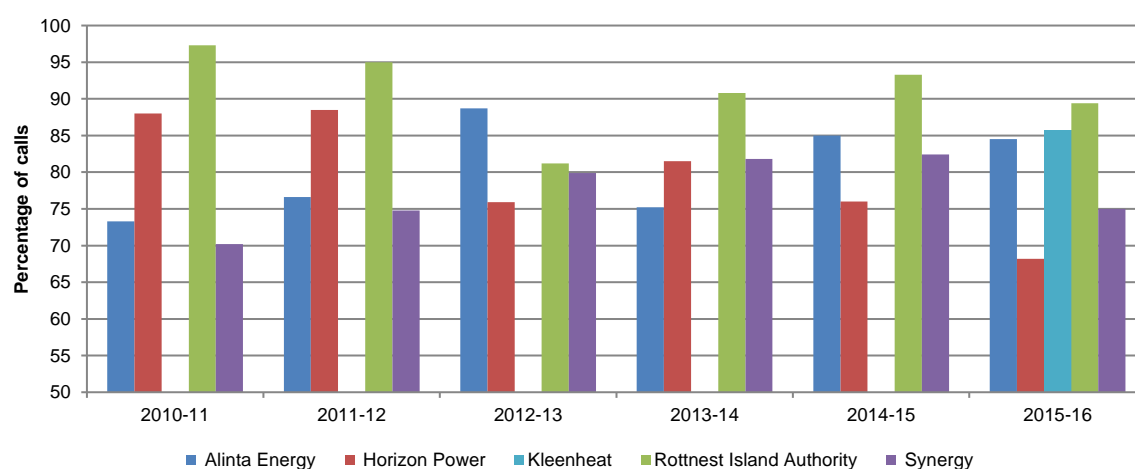
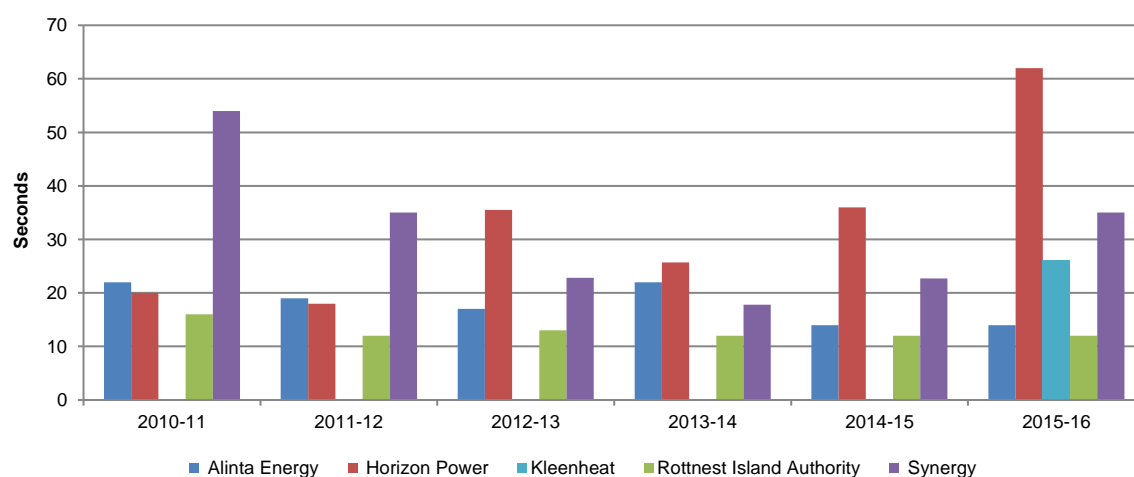
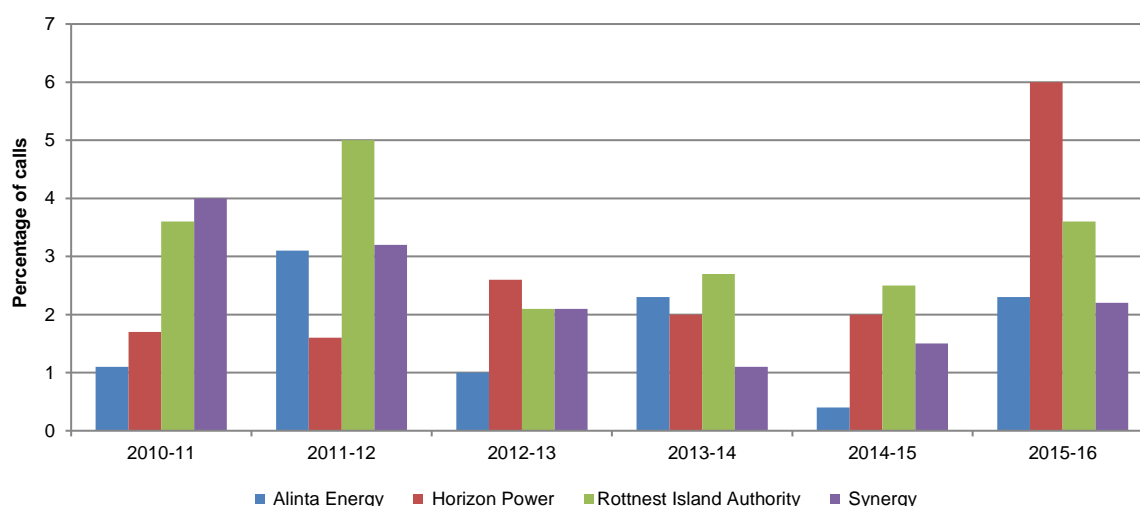


Figure 15: Average duration before a call is answered by electricity retail call centres



⁶³ For more information see the discussion under customers granted more time to pay on page 9.

⁶⁴ The initiatives include undertaking more preventative maintenance, and having an increased presence on the island (called "Island Office") during office hours. The office handles all minor maintenance works that previously had to be logged by the Authority's staff via the call centre.

Figure 16: Percentage of calls that are unanswered by electricity retailers

The percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds by each retailer's call centre was between 68 per cent and 89 per cent.

Both Horizon Power and Synergy reported increases in the average duration before a call is answered. In 2015-16, Horizon Power's customers waited 62 seconds, while Synergy's customers waited 35 seconds. Synergy took a higher than usual volume of calls between July and September 2015, following changes to customer energy concession entitlements on 1 July 2015. This, plus changes to call centre resourcing issues and an increase in customers requesting more time to pay a bill, led to staff taking longer to handle calls.

All four retailers reported an increase in the percentage of unanswered calls. The largest increase was Horizon Power, up from 2.0 per cent in 2014-15 to 6.0 per cent in 2015-16.

Horizon Power linked the decline in all three of its responsiveness measures to the higher volume of calls received by the call centre.

