

## **Evoenergy Energy Consumer Reference Council Communique**

### **Meeting 48 – 18 August 2022**

The Evoenergy Energy Consumer Reference Council (ECRC) met virtually on 18 August 2022.

Member representatives attended from Tuggeranong Community Council, Gungahlin Community Council, and the Council on the Ageing (COTA). Observers attended from the Australian Energy Regulator (AER). Guest speakers attended from the ACT Government and Energy Consumers Australia.

The following presentations and discussion occurred at the meeting:

#### **ACT Government ‘Our Pathway to Electrification’**

Mr. Daniel Harding from the ACT Government presented a stakeholder overview of the ACT Government gas transition pathway.

He explained the three key reasons for the ACT to make the transition are the environment, costs, and savings. He discussed the modelling work that has been undertaken and the factors identified which indicated the transition should be led by electrification while noting renewable gas may still have a role to play for certain niche applications.

Mr. Harding explained the ACT Government wants to enable energy consumers to save money by transitioning at a time convenient for them, and gave examples of efficient electric alternative replacements. He also reviewed current ACT government programs available to help support the transition. Key opportunities and challenges of the gas transition were discussed and he advised policy will be developed in the next 12–18 months to address these areas.

He took questions and facilitated discussion about the transition, and how the success would be measured to achieve net zero targets.

#### **EN24 Update**

Ms. Gillian Symmans presented an overview of Evoenergy’s Draft EN24 plan, including how consumer engagement has influenced the plan and informed members of opportunities for further engagement and feedback. Ms. Symmans explained how the impacts of the recent ACT Government policy announcements were not able to be included in the draft version of the plan, as the demand and expenditure forecasts in the draft plan were finalised before the announcements. She advised that the details from the recent announcements will be reviewed and assessed to make any necessary changes to be reflected in the EN24 regulatory proposal submitted in January 2023.

Ms. Symmans also provided information about the upcoming community panel sessions and stakeholder forum dates and encouraged the ECRC to provide written feedback on the draft EN24 plan by 30 September 2022.

#### **Tariff Structure Statement update**

Ms. Emily Brown provided an overview of the consumer feedback for the proposed tariff structure statement (TSS) and export pricing.

She explained feedback was received from a wide range of engagement activities which discussed changes to new and existing tariffs. Ms. Brown explained that residential consumers would see changes to the time of use tariff and demand tariff, while new tariffs to be introduced include a residential battery tariff and an export tariff. Commercial consumers would see changes to the existing capacity-based tariffs and streetlight tariffs, as well as a new large scale battery tariff. Ms. Brown elaborated on export pricing and the export tariff pathway to demonstrate how it fits within the 2024–29 proposal.

Finally, she asked members for feedback on the proposed future tariff structure and whether it supported the transition to net zero by 2045.

#### **Incentivising service improvements**

Ms. Alison Davis presented Evoenergy’s background on incentive-based regulation and its goal of efficient spending balanced with network service and reliability. She explained the current ‘Service Target Performance Incentive Scheme’ (STPIS) and the ‘Customer Service Incentive Scheme’ (CSIS) and how community panels were used to build awareness and capability. The results revealed the customer service aspects most desired were reporting of outages, call response times, restoration notification and accessible information. Evoenergy plans to approach this by addressing the speed of telephone answering, speed of visibility outages via digital channels and unplanned outage SMS notifications. The community panel was asked if the proposed CSIS options would meet customer expectations and 83% responded yes it would. This feedback will be included in the final EN24 submission.

### **Consumer Empowerment Funding Program**

Ms. Caroline Valente presented a new grant program available to provide consumer advocates with support to engage effectively in network determinations. The Consumer Empowerment Funding Program is available for panels to access independent analysis and advice, training and building capacity, independent report and submission writing services, facilitation of broader consultation with community and small research projects. She explained that they have made \$100,000 available for the regulatory review period, and encouraged panel members to decide in consensus how they can best utilize funding based on their needs.

Ms. Valente also explained the straightforward application process for funding. ECRC members discussed and decided they will meet separately to determine the use of this fund and application through Ms. Valente.

### **Customer share**

Ms. Gemma Killen was unable to attend the meeting due to illness so the customer share was moved to the October meeting.

### **Safety share**

Ms. Bronwen Butterfield presented a safety share whereby Evoenergy was called out to complete an inspection for a contractor. She presented two photos of the site which revealed the whole building had been demolished, except one wall with the service connection. This was an extremely dangerous situation for the contractor and Evoenergy since it was not de-energized. Crews were immediately dispatched and the contractor was reported for serious risks to themselves and Evoenergy workers. Ms. Butterfield explained that while Evoenergy has processes in place to prevent this, safety campaigns will be reviewed to ensure further engagement and improved safety practices.

### **Member update**

No further member updates were provided.

Information about the ECRC is available on our website: [www.evoenergy.com.au/consumerengagement](http://www.evoenergy.com.au/consumerengagement)

The next meeting of the Evoenergy Energy Consumer Reference Council is to be held on 13 October 2022. For further information please contact Evoenergy Communication & Engagement Manager Samantha Lloyd on 02 6248 3524.