

# Transparency Statement

April 2016

**Economic Regulation Authority**

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# ERA transparency statement

## Our role

The Economic Regulation Authority (ERA) is an independent statutory authority established by the Parliament of Western Australia. Our purpose is *to benefit the WA community by promoting an efficient and customer focused economy* and we have a range of regulatory functions that enable us to achieve this purpose.

We work independently of industry, government and other interests to ensure our decisions and recommendations are free from bias. We have a transparent and ordered approach to our decision making process and are committed to consultation with our stakeholders throughout each stage of the process. By maintaining an impartial position we are able to work in the best long-term interests of all Western Australians.

## What we do

We regulate monopoly aspects of the gas, electricity and rail industries, and administer the licensing schemes for gas, electricity and water services. We also have a range of responsibilities in relation to the wholesale electricity market in WA. In addition, we conduct inquiries into matters referred to us by the State Government.

## Why transparency?

Transparency is an important part of our statutory duties and a core governance principle that supports the predictable, authoritative decision-making process that is key to independent economic regulation. We recognise that transparency is directly linked to accountability and provides important benefits:

- To inform stakeholders of the matters that we have considered in our decision-making, and to explain the reasons for our decisions.
- To make information publicly available, noting that we have a legal obligation to keep certain commercially sensitive information confidential.
- To inform stakeholders of our approach to regulation and their rights and obligations by publishing guidelines and other regulatory documents.

As a regulator with a strong commitment to transparency, we can assure consumers that we meet our responsibilities with vigilance and rigor. We expect the businesses we regulate to be transparent in dealings with us and their customers, and we understand that our stakeholders expect the same from us.

## Our commitment to best practice consultation

Our approach to effective external consultation on regulatory reviews and inquiries includes a commitment to:

- Publicly promote the regulatory review or inquiry that we are conducting through our website and by emailing notices to people who have subscribed on our website.
- Engage with relevant audiences – such as consumer and industry groups and regulated businesses – throughout the review process.

- Provide opportunities for stakeholders to contribute to our regulatory reviews and inquiries at key stages of the process.
- Focusing on producing reader-friendly documents, wherever possible.
- Tailoring our public communication and consultation to the intended audience, making use of appropriate media channels, direct engagement with stakeholders, or by holding meetings or workshops.

## How we communicate

We are committed to publishing all information about the regulatory review or inquiry we are undertaking, unless the information is commercially sensitive or subject to other legal constraints.

To this end, our goal is to:

- Publish information that is timely, accurate and complete.
- Deliver information in a way that is accessible to stakeholders.
- Facilitate an informed discussion about the matters we are working on.

## Our work program

At the start of each financial year, we develop and publish a work program for the year. The work program reflects the goals and strategies we will pursue in meeting our statutory obligations and responsibilities.

At the conclusion of the financial year, we report on our work program in our annual report, which includes information on outputs achieved and the benefits we have delivered to the Western Australian public.

## Individual customer disputes with the entities we regulate

We do not resolve general disputes between individual consumers and the entities we regulate.

The entities we regulate are subject to complaint and dispute resolution processes that are provided by other organisations, such as the Energy and Water Ombudsman of WA, the Australian Competition Tribunal, and other independent review bodies.

## Subscribe for updates

We invite you to stay up-to-date on our work across any or all of the industries we regulate by subscribing to our email notifications from our [website](#).

## Freedom of Information requests

Anyone has the right to request access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*. Further information on our freedom of information processes can be found on our [website](#).

## Providing feedback

For more information, or to provide feedback on our performance, please don't hesitate to contact us:

- Electronically via [records@erawa.com.au](mailto:records@erawa.com.au)
- Phone us (08) 6557 7900
- Write to us PO Box 8469, Perth BC 6849
- Send us a fax (08) 6557 7999
- Follow us on [twitter](#) or [linked in](#)

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