



Engagement Summary Report

In support of the Ergon Energy Network
Regulatory Proposal 2025-30

January 2024



Part of Energy Queensland

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Welcome from the Chief Customer Officer



We are pleased to release this summary of the engagement program undertaken to inform the development of our Ergon Energy Network Regulatory Proposal 2025-30. It not only outlines Ergon Energy Network's approach to co-design but also highlights its significant impact in shaping a distinctly different Regulatory Proposal compared to previous regulatory resets.

Our Regulatory Proposal details the funding needed to deliver expenditure plans that are reflective of customer preferences both now and into the future. We have sought to strike the right balance between investing in the network to provide clean, reliable, and smart electricity and efficiently delivering electricity services in the most affordable way from 2025-2030. It details what is planned and why, for the consideration of the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) before it makes its decision on the revenue we can recover from our customers.

This report details how we have arrived at our investment and revenue recovery plans and reflects the culmination of Ergon Energy Network's most extensive engagement effort to support a regulatory reset. It serves as a testament to our commitment to a responsive and collaborative engagement process.

Building on our business-as-usual customer and stakeholder engagement, research, and insights program with a suite of bespoke engagement activities, principles, and methods, we have aimed to involve customers and stakeholders in shaping our Regulatory Proposal. This reflects our commitment to customer-centric solutions, informed by best practice principles in stakeholder engagement.

Central to our methodology was an iterative engagement strategy. We actively involved our Reset Reference Group (RRG), an independent advisory group, and a broad spectrum of customers and stakeholders. This collaborative effort allowed us to continuously refine our plans, addressing key issues such as revenue, regulatory changes, and tariff reforms based on diverse perspectives.

The feedback and insights we received has been instrumental in shaping our approach. It highlighted the high expectations of our customers and communities, who seek active involvement and sustainable solutions in the rapidly evolving energy landscape. Despite economic and environmental challenges like inflation and the rising cost of living, our commitment has been unwavering in seeking to provide an affordable, reliable, and resilient electricity supply. This focus is mirrored in our Regulatory Proposal, which seeks a delicate balance between developing a smart, integrated network and managing costs efficiently. We have placed a strong emphasis on affordability, ensuring our customers pay only what is necessary for their electricity distribution services, and are seeking ways for customers to better manage their energy costs through greater choice and strategic network tariff structure reform.

As we look towards the future, we recognise that earlier initiation of bespoke engagement activities could have further enriched our process. This reflection is a crucial learning point for us, and we're committed to incorporating these insights into our ongoing business practices. By embedding the lessons learned and the successful elements of this regulatory engagement into our business operations, we aim to ensure authentic and meaningful engagement remains at the core of what we do.

We truly believe this engagement process has not only shaped a regulatory proposal that deeply resonates with the needs and aspirations of our customers and stakeholders but also sets a new benchmark for our future engagement activities. We're dedicated to upholding these standards, ensuring long-term value and sustainability for the customers and communities we serve.

Michael Dart
Chief Customer Officer

1 CO-DESIGNING OUR ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PLAN

Engagement with our customers and stakeholders has always been a fundamental aspect of our daily operations at Ergon Energy Network. Recently, we have taken this commitment to new heights, recognising that what was, by all accounts an effective approach, has evolved to become a core business priority. This shift in our approach when developing our engagement strategy and plan has been pivotal for the regulatory reset period. We committed to working in collaboration with our customers and stakeholders, to shape and deliver a regulatory proposal that not only reflects the outcomes of our engagement process but also has the endorsement from regional Queensland customers and communities.

We recognise the critical role our customers and stakeholders have at each stage in the engagement process, so in developing our regulatory proposal engagement program we first set out to understand the AER's 'Better Resets Handbook - Towards consumer centric network proposals' (December 2021), also known as 'The Handbook', which seeks to encourage networks to better engage and have consumer preferences drive the development of their regulatory proposals.

The Handbook identified three key themes for engagement including 'Nature of Engagement,' 'Breadth & Depth,' and 'Clearly Evidenced Impact,' which is depicted in Figure 1: Engagement Strategy Building Blocks.

Figure 1 Engagement Strategy Building Blocks

Engagement Strategy Building Blocks		
Nature of Engagement	Breadth of Engagement	Clearly Evidenced Impact
Sincerity of engagement	Accessible, clear and transparent engagement	Regulatory Proposal linked to consumer preferences
Consumers as partners	Consultation on desired outcomes and then inputs	Independent consumer support for the Regulatory Proposal
Equipping consumers	Multiple channels of engagement	
Accountability	Consumers' influence on the Regulatory Proposal	

Building on our business-as-usual engagements, Ergon Energy Network has undertaken a comprehensive engagement program, based on best practice principles for customer and stakeholder engagement - the foundation and framework for the way we do business. We have aligned our engagement with the AER's Better Resets Handbook: Towards consumer centric network proposals (December 2021), and their expectation for customer driven priorities to produce our Regulatory Proposal 2025-30.

To see how we have delivered against these engagement themes and principles, see Appendix 4: Delivering on engagement expectations – Assessment.

In July 2022 we confirmed our intention to ensure proactive consultation and co-design of our engagement strategy and associated engagement plan to ensure they both supported and met our customers' and stakeholders' needs and expectations. We invited residential and small business customers, Energy Queensland's Customer and Community Council and other respected customer representative to participate in a co-design five-day online 'Recollective' workshop process.

The purpose of the 'Recollective' workshop was to work together to shape the direction for what future engagement could look like, and to inform our engagement strategy for our Regulatory Proposal 2025-30. We were keenly interested in the views of a representative range of customer and stakeholder participants.

The outcomes of the 'Recollective' workshop, which met in August 2022, has guided the development of our *Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy* and subsequent *Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan*. The 'Recollective' workshop was attended by a diverse range of customers and stakeholders which included:

- 30 customers representing an approximate equal customer mix across demographics, geographic locations and electricity bill.
- 19 out of the 21 stakeholders invited, committed to the five-day consultation period, which included members of our Customer and Community Council.
- 49 observers were invited to view the discussions, given the role these stakeholders had in the development of our Regulatory Proposal. These observers included Ergon Energy Network Executives, Board Directors and employees, and key regulatory and Queensland government representatives.

Through the 'Recollective' workshop process several specific customer cohorts or 'target audiences' were identified as priorities for our engagement on the Regulatory Proposal. The different topics and issues that these target audiences may be interested in, and the different communication and engagement needs they may have to enable active participation were also identified. In addition to identifying target audiences to engage, participants also told us of the energy challenges they face which provided us with early insights into some of the key issues to be considered as part of our Regulatory Proposal development.

These early insights also helped us develop some overarching key themes and topics to frame and guide our engagement conversations with customers as outlined in Section 1.2.

Following development of our strategy, in March 2023, we published our *Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan*, which was developed in consultation with our Customer and Community Council and Regulatory Reset Group, to bring our *Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy* to life.

Both our *Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy* and *Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan* were designed mindful of best practice customer and community engagement described by both the AER in its Better Resets Handbook – Toward consumer centric network proposals (December 2021), and the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Framework.

For more information on our co-design process, please refer to the *Customer and Stakeholder Co-Design Engagement and Insights Report, September 2022*.

1.1 Engagement themes and topics

As part of our engagement strategy development, in partnership with our customers and stakeholders, we identified overarching themes to guide our engagement discussions. The themes developed were based on the energy challenges and issues that our customers and stakeholders told us are important to them.

These overarching themes are: Affordable, Clean, Reliable, Smart and Customer Service Excellence, as outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Engagement themes



Affordable

Our customers have told us that affordability is their primary concern – for both cost of living and business competitiveness reasons. Therefore, in developing our plans for the 2025-30 regulatory control period, we have sought to strike the right balance between investing in the network to provide a clean, reliable, and smart electricity supply and ensuring customers pay no more than is necessary. We are committed to providing cost-effective and efficient services.



Clean

Our research shows customers expect us to be able to facilitate and accommodate integration of renewables, battery storage and electric vehicles into the network, without creating risks to network security, supply quality or performance. Our investment plans support the transition to clean and renewable energy and the electrification of transport.



Reliable

Our customers have told us they are satisfied with our current levels of network reliability, with only ten per cent¹ willing to pay more for increased reliability. Our investment plans will therefore focus on replacing ageing assets to maintain our current performance levels and ensure that we continue to provide a reliable and resilient network that meets the needs of our customers.



Smart

Our customers consider that new technology is becoming increasingly important to not only secure network reliability but also provide opportunities to reduce energy consumption and improve energy affordability. We are therefore planning ahead and evolving our network to best enable customer choice in their energy supply solutions both now and into the future.



Customer Service Excellence

We see customer service excellence as being at the centre of our business and at the heart of all that we do. As an essential service provider, we understand how important electricity is to our customers and communities. Customer service excellence includes our commitment to safety which is a core customer and stakeholder expectation.

Our Voice of the Customer Panel engagement focused on those areas of our plans where customers have expressed an interest and can have the most influence. As a result, and in consultation with our Reset Reference Group, we have primarily engaged on network tariffs and customer service with these customers.

In addition, we have run tailored consultation on topics such as public lighting, distributed energy resources and our property and fleet strategies. More on these engagements in Section 3.4.

¹ Queensland Household Energy Survey Report 2023

As part of our engagement planning, we also developed an engagement roadmap, as outlined in Figure 3. It depicts the distinct phases of engagement that have occurred over our Regulatory Proposal development. The purpose and objectives of each distinct phase in the engagement roadmap are outlined in Figure 4.

Phase 1 – Gather and Plan, Phase 2 – Listen, Phase 3 – Share and Explore, and Phase 4 Test and Revise, have all been undertaken to date with the engagements and insights obtained through those phases informing our Draft Plan and subsequently, our Regulatory Proposal.

