Media Statement

11 November 2025

ERA takes further compliance action against Synergy

The Economic Regulation Authority has issued Synergy with a second compliance enforcement notice for breaching its retail licence obligations under the Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity Customers 2022.

Synergy's breach is for failing to notify customers of overcharges on closed accounts within 10 business days of becoming aware of those overcharges.

The ERA issued Synergy with a compliance notice for a similar breach in July 2025.

This second, much larger breach was discovered as a result of that first compliance investigation, when in late June Synergy self-reported to the ERA that it had discovered a wider set of overpayments.

Since then, Synergy has been working with the ERA to gather data on the extent of the breach, and the exact number of customers affected.

Synergy has now confirmed that it has received 174,522 overpayments on closed accounts totalling $40.42 million since 2009.

The ERA's compliance enforcement notice applies only to 16,092 of those overpayments, totalling almost $3.6 million, as this particular type of breach was only defined in the Code in February 2023.

The average amount owed to customers is around $200 per account, but a small number of customers are owed as much as $5,000.

Other retailers

Separately, the ERA has also investigated the conduct of other electricity and gas retailers in Western Australia to determine whether this issue is more widespread.

While we have found some evidence of overcharges, we have also confirmed that all other retailers have processes in place to ensure refunds are identified and issued in a timely manner.

Therefore, we have not taken compliance action against any other retailers.

Further information on the ERA's investigations into both Synergy and the other retailers is available on our website.

Comments attributed to ERA Chair Steve Edwell:

"Synergy has accumulated $40 million in inadvertent overpayments by its customers over many years."

"It is hard to understand how Synergy did not have any automating trigger or periodic health interrogation of its billing system to detect this accumulation of funds across 174,000 closed accounts."

"The ERA considers this a very material, systemic operational and financial management failure by Western Australia's largest energy retailer."

"Under our compliance notice, Synergy is required to make every effort to contact and refund affected customers by 30 April 2026. If they do not do so, they will be fined."

"As the regulatory framework currently stands, the maximum amount we can fine a licensee, regardless of the seriousness of the breach, is $100,000."

"I note that Synergy, rightfully, has invested considerable time and resources in making system changes to ensure these overpayments do not continue, and has taken time to prepare for the mammoth task of contacting and refunding such a large number of customers over the coming months."

"We expect that repayment process to proceed as quickly as possible."

About the ERA

The ERA is Western Australia's independent economic regulator. We aim to benefit all Western Australians by promoting strong economic outcomes through effective regulation and decision making. We strive to make sure current and future consumers pay no more than necessary for safe and reliable utility services.

For further information contact:

Natalie Warnock
Manager Communications
Ph: +61 428 859 826
media@erawa.com.au

D300395