Gas Retailer Call Centres

Alinta Energy and Kleenheat are the only gas retailers that have call centres. Synergy and EGDC provide telephone support to their customers using telephone systems that do not record call statistics.

Table 33 shows the total volume of calls to the two gas retailer call centres.

Table 33: Volume of calls to gas retailer call centres

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Alinta Energy | 720,439 | 686,935 | 696,694 | 735,884 | 778,427 | 675,673 |
| Kleenheat | 190,764 | 214,280 | 220,710 | 235,698 | 233,363 | 222,505 |
| Total | 911,203 | 901,215 | 917,404 | 971,582 | 1,011,790 | 898,178 |

The total volume of calls to gas retailer call centres was 11.2 per cent lower in 2015-16. Alinta Energy accounted for most of the reduction, with its call centre taking 13.2 per cent less calls.

Figures 17, 18 and 19 show each gas retailer's performance against the three key responsiveness measures.

Figure 17: Percentage of gas retail calls answered within 30 seconds

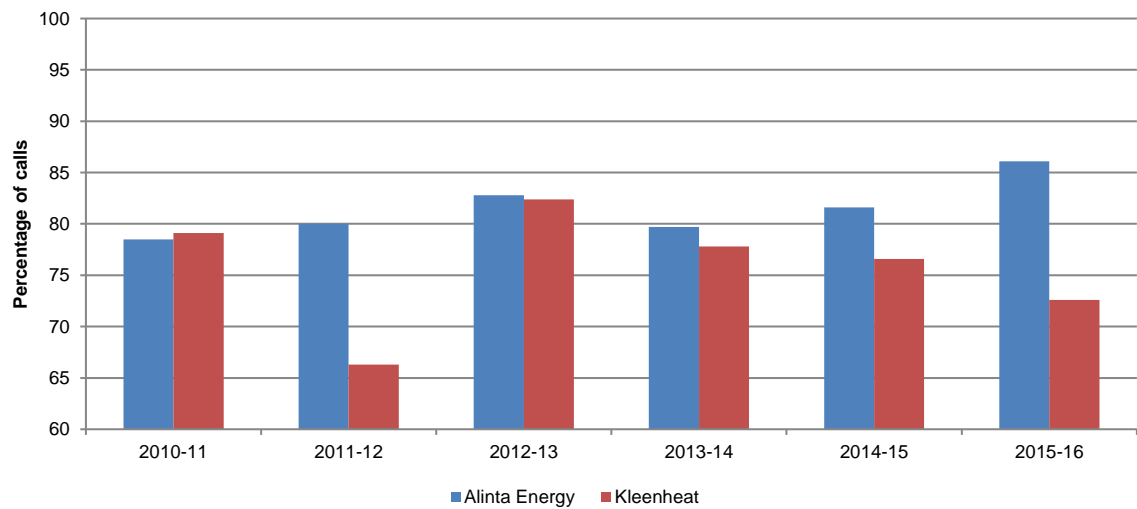


Figure 18: Average duration before a call is answered by gas retailers

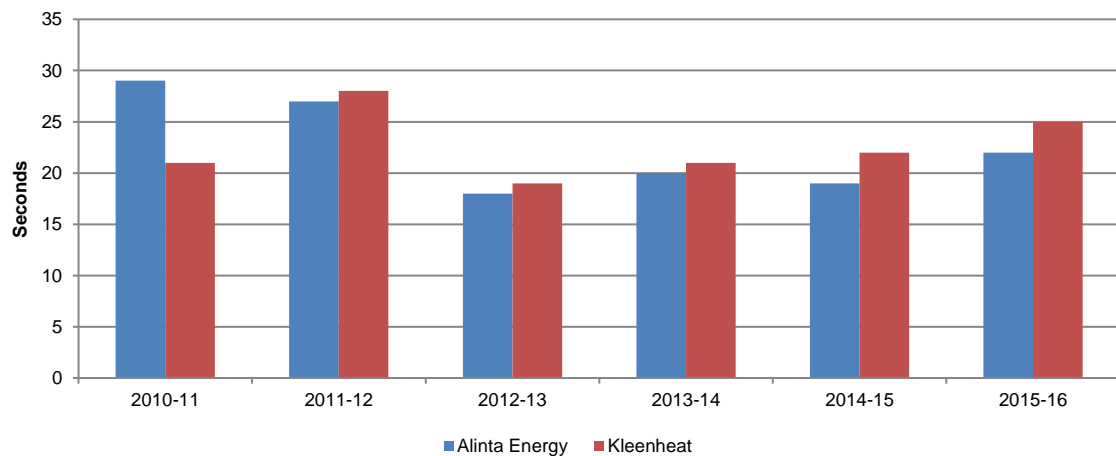
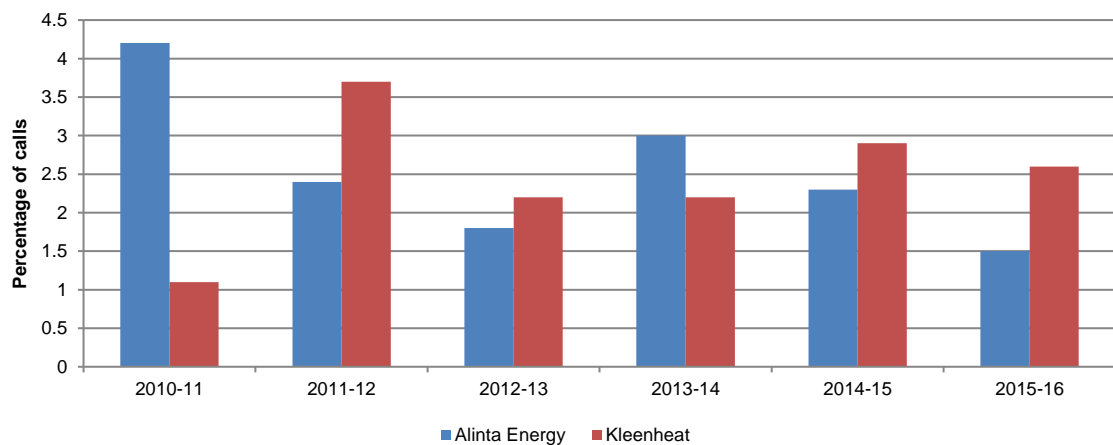


Figure 19: Percentage of calls that are unanswered by gas retailers



The performance of both retailers' call centres in 2015-16 were broadly similar to the previous year.

