

evoenergy

# Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2023

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# Foreword

**At Evoenergy, we have a long-standing commitment to the local community and strive to operate with our customers' interests at the heart of all we do. With over 213,000 customers relying on our electricity network and more than 150,000 on our gas network, Evoenergy is an integral part of the lives, homes, businesses, and infrastructure that shape our region.**

As we step into an era of significant change, Evoenergy is at the forefront of supporting and enabling the full electrification of Canberra. We're embracing the rise of customer energy resources like solar, batteries, and electric vehicles, supporting our stakeholders to take charge of their energy generation and consumption. This aligns with our dedication to meeting the ACT Government's target of achieving net zero emissions by 2045.

However, such a transformative journey isn't without its complexities. Our strategic, technical, social, and operational considerations are all intertwined as we ensure safe, reliable, and affordable energy. Our journey requires close collaboration with stakeholders who play a pivotal role in shaping our shared energy future.

This strategy outlines our path to meaningful engagement with our stakeholders. We've made significant strides in improving our practices, yet we recognise the journey ahead is substantial. Over the coming years, open and continuous dialogue with stakeholders will be essential as we plan for the future together.

This strategy is a roadmap for stakeholder engagement and reinforces our commitment to optimising our networks, adopting innovative technologies, and delivering reliable energy our customers rely on. Together, we embark on a transformative journey with the Canberra Community.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Billing', written over a light grey background.

**Peter Billing**  
**General Manager Evoenergy**

# Who we are

## *A sustainable business, energising our evolving community*

Evoenergy delivers safe and reliable energy to Canberra and the surrounding region, owning and operating 2,358 square kilometres of electricity network and over 4,563 kilometres of gas mains. We supply electricity to over 213,000 residential and business customers across the ACT and 150,000 gas customers in the ACT and NSW. Our commitment lies in safety, reliability, and sustainability, driving us to be agile, innovative, and technology-driven in meeting the ever-changing needs of our customers.

## Engagement

Safety, reliability, trust and progressive planning matter to us and understanding our community's evolving needs is paramount to provide the energy solutions they value.

Genuine engagement involves a two-way conversation that helps us deliver better outcomes for customers and enhances the management of our energy networks, creating a thriving, sustainable network with great customer experiences.

Visit [www.evoenergy.com.au](http://www.evoenergy.com.au) for planning reports and other publications on our engagement.



# Our stakeholders

Evoenergy serves everyone who lives, works in or visits the ACT and uses energy. As a result, our stakeholders are diverse, impacted by, and impacting the installation, operation, and maintenance of our networks infrastructure. The rise of distributed energy resources and technology fosters increasingly complex relationships between Evoenergy and its stakeholders. By engaging our stakeholders on various topics, we can develop services that meet their needs and deliver positive customer experiences.



## Consumers

- Residential customers including homeowners, renters and vulnerable households
- Small and large businesses
- Major energy users
- Representative and special interest groups
- Evoenergy Energy Consumer Reference Council (ECRC)
- Community Councils



## Industry

- Industry bodies and representatives
- Property developers
- Electricity and gas contractors
- Energy Retailers
- Other utilities and energy supply chain participants



## Government

- Territory Directorates
- Federal Departments and Agencies



## Business Partners

- Innovative technology manufacturers
- Research partners
- Vendors and contractors
- Electricians and gas technicians



## Regulators

- National
- Jurisdictional/local



## Media

- Local, national, and international media
- Trade and industry publications



## Internal

- Owners
- Employees

# Our engagement principles

*Our principles underpin our behaviour and how we approach engagement*

We are	What this means to us	What it signifies stakeholders
<b>Adaptive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tailored approaches - no one-size-fits-all</li> <li>Evolving alongside the changing energy landscape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible engagement and communication to meet stakeholder needs</li> <li>Engagement on your own terms</li> </ul>
<b>Curious</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enthusiasm for learning and exploring new ideas</li> <li>Embracing diverse perspectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your voice will be listened to and valued</li> <li>Inclusive engagement practices</li> </ul>
<b>Courageous</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluating and enhancing our engagement practices</li> <li>Initiating bold conversations and seeking input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can hold us accountable</li> <li>We will actively seek your feedback</li> </ul>
<b>Transparent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing clear, precise, relevant and timely information</li> <li>Openness around the purpose, scope and outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will use plain language to help you make informed contributions</li> <li>You will be able to read reports on our engagement activities, and their impact, on our website</li> </ul>
<b>Committed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocating time and resources for engagement</li> <li>Acting with integrity - doing what we say we'll do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our commitment is long-term – our engagement is ongoing</li> <li>We will explain how your inputs influence our work and your experiences</li> </ul>

# How we engage

At Evoenergy, we place a high value on engaging with our stakeholders and customers because we believe it's essential to make better decisions together. Our approach is inspired by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) framework, which guides us in involving stakeholders and customers in a way that respects their input and concerns.

## IAP2 framework alignment

The IAP2 framework helps us align our engagement practices with the needs and expectations of stakeholders. It shows that different levels of involvement are needed depending on the nature of the project and the level of concern of stakeholders and customers. Considering our specific safety, regulatory, technical and requirements, our engagement initiatives typically fall within the Inform to Collaborate parts of the IAP2 spectrum. This ensures that we include stakeholders and customers appropriately in our projects and decisions.

## Personalised approach

We understand that stakeholders are unique individuals or groups with their own needs and interests. That's why we take a personalised approach to our engagement. Learning more about each stakeholder group and their preferences helps us tailor our engagement initiatives to match their specific requirements.

