Economic Regulation Authority

Notice

20 August 2026

Horizon Power

Type 1 licence breaches – Family and domestic violence

The Regional Power Corporation (trading as Horizon Power) has breached its electricity licence EIRL2 by disconnecting customers experiencing family and domestic violence (FDV).

The ERA introduced protections for customers experiencing family and domestic violence in the *Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers* in 2023, including a moratorium on disconnections for 9 months from the date the retailer becomes aware of their FDV status.[1]

Breach details

Horizon Power disconnected 3 customers for failing to pay a bill or adhere to a payment plan when they were covered by the moratorium, so should not have been disconnected. Two customers were disconnected in 2024 and one in 2026. Two of the customers were disconnected for an extended period (one and two months respectively), while the third customer left the supply address after the disconnection and did not return.

The breaches have been identified during the ERA's independent audit of Horizon Power's compliance with its licence, which includes compliance with the Code. The detailed findings from the audit will be published later this year and include these breaches.

Cause of the breaches

The breaches were caused by a gap in Horizon Power's account management system controls to ensure a customer's FDV status is transferred between accounts when the account with the FDV 'flag' is closed and a new one is opened. At the time the customers were disconnected, their accounts did not have a flag to identify them as experiencing FDV and prevent disconnection, as it had not been transferred from their previous accounts.

Preventative action taken by Horizon Power

To ensure there are no further breaches, Horizon Power has:

- Has implemented temporary additional controls for disconnections for current and historic FDV customers until it has effective controls in place.

[1] These are customers who have advised their retailer that they are affected by FDV or who the retailer has reason to believe are affected by FDV.

- Reviewed all current and historic FDV accounts to confirm no customers have been disconnected except the three reported.
- Implemented new detective controls to monitor FDV activity on its accounts, including identifying missing FDV flags to prevent Code breaches and identify breaches as soon as they occur. These controls went live on 31 July 2026.
- Initiated an independent review of its controls to confirm the root cause of the breaches and the process improvements required to prevent future breaches. This review is due to be completed by 31 August 2026.

ERA's response to the breach

The breaches are very serious, as the customers that were disconnected are very vulnerable and were without electricity for a prolonged period (it is unknown how long the customer who moved out stayed at the supply address after it was disconnected).

While Horizon Power did warn the customers that they would be disconnected if they did not pay their bill or adhere to their payment plan, they should never have been disconnected. The FDV moratorium is in place to support vulnerable customers to have access to essential services even if their ability to pay for them has become limited.

It is also a concern that these breaches were not identified by Horizon Power, but by the ERA's independent audit. Therefore, the ERA welcomes Horizon Power implementing new detective controls in July.

The ERA is using all the powers available to it to ensure Horizon Power puts in place effective controls to prevent further breaches. This includes ensuring Horizon Power implements the recommendations from the independent review and ERA's audit. As part of the ERA's audit process, Horizon Power is required to submit a detailed post-audit implementation plan explaining how it will resolve licence breaches identified by the audit.

The ERA considers Horizon Power's preventative actions and independent review to be an appropriate response to the breach in the short term while it identifies long-term control improvements. The ERA will seek regular updates from Horizon Power on the outcomes of the review and monitor the implementation of its new controls.

Separately the ERA has today published details of another Type 1 breach by Horizon Power.

Further information

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