



Notice

5 December 2022

Origin Energy Retail Limited

2022 performance audit

The Economic Regulation Authority has published the 2022 [performance audit report](#) and [post-audit implementation plan](#) for Origin Energy Retail Limited's gas trading licence GTL13.

Origin supplies gas to residential and small business customers in the coastal supply area of the State, including Perth. Origin had 14,228 customers as at 30 June 2022.

The ERA's decision

The ERA considers that Origin achieved a satisfactory level of compliance with its licence.

The ERA has decided to maintain the audit period at 36 months. The next audit will cover the period 1 June 2022 to 31 May 2025, with the report due to be provided by 31 August 2025.

Audit findings

The audit of the 240 licence obligations applicable to Origin found 13 non-compliances and six controls deficiencies. Most of the non-compliances relate to Origin not providing prescribed information to customers.

The auditor made 10 recommendations to address the non-compliances and controls deficiencies. Origin had addressed seven of the 10 recommendations by the time the audit was finalised. The post-audit implementation plan states that Origin will address the remaining recommendations by 31 December 2022.

Origin's compliance with its licence has improved slightly since the previous audit, with the current audit identifying 13 non-compliances compared to 16 non-compliances in the previous audit. However, the previous audit identified only one controls deficiency, compared to six controls deficiencies in this audit.

Most of the non-compliances relate to Origin not providing prescribed information to customers. For example, some customers were not informed when their bill was based on an estimate, or that the customer may request verification of the estimate and a meter reading. Some customers were not informed of Origin's internal complaints handling processes following a review of their bill.

Origin has implemented, or intends to implement, further controls to address these non-compliances.

Areas of special focus

The ERA's *Audit and Review Guidelines: Electricity and Gas Licences* allow the ERA to identify areas of special focus for an audit. The ERA requested Origin to instruct the auditor to examine Origin's hardship policies and processes as a special area of focus.

The auditor found Origin failed to comply with four payment difficulties and financial hardship obligations. The ERA considers these are material non-compliances and may have impacted customers. For example, some customers experiencing payment difficulties or financial hardship were not:

- Offered additional time to pay a bill.
- Advised of the customer's right to have the bill directed at no charge to a third person.
- Informed of the payment methods available to the customer.
- Advised of the concessions available to the customer and how to access them.
- Provided with the terms of their instalment plan and the consequences of not adhering to the instalment plan.

This is important information that customers are entitled to.

In its post-audit implementation plan, Origin has committed to improving its processes by 31 December 2022 to ensure customers experiencing payment difficulties or financial hardship are provided the information they are entitled to. This includes implementing system changes and staff training.

The ERA will monitor Origin's progress in resolving the non-compliances.

Further information

General enquiries

Alex Kroon
Ph: 08 6557 7989
info@erawa.com.au

Media enquiries

Danielle Asarpota
Mob: 0428 859 826
media@erawa.com.au