Figure 3 Engagement roadmap

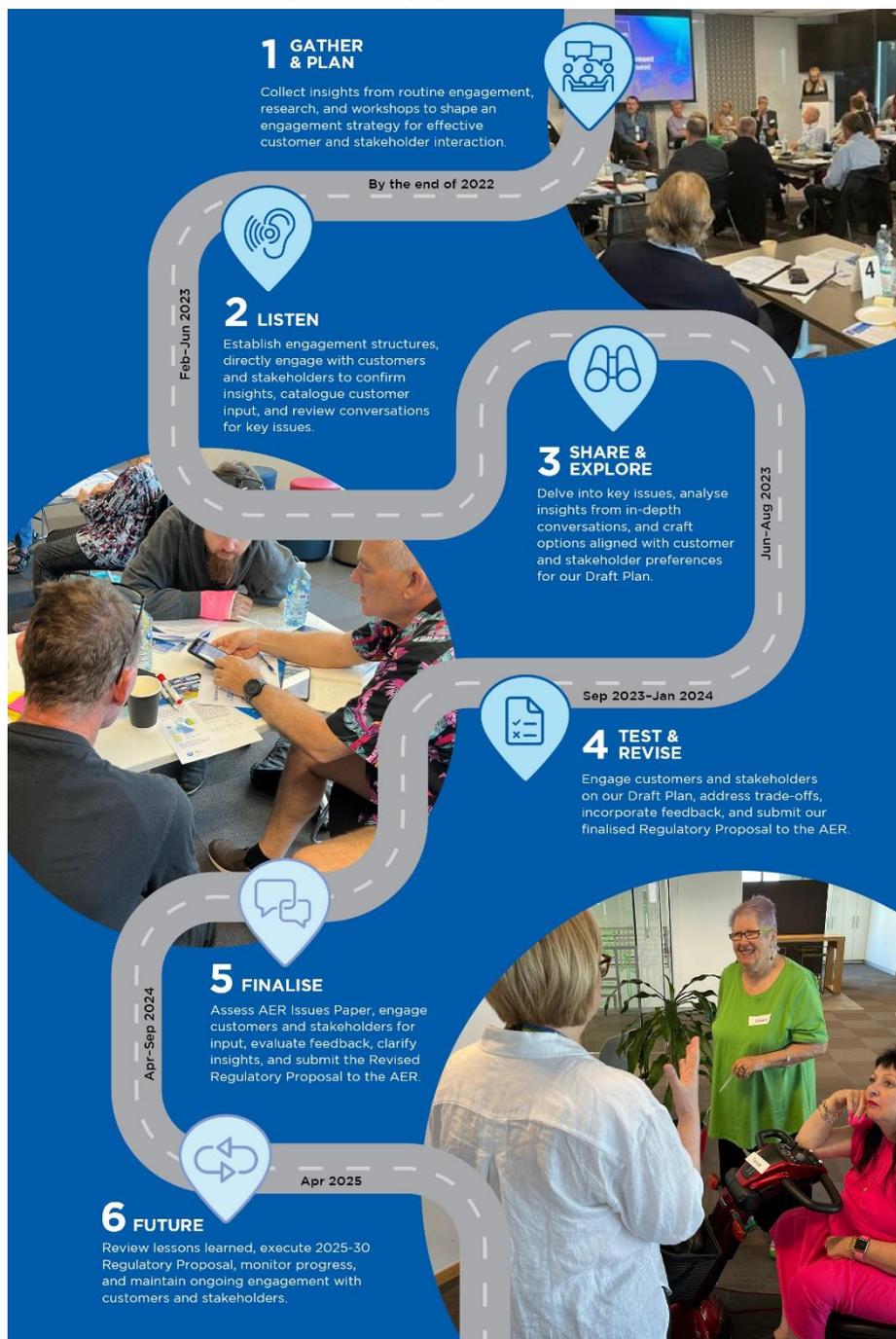


Figure 4 Phases of engagement

PHASE	PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE	TIMEFRAME	PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE
PHASE 1	 GATHER & PLAN	By end-2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather insights from our business-as-usual engagement activities and other interactions with customers and stakeholders. Gather insights from our existing customer research and insights program of activity and research conducted to date. Gain a further understanding of our customer and stakeholder energy needs and engagement preferences to inform our engagement planning through a customer and stakeholder workshop/online forum. Incorporate all insights and understanding into an engagement strategy and engagement plan outlining our approach and proposed activities to engage with our customers and stakeholders throughout the regulatory proposal process.
PHASE 2	 LISTEN	Feb - Jun 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish our key engagement structures as part of the engagement approach and plan. Engage directly with customers and stakeholders across regional Queensland to confirm insights and understandings from Phase 1 'Gather & Plan'. Catalogue what customers told us in our engagement conversations about their energy needs now and into the future and identify any gaps and new issues/insights provided. Review conversations undertaken to determine key customer and stakeholder issues to inform in-depth future conversations.
PHASE 3	 SHARE & EXPLORE	Jun - Aug 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore key issues with our customers and stakeholders in-depth and analyse options, including trade-offs that may be required. Gather insights from our in-depth customer and stakeholder conversations and evaluate how these insights and their preferences can influence the Regulatory Proposal. Develop specific options based on customer and stakeholder preferences to be incorporated into our Draft Plan.
PHASE 4	 TEST & REVISE	Sep 2023 - Jan 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with customers and stakeholders on our Draft Plan and test options outlined. Explore any additional 'trade-offs' that may be required around preferences and seek common agreement where possible. Incorporate feedback to Draft Plan and additional insights and preferences provided into Regulatory Proposal. Submit Regulatory Proposal to the AER.
PHASE 5	 FINALISE	Apr - Sep 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate AER Issues Paper on our Regulatory Proposal. Engage with customers and stakeholders to provide information required in informing their response and submissions to the AER Issues Paper consultation. Evaluate customer and stakeholder feedback to the AER Issues Paper and further engage with customers and stakeholders to clarify the insights and feedback they provide through the AER Issues Paper consultation. Consider all insights and feedback received to finalise our Revised Regulatory Proposal. Submit Revised Regulatory Proposal to the AER.
PHASE 6	 FUTURE	Apr 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct lessons learned exercise with our customers and stakeholders to inform our engagement activities going forward. Implement 2025-2030 Regulatory Proposal plans. Monitor and evaluate delivery effectiveness, including reporting on progress against meeting our customer and stakeholder expectations and continually engage with them as part of business-as-usual engagement practices.

As per our *Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy*, Phase 5 and Phase 6 are yet to occur.

In line with the activities outlined in our *Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan* we have also undertaken a wide range of both bespoke and business-as-usual engagement activities to inform our Regulatory Proposal.

Our aim has been to conduct a series of conversations with different customers through a mix of techniques to provide us with both, a broad or general customer sentiment on the themes and topics pertaining to our Regulatory Proposal, as outlined above, and also in-depth explorative discussions on some key issues we believed our customers were most able to influence during this current regulatory proposal engagement process.

To ensure we are meeting the unique and diverse needs of our customers and communities we regularly engage with our customers and other stakeholders on their thoughts, needs, expectations and concerns. Appendix 1 provides a high-level overview of our business-as-usual and bespoke engagement activities undertaken to date, by customer and stakeholder segment, which have informed development of our Regulatory Proposal.

We have utilised a wide variety of engagement methods and channels to ensure the overall regulatory engagement program achieves both deep and broad engagement with a diverse cross-section of customers and stakeholders. This is depicted in Appendix 2: Overview of customer and stakeholder activity, and Appendix 3: Engagement by numbers.

2 BUSINESS-AS-USUAL ENGAGEMENT

Throughout this regulatory reset period, we have fostered collaboration with our customers, their representatives, and other stakeholders, directly engaging with them on a range of topics that are important to them, like addressing affordability and value, providing a well-integrated, smart, and resilient electricity network to facilitate the energy transition, and enhancing customer service.

Input from customers and stakeholders spans a wide range of engagement activities that have taken place since 2020, throughout the current 2020-25 regulatory control period. It has been invaluable in shaping not only our current business decisions and planning, but also our future strategies for the period from 2025 to 2030.

Some of our business-as-usual engagement activities and the feedback and insights received, are outlined below. In addition to those listed we welcome, and regularly receive, broad-based customer feedback and insights through online and digital forums, from our employees (who are also energy customers), customer call centres, traditional media, and social media. Feedback and insights through these engagement activities (as well as others) helps shape our ongoing thinking and continual improvement in service delivery and investment approach based on customer insights, which blends together with our bespoke regulatory proposal engagement activities to provide a holistic view of our different customers and their varying needs and expectations.

2.1 Customer and Community Council

The Energy Queensland Customer and Community Council (CCC) is a forum that enables Energy Queensland, including Ergon Energy Network, to work in partnership with organisations that represent our customers and communities. In realising our corporate vision to energise Queensland communities, we are focused on delivering our four strategic priorities across the business:

- **The safety of our people** - customers and communities is our first priority safety and network asset integrity remain at the forefront of our activities.

- **Keeping the lights on** - our role is to ensure electricity can be reliably and sustainably supplied to our customers.
- **Financial sustainability** - we will pursue ways to reduce indirect costs and deliver value for our business to improve our financial position.
- **Improve and sustain employee engagement** - we are embedding a people-centred culture, supported by advancing digital technologies, to be future ready.

We know that for our strategic priorities to be meaningful and to have impact, it is critical we partner with our stakeholders and organisations that represent our customers and communities.

Membership

The CCC is sponsored by our Chief Customer Officer and Chaired by our Manager Customer Advocacy. There are fourteen Council members representing a diverse range of customer advocacy groups and organisations. Council members details and the organisations they represent can be viewed on the [Customer and Community Council page](#) on our Talking Energy website.

The purpose of the CCC is to explore strategic issues relating to customer and community needs and expectations, emerging customer and community issues and initiatives in energy infrastructure and services, and the provision of energy solutions across Queensland.

The aim of the CCC is to provide guidance to us regarding the needs, views and expectations of our customers and broader community, and to facilitate our engagement with our customer and communities through members respective organisations and networks. In an advisory capacity, the CCC fulfil the following functions, as per the agreed [Terms of Reference](#).

Throughout the regulatory reset period, the CCC has been actively involved in our Regulatory Proposal engagement through participation in the RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum.

The RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum was established to bring together our business-as-usual Customer and Community Council and Agriculture Forums, together with a wider range of other customer representatives and stakeholders. It has provided an efficient way to engage with our diverse customer and stakeholder base. For more information on the breadth and depth of engagement with the RDP2025 Stakeholder forum, see Section 3.5.