## Inclusivity and accessibility

To ensure that all stakeholders can participate, we use different communication channels. We hold face-to-face meetings and engage online. Our materials are also available in various formats and languages, making sure that most can access and understand the information provided.

## Feedback from stakeholders

The feedback we receive from stakeholders is crucial to us. That's why we actively seek their input on how they'd like to engage with us. Their opinions on engagement methods, timing, and frequency help us improve how we interact with them. We want all stakeholders to feel valued and heard throughout our journey together.

## Listening and taking action

We promise to listen carefully to the feedback provided by stakeholders. Their insights shape the decisions we make, the projects we undertake, and the policies we implement. Our transparent reporting and case studies showcase how their perspectives influence what we do. This accountability ensures that we act on the valuable input provided by stakeholders.



# Australian Energy Regulator (AER) Better Resets Handbook alignment

We also take guidance from the AER Better Resets Handbook. This valuable resource supports us in continuously improving our stakeholder engagement practices in our regulatory framework. It allows us to learn from others and apply the best strategies to our engagement efforts.

## Beyond regulatory planning

Engagement at Evoenergy isn't limited to regulatory planning alone. We recognise that collaboration and involvement are essential for building strong relationships and making well-informed decisions across all aspects of our operations. Our engagement initiatives encompass a wide spectrum of activities aimed at involving stakeholders in many aspects of our work. This holistic approach allows us to continuously learn, adapt, and grow while ensuring that the perspectives of those we serve are at the heart of everything we do.

## IAP2'S Public Participation Spectrum

The IAP2 federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

**Increasing impact on the decision** →

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<b>Public participation goal</b>				
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the classification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
<b>Promise to the public</b>				
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

# Engagement goals

Make engagement business as usual by sharing stories and listening to stakeholders.

Focus on our customers' changing needs through regular and targeted engagement.

Acknowledge and involve stakeholders in our business planning and direction.

## Achieving our goals

Specific, tailored initiatives will help us achieve our strategic goals.

- Continuing to develop our engagement capabilities
- Proactively identifying opportunities to engage accessibly and sustainably
- Utilising our communication channels to promote our work and ways for stakeholders to engage with us
- We will prioritise relationship building
- Our engagement will reflect the diversity of our community, across all age, gender, ability or disability, cultural, and socio-economic groups, across delivery modes from online options to low-tech solutions. Your engagement, whether it's at our place or yours, will be designed with inclusivity in mind.
- We will close the loop and communicate what we do with stakeholder feedback
- Engagement will form a key element of Evoenergy's strategy development and delivery
- Our understanding of our stakeholders will support more meaningful, targeted engagement



# Industry guidelines, regulatory and legal obligations

## Safety

*Sometimes Evoenergy must act or respond quickly to a situation to manage the health, safety or wellbeing of the community: in these instances, Evoenergy focuses on ensuring proactive, timely communications to consumers to ensure impacts are understood.*

Industry guidelines, regulatory, and legal obligations form the bedrock of Evoenergy's operations, guiding our activities within the framework established by the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC). As an independent statutory body, the AEMC plays a pivotal role in shaping and modifying rules and regulations for the National Electricity Market and aspects of the natural gas market.

Evoenergy's engagement approach is deeply influenced by these guidelines and regulations, which are critical for ensuring transparency, fairness, and the best interests of consumers. Central to our commitment is the utilisation of the Better Resets Handbook, which provides energy network service providers with a comprehensive framework for effectively engaging with consumers.

Within this regulatory context, Evoenergy adheres to the National Electricity Law (NEL), National Electricity Rules (NER), and National Gas Law (NGL) — key energy market legislations that provide the foundation for our engagement strategies. The overarching objective of the NEL is to foster efficient investments, operations, and utilisation of electricity services in the best interests of consumers. This includes considerations of price, quality, safety, reliability, and security of electricity services.

By integrating the principles of the Better Resets Handbook, industry guidelines, and regulatory obligations, Evoenergy promotes consumer interests, informed decision-making, and meaningful engagement.

## Strategy implementation and measurement

Implementation and performance will be regularly reviewed, with transparent reporting both internally and externally. Success measures include evaluating effectiveness, participant ratings, increasing engagement accessibility, and conducting annual customer satisfaction surveys.



## Our engagement priorities for 2023–2025

Based on our understanding of the key impacts facing our customers we have identified priority areas for engagement over the next two years. These include:

- Pricing and affordability
- Customer experience
- First Nations engagement strategy
- Electric vehicle charging
- Electrification and gas transition
- Customer Energy Resources (CER) such as solar and batteries
- Network planning
- Demand management
- Metering
- Community batteries
- Electricity network Regulatory Proposal 2024-2029
- Gas network Regulatory Access Arrangement 2026-2031





Evoenergy welcomes your feedback at any time via [consumerfeedback@evoenergy.com.au](mailto:consumerfeedback@evoenergy.com.au)



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**Language Assistance**  
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Open between 7.30 am – 5.30 pm  
Monday to Friday

**General gas enquiries**  
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**Media enquiries**  
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24/7 hotline - for media enquiries only

**Outages**  
Visit our outages section for  
more information on planned and  
unplanned outages.

## Supporting documents

Evoenergy has a range of initiatives and supporting documentation that support the delivery of this engagement strategy:

1. Demand Management Engagement Strategy
2. Gas Networks and Electricity Networks Consumer Engagement Programs for regulatory reviews, and
3. Evoenergy Energy Consumer Reference Council Terms of Reference
4. Internal Risk Management Policies



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