Service Standard Payments by Electricity Retailers

The electricity code requires retailers to make service standard payments to customers for:⁶⁵

- requesting a customer reconnection (following disconnection for non-payment of a bill) after the prescribed timeframe, at a rate of \$60 per day up to a maximum of \$300 total;⁶⁶
- wrongful disconnection, at a rate of \$100 per day;⁶⁷ and
- failure to acknowledge or respond to a customer query or complaint within the prescribed timeframes at a rate of \$20 for each written query or complaint.⁶⁸

Horizon Power and Synergy were the only electricity retailers to make service standard payments in 2015-16.

Table 34 shows the number of service standard payments made by both retailers.

Table 34: Service standard payments made by electricity retailers

| | Horizon Power | | | Synergy | | |
|---------|-------------------|------------------------|--|-------------------|------------------------|--|
| | Late reconnection | Wrongful disconnection | Timely response to customer complaints | Late reconnection | Wrongful disconnection | Timely response to customer complaints |
| 2010-11 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 44 | 4 | 24 |
| 2011-12 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 13 | 14 | 1 |
| 2012-13 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 16 | 40 | 0 |
| 2013-14 | 12 | 11 | 0 | 12 | 51 | 4 |
| 2014-15 | 10 | 16 | 0 | 5 | 31 | 1 |
| 2015-16 | 15 | 34 | 0 | 6 | 14 | 0 |

Horizon Power noted the increase in payments for late reconnection and wrongful disconnection were caused by the transition to new advanced meters. Its staff made errors while the old manual and new automated disconnection and reconnection processes were running in parallel.

Synergy noted the reduction in payments for wrongful disconnection followed system changes in September 2015. The changes introduced enhancements to the customer move in and promise to pay transactions, resulting in fewer wrongful disconnections.

⁶⁵ The retailer is only required to make payments for late reconnections and failure to acknowledge a complaint or query if the customer if the customer applies. Payments for wrongful disconnection must be made without application from the customer.

⁶⁶ Clause 14.1 of the Electricity Customer Code requires a retailer to forward a reconnection request to the relevant distributor within a prescribed timeframe, depending on when the customer meeting specified conditions.

⁶⁷ Clause 14.2 of the Electricity Customer Code.

⁶⁸ Clause 14.3 of the Electricity Customer Code.

Appendix 1: Additional Retailer Performance Information

Customers

Table 35: Number of electricity customers by retailer

| Residential customers | | | | | | | Business customers | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Alinta Energy | 1,447 | 1,449 | 1,351 | 1,967 | 2,548 | 2,428 |
| A-Star | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | A-Star | - | - | - | - | 17 | 0 |
| AER Retail | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | AER Retail | - | - | - | - | 0 | 21 |
| Amanda Energy | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | Amanda Energy | - | - | - | - | 0 | 76 |
| Horizon Power | 30,371 | 34,037 | 36,051 | 37,398 | 38,299 | 38,936 | Horizon Power | 7,159 | 7,939 | 8,050 | 9,235 | 8,224 | 7,873 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 28 |
| Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Perth Energy | 32 | 68 | 171 | 229 | 364 | 599 |
| Rottneest Island Authority ⁶⁹ | 85 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Rottneest Island Authority | 90 | 25 | 25 | 26 | 26 | 25 |
| Synergy | 890,918 | 894,804 | 894,542 | 913,200 | 934,717 | 982,615 | Synergy | 91,763 | 87,650 | 98,389 | 99,408 | 99,611 | 99,239 |
| State Total | 921,374 | 928,841 | 930,593 | 950,598 | 973,016 | 1,021,551 | State Total | 100,491 | 97,131 | 107,986 | 110,865 | 110,790 | 110,289 |

Table 36: Number of gas customers by retailer

| Residential customers | | | | | | | Business customers | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 615,717 | 628,328 | 624,314 | 635,893 | 628,171 | 611,142 | Alinta Energy | 8,359 | 8,468 | 8,355 | 8,282 | 8,127 | 8,319 |
| Synergy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Synergy | 119 | 112 | 141 | 79 | 107 | 137 |
| Kleenheat | 455 | 535 | 8,212 | 21,697 | 47,353 | 87,648 | Kleenheat | 1 | 1 | 20 | 232 | 871 | 1,554 |
| EGDC | 259 | 279 | 296 | 309 | 350 | 327 | EGDC | 34 | 31 | 36 | 33 | 34 | 49 |
| State Total | 616,431 | 629,142 | 632,822 | 657,899 | 675,874 | 699,117 | State Total | 8,513 | 8,612 | 8,552 | 8,626 | 9,139 | 10,059 |

⁶⁹ RIA informed the ERA that it had incorrectly reported customer numbers prior to 2011-12, which resulted in significant changes to customer numbers from 2011-12 onwards.

Table 37: Contestable and non-contestable residential electricity customers by retailer

| Contestable | | | | | | | Non-contestable | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Alinta Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| A-Star | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | A-Star | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 |
| AER Retail | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | AER Retail | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 |
| Amanda Energy | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | Amanda Energy | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 |
| Horizon Power | 30,371 | 34,037 | 36,051 | 37,398 | 38,299 | 38,936 | Horizon Power | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 0 |
| Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Synergy | 1,095 | 1,749 | 333 | 315 | 290 | 292 | Synergy | 889,823 | 893,055 | 894,209 | 912,885 | 934,427 | 982,323 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Rottnest Island Authority | 85 | 22 ⁷⁰ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| State Total | 31,466 | 35,786 | 36,384 | 37,713 | 38,589 | 39,228 | State Total | 889,908 | 893,077 | 894,209 | 912,885 | 934,427 | 982,323 |

Table 38: Customers covered by the Gas Moratorium in areas supplied through the ATCO distribution networks

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Residential | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 603,687 | 615,454 | 628,084 | 624,122 | 635,701 | 628,007 | 611,003 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | 21,058 | 47,350 | 87,646 |
| State Total | 603,687 | 615,454 | 628,084 | 624,122 | 656,759 | 675,357 | 698,649 |
| Change from previous year | 3.2% | 2.0% | 2.0% | -0.6% | 5.2% | 2.9% | 3.4% |
| Business | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 6,340 | 6,513 | 6,496 | 6,541 | 6,361 | 6,342 | 6766 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | 142 | 492 | 735 |
| State Total | 6,340 | 6,513 | 6,496 | 6,541 | 6,503 | 6,834 | 7,501 |
| Change from previous year | -17.5% | 2.7% | -0.3% | 0.7% | -0.6% | 5.1% | 9.8% |

⁷⁰ RIA advised the ERA that it had misinterpreted the definition of a customer and this figure has been over reported prior to 2011-12.