2.2 Agriculture Forum

In order to support our Customer and Community Council we have a forum dedicated solely to the agricultural industry. The Agriculture Forum meets regularly and discusses topics and issues that are specific to the agricultural industry. The Forum is represented by members from the following advocacy groups and organisations:

- Ag Force
- Bundaberg Regional Irrigators Group
- Cotton Australia
- Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland
- Pioneer Valley Water
- Queensland Cane Growers Organisation

- Queensland Farmers' Federation
- Sunwater

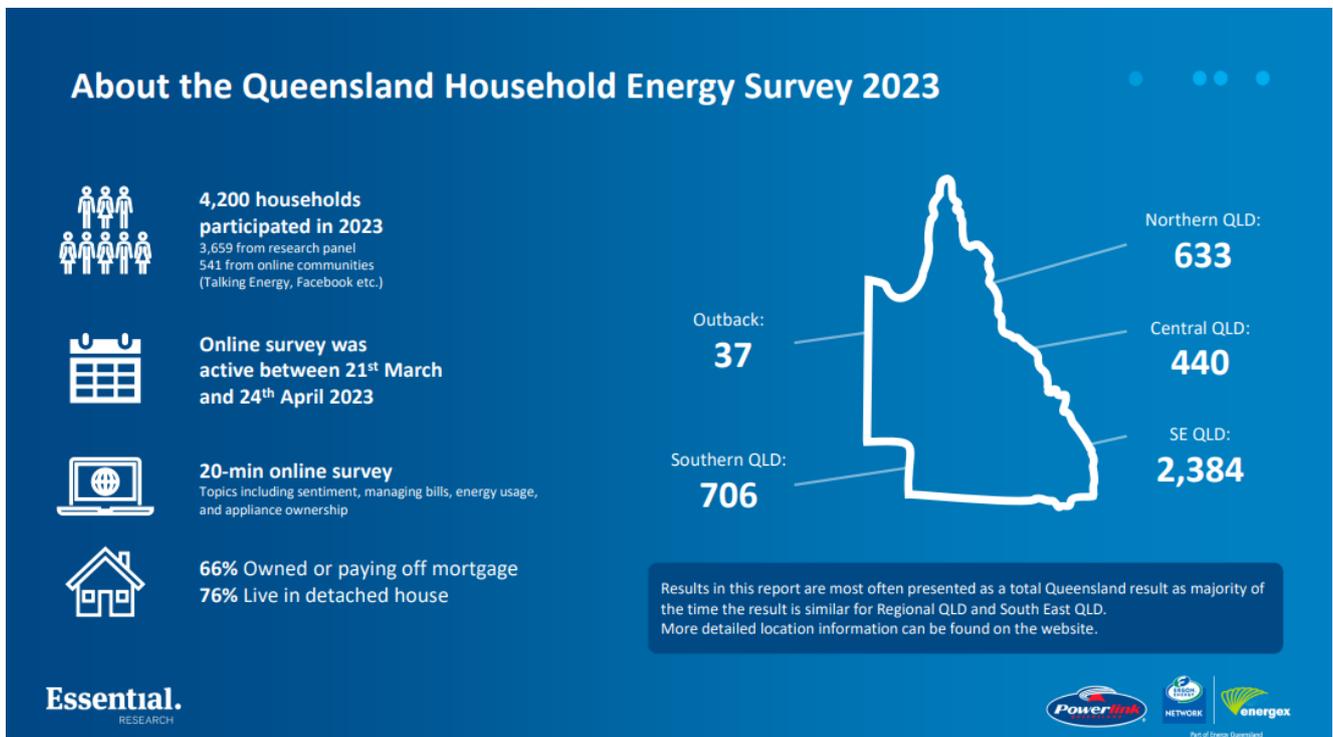
Throughout the regulatory reset period, the Agriculture Forum has been actively involved in our Regulatory Proposal engagement through participation in the RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum.

The RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum was established to bring together our business-as-usual Customer and Community Council and Agriculture Forums, together with a wider range of other customer representatives and stakeholders. It has provided an efficient way to engage with our diverse customer and stakeholder base. For more information on the breadth and depth of engagement with the RDP2025 Stakeholder forum, see Section 3.5.

2.3 The Queensland Household Energy Survey

Together with Powerlink Queensland and Energex, Ergon Energy Network conducts an annual Queensland Household Energy Survey (QHES) that tracks customer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours towards a range of energy related matters. These include electricity prices, power supply reliability, energy use, energy efficiency and interest in emerging energy-related technologies. The 2023 QHES was completed by 4,200 customers across Queensland, between 21 March and 24 April 2023, with 1,816 Ergon Energy Network customers participating. Figure 5 provides an overview of the demographics of survey participants.

Figure 5 QHES demographics



What we have heard from Ergon Energy Network QHES survey participants

Represented below are the common themes that emerged from the 2023 QHES results:



- Households are starting to feel the impact of cost-of-living pressures, as more are now concerned about their ability to pay electricity bills than recorded in previous years
- Households are increasingly looking at ways to reduce consumption and change behaviour, with some even indicating a potential willingness to sacrifice reliability for reduced bills
- Uptake of some new energy technologies has waned, although interest in technologies to manage consumption has remained steady

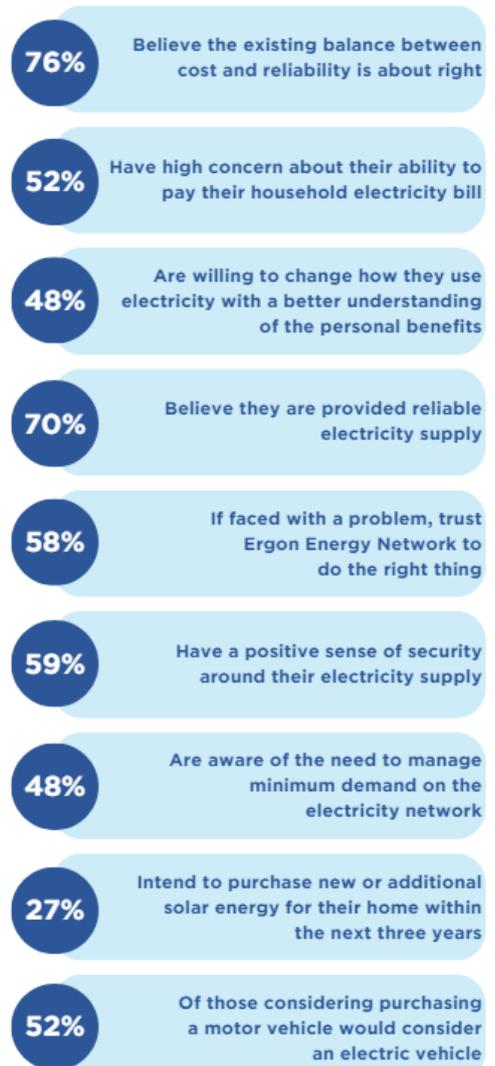
As we pave the way for a new energy future that delivers for our customers and communities, striking the right balance is crucial. We have heard from customers that affordability and cost of living is the key concern for them. We have responded to customers' affordability concerns by committing that we will not spend one dollar more than necessary to deliver our future program of work and continue putting downward pressure on prices wherever possible.

In developing our *Ergon Energy Network Draft Plan* and Regulatory Proposal for the 2025-30 period, our focus has been on making investment decisions that provide clean, reliable, safe and smart electricity and delivering electricity services efficiently, and in the most affordable way.

To see where these insights have directly influenced our investment decisions, see Chapter 3 – Investment priorities for 2025-30, in our Ergon Energy Network Regulatory Proposal 2025-30.

For detailed results, please see the *2023 Queensland Household Energy Survey (QHES) Report*, which is published on our Talking Energy website. Further information is also available by visiting qhes.com.au.

Figure 6 QHES results



2.4 Talking Energy – Queensland energy future survey

We have an online communication and engagement platform, the *Talking Energy* website, through which we provide updates on business activities and seek feedback on topics of interest to our customers and stakeholders. It serves as an important mechanism to obtain breadth of insights into the conversations we are having with our customers and stakeholders throughout the Regulatory Proposal engagement process.

We have nearly 3,000 subscribers registered for Talking Energy, providing a broad and diverse range of customers and stakeholders to draw from in obtaining insights to inform business planning and direction.

As part of our broader engagement on issues to inform our thinking around the development of our Regulatory Proposal, we invited our Talking Energy subscribers to complete an online Queensland's Energy Future Survey (QEFS). The survey closed at the end of July 2023.

With 549 Queenslanders visiting the Queensland Energy Future page to find out more, 344 contributed and had their say on various weekly topics for conversation or completing the full Energy Future survey.

Although undertaken across Queensland with customers and stakeholders within both the Ergon Energy Network and our sister company Energex distribution areas, the proportion of Ergon Energy Network customers who participated was high.

What we have heard from customers

Represented below are the common themes that emerged from the Energy Future survey results:



- **When thinking about Queensland's energy future, 'lower bills for all' and 'no one left behind' were the most important issues for them, or their communities – solutions that deliver prices at the lowest cost, and that renters and those most vulnerable are not to be disadvantaged**
- **'Keeping the lights on' – reliability / system stability is managed in the shift to renewables**

We have also grouped what customers who participated in the Energy Future survey told us, based on the customer and stakeholder identified energy challenges and issues by engagement themes that emerged from the survey results:

Table 1 Customer and stakeholder energy challenges by engagement themes

Energy challenge theme	What customers have told us
 <p>Affordability and equity</p>	<p><i>“Make it [energy] more affordable.”</i></p> <p><i>“Make it [energy] fair so that those who want to go down the renewable path pay their fair share.”</i></p> <p><i>“Serious efforts have to be made to increase energy literacy and understanding of our current system, trade-offs and gain social licence. We need to understand what the actual problem is.”</i></p> <p><i>“Need to adjust to clean energy whilst maintaining reliability and reduce prices.”</i></p> <p><i>“A two-way tariff that give incentive for prosumers to help you with the 4-8pm peak demand”.</i></p>
  <p>Renewables, batteries, and electric vehicles</p>	<p><i>“We need to be able to share solar energy at high levels without it risking the security of the network.”</i></p> <p><i>“I am concerned... there doesn't seem to be any plan to recycle when these items come to the end of their useful lives.”</i></p> <p><i>“Act now to prevent future impacts from greater distributed renewable energy resources, especially Electric Vehicles.”</i></p> <p><i>“You need to have a major focus on expanding storage at all levels, and building pricing to encourage when you want consumers to use energy and when you don't.”</i></p> <p><i>“... future proofing (so)we have an adaptable network... to be ahead of the game, so we don't get caught out...”</i></p> <p><i>“Promote and support vehicle-to-grid technology. This enables... more self-sustainable during peak times... allowing the grid to be less reliable for a lower cost (own backup energy).”</i></p>
 <p>Network resilience</p>	<p><i>“Safety for community staff and contractors first with reliability a close second. Apply technology-based solutions to minimise storm related outages in areas vulnerable to such events, as a priority.”</i></p> <p><i>“It can't be at the expense of reliability and consistency of supply. Those things are paramount.”</i></p>

To see where these insights have directly influenced our investment decisions, see Chapter 3 – Investment priorities for 2025-30, Chapter 4 – Demand, Energy Delivered, and Customer Forecasts, and Chapter 5 – Capital Expenditure, in our Ergon Energy Network Regulatory Proposal 2025-30.

