



Minutes

Meeting Title: Economic Regulation Authority Consumer Consultative Committee

Meeting Number: 03/2022

Date & Time: Wednesday, 5 October 2022 10:00am (AWST)

Location: Online via Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Members

Noelli Bariacto	CCI WA	
Analena Gilhome	CCI WA	<i>Apology</i>
Liz Crompton	Chamber of Minerals and Energy	
Rowan Kelly	Consumer Credit Legal Service	
Suresh Rajan	Ethnic Communities Council of WA	
Melanie Every	Financial Counsellors' Association	
Sheldon Mumby	Pastoralists & Graziers Association	
Lindsay Duncan	Property Council of Australia (WA)	
Emily Young	Property Council of Australia (WA)	<i>Apology</i>
Kitty Prodonovich	RCCI WA	
Tim Dymond	UnionsWA	<i>Apology</i>
Graham Hansen	WA Council of Social Service	
John Hassell	WA Farmers Federation	
Daniel Thomson	WA Local Government Association	

ERA

Steve Edwell	ERA
Jenness Gardner	ERA
Rajat Sarawat	ERA
Sara O'Connor	ERA
Danielle Asarpota	ERA

Observers

Catherine Scott	Consumer Protection (DMIRS)	
Penny Lipscombe	Consumer Protection (DMIRS)	<i>Apology</i>
Marcus Claridge	Energy and Water Ombudsman	
Brent Savage	Energy Policy WA	

DMS: D252372

1. Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country by Steve Edwell, Chair ERA

The meeting opened at 10:00am. Steve Edwell welcomed all attendees and acknowledged Country.

2. Apologies

Steve noted the apologies as below:

- Analena Gilhome. CCI WA is instead represented by Noelli Bariacto.
- Emily Young. Property Council of Australia (WA) is instead represented by Lindsay Duncan.
- Tim Dymond (Unions WA)
- Penny Lipscombe. Consumer Protection is instead represented by Catherine Scott.

3. Minutes of meeting 02/2022 held on Wednesday 1 June 2022

The Chair approved the minutes of Meeting 02/2022 as a formal record of those events.

4. Western Power AA5 draft decision – Steve Edwell, ERA

Steve provided an overview of the ERA's draft decision on Western Power's access arrangement 5, including the particular challenges of fluctuating economic conditions and the need the support the energy transformation.

Steve explained the ERA's approach to calculating the Weighted Average Price of Capital and encouraged members to make submissions on this aspect of the draft decision.

Members noted that the network tariff is about 45% of the total cost to supply residential and business customers using <50MWh and that residential tariffs are set by the government, which has capped increases in line with inflation. However, they observed that costs imposed on Western Power would likely flow through to consumers in some capacity and education is required to appropriately set consumers' expectations.

Members discussed the possibility of more regional and remote customers becoming independent of the grid and the nature of Western Power's access to favourable credit rates as a government-owned entity. Members queried how the ERA had accounted for fluctuating economic conditions.

Members noted that Energy Policy WA offers grant funding to support organisations to make submissions.

5. Engagement with consumers

The 2021 ERA stakeholder survey returned positive feedback on the ERA's engagement in two categories:

- 88% were satisfied that we explained decisions and advice clearly

- 90% were satisfied that we consult widely

However, stakeholders considered the ERA performed poorly on effectively promoting its role to the wider community, with only 44% being satisfied.

Danielle Asarpota provided an overview of the activities the ERA currently undertakes to engage with stakeholders including:

- Publish all decisions on our website
- Provide briefings on request about our decisions
- Encourage organisations we regulate to follow good consultation processes
- Host ERACCC

Danielle explained that areas of focus were ensuring that publications are written clearly and articulate the impacts of our decisions, and ensuring that ERACCC is a productive and relevant forum.

Members provided feedback that facilitating opportunities for consumer groups to engage with the more technical aspects of decisions would be helpful. Members requested more information about consultation touchpoints and the information stakeholders might best provide at each.

Steve provided commentary on the limitations in the regulatory framework in regard to consultation, and how this influenced the type of information that the ERA could consider.

6. Summary of recent work

Sara O'Connor, Executive Director Regulation and Rajat Sarawat, Executive Director Energy Markets provided an overview of recently completed projects:

- AA5 draft determination
- AEMO regulatory reporting guideline
- Wholesale Electricity Market Review
- Review of the Electricity Code of Conduct

7. Upcoming consultations

Jenness Gardner provided an overview of the ERA's upcoming consultations, with a particular focus on:

- ATCO AA6 Reference Service Proposal (Consultation open until 10 October)
- Water Code Review (Consultation paper to be published by early December).

8. General business

No members raised general business.

9. Meeting closed 11:50am

The next meeting is expected to be held on Wednesday, 22 February 2023.