Table 39: Contestable and non-contestable electricity business customers by retailer

| Contestable | | | | | | | Non-contestable | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 1,447 | 1,449 | 1,351 | 1,967 | 2,548 | 2,428 | Alinta Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| A-Star | - | - | - | - | 17 | 0 | A-Star | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 |
| AER Retail | - | - | - | - | 0 | 21 | AER Retail | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 |
| Amanda Energy | - | - | - | - | 0 | 76 | Amanda Energy | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 |
| Horizon Power | 7,159 | 7,939 | 8,050 | 9,235 | 8,224 | 7,873 | Horizon Power | 5,805 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 28 | Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 0 |
| Perth Energy | 32 | 68 | 171 | 229 | 364 | 599 | Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Synergy | 8,781 | 7,849 | 7,173 | 6,767 | 5,947 | 6,261 | Synergy | 82,982 | 79,801 | 91,216 | 92,641 | 93,664 | 92,978 |
| Rottnest Island Authority ⁷¹ | 83 | 22 ⁷² | 25 | 26 | 26 | 25 | Rottnest Island Authority | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| State Total | 11,621 | 17,308 | 16,745 | 18,198 | 17,100 | 17,311 | State Total | 88,870 | 79,823 | 91,241 | 92,667 | 93,690 | 92,978 |

⁷¹ While there are legal barriers that prevent other retailers operating on Rottnest Island, customers on the island are still deemed contestable under the legislation. The customer data provided by Rottnest Island Authority from 2012-13 to 2014-15 in Table 40 was incorrectly classified as non-contestable. This has now been corrected.

⁷² The Rottnest Island Authority informed the ERA that it had incorrectly reported customer numbers prior to 2011-12, which has resulted in significant changes to customer numbers from 2011-12 onwards.

Affordability

Table 40: Residential energy customers issued with a bill outside the prescribed timeframes (due to fault on the part of the retailer)

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of customers | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|---------|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | | | . ⁷³ | 516 | 108 | 124 | | | - | 1.4 | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Synergy | | | 12,231 | 3,720 | 5,935 | 5,398 | | | 1.4 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.5 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | | | 9,256 | 8,080 | 8,213 | 8,478 | | | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.4 |
| Kleenheat | | | 0 | 220 | 25 | 195 | | | 0.0 | 1 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| EGDC | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

Table 41: Business energy customers issued with a bill outside the prescribed timeframes

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of customers | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|---------|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | | | . ⁷⁴ | 637 | 220 | 398 | | | - | 6.9 | 2.7 | 3.8 |
| Synergy | | | 6,397 | 1,749 | 1,273 | 967 | | | 6.5 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 1.0 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | | | 271 | 365 | 343 | 394 | | | 3.2 | 4.4 | 4.2 | 4.7 |
| Kleenheat | | | 0 | 36 | 66 | 58 | | | 0.0 | 15.5 | 7.6 | 3.7 |
| EGDC | | | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | | | 0.0 | 9.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Synergy | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | | | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.7 |

⁷³ Horizon Power was not able to report separate values for residential and business customers. The total number of late bills issued in 2012-13 was 19,655.

⁷⁴ Ditto.

Table 42: Residential energy customers on instalment plans

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of customers | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 566 | 1,848 | 3,084 | 3,622 | 1,846 | 2,714 | 1.9 | 5.4 | 8.6 | 9.7 | 7.5 | 7.0 |
| Synergy | 30,893 | 34,026 | 29,098 | 32,190 | 22,359 | 45,343 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 2.4 | 4.6 |
| Electricity Total | 31,459 | 35,874 | 32,182 | 35,812 | 25,230 | 48,057 | 3.4 | 3.9 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 2.6 | 4.7 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 9,890 | 8,622 | 13,119 | 13,845 | 14,336 | 13,542 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.2 |
| Kleenheat | 13 | 20 | 16 | 372 | 784 | 2,291 | 3.0 | 3.7 | 0.2 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 2.6 |
| EGDC | 15 | 48 | 4 | 10 | 15 | 0 | 6.4 | 17.2 | 1.4 | 3.2 | 4.2 | 0.0 |
| Gas Total | 9,918 | 8,690 | 13,139 | 14,227 | 15,135 | 15,833 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.3 |

Table 43: Business energy customers on instalment plans

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Per 100 customers | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 27 | 32 | 29 | 32 | 43 | 48 | 1.9 | 0.3 | 2.1 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 2.0 |
| Horizon Power | 98 | 120 | 197 | 236 | 180 | 210 | 1.4 | 2.8 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 2.2 | 2.7 |
| Synergy | 920 | 977 | 907 | 1,013 | 912 | 1,400 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 1.4 |
| Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Electricity Total | 1,045 | 1,129 | 1,133 | 1,282 | 1,219 | 1,661 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 1.5 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 23 | 25 | 31 | 34 | 39 | 27 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.3 |
| Synergy | 14 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 29 | 12.5 | 2.7 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 0.9 | 21.2 |
| Kleenheat | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 30 | 99 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.3 | 3.4 | 6.4 |
| EGDC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Gas Total | 37 | 28 | 32 | 37 | 70 | 155 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 1.5 |

Table 44: Residential and business electricity customers who have been granted additional time to pay a bill

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Per 100 customers | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Residential | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 7,790 | 13,022 | 8,781 | 6,040 | 8,147 | 5,113 | 25.6 | 38.3 | 24.4 | 16.2 | 21.3 | 13.1 |
| Synergy | 96,148 | 90,262 | 87,601 | 80,264 | 83,086 | 107,167 | 10.8 | 10.1 | 9.8 | 8.8 | 8.9 | 10.9 |
| Residential Total | 103,938 | 103,284 | 96,382 | 86,304 | 91,233 | 112,280 | 11.3 | 11.1 | 10.4 | 9.1 | 9.4 | 11.0 |
| Business | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 48 | 0 | 45 | 55 | 78 | 0 | 3.3 | 0.0 | 3.3 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 0.0 |
| Horizon Power | 1,372 | 1,573 | 1,420 | 964 | 417 | 842 | 19.2 | 19.8 | 17.6 | 10.4 | 5.1 | 10.7 |
| Synergy | 6,867 | 8,069 | 6,296 | 5,158 | 5,089 | 6,986 | 7.5 | 9.2 | 6.4 | 5.2 | 5.1 | 7.0 |
| Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.2 | 2.8 | 1.2 |
| Business Total | 8,287 | 9,642 | 7,761 | 6,182 | 6,571 | 7,835 | 8.2 | 10.1 | 7.2 | 5.6 | 5.9 | 7.1 |

Table 45: Residential and business gas customers who have been granted additional time to pay a bill