For detailed survey results and insights, please see [Queensland's Energy Future Conversations Summary Report](#), which is published on our Talking Energy website.

2.5 Voice of the Customer – customer satisfaction, trust, and key issues

Figure7 Ergon Energy Network Customer Satisfaction and Net Trust Score FY22/23

Our business-as-usual, Voice of the Customer - Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) and Net Trust Score (NTS) measurement program conducts a combination of weekly and quarterly surveys with customers from across the Ergon Energy Network distribution area. It provides us with regular feedback from our customer base on their level of satisfaction in their interactions with Ergon Energy Network services delivered as well as the level of trust they have in us to do the right thing by them and the communities we serve.

Our post interaction customer satisfaction survey was completed by 9,123 Ergon Energy Network customers last year, with a further 1,939 customers independently surveyed, regardless of if they have had an interaction with the business or not. The surveys assist us in identifying key issues of concern so that we can look to make service improvements where practical and possible.

As our interactions and research indicates, customer expectations around the customer experience are generally increasing, especially around handling their enquiries in a timely manner and in regard to information and notifications on issues such as power outages. Many see outage updates and restoration times as important as preventing the initial outage, a fact also highlighted through the 2023 Queensland Household Energy Survey results, where 58 per cent of Queenslanders who responded indicated they were satisfied with the time taken to restore electricity to their home after an outage.

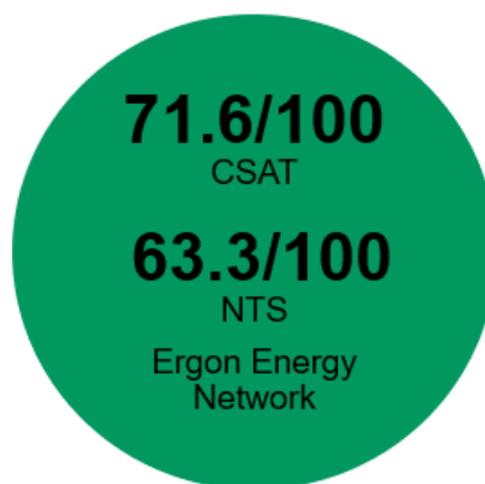
Generally, our stakeholders support us in using technology to improve efficiency and reduce costs, but we note that the scale of our digital transformation program is significant and that this creates some customer and stakeholder concerns around potential business and service disruption.

Our customers, communities, and other stakeholders, expect us to keep them informed in a timely manner and engage with them transparently and meaningfully on a regular basis.

Findings from research into our business customers' experience during power outages showed that while customers were highly supportive of the networks' need to conduct work relating to reliability, there were opportunities to support customers in preparing contingency plans and improve communications.

The highest score in our CSAT results for customer satisfaction in 2022/23 was *'Provides a reliable power supply'* which consistently outperforms other key drivers. The biggest drivers or areas we can focus on to improve our customer satisfaction scores are *'Delivers work in a timely manner'* and *'Delivers value.'*

The highest score for our NTS results for building trust with our customers was, *'Is strongly focused on safety.'* The biggest driver or area we can focus on to improve and further enhance trust is, *'Is open and honest.'*



What we have heard from customers

Represented below are the key drivers that emerged from our CSAT and NTS survey results:



- ‘Provides a reliable power supply’ - consistently outperforms other key drivers of customer satisfaction (CSAT)
- ‘Delivers work in a timely manner’ and ‘Delivers value’ - biggest drivers to improve our customer satisfaction (CSAT)
- ‘Is strongly focused on safety’ – highest score for building trust (NTS)
- ‘Is open and honest’ – biggest driver to improve trust with our customers (NTS)

3 BESPOKE ENGAGEMENT CHANNELS AND TECHNIQUES

3.1 Reset Reference Group

To facilitate customer and community participation in the 2025-30 Regulatory Proposal process we established a *Reset Reference Group* (RRG). The RRG's primary purpose has been to collaborate constructively with Ergon Energy Network in developing and implementing our *Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan* and to challenge us on our thinking in relation to investment and revenue recovery issues pertaining to our Regulatory Proposal. The RRG's over-riding objective is to ensure that customer needs and preferences are of paramount consideration by the business.

Membership

The RRG is an independent advisory group, comprising three customer representatives from our Customer and Community Council together with two external regulatory and customer focused experts.



Robyn Robinson
Non-Executive Director
and Energy Policy Advisor
COTA Queensland



Mark Grenning
Director of Policy and
Regulation
Energy Users Association
of Australia (EUAA)



Gavin Dufty
Manager Policy and
Research
St Vincent de Paul Society



Frank Edwards
Industry Engagement Manager
Capricorn Enterprise



Neil Horrocks
Director of the Centre for
Energy Data Innovation
University of Queensland

Since November 2022, the RRG has overseen our engagement and collaboration with various customer cohorts, their representatives, and wider stakeholders as we have sought to ensure that our Regulatory Proposal reflects the long-term interests of customers, both residential and business, against efficiency and affordability performance indicators.

In an advisory capacity, the RRG have fulfilled the following functions, as per the agreed [Terms of Reference](#), during the formulation of our Regulatory Proposal:

- Advocating for the long-term interests of Queensland customers
- Collaboratively designing our regulatory engagement program
- Playing a pivotal role as significant stakeholders in the Regulatory Proposal engagement
- Continuously challenging us throughout the development of our Regulatory Proposal, providing scrutiny on various aspects, including the Regulatory Proposal itself, and the Regulatory Proposal engagement program.

The RRG has helped shape the design of and overseen many of the engagements outlined in our Regulatory Proposal, including this summary report, and provided expert guidance to us on numerous topics, including our different aspects of our capex and opex investment plans, network tariff challenges, network tariff structure design, the Connection Policy 2025-30, Network Capital Governance Framework, cyber security and non-network ICT investments, customer service, including the Customer Service Incentive Scheme, and smart meter data roll out, including associated recovery of legacy meter costs.

What we have heard from the RRG

Represented below are the key themes that emerged from the RRG's response to our Draft Plan:



- **Affordability is of a pressing concern for both large and small customers, particularly given current cost of living pressures. The affordability priority could focus upon governance, reporting, business cases, processes, benefits realisation and initiatives**
- **The quantification of bill impacts of elements of the business's forecast revenue for the 2025-30 regulatory period to give a clear picture to customer of how different scenarios can affect costs**
- **Customers are interested to know more about the energy transition, and how it will impact their day-to-day lives**

To read the RRG's submission responses to our Draft Plan, see the RRG Response to the RDP2025 Ergon Energy Network Draft Plan, which is published in the [2025-30 Draft Plan Submissions received folder](#) in the Document Library on our Talking Energy website.

3.2 Network Pricing Working Group

Our Tariff Structure Statement and proposed network tariff reforms have been influenced by the perspectives gained from the variety of engagement sessions with different customers and stakeholders across each of our customer segments. We commenced our tariff engagement in October 2021, by establishing the Tariff Reform Working Group – Residential (TRWG-R), to co-design a residential network 'capacity' tariff for smart-metered residential Standard Asset Connection (SAC) small customers, for the purpose of a customer trial. Our aim was to develop the initial approaches towards refining network tariffs, customer impact framework and customer education.

A key driver of the TRWG-R was to have input into the design of the Residential Network Capacity Tariff Trial. Early insights from customers participating in the trial indicated there was little appetite or understanding of the 'capacity' tariff trial concept and it was decided that further work to broaden customer understanding would need to be undertaken in the longer term. As such, the customer insights obtained influenced us to change direction and to not proceed with proposing a new residential Standard Asset Connection (SAC) small customers 'capacity' network tariff for the 2025-30 regulatory control period.

Here's what one of our NPWG employee representatives' members had to say about the tariff trials:



“Implementing trials of proposed new network tariffs has provided us with invaluable feedback and learnings about how applicable proposed tariffs are to real residential and business customers. This helps us refine and optimise the tariffs as they are developed for regulatory approval - but also provides insights on the best way to deploy those tariffs”

– Brian Elmer, Manager Tariff Trials and Deployment.

Building on the work of the TRWG-R, and to broaden our engagement, the TRWG-R evolved into a new Network Pricing Working Group (NPWG). The NPWG brought together residential and business customer representatives for in-depth network tariff and pricing discussions and is tasked to take a more holistic cross-customer perspective on network tariff reform.

Membership

The NPWG membership comprises representatives from our Customer and Community Council, the RRG and industry representatives to represent a broad set of customer groups including, ageing populations, consumer groups, vulnerable customers, agriculture, and industry. To date, the NPWG has been tasked with providing input on our network tariff strategies and negotiating balanced outcomes for customers.

Four workshops, independently facilitated by Deloitte, have occurred to date, with the NPWG exploring network tariffs relating to Time of Use charging, load control, two-way tariffs (exports tariffs) and the pace of tariff reform.



Pictured: some members of the Network Pricing Working Group with the Network Pricing Manager

Given the complexity of network tariff reform and fast-moving environment, we have committed to the NPWG becoming a standing Working Group under the Terms of Reference of our Customer and Community Council, to enable us to continue the network tariff dialogue throughout 2024 and beyond into the 2025-30 regulatory control period.

What we heard from the NPWG

Represented below are the key themes that emerged from the NPWG workshops to date:



- **Support for the development of long-term durable network tariff design as the foundation for acceleration and adaptability towards cost reflectivity, with consideration of customer impacts**
- **General support for the introduction of two-way tariffs. However, NPWG stated while it understood the reasoning for proposed mandatory introduction of two-way tariffs from 2028, it would prefer these tariffs to be introduced via an opt-in process from 2025**
- **Support for tariff streamlining, noting the importance for customer education and choice of how revenue from each customer segment will be reallocated based on the proposed approach**
- **Ergon Energy Network to engage in advance with customers impacted from retiring tariffs**

The NPWG recommended the following actions be taken by Ergon Energy Network in the lead up to the development of our Tariff Structure Statement:

- Customer analysis on the impacts and pace of proposed changes.
- Provide personas for business customers.
- Consideration should be given to forming community reference groups to consider network tariffs in more detail.
- A holistic approach to the load control strategy being incorporated into the Regulatory Proposals.
- Whole of network integration issues being presented to customers, including dynamic operating envelope (DOE) options for small customers.
- Conduct further investigation into customer profiles and types who may be impacted by opting-out of the default tariff to the optional legacy demand small tariff.
- Designs storage tariffs so that they apply to both low and high voltage customers which can benefit a greater diversity of customer groups, including regional small businesses.

