

19 September 2013

Australian Energy Market Commission
PO Box A2449
Sydney South NSW 1235

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: National Electricity Amendment (Access to NMI Standing Data) Rule 2013

The Energy Retailers Association of Australia (ERAA) welcomes the opportunity to provide input to the *National Electricity Amendment (Access to NMI Standing Data) Rule 2013* (the Draft Rule).

The ERAA represents the organisations providing electricity and gas to almost 10 million Australian households and businesses. Our member organisations are mostly privately owned, vary in size and operate in all areas within the National Electricity Market (NEM) and are the first point of contact for end use customers of both electricity and gas. The ERAA also notes that the proponent of this rule change, EnergyAustralia, is a member of the ERAA.

This submission compliments our input to the *Access to NMI Standing Data Consultation Paper*. The ERAA supports the rule change proposal as it will allow industry and consumers to continue to benefit from the efficiencies of current practices. As such, the ERAA welcomes and supports the AEMC's Draft Rule, albeit with one key proposed amendment.

Clause 8.6.2(b1)

The ERAA is concerned that the proposed clause 8.6.2(b1) (restated below) could be open to interpretations that are inconsistent with the intent outlined in the Draft Rule.

(b1) (**service providers**): the disclosure of NMI Standing Data by a *Customer* or the *Customer's Disclosees* to a person who requires the information for the purposes of providing services in connection with the *Customer's* sale of electricity to end users.

The ERAA understands that the rationale for this change is to provide certainty within the National Electricity Rules (NER) to ensure that the benefits of current retailer outsourcing arrangements are continued. However, we see two potential issues with this clause as worded:

1. this wording could be interpreted to mean that retailers would have to extract data from MSATS to pass on to their service providers. This interpretation would not be consistent with current practices, nor with the intention of the Draft Rule.
2. this clause would limit retailer's service providers to accessing NMI standing data. Should service providers be unable to access the metering data of customers, they would be unable to resolve many simple billing enquiries.



In order to address these issues, the ERAA proposes the following amended wording to clause 8.6.2(b1):

(b1) (**service providers**): the use, disclosure and reproduction of information by a person who requires the information for the purposes of providing services in connection with the Registered Participant's supply or sale of electricity to end users.

Without this amendment there is a risk that retailers would be unable to outsource the activities that currently provide significant cost efficiencies for the industry.

Should you wish to discuss the details of this submission, please contact me on (02) 8241 1800 and I will be happy to facilitate such discussions with my member companies.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cameron O'Reilly', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Cameron O'Reilly
CEO
Energy Retailers Association of Australia