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Per 100 customers | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Residential | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | | | 61,204 | 75,523 | 68,166 | 98,585 | | | 9.8 | 11.9 | 10.9 | 16.1 |
| Kleenheat | | | 0 | 102 | 284 | 679 | | | 0.0 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.8 |
| EGDC | | | 20 | 10 | 15 | 0 | | | 6.8 | 3.2 | 4.3 | 0.0 |
| Residential Total | | | 61,224 | 75,635 | 68,465 | 99,264 | | | 9.7 | 11.5 | 10.1 | 14.2 |
| Business | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | | | 748 | 1,307 | 1,054 | 1,660 | | | 9.0 | 15.8 | 13.0 | 20.0 |
| Synergy | | | 130 | 0 | 19 | 93 | | | 92.2 | 0.0 | 17.8 | 67.9 |
| Kleenheat | | | 0 | 17 | 35 | 1 | | | 0.0 | 7.3 | 4.0 | 0.1 |
| EGDC | | | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | 5.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Business Total | | | 880 | 1,324 | 1,108 | 1,754 | | | 10.3 | 15.3 | 12.1 | 17.4 |

Table 46: Residential and business energy customers with direct debit plans terminated as result of default

| Retailer | 2010-11 | | 2011-12 | | 2012-13 | | 2013-14 | | 2014-15 | | 2015-16 | |
|---------------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Electricity | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business |
| Horizon Power | - | - | - | - | 27 | 0 | 39 | 0 | 17 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Synergy | 3,925 | 100 | 4,164 | 134 | 5,093 | 169 | 5,707 | 206 | 7,968 | 315 | 11,742 | 485 |
| Gas | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business |
| Alinta Energy | 642 | 1 | 512 | 2 | 722 | 2 | 238 | 1 | 893 | 5 | 1,128 | 3 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Synergy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

Table 47: Residential and business energy customers who have provided a security deposit

| Retailer | 2010-11 | | 2011-12 | | 2012-13 | | 2013-14 | | 2014-15 | | 2015-16 | |
|-------------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Electricity | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business |
| Synergy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Gas | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business | Residential | Business |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 |

Disconnections and Reconnections

Table 48: Residential energy customers disconnected for a failure to pay a bill

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Per 100 customers | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 664 | 328 | 424 | 1,132 | 1,084 | 1,705 | 2.19 | 0.96 | 1.18 | 3.03 | 2.83 | 4.38 |
| Synergy | 7,631 | 7,723 | 6,322 | 8,103 | 8,328 | 8,069 | 0.86 | 0.86 | 0.71 | 0.89 | 0.89 | 0.82 |
| Electricity Total | 8,295 | 8,051 | 6,746 | 9,235 | 9,412 | 9,774 | 0.90 | 0.87 | 0.72 | 0.97 | 0.97 | 0.96 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 10,841 | 9,557 | 10,712 | 9,930 | 14,530 | 15,044 | 1.76 | 1.52 | 1.72 | 1.56 | 2.31 | 2.46 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | 7 | 229 | 639 | 1,600 | - | - | 0.09 | 1.06 | 1.35 | 1.83 |
| EGDC | 7 | 0 | 5 | 6 | 15 | 5 | 2.70 | 0.00 | 1.69 | 1.94 | 4.29 | 1.53 |
| Gas Total | 10,848 | 9,557 | 10,724 | 10,165 | 15,184 | 16,649 | 1.76 | 1.52 | 1.69 | 1.55 | 2.25 | 2.38 |

Table 49: Additional residential electricity disconnection indicators

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of disconnections | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Previously the subject of an instalment plan | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 214 | 135 | 169 | 489 | 375 | 617 | 32.2 | 41.2 | 39.9 | 43.2 | 34.6 | 36.2 |
| Synergy | 1,993 | 2,342 | 2,193 | 2,559 | 3,533 | 3,678 | 26.1 | 30.3 | 34.7 | 31.6 | 42.4 | 45.6 |
| Total | 2,207 | 2,447 | 2,362 | 3,048 | 3,908 | 4,295 | 26.6 | 30.4 | 35.0 | 33.0 | 41.5 | 43.9 |
| Disconnected at the same supply address within the past 24 months | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 153 | 62 | 29 | 85 | 181 | 475 | 23.0 | 18.9 | 6.8 | 7.5 | 16.7 | 27.9 |
| Synergy | 858 | 1,546 | 1,170 | 1,284 | 1,397 | 1,254 | 11.2 | 20.0 | 18.5 | 15.8 | 16.8 | 15.5 |
| Total | 1,011 | 1,608 | 1,199 | 1,369 | 1,578 | 1,729 | 12.2 | 20.0 | 17.8 | 14.8 | 16.8 | 17.7 |
| Concession card holders | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 68 | 57 | 48 | 291 | 284 | 214 | 10.2 | 17.4 | 6.8 | 25.7 | 26.2 | 12.6 |
| Synergy | 2,189 | 2,369 | 1,853 | 2,237 | 2,595 | 2,662 | 28.7 | 30.7 | 29.3 | 27.6 | 31.2 | 33.0 |
| Total | 2,157 | 2,426 | 1,901 | 2,528 | 2,879 | 2,876 | 26.0 | 30.1 | 28.2 | 27.4 | 30.6 | 29.4 |

Table 50: Additional residential gas disconnection indicators

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of disconnections | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Previously the subject of an instalment plan | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 151 | 351 | 477 | 761 | 1786 | 1,425 | 1.4 | 3.7 | 4.5 | 7.7 | 12.3 | 9.5 |
| Kleenheat | - | 0 | 0 | 24 | 55 | 536 | - | 0.0 | 0.0 | 10.5 | 8.6 | 33.5 |
| EGDC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 151 | 351 | 477 | 327 | 1,844 | 1,961 | 1.4 | 3.7 | 4.5 | 7.7 | 12.1 | 11.8 |
| Disconnected at the same supply address within the past 24 months | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 2,946 | 1,960 | 2,806 | 2,510 | 2,990 | 3,685 | 27.2 | 20.5 | 26.2 | 25.3 | 20.6 | 24.5 |
| Kleenheat | - | 0 | 0 | 29 | 88 | 163 | - | 0.0 | 0.0 | 12.7 | 13.8 | 10.2 |
| EGDC | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 20.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 13.3 | 0.0 |
| Total | 2,949 | 1,960 | 2,806 | 2,539 | 3,080 | 3,848 | 27.2 | 20.5 | 26.2 | 25.0 | 20.3 | 23.1 |

Table 51: Inter-jurisdictional comparison of residential electricity disconnections (per 100 customers)

| | New South Wales | South Australia | Victoria | Western Australia |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 2010-11 | 0.60 | 0.66 | 0.59 | 0.38 |
| 2011-12 | 0.61 | 1.01 | 0.77 | 0.90 |
| 2012-13 | 0.80 | 1.35 | 1.02 | 0.87 |
| 2013-14 | 0.83 | 1.5 | 1.07 | 0.72 |
| 2014-15 | 1.03 | 1.37 | 1.47 | 0.97 |
| 2015-16 | 1.06 | 1.36 | 1.45 | 0.97 |
| 2010-11 | 1.00 | 1.39 | 1.34 | 0.96 |