For further details on the Network Pricing Work Group including, proceedings, insights obtained, summaries and recommendations made to the business, see the Outcome and Summary Reports which are published in the Document Library on the [Network Pricing Working Group page](#) on our Talking Energy website.

For a comprehensive overview of our engagement insights and how their insights influenced our Proposal, please see Chapter 5 – Engaging with customers, and Chapter 6 – Consultation outcomes: proposed changes in 2025 of our Tariff Structure Statement Explanatory Statement.

Due to the complex nature of network tariffs and the valuable contributions the NPWG has made to shaping our Regulatory Proposal, Tariff Structure Statement and Tariff Structure Explanatory Statement, the NPWG will continue to meet on a regular basis beyond the submission of our 2025-30 Regulatory Proposal. Furthermore, we are actively exploring opportunities to broaden the membership

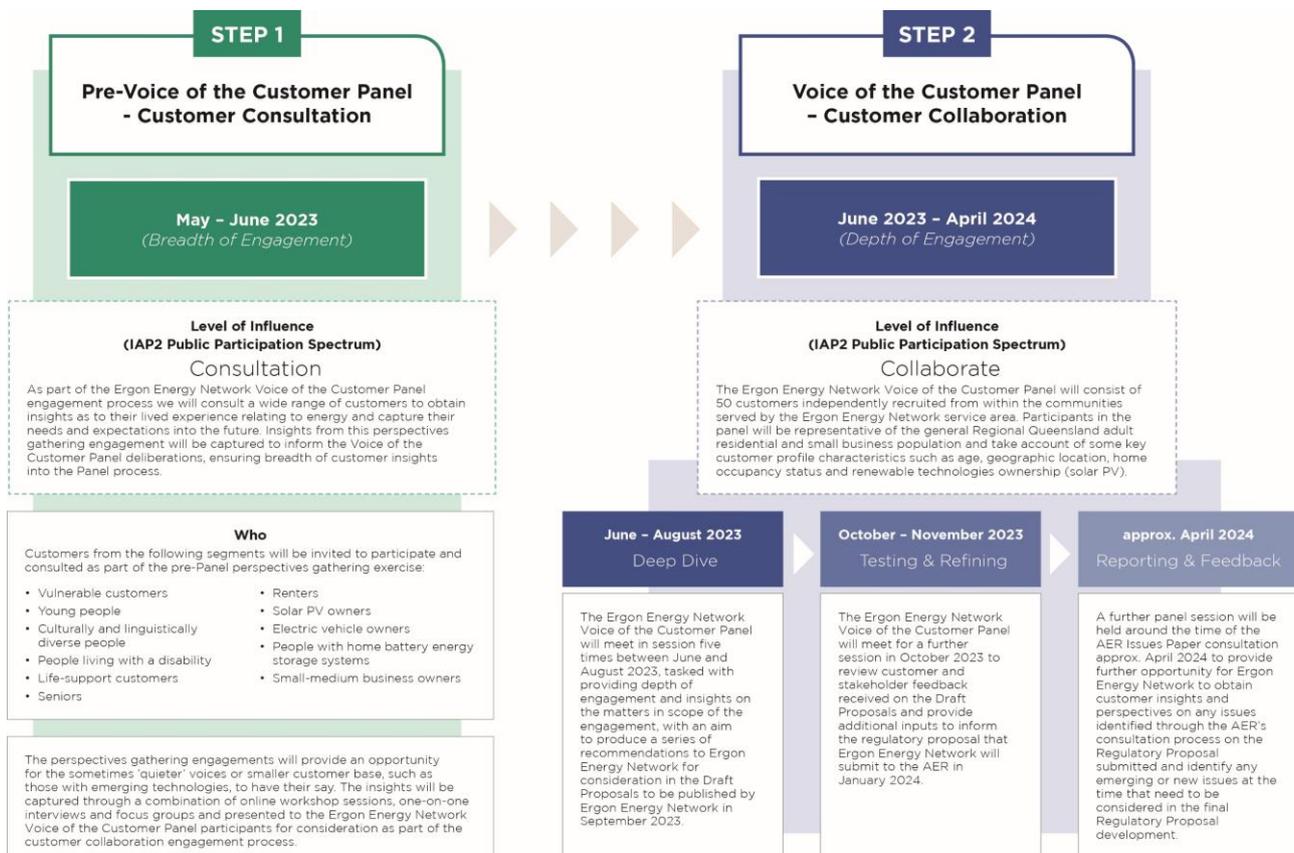
to include other customers who have expressed keen interest in participating in ongoing network tariff engagement efforts.

Engagement with the NPWG has enabled us to develop a firm basis of knowledge to deliver an extensive engagement program across a range of customer segments, customer and industry representatives. With this foundation platform developed, we expanded into dedicated engagement streams spanning our residential, business and retailer forums which you can read more about in Sections: 3.3 Voice of the Customer, 3.6 Customer Conversations, 3.7 Large Customer Forum, and 3.10 Energy Retailer Forum and Individual Conversations.

3.3 Voice of the Customer Panel

A key component of our engagement activities in obtaining insights to inform our Regulatory Proposal has been the establishment of a two-step customer consultation and collaboration Voice of the Customer Panel process to provide both breadth and depth to our engagement with residential and small non-residential customers. A summary of the Voice of the Customer Panel process is outlined in Figure 8.

Figure 8 Voice of the Customer Panel process



More information on each step of the Voice of the Customer Panel process (independently facilitated by engagement consultancy [MosaicLab](#)) and insights obtained is provided below.

Step 1 – Perspectives gathering

In late May and early June 2023, we undertook two online consultation sessions with customers from across regional Queensland. Our audience for these sessions was drawn from the 'quiet voices' and 'future voices' target audiences identified through our *Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy* planning and included the following:

- First Nations/Indigenous
- Multi-cultural groups/English not first language
- People living with a disability
- People renting their home
- People who own an electric vehicle
- People with medical conditions who may rely on life-support systems
- People with solar PV and/or battery storage systems
- Seniors
- Small-medium business owners, and
- Young people

Across the two consultation sessions, 65 Ergon Energy Network customers participated. The consultation sessions, independently facilitated by MosaicLab, provided an opportunity for these customers to highlight their lived experience in relation to energy, the services provided by Ergon Energy Network and their aspirations for the future within the energy context. The demographics of participants is detailed in Figure 9.

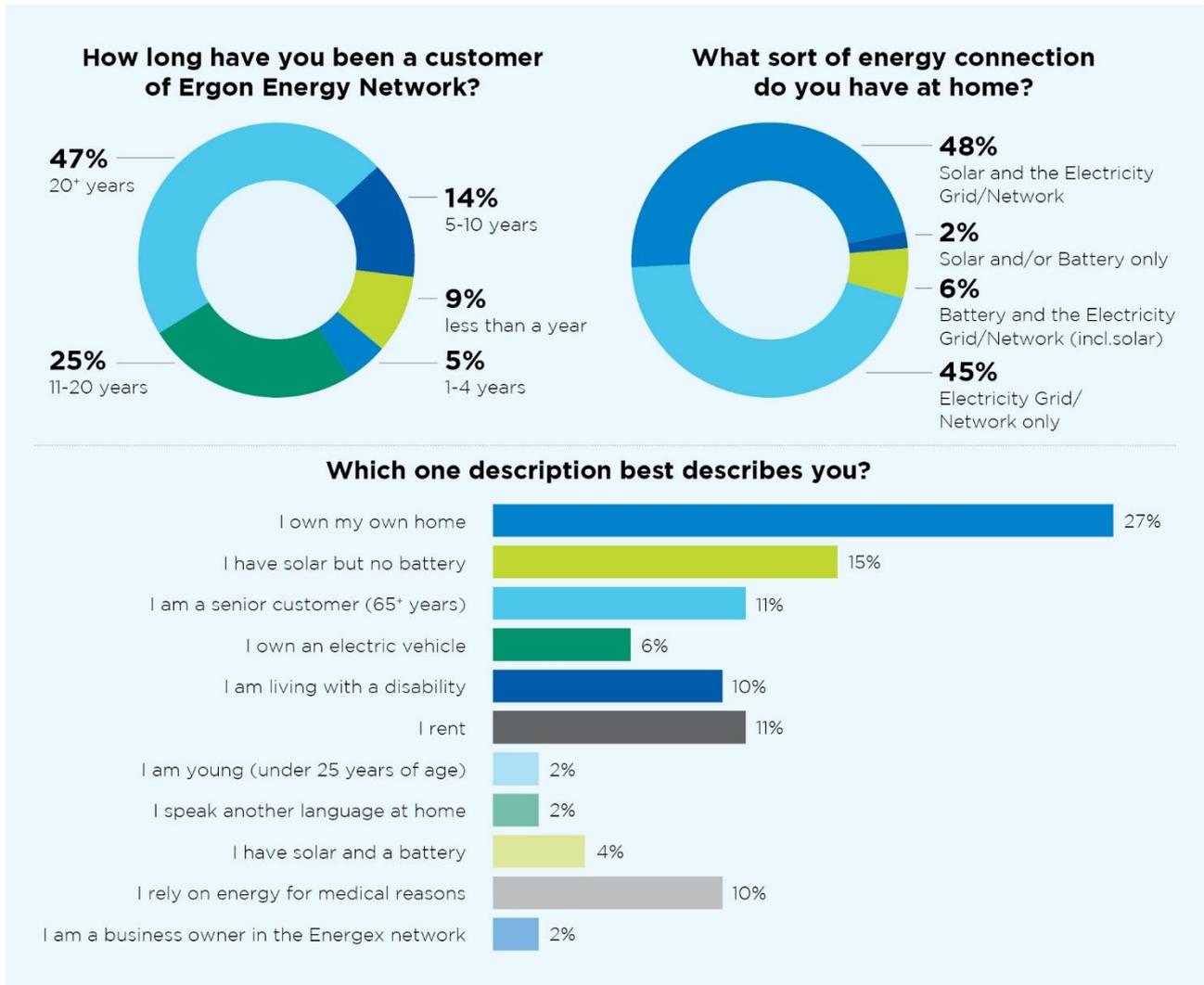
The main topics engaged on were 'network tariffs' and 'customer service' and to seek perspectives into how we should plan for a new energy future, while providing affordable and fairer services for all customers.

