

Minutes

Meeting of the Economic Regulation Authority Consumer Consultative Committee

Meeting 2/2011

Date & Time: Wednesday, 1 June 2011, 1pm

Location: Boardroom, Level 6, 197 St Georges Terrace, Perth

Attendees:

Mr Lyndon Rowe	Chairman ERA
Mr Paul Kelly	Executive Director, Licensing, Monitoring & Customer Protection. ERA
Ms Lanie Chopping	Assistant Director, Customer Protection Licensing, Monitoring & Customer Protection, ERA
Mr Chris Field	State Ombudsman / Energy Ombudsman
Mr Wayne Mann	Director, Energy Ombudsman, Western Australia
Mr Chris Alexander	Chamber of Minerals & Energy
Mr Charles Brown	Financial Counsellors Association of WA
Mr Ian Duncan	WA Local Government Association
Mr Mike Norton	WA Farmers Federation
Mr Milan Zaklan (proxy for Mr Tony Seabrook)	Pastoralists & Graziers Association
Ms Amelia Brancato (proxy for Irina Cattalini)	WACOSS

Apologies:

Mr Gary Newcombe	Department of Commerce
Ms Jill Rudeforth	Consumer Credit Legal Service
Ms Irina Cattalini	WACOSS
Mr Andrew Canion	Small Enterprise Network (CCI)
Mr Tony Seabrook	Pastoralists & Graziers Association
Ms Erin Meikle	Property Council WA

1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Mr Lyndon Rowe welcomed members and noted apologies as listed above.

2 MINUTES OF MEETING 1/2011 HELD ON 2 March 2011

The minutes were accepted as a true and correct record of the last meeting.

3 UPDATE ON ACTION ITEM REGISTER & STATUS REPORT

The report was taken as read and no issues were raised.

4 ERA PRESENTATION – WA GAS NETWORKS ACCESS ARRANGEMENT – FINAL DECISION

Mr Robert Pullella provided a presentation regarding the WAGN Final Decision. A copy of the PPT will be circulated with these minutes.

Mr Rowe left the meeting and Mr Kelly took over as Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

5 ERA PRESENTATION – CURRENT INQUIRIES – FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS OF HORIZON POWER – FINAL REPORT, Ms Sara O'Connor, Analyst, ERA.

Ms Sara O'Conner provided a presentation regarding the Horizon Power Inquiry. A copy of the PPT will be circulated with these minutes.

6 MEMBER PRESENTATION – TRENDS IN FARMING IN WA – WA FARMERS FEDERATION, Mr Mike Norton, President, WA Farmers Federation

Mr Mike Norton provided a presentation regarding trends and issues in farming in WA. A copy of the PPT will be circulated with these minutes.

7 GUEST PRESENTATION – ENERGY COST DRIVERS & COST REFLECTIVITY REVIEW / FINANCIAL HARDSHIP PROGRAMS, Mr Michael Kerr, A/Coordinator of Energy, Office of Energy

Mr Michael Kerr, A/Coordinator of Energy, Office of Energy, provided a presentation regarding the Strategic Energy Initiative and issues surrounding competition in the energy market in WA.

A copy of the PPT will be circulated with these minutes.

8 ENERGY OMBUDSMAN'S REPORT

Mr Chris Field, Energy Ombudsman, provided an overview of some developments within the EOWA office. Mr Field advised the following:

- The EOWA had secured resources to allow an enhanced focus on systemic issues and will be providing further information about systemic issues in its next report.
- There will be enhancements to the EOWA Annual Report to provide more detailed and contextual information.
- A newsletter will be produced specifically for EOWA.
- Depending upon the passage of the Water Services Bill 2010 it is currently planned for the EOWA to assume responsibility for the Water Ombudsman service on 1 July 2012.

Mr Wayne Mann provided an overview of the quarterly report. Mr Mann highlighted:

- Complaints in electricity remain high.
- The majority of the complaints relate to Synergy and are billing complaints.
- It is anticipated that the transitional issues surrounding the anticipated changes to the feed-in tariff will result in an increase in complaint in this area.

9 MEMBERS' ISSUES

- Mr Ian Duncan (WALGA) raised concerns regarding the increase in the street light tariff and the fact that the tariff is considered a 'contestable' tariff but there is no competition in terms of providers in relation to street lights.

10 OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Consumers 2011

Ms Lanie Chopping reported that there were insufficient numbers of ERACCC members attending Consumers 2011 to warrant a special liaison meeting with the Australian Energy Regulator Consumer Consultative Committee. However, there will be opportunity for informal liaison during the conference.

10.2 Root Cause Analysis Seminar' Feedback

The 2011 seminar hosted by the ERA (with input from the ERACCC), the EOWA and Department of Commerce was well received by around 60 participants.

11 ERACCC ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

11.1 AER Communiqué

Ms Chopping proposed that the ERA consider adopting a similar approach to the AER by putting out a communiqué to all interested parties following each ERACCC meeting. The communiqué would be a short summary of the issues discussed at the meeting. ERACCC members agreed that this would be a useful initiative to raise the profile and understanding of the ERACCC amongst stakeholders.

Action: Ms Chopping to develop a communiqué following each meeting, commencing after the September 2011 meeting.

12 CHAIRMAN'S TAKE AWAY

Mr Kelly noted the high quality of presentation.

Mr Kelly encouraged members to get involved with the work of the Office of Energy as they are the major driver of policy change.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 7 September 2011, 1pm (lunch 12:30pm)

Meeting closed at 4:15pm