Table 52: Business energy customers disconnected for a failure to pay a bill

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Per 100 customers | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 0 | 10 | 11 | 7 | 10 | 21 | 0.0 | 0.14 | 0.81 | 0.36 | 0.39 | 0.86 |
| Horizon Power | 19 | 11 | 7 | 38 | 41 | 128 | 0.27 | 0.15 | 0.09 | 0.41 | 0.50 | 1.63 |
| Synergy | 499 | 436 | 450 | 565 | 560 | 616 | 0.54 | 0.50 | 0.46 | 0.57 | 0.56 | 0.62 |
| Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.75 | 0.82 | 0.33 |
| Electricity Total | 518 | 459 | 468 | 614 | 614 | 767 | 0.51 | 0.47 | 0.43 | 0.55 | 0.55 | 0.70 |
| G a s | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 86 | 97 | 132 | 141 | 154 | 201 | 1.03 | 1.15 | 1.58 | 1.70 | 1.89 | 2.42 |
| Kleenheat | - | 0 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 42 | - | 0 | 0 | 0.43 | 1.03 | 2.70 |
| Gas Total | 86 | 97 | 132 | 142 | 163 | 243 | 1.01 | 1.14 | 1.54 | 1.65 | 1.78 | 2.42 |

Table 53: Residential energy customers reconnected at same supply address within seven days of disconnection

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of disconnections | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 120 | 55 | 30 | 222 | 231 | 694 | 18.1 | 16.8 | 7.1 | 19.6 | 21.3 | 40.7 |
| Synergy | 4,366 | 4,530 | 4,022 | 5,280 | 5,804 | 5,665 | 57.2 | 58.7 | 63.6 | 65.2 | 69.7 | 70.2 |
| Electricity Total | 4,486 | 4,585 | 4,055 | 5,502 | 6,035 | 6,359 | 54.1 | 56.9 | 60.1 | 59.6 | 64.1 | 65.1 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 2,615 | 3,236 | 4,144 | 3,568 | 5,994 | 6,666 | 24.1 | 33.9 | 38.7 | 35.9 | 41.3 | 44.3 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | 4 | 101 | 273 | 629 | - | - | 57.1 | 44.1 | 42.7 | 39.3 |
| EGDC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 60.0 |
| Gas Total | 2,615 | 3,236 | 4,148 | 3,673 | 6,272 | 7,298 | 24.1 | 33.9 | 38.7 | 36.1 | 41.3 | 43.8 |

Table 54: Total residential energy customers reconnected at same supply address after disconnection

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of disconnections | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------------|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | - | - | 95 | 237 | 668 | 942 | - | - | 22.4 | 20.9 | 61.6 | 55.2 |
| Synergy | - | - | 4,396 | 5,962 | 6,916 | 6,121 | - | - | 69.5 | 73.6 | 83.0 | 75.9 |
| Electricity Total | - | - | 4,491 | 6,199 | 7,584 | 7,063 | - | - | 66.6 | 67.1 | 80.6 | 72.3 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | - | - | 8,082 | 6,350 | 9,897 | 10,545 | - | - | 75.4 | 63.9 | 68.1 | 70.1 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | 4 | 138 | 340 | 757 | - | - | 57.1 | 60.3 | 53.2 | 47.3 |
| EGDC | - | - | 0 | 5 | 10 | 4 | - | - | 0.0 | 83.3 | 66.7 | 80.0 |
| Gas Total | - | - | 8,086 | 6,493 | 10,247 | 11,306 | - | - | 75.4 | 63.9 | 67.5 | 67.9 |

Table 55: Additional residential electricity reconnection indicators

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of disconnections | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Previously the subject of an instalment plan | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 46 | 38 | 29 | 131 | 150 ⁷⁵ | 336 | 6.9 | 11.6 | 6.8 | 11.6 | 13.8 | 19.7 |
| Synergy | 1,805 | 2,073 | 1,984 | 2,388 | 2,949 | 3,541 | 23.7 | 26.8 | 31.4 | 29.5 | 35.4 | 43.9 |
| Total | 1,851 | 2,111 | 2,013 | 2,519 | 2,950 | 3,877 | 22.3 | 26.2 | 29.8 | 27.3 | 31.3 | 39.7 |
| Reconnected at the same supply address within the past 24 months | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 24 | 13 | 6 | 14 | 39 | 294 | 3.6 | 4.0 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 3.6 | 17.2 |
| Synergy | 544 | 1,048 | 1,033 | 1,006 | 1,128 | 1,001 | 7.1 | 13.6 | 16.3 | 12.4 | 13.5 | 12.4 |
| Total | 568 | 1,061 | 1,039 | 1,020 | 1,167 | 1,295 | 6.8 | 13.2 | 15.4 | 11 | 12.4 | 13.2 |
| Concession card holders | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 21 | 14 | 10 | 74 | 77 | 107 | 3.2 | 4.3 | 2.4 | 6.5 | 7.1 | 6.3 |
| Synergy | 1,512 | 1,565 | 1,567 | 1,626 | 2,138 | 2,042 | 19.8 | 20.3 | 23.2 | 20.1 | 25.7 | 25.3 |
| Total | 1,533 | 1,579 | 1,577 | 1,700 | 2,215 | 2,149 | 18.5 | 19.6 | 23.4 | 18.4 | 23.5 | 22.0 |

⁷⁵ Horizon Power has provided an updated value for this indicator, which was previously reported to be 1.

Table 56: Additional residential gas reconnection indicators

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of disconnections | | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Previously the subject of an instalment plan | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 147 | 156 | 231 | 318 | 860 | 737 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 3.2 | 5.9 | 4.9 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | 0 | 8 | 56 | 728 | - | - | 0.0 | 3.5 | 8.8 | 45.5 |
| EGDC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 147 | 156 | 231 | 327 | 916 | 1,465 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 3.2 | 6.0 | 8.8 |
| Disconnected at the same supply address within the past 24 months | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 573 | 491 | 825 | 700 | 839 | 1,384 | 5.3 | 5.1 | 7.7 | 7.0 | 5.8 | 9.2 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | 0 | 18 | 45 | 126 | - | - | 0.0 | 7.9 | 7.0 | 7.9 |
| EGDC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 16.7 | 13.3 | 0.0 |
| Total | 573 | 491 | 825 | 719 | 886 | 1,510 | 5.3 | 5.1 | 7.7 | 7.1 | 5.8 | 9.1 |

Table 57: Business energy customers reconnected at same supply address within seven days of disconnection