The following objectives were developed for the workshops and interviews:

- Provide customers with information about the regulatory proposal process
- Provide customers an opportunity to share what is important to them when it comes to network tariffs
- Provide input into the existing and potential new Customer Service Incentive Schemes
- Provide information and speaker suggestions for the Voice of the Customer Panel going forward

Our focus was to ensure that the insights obtained could not only be considered by the business in the development of our Draft Plan and Regulatory Proposal, but to also provide insights to go forward into the **Step-2 Voice of the Customer Panel** collaboration process.

Figure 9 Demographics of perspective gathering participants



What we heard from the perspectives gathering sessions

Below is a summary of the perspectives we obtained on Network Tariffs and Customer Service:



- “It would mean things progress at a reasonable pace but not high speed and should problems or issues arise, they can be dealt with” (Network tariffs)
- “Payment plan options and more education and discussion about tariffs and usage needs” (Network tariffs)
- “Making sure that the losers are not those who can least afford to lose and ensuring that all customers understand the changes and any saving options that might available” (Network Tariffs)
- “Good service should be the norm, we, the customer should not have to pay for good service, however the customer should be compensated for poor service” (Customer Service)
- “Customer service should not be working off a rewards and penalties system, it should be standard and to the best of their ability” (Customer Service)

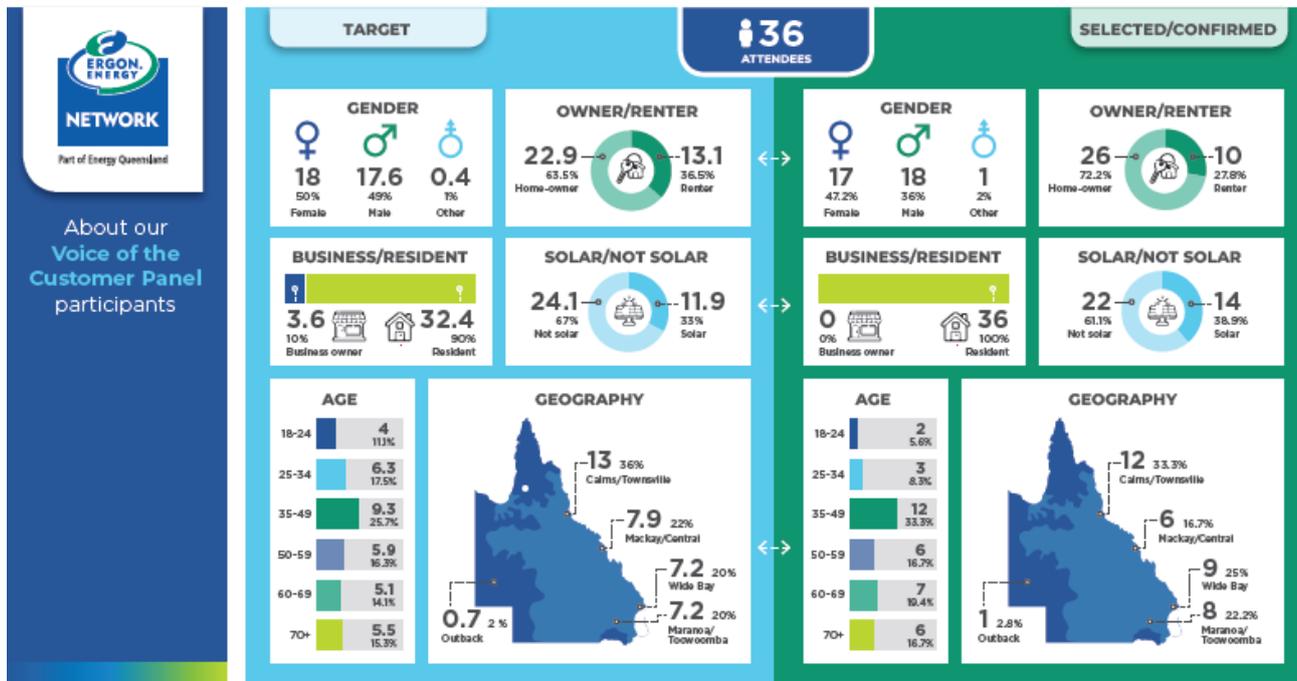
Summaries of these sessions which include detailed information about each customer cohort’s perspectives are available in the *Ergon Energy Network Perspectives Group and Interviews Wider Engagement Report* which is published on our Talking Energy website.

Step 2 – Customer collaboration and depth of engagement

The Voice of the Customer Panel, independently facilitated by MosaicLab, was designed to provide a consultation platform for in-depth direct discussion with a representative sample of our regional Queensland residential customer base. 50 participants were independently recruited to the Panel with 36 actively participating throughout the entire process. Panellists were independently recruited by *Sortition Foundation* in order to match the demographic profile of the Ergon Energy Network distribution area in regional Queensland. A summary of the Voice of the Customer Panel demographics is depicted in Figure 10.



Figure 10 Voice of the Customer Panel demographics



The Panel was tasked with providing insights as to how Ergon Energy Network should plan for the future, while providing affordable services that meet changing customer and community needs.

We wanted to ensure depth of our engagement with customers on matters that we believe they could most influence. To provide focus and assist in conversations, in consultation with the RRG, two key topics were highlighted as in scope through a series of five sub-questions for the Panel’s consideration focused around how we charge customers to use the network (network tariffs) and the services they receive from us, including matters relating to the potential for a new Customer Service Incentive Scheme (CSIS) for the 2025-30 regulatory control period.

The sub questions we asked the Voice of the Customer Panel to consider were:

1. Whether and how Ergon Energy Network should be incentivised to improve customer service?
2. Whether customers in regional Queensland value the option of having lower charges for appliances that we can control at agreed times e.g., hot water systems, and how this could be extended?
3. How can we create opportunities for customers to save on their energy bills and help reduce emissions more quickly?
4. We know that our network has to accommodate new technologies like household solar generation, batteries, and electric vehicles, so how do we set charges for them now so that it is fair to everyone?
5. What is the right pace for laying these foundations for the future?

To ensure participants were well prepared for the Panel sessions, we distributed the *Voice of the Customer Panel Handbook*. The Panel handbook set out important information for customers to consider during the Panel process, as well as information about the Panel, its purpose, principles, and importantly, the role of Panel members. We also provided our *Ergon Energy Network Business Narrative*, designed to offer a comprehensive understanding of our operations, thereby facilitating informed discussions.

As part of our consultation, our Voice of the Customer Panel asked for easy-to-understand information on network tariffs and Customer Service Incentive Schemes. We listened and created a number of short videos:

- *Let's talk Customer Service: Customer Service Incentive Schemes*
- *Let's talk Tariffs: What is time of use pricing?*
- *Let's talk Tariffs: What are time of use windows?*
- *Let's talk Tariffs: What is a demand charge?*
- *Let's talk Tariffs: Why did Ergon Energy Network & Energex introduce a demand charge?*
- *Let's talk Tariffs: Why can't you tell me how changes in network tariffs will impact me?*
- *Let's talk Tariffs: I use more energy at night. Won't I pay more?*
- *Let's talk Tariffs: Tips for reducing electricity costs in the home?*

We also provided the following network tariff fact sheets:

- *RDP2025 Fact Sheet Load Control (12 July 2023)*
- *RDP2025 Fact Sheet Time of use windows (12 July 2023)*
- *RDP2025 Fact Sheet Demand tariffs (12 July 2023)*
- *RDP2025 Fact Sheet Two-way tariffs 12 July 2023*

The Panel met online six times through a Meet and Greet and five full-day online workshop sessions.



a **clear question (remit)** to focus the deliberations access to a broad range of information from a variety of sources relevant to the remit



conversations and Q&A with Ergon Energy Network and panel identified **key speakers**



35 hours per person of discussion and deliberations across **five panel sessions** (one evening sessions, four full days)



support from **facilitators experienced** in delivering deliberative processes



an **online portal** that provided a central place for participants to access relevant information inputs as well as a discussion forum



group agreement, where a **supermajority** (80% or more of the panel said they could live with it or better) was needed for a recommendation to be included in the final report.

Voice of the Customer Panel deliberations were observed by both RRG and the AER's Consumer Challenge Panel (CCP) members to increase the transparency of the process, with all following an Observer 'code of conduct' so as not to influence outcomes.

Through its deliberations the Voice of the Customer Panel provided twelve (six network tariffs and six customer service) recommendations for consideration in our Draft Plan and Regulatory Proposal development.

What we heard from our Voice of the Customer Panel

Here's some of what of our Voice of the Customer Panel members had to say about our engagement with them.

"A learning experience. I gained an insight into the future direction of Ergon which will definitely be beneficial for me and my family, and I hope the group's recommendations will be beneficial for the community overall."

"Diversity of panel members and the wealth of knowledge gained from the speakers."

"Well explained and very well controlled. The facilitators ensured that we stayed within the scope and provided the necessary expertise when required. Well done."

"I really enjoyed having guest speakers to discuss with alongside fellow panel members. It was good to be able to talk through things with my associates."

"I think the process was interesting and kept all the panellist involved. Everybody had a chance to have their say."

"I enjoyed the process. I think having guest speakers played an important role in helping us make more accurate response."

"The consensus and supermajority model is a good one. I feel like maybe one day more might've given us some really great recommendations, but it is what it is."

A summary of their recommendations:



- **Education for customers to understand tariffs and usage**
- **Encourage Ergon Energy Network to work with retailers to provide real-time alerts for customers for tariff use**
- **Confusion on the roles of Ergon Energy Network and Ergon Energy Retail**
- **Do not recommend CSIS scheme implementation nor STPIS telephony (Calls to fault line not answered within 30 seconds)**

In October 2023, post wider consultation on our Draft Plan, we brought the Panel together in a hybrid fashion, accommodating both online and in person participation. Out of the 36 original customer panel members who participated in the initial 5 panel sessions, 25 participated online. We shared how their recommendations had been reflected in our Draft Plan. We also wanted to see how comfortable Panel members were with the way their recommendations had been incorporated. Giving Panel members an opportunity to deliberate further, we shared the feedback we received from other customers and stakeholders on our Draft Plan consultation process and asked for final input into the development of our Regulatory Proposal.

Here's a summary of the comments, reactions, and reflections we received in the October 2023 session:

"Concern that CICS with financial penalty will be applied despite our preference."

"They heard us regarding the incentive scheme."

"We like that you are thinking ahead and thinking of more ways to improve customer service with Ergon."

"There seems to be a fear that a Dynamic Connection will cut off the power to appliances & electric car recharging at times when there is high demand for power. Some feel this is a risk for losing control of their right to use electricity when they choose to and will cause massive inconvenience."

"Additional information to help solar users understand the need, and benefit to them; and more support from Government for battery uptake incentives."

