

PROTECTING CONSUMERS IN PRIVATE POWER NETWORKS

UPDATING REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS FOR EMBEDDED NETWORKS FINAL REPORT 20 JUNE 2019

High density development is driving fast growth in private networks

Hundreds of thousands of people are customers in private power networks like apartment buildings, shopping centres, retirement villages and caravan parks. They are often locked into uncompetitive supply deals. They don't have the same protections as customers who are connected directly to the grid.

This review is stepping in to protect consumers

This report is all about treating customers the same way wherever they live and do business. Everyone should have the same rights and protections no matter who they buy their electricity from.

Next steps

The AEMC has given the COAG Energy Council a comprehensive package of detailed advice on laws, rules and regulations to protect consumers and improve choice in embedded networks:

- COAG Energy Council redrafts electricity and energy retail laws
- South Australian Parliament makes law changes; South Australian Minister makes rule changes
- AER and AEMO update guidelines, systems and procedures to reflect changes to the laws and rules
- State governments, regulators and ombudsmen consider required changes to jurisdictional regulations.

Give customers in embedded networks:



improved consumer protections in areas such as disconnections, billing information, payment options and notification of planned outages



new protections for the first time including access to customer hardship programs and continuity of supply in the event of retailer failure



stronger regulation which enhances the ability of the Australian Energy Regulator to enforce compliance with obligations to provide protections



access to competitively priced market offers by making it possible for customers to choose the retailer and requiring better industry financial and data transfer processes to help more retailers compete in embedded networks



market-compliant meters that are registered with AEMO so it's easier for customers to switch retailers and get better information about their usage and bills



the same rights as grid-connected customers when upgrading their connections eg when installing electric vehicle charging stations within apartment blocks



improved access to state government services such as concession schemes and emergency financial assistance, provide access to independent dispute resolution, and introduce reliability protections (these changes are recommended to state and territory governments)