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of disconnections | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 0 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 10 | 14 | 0.0 | 81.8 | 9.1 | 7.14 | 100.0 | 66.7 |
| Horizon Power | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 50 | 5.3 | 8.3 | 0.0 | 13.2 | 12.2 | 39.1 |
| Synergy | 218 | 154 | 193 | 256 | 328 | 344 | 43.7 | 35.3 | 42.9 | 45.3 | 58.6 | 55.8 |
| Perth Energy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Electricity Total | 219 | 164 | 194 | 270 | 346 | 410 | 42.3 | 35.7 | 41.5 | 44.0 | 56.4 | 53.5 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 41 | 31 | 58 | 53 | 79 | 88 | 47.7 | 32.0 | 43.9 | 37.6 | 51.3 | 43.8 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | 0 | 3 | 29 | - | 0- | - | 0 | 33.3 | 69.0 |
| Gas Total | 41 | 31 | 58 | 53 | 82 | 117 | 47.7 | 32.0 | 43.9 | 37.3 | 50.3 | 48.1 |

Table 58: Total business energy customers reconnected at same supply address after disconnection

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of disconnections | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | - | - | 1 | 5 | 10 | 14 | - | - | 9.1 | 71.4 | 100.0 | 66.7 |
| Horizon Power | - | - | 0 | 15 | 13 | 78 | - | - | 0.0 | 39.5 | 31.7 | 60.9 |
| Synergy | - | - | 222 | 322 | 439 | 397 | - | - | 49.3 | 57.0 | 78.4 | 64.4 |
| Perth Energy | - | - | 0 | 4 | 3 | 2 | | | | 100 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Electricity Total | - | - | 223 | 346 | 465 | 491 | - | - | 47.6 | 56.4 | 75.7 | 64.0 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | - | - | 96 | 83 | 111 | 122 | - | - | 72.7 | 58.9 | 72.1 | 60.7 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | 0 | 1 | 3 | 29 | | | | 100 | 33.3 | 69.0 |
| Gas Total | - | - | 96 | 84 | 114 | 88 | - | - | 72.7 | 59.2 | 69.9 | 62.1 |

Customer Complaints

Table 59: Residential energy complaints

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Per 100 customers | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 100 | 133 | 382 | 268 | 219 | 546 | 0.33 | 0.39 | 1.06 | 0.72 | 0.57 | 1.40 |
| Synergy | 13,403 | 7,144 | 3,635 | 2,694 | 2,290 | 1,879 | 1.50 | 0.80 | 0.41 | 0.30 | 0.24 | 0.19 |
| Electricity Total | 13,503 | 7,277 | 4,017 | 2,962 | 2,509 | 2,425 | 1.47 | 0.78 | 0.43 | 0.31 | 0.26 | 0.24 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 1,298 | 968 | 996 | 892 | 997 | 1,570 | 0.21 | 0.15 | 0.16 | 0.14 | 0.16 | 0.26 |
| Kleenheat | 0 | 2 | 44 | 197 | 243 | 290 | 0.00 | 0.37 | 0.54 | 0.91 | 0.51 | 0.33 |
| EGDC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Gas Total | 1,298 | 970 | 1,040 | 1,089 | 1,240 | 1,860 | 0.21 | 0.15 | 0.16 | 0.17 | 0.18 | 0.27 |

Table 60: Residential electricity complaints by complaint category

| Retailer | Billing (%) | | | | | | Marketing (%) | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Horizon Power | 42.0 | 63.2 | 88.7 | 83.6 | 68.5 | 74.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Synergy | 94.3 | 83.0 | 83.9 | 88.8 | 87.4 | 90.2 | 1.3 | 5.6 | 13.7 | 8.4 | 8.9 | 7.0 |
| Retailer | Transfer (%) | | | | | | Other (%) | | | | | |
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Horizon Power | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 58.0 | 36.8 | 11.3 | 14.9 | 31.5 | 26.0 |
| Synergy | 0.0 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 4.4 | 11.0 | 0.03 | 1.9 | 2.8 | 2.5 |

Table 61: Residential gas complaints by complaint category

| Retailer | Billing (%) | | | | | | Marketing (%) | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 41.4 | 47.3 | 70.9 | 66.4 | 66.4 | 80.1 | 1.3 | 1.9 | 3.1 | 4.7 | 6.8 | 7.0 |
| Kleenheat | - | 50.0 | 6.8 | 35.5 | 71.2 | 70.3 | - | 0.0 | 56.8 | 54.4 | 7.4 | 0.7 |

| Retailer | Transfer (%) | | | | | | Other (%) | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 0.4 | 57.3 | 50.8 | 26.0 | 28.9 | 25.7 | 13.0 |
| Kleenheat | - | 0.0 | 11.4 | 6.6 | 4.5 | 6.6 | - | 50.0 | 25.0 | 33.5 | 16.9 | 22.4 |

Table 62: Business energy complaints

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Per 100 customers | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 6 | 17 | 13 | 10 | 25 | 3 | 0.41 | 0.11 | 0.96 | 0.51 | 0.98 | 0.12 |
| A-Star | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | - | - | - | - | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Horizon Power | 37 | 4 | 87 | 54 | 25 | 115 | 0.41 | 0.05 | 1.08 | 0.58 | 0.30 | 1.46 |
| Perth Energy | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0.00 | 0.14 | 0.58 | 0.00 | 0.27 | 0.17 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0.00 | 0.40 | 0.00 | 23.08 | 3.85 | 0.00 |
| Synergy | 1,865 | 1,182 | 425 | 349 | 240 | 204 | 2.03 | 1.35 | 0.43 | 0.35 | 0.24 | 0.21 |
| Electricity Total | 1,908 | 1,205 | 526 | 419 | 292 | 323 | 1.90 | 1.24 | 0.49 | 0.38 | 0.26 | 0.29 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 5 | 14 | 33 | 6 | 21 | 15 | 0.06 | 0.17 | 0.39 | 0.07 | 0.26 | 0.18 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | 0.00 | 0.32 |
| Synergy | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0.84 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Gas Total | 6 | 14 | 33 | 6 | 21 | 20 | 0.07 | 0.16 | 0.39 | 0.07 | 0.23 | 0.20 |

Table 63: Business electricity complaints by complaint category

| Retailer | Billing (%) | | | | | | Marketing (%) | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 83.3 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 70.0 | 68.0 | 66.7 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 30.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Horizon Power | 43.3 | 50.0 | 86.2 | 92.6 | 72.0 | 73.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 100.0 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.0 |
| Perth Energy | 0.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | - | 100.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | - | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Synergy | 95.2 | 83.0 | 91.8 | 91.8 | 68.0 | 86.3 | 1.3 | 5.6 | 4.9 | 9.8 | 9.2 | 9.8 |

| Retailer | Transfer (%) | | | | | | Other (%) | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 28.0 | 33.3 |
| Horizon Power | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 56.7 | 50.0 | 13.8 | 7.4 | 28.0 | 27.0 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 0.0 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.0 |
| Perth Energy | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | - | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | - | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Synergy | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 3.4 | 11.0 | 3.3 | 2.0 | 3.8 | 2.0 |