"As a non-solar user, I still believe it is fair across the board for everyone."

"I feel that a broad education portfolio is required to explain to customers i.e., end users as to why the need for change."

Here's what one of our employees involved in the Voice of the Customer Panel engagements had to say about the Customer Service Incentive Scheme conversations:



"These sessions were a fantastic insight into our diverse customer base, their understanding of the industry and their concerns and priorities that they wish to see Ergon Energy Network focus on into the future. It demonstrated the importance of this process as part of our planning and decisions."
– Brent Sheriff, Manager, Customer Operations.

We have kept open the option of a potential further Panel session in 2024, post publication of the AER's Issues Paper on our Regulatory Proposal, where we may seek further input from the Panel on any relevant issues that may arise from the AER's Issues Paper consultation process, and where the

business believes additional insights may be required to inform a revised Regulatory Proposal to the AER in December 2024, post their Draft Decision.

Through its deliberations the Voice of the Customer Panel has provided a series of recommendations for consideration in our Regulatory Proposal development.

To see where these insights have directly influenced our investment decisions, see Chapter 7 - Incentive Schemes, and Chapter 9 – Network Tariffs in our Ergon Energy Network Regulatory Proposal, and Chapter 5 – Engaging with customers, and Chapter 6 – Consultation outcomes: proposed changes in 2025 of our Tariff Structure Statement Explanatory Statement.

For full details on the Voice of the Customer Panel process, proceedings, insights obtained, and recommendations made to the business, see the [Ergon Energy Network Voice of Customer Panel folder in the Document Library on our Talking Energy website](#).

3.4 Customer Focus Group

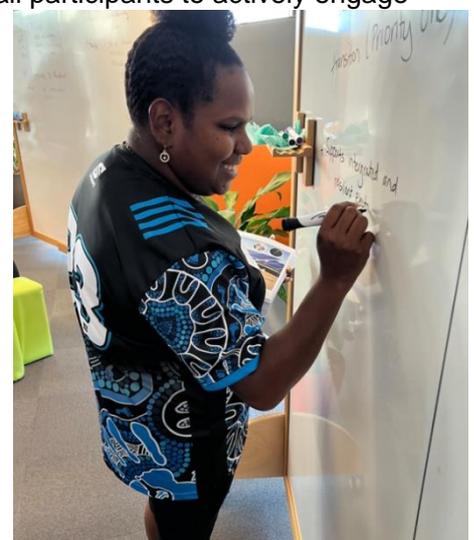
In addition to our Ergon Energy Network Voice of the Customer Panel engagement, we widened the conversation with our residential customers. Facilitated by [Deloitte](#), in mid-August 2023, we held a customer focus group session in Townsville. Participants were selected to ensure a diversity of views, backgrounds, and experiences. Seventeen customers attended the 1.5-day focus group workshop, providing their views and sentiment on a range of issues that helped inform our Draft Plan.

Issues explored included the range of services we provide to our customers and community and the key drivers of our expenditure for the 2025-30 regulatory control period. Specific discussions focused on obtaining customer preferences to inform our investments in relation to the integration of Distributed Energy Resources (DER); Information and Communications Technology relating to the customer experience and customer enablement; electrification of fleet and refurbishment and building of property.

Multiple tools were used to support engagement, including small group discussions, use of interactive materials and whiteboarding exercises. The group activities allowed all participants to actively engage and supported them in providing informed and meaningful feedback on those issues engaged upon.

Throughout the session, participants were encouraged to actively contribute to discussions and to ensure everyone had an opportunity to speak. Participants also engaged in interactive activities intended to capture views in ways other than through discussions and group presentations. This ensured that all views were captured, including from those ‘quieter voices.’

Participants were encouraged to share and consider their unique backgrounds and experiences when responding to group activities. This included renters, homeowners, those who had an advanced understanding and take up of solar and battery systems, differing age groups, people living with a disability and also multi-cultural customers.



In October 2023, we invited participants back, post wider consultation on our Draft Plan and to provide further information on costings and insights around DER integration options and the digital enablement of customer experience. In these sessions we also sought input into our decisions around legacy metering and associated cost recovery options. The session, held in Townsville, was attended by thirteen participants. Of these participants, eleven attended the August Focus Group, and two new participants were recruited for the October session, nominated by an original Focus Group participant to attend on their behalf.



What we heard from our focus group customers

Here's some of what of our Customer Focus Group participants had to say about our engagement with them.

"I have a clearer understanding of the challenges ahead in meeting energy needs at affordable prices."

"Awareness of challenges and opportunities for Ergon, Qld and Australia."

"There is a need to support a rapid transition to DE R, especially in the context of climate change-induced risks and sovereign risk".



A summary of their recommendations is outlined below:



- **Property** – most participants agreed maximising customer value is primary influencer for these decisions and had a preference for industrial sites and expanding existing sites if practical
- **Fleet** - most participants agreed with a 'Slow and Steady' approach so that fleet vehicles would be replaced as per the current standard replacement criteria
- **Distributed Energy Resources(DER) integration and investment** – in August, most participants most participants were between 'Build up Pace' and 'Fast and Furious' for the options for DER integration due to a preference to future proof and assist with affordable solar uptake but also acknowledging there are sections of the community that may not be able to afford to purchase solar
- **Digital enablement of customer experience**– In August, the preferred customer service offerings were approximately two thirds (66%) of participants preferred option 3 of digital customer experience where with assistance with unbiased information around DER knowledge and insights, online tools and call centre agents

Following the additional information provided in the October Focus Group around costs for these key expenditure categories, we re-tested customer preferences in the context of bill impacts. The options we asked customers to consider in relation to these key expenditure categories is depicted in Figures 11, 12, and 13. What customers told us in relation to their preferences is also detailed below.

Figure 11 – Customer Service investment options

Options we asked you to consider that you could influence



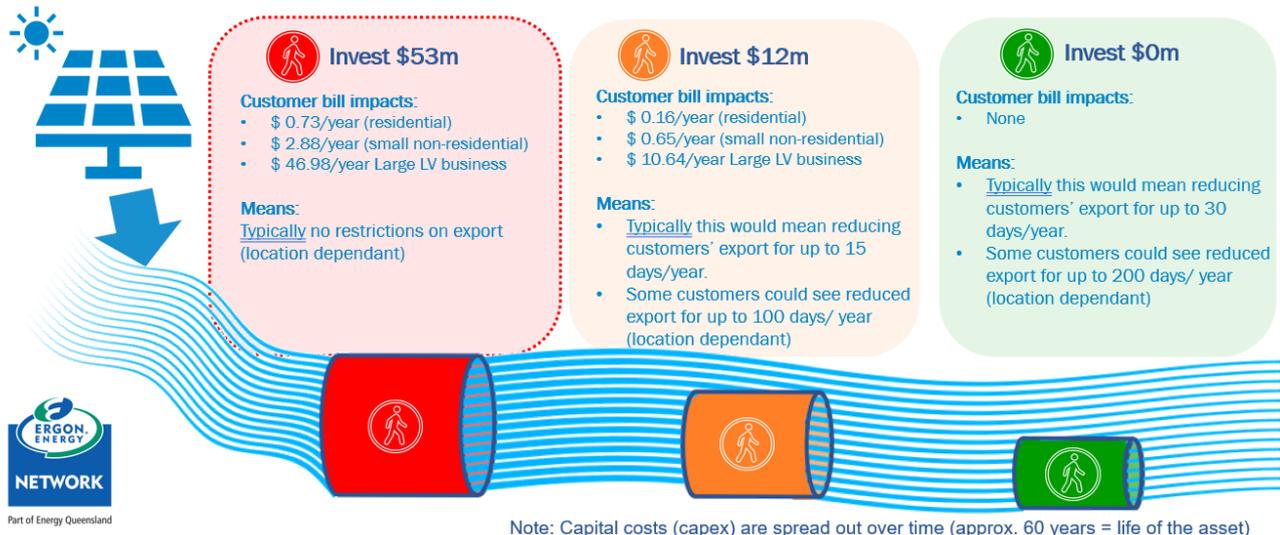
	What we could do:	Customer benefits:	Bill impacts: (cumulative)
 Option 1	Invest \$2.28m over five years to enhance call centre technology to help call centre agents handle the forecast growth in customer enquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep pace with expected growth in call centre enquiries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$0.10/year (residential) \$ 0.36/year (small non-residential) \$ 5.90/year Large LV business
 Option 2	Invest \$9.52m over five years to enhance broader digital online channels (e.g. web chat, websites, portals) to aid customer service expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep pace with expected growth in call centre enquiries Allows customers to obtain information 24/7 Free up call centre for more complex queries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ 0.46/year (residential) \$ 1.82/year (small non-residential) \$ 29.54/year Large LV business
 Option 3	Invest \$5.23m over five years to assist customers with DER knowledge and insights through provision of on-line tools and more support by call centre agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep pace with expected growth in call centre enquiries Allows customers to obtain information 24/7 Free up call centre for more complex queries Provide unbiased information around DER to support customer decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ 0.23/year (residential) \$ 0.91/year (small non-residential) \$ 14.77/year Large LV business

- Digital enablement of customer experience - preferred cost** – All participants agreed Ergon Energy Network should invest \$5.23m over five-years to assist customers with DER knowledge and insights through provision of on-line tools and more support by call centre agents. This was the most preferred option. Reasons included the ability to provide unbiased information to energy consumers to assist with understanding energy costs and improving energy literacy of customers.

Figure 12 Distributed Energy Resources investment options.

How much should we invest in our network to enable DER integration?

Last time we asked you how big we should make the pipe.



- Distributed Energy Resources Integration** – The majority of participants (10) chose ‘fast and furious’ (red option - \$53M) while three chose the ‘build up pace’ investment option (orange option \$12M) The participants felt rapid transition was required in the context of climate change induced risks and all participants were cognisant of the balance of affordability, noting that not all energy users will have the opportunity to invest in or benefit from solar e.g. renters, low income households.

Figure 13 Legacy metering cost recovery options

Indicative Customer bill impacts*



If the **user-pays** arrangements continue:

- customers with a basic meter will see the annual metering bill increase from \$43 in 2024-25 to \$83 in 2029-30 (therefore impacting our most vulnerable customers who are unable to change their meters) (approx. 60% of customers)
- existing customers who have replaced a basic meter with a smart meter after 2017 will see the annual metering bill increase from \$30 in 2024-25 to \$39 in 2029-30 (approx. 30% of customers)
- new customers who connected to the network after 2017 (e.g., new houses) will continue to pay no charge (approx. 10% of customers)



Under the proposed option to share the costs (**everyone pays**) the annual metering bill is expected to be \$45 in 2029-30 (all residential and small business customers)

Reclassification of service to **everyone pays** will lower the cost per customer, which will in turn decrease over time as customer numbers continue to grow



*Indicative bill impacts are based on Energex costs due the application of the uniform tariff policy

- **Legacy metering** - The majority of participants agreed with accelerating the smart meter rollout and sharing the costs of replacing legacy meters between both smart meter and legacy meter holders. There was a minority view that only legacy meter holders should pay for the cost of replacing legacy meters.

