



Economic Regulation Authority

Promoting fair prices, quality services and choice

NOTICE

Financial Hardship Policy Guidelines – August 2010

NEW VERSION RELEASED

The Authority has approved the *Financial Hardship Policy Guidelines – August 2010* (**guidelines**) to provide guidance to electricity and gas retailers and to be used by the Authority to undertake the assessment of financial hardship policies.

Electricity and gas retailers are required to have a financial hardship policy under Part 6 of the *Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers* and the *Compendium of Gas Customer Licence Obligations (Gas Customer Code)* (**Energy Codes**).

In 2008 the Authority published the guidelines to provide guidance regarding the requirements of the Energy Codes and information regarding good practice in the development and implementation of financial hardship policies.

From 1 July 2010, the Energy Codes require that retailers must undertake an annual review of their financial hardship policy, have consideration for the guidelines in doing so, and submit the policy to the Authority for assessment.

The Energy Codes specify that the Authority will assess the policy and the review process against the Energy Codes and the guidelines, and publish an assessment no more than once each year.

As a consequence of the new requirements under the Energy Codes, the Authority approved proposed amendments to the guidelines in May 2010. The proposed guidelines were released for public consultation on 23 June 2010.

Public consultation closed on 14 July 2010 and submissions were received from Synergy and the Western Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS). Copies of these submissions are available on the Authority's [website](#).

The Authority has considered the submissions and made some amendments to the guidelines as a result.

A copy of the [Decision](#) and the [Guidelines](#) are available on the Authority's website.

For further information contact:

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