Table 64: Business gas complaints by complaint category

| Retailer | Billing (%) | | | | | | Marketing (%) | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 60.0 | 71.4 | 56.7 | 83.3 | 60.0 | 93.3 | 20.0 | 21.4 | 3.3 | 16.7 | 5.0 | 0.0 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 60.0 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.0 |
| Synergy | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | - | - | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | - | - | 0.0 |

| Retailer | Transfer (%) | | | | | | Other (%) | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Alinta Energy | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 7.1 | 40.0 | 0.0 | 35.0 | 6.7 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 20.0 | - | - | - | - | - | 20.0 |
| Synergy | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | - | - | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | - | - | 0.0 |

Table 65: Complaints from residential energy customers resolved within 15 business days

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of complaints | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horizon Power | 100 | 133 | 205 | 165 | 162 | 316 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 53.7 | 61.6 | 74.0 | 57.9 |
| Synergy | 5,672 | 5,097 | 3,632 | 2,539 | 2,186 | 1,852 | 42.3 | 71.4 | 99.9 | 94.2 | 95.5 | 98.6 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 1,298 | 948 | 874 | 805 | 960 | 1,114 | 100.0 | 97.9 | 87.8 | 90.2 | 96.29 | 71.0 |
| Kleenheat | - | 2 | 44 | 194 | 235 | 284 | - | 100.0 | 100.0 | 98.5 | 96.71 | 97.9 |
| EGDC | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

Table 66: Complaints from business energy customers resolved within 15 business days

| Retailer | Number | | | | | | Percentage of complaints | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 6 | 16 | 13 | 9 | 25 | 3 | 100.0 | 94.1 | 100.0 | 90.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Horizon Power | 37 | 4 | 39 | 34 | 15 | 47 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 44.8 | 63.0 | 60.0 | 40.9 |
| Perth Energy | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | 100.0 | 100.0 | - | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | - | 1 | - | 4 | 1 | 0 | - | 100.0 | - | 66.7 | 100.0 | - |
| Synergy | 603 | 720 | 425 | 313 | 230 | 202 | 32.3 | 60.9 | 71.4 | 89.7 | 95.8 | 99.0 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 5 | 13 | 30 | 5 | 20 | 14 | 100.0 | 92.9 | 90.9 | 83.3 | 95.2 | 93.3 |
| Synergy | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 100.0 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 100.0 |
| EGDC | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

Table 67: Inter-jurisdictional comparison of electricity and gas complaints (per 100 customers) (Archived)

| State | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Electricity complaints | | | | | |
| NSW | 0.4 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 1.6 | 2.8 |
| SA | 1.26 | 1.54 | 2.5 | 2.7 | n/a |
| VIC | 2.22 | 2.10 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 5.5 |
| WA | 0.22 | 0.96 | 1.51 | 0.83 | 0.44 |
| Gas Complaints | | | | | |
| NSW | 0.51 | 0.97 | 1.23 | 1.54 | 2.3 |
| SA | 0.50 | 0.53 | 1.47 | 1.8 | n/a |
| VIC | 0.80 | 0.74 | 1.18 | 1.5 | 2.4 |
| WA | 0.09 | 0.16 | 0.21 | 0.15 | 0.17 |

Call Centre Performance

Table 68: Total number of calls received by energy retailer call centres

| Retailer | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 2,452 | 2,462 | 2,728 | 2,828 | 3,342 | 2,997 |
| Horizon Power | 71,215 | 82,587 | 103,301 | 99,347 | 95,203 | 108,497 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 14 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 5,272 | 5,840 | 6,173 | 4,850 | 5,250 | 1,955 |
| Synergy | 1,439,432 | 1,315,881 | 1,223,000 | 1,132,395 | 1,072,272 | 1,058,008 |
| Electricity Total | 1,518,371 | 1,406,770 | 1,335,202 | 1,239,420 | 1,176,067 | 1,171,471 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 720,439 | 686,935 | 696,694 | 735,884 | 778,427 | 675,673 |
| Kleenheat | 190,764 | 214,280 | 220,710 | 235,698 | 233,363 | 222,505 |
| Gas Total | 911,203 | 901,215 | 917,404 | 971,582 | 1,011,790 | 898,178 |

Table 69: Average duration before a call is answered and the percentage of calls that are answered within 30 seconds

| Retailer | Average duration before a call is answered (seconds) | | | | | | Percentage answered within 30 seconds | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 22.0 | 19.0 | 17.0 | 22.0 | 14.0 | 14.0 | 73.3 | 76.6 | 88.7 | 75.2 | 85.0 | 84.5 |
| Horizon Power | 20.0 | 18.0 | 35.5 | 25.7 | 36.0 | 62.0 | 88.0 | 88.5 | 75.9 | 81.5 | 76.0 | 68.2 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 26.0 | - | - | - | - | - | 85.7 |
| Rottnest Island Authority | 16.0 | 12.0 | 13.0 | 12.0 | 12.0 | 12.0 | 97.3 | 95.0 | 81.2 | 90.8 | 93.3 | 89.4 |
| Synergy | 54.0 | 35.0 | 22.8 | 17.8 | 22.7 | 35.0 | 70.2 | 74.8 | 79.9 | 81.8 | 82.4 | 75.0 |
| Gas | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 29.0 | 27.0 | 18.0 | 20.0 | 19.0 | 22.0 | 78.5 | 80.0 | 82.8 | 79.7 | 81.6 | 86.1 |
| Kleenheat | 21.0 | 28.0 | 19.0 | 21.0 | 22.0 | 25.0 | 79.1 | 66.3 | 82.4 | 77.8 | 76.6 | 72.6 |

Table 70: Percentage of unanswered calls

| Retailer | Percentage of unanswered calls | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
| Electricity | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 1.1 | 3.1 | 1.0 | 2.3 | 0.4 | 2.6 |
| Horizon Power | 1.7 | 1.6 | 2.6 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 6.0 |
| Kleenheat | - | - | - | - | - | 0.0 |
| Rottneest Island Authority | 3.6 | 5.0 | 2.1 | 2.7 | 2.5 | 3.6 |
| Synergy | 4.0 | 3.2 | 2.1 | 1.1 | 1.5 | 2.2 |
| Gas | | | | | | |
| Alinta Energy | 4.2 | 2.4 | 1.8 | 3.0 | 2.3 | 1.5 |
| Kleenheat | 1.1 | 3.7 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.9 | 2.6 |