To see where these insights have directly influenced our investment decisions, see Chapter 4 – Demand, Energy Delivered and Customer Forecasts, Chapter 5 – Capital Expenditure, and Chapter 10 – Metering in our Ergon Energy Network Regulatory Proposal 2025-30.

For full details on our Customer Focus Group including, proceedings, insights obtained, summaries and recommendations made to the business, see the [Ergon Energy Network Customer Focus Group folder in the Document Library on the RDP2025 page on our Talking Energy website](#).

Note: Similar to the Voice of the Customer Panel members, the Customer Focus Group were confused about the difference between Ergon Energy Network and Ergon Energy Retail and initially confused their interactions between the two, something that the business continues to try and address through our business-as-usual communication and engagement activities.

3.5 RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum

The RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum was established to bring together our business-as-usual Customer and Community Council and Agriculture Forums, together with a wider range of other customer representatives and stakeholders interested in being actively involved in our Regulatory Proposal engagement. It has provided an efficient way to engage with our diverse customer and stakeholder base.

Facilitated by *Deloitte* to ensure independence in proceedings and reporting, the RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum met three times in 2023, in June, September, and December.

In June, the Forum was attended by over 27 stakeholders, including our Customer and Community Council, and Agriculture Forum members as well as others representing a broad range of interests across consumer groups and associations, including large customers, and customer representative organisations. The forum was also attended by observers from the AER, the AER Consumer Challenge Panel, the Energy and Water Ombudsman, and the Queensland Government's Department of Energy and Public Works.



The main purpose of the Forum was to bring together our key stakeholders and:

- Provide a status update on the development of the Regulatory Proposal and the forward program for customer and stakeholder engagement
- Develop participants' understanding of key issues influencing the Regulatory Proposal' development
- Test participant views and preferences on key issues
- Provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions and identify their areas of concern and issues for the Regulatory Proposal development and to inform future engagement, and
- Inform development of the Ergon Network Draft Plan.



What we heard from our RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum participants

Highlighted below is a summary of the key insights from the Forum held in June:



- **Affordability is number one priority for customers**
- **Looking beyond five-year regulatory period when developing forecasts and engagement plans**
- **Improve energy literacy for customers, customer advocates and stakeholders. Network tariffs should be kept simple and standardised across Australia**
- **Feedback on costs and bill impacts is a priority**
- **Customer focussed engineering and innovation is important for the next regulatory period so foundations need to be laid now**

In the September Forum, there were 23 participants. We provided participants with an update on our engagement activities with end-use customers and the feedback and insights they had provided, and importantly, how they had evolved or thinking and decision-making in relation to our Draft Plan. Key elements of the Draft Plan were subsequently shared with Forum participants to test our thinking before the Draft Plan was finalised and issued for formal consultation between 15 September and 13 October 2023.

Several tools were used on the day to support increased engagement, including rotating market stalls, post-it note activities and a 'parking lot' to capture issues raised throughout the day for potential discussion in future forums. In the afternoon session, a short video was shown to participants, bringing to life insights from the Voice of the Customer Panel participants. The featured customers shared their experiences and learnings from being involved in the Voice of the Customer Panel engagement process, adding to the perspectives of those in the room.



Highlighted below is a summary of the key insights from the Forum held in September:



- Ergon Network should look beyond the five-year regulatory period when developing its forecasts and the engagement plan
- Short-term planning must be flexible enough to allow for unexpected changes to the network, including from the increasing uptake of renewables
- Release of the Draft Plan in September 2023 may not allow sufficient time for stakeholders to review and provide feedback. It was important for Ergon Network to support ease of engagement and the ability of stakeholders to respond, including by allowing stakeholders to provide verbal feedback where appropriate
- The Draft Plan is comprehensive and appears to be consultative which, while positive, will require focused work in a tight timeframe. It was suggested that there should be increased collaboration between different stakeholders and the provision of information about the process and the cohorts being engaged
- Educational sessions with active advocates on key concepts should be facilitated to improve energy literacy
- Tariffs should be kept simple and should be standardised across the country. This would make it easier for customers. Perspectives from Retailers were also seen as important as Retailers deal directly with customers
- Engagement has been undertaken without incorporating information on costs and bill impacts, due to compressed engagement timeframes. Feedback on costs and bill impacts is seen as a priority to be included for consideration in the Regulatory Proposals
- Customers want more information from Ergon Energy Network on what the energy transition means for them
- More education on tariff structures is also required, particularly for small business customers
- Affordability was not reflected in the narrative, despite being the number one priority for customers
- Efficiency, climate resilience, and customer focused engineering and innovation were also seen as important for the next regulatory period
- Participants raised questions on the limits of Ergon Energy Network's role to ensure equitable cost distribution and whether social policy settings were better suited to achieve this

In the December Forum, there were 26 participants. We provided participants with a pre-publication overview of our Regulatory Proposal for the 2025-30 period, including the changes since our Draft Plan. We sought initial feedback on elements of our Regulatory Proposal and provided an opportunity for participants to ask questions and identify their areas of concern. Participants also heard from Chair of

the Reset Reference Group (RRG), who provided an update on the RRG's work, and key issues they had observed in our customer and stakeholder engagement to date, including strengths and limitations.

Highlighted below is a summary of the key insights from the Forum held in December:



- Participants were interested in how the efficiency of the large capital expenditure (capex) program during the current period could be ensured
- Participants wanted to understand whether the proposed tariff changes would apply to smart meters and whether customers could opt-out of the smart meter program
- Some participants wanted to understand how Ergon Energy Network could reduce its regulatory asset base (RAB) through actions it can take with controllable expenditure and whether a reportable utilisation metric in the RAB could be useful
- Participants were interested in understanding whether the RRG had further insight into whether customers were concerned that renewables were contributing to affordability concerns



For detailed results and insights, from the June, September, and December Forums, see the [RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum folder in the Document Library on the RDP2025 page on our Talking Energy website](#).

3.6 Customer Conversations

We have also undertaken individual discussions with a range of customers on topics of interest to different customer groups. These individual discussions have allowed customers who did not have the time to participate in engagement events, or felt comfortable participating in group activities, to still have an opportunity to provide their input.

1:1 Customer conversations on network tariffs – residential

As part of our engagement with residential customers on network tariffs we undertook 15 interviews with individual Ergon Energy Network customers in December 2022. We engaged independent consultants *Vocatif* to undertake these interviews with the aim of better understanding opinions, knowledge and needs of residential electricity customers regarding network tariffs, price signals and incentives for modifying how and when electricity is used. This research was important in helping us assess both the gaps and opportunities when considering residential network tariff reform.

Fifteen consumers were recruited via specialist market research agency *Chit Chat Research* for tariff interviews within a mix of interview participants independently recruited to ensure a range of demographics reflective of the Ergon Energy Network distribution area customer base.

The research was undertaken by telephone as individual interviews of 30 minutes maximum duration from 5 to 16 December 2023.

What we heard from customers

Highlighted below is a summary of the key insights:



Most respondents:

- Didn't know what tariff they are on
- Say they do know how their bill is structured but were probably mistaken (when further explored with them)
- Do try to reduce their bills but only via reducing consumption
- Don't know what time of use or controlled load pricing means
- Need more information about these tariffs to decide if they would be in favour of them
- Would be willing to adjust electricity usage in response to price signals
- Suggested saving money as the key incentive for reducing or time-shifting

The network tariff conversation research findings have been captured and blended with the other key insights from customers on network tariffs as part of our consideration of the proposed tariff reforms we have outlined in Chapter 5 – Engaging with customers, and Chapter 6 – Consultation outcomes: proposed changes in 2025 of our Tariff Structure Statement Explanatory Statement.

For detailed results and insights, please see the *Tariff Customer Interview Report, December 2022*, which is published on our Talking Energy website.

1:1 Customer conversations on network tariffs – small to medium business

In recognition that our small to medium size (SME) business customers have various time pressures in relation to attending engagement events, by the very nature of these customers running their business

operations, we conducted several individual SME business customer network tariff conversations. In late July and early August 2023, we engaged Deloitte, to independently conduct one-on-one conversations with 11 small to medium business customers within the Ergon Energy Network distribution service area to obtain insights on the network tariff needs and preferences of this customer cohort.

Given feedback from our stakeholders and customer representatives who represent those customers that affordability of electricity was the key issue for this customer cohort, we centred our conversations with them on network tariffs and pricing.

What we heard from SME customers

Below is a summary of the key insights obtained. The insights from these interviews have assisted the Network Pricing Working Group with their deliberations and have informed our Regulatory Proposal in relation to network tariffs and pricing as outlined in Chapter 5 – Engaging with customers, and Chapter 6 – Consultation outcomes: proposed changes in 2025 in our Tariff Structure Statement Explanatory Statement.



- **Energy literacy was very low. Customers often didn't understand how they are currently charged for electricity and get their energy updates from the news, which impacted their attitudes towards proposed changes**
- **Customers struggled to distinguish between their distributor and retailers' role in setting energy prices, particularly for Ergon customers due to the shared retailer and distributor branding**
- **Customers say they do know how their bill is structured but were probably mistaken**
- **High-energy businesses were most willing to change behaviours for Time-of-Use (TOU) windows and just needed better education on the timings and motivation by quantifying potential cost savings**
- **Strength of Price Signal - Most small businesses are cost-sensitive, so many are already modifying their behaviours to reduce their energy costs to the best of their ability**
- **Some customers dislike being charged for exporting energy as they associate solar with rebates, not charges. However, others view two-way tariffs positively as they focused on the rebate and the environmental benefits of implementing solar**

Research findings have been captured and blended with the other key insights from customers on network tariffs as part of our consideration of the proposed network tariff reforms we have outlined in Chapter 5 – Engaging with customers, and Chapter 6 – Consultation outcomes: proposed changes in 2025 in our Tariff Structure Statement Explanatory Statement.

For detailed results and insights from the small business one-on-one interviews, please see the [Small Business One-on-One Interviews Outcomes Report, August 2023](#), which is published on our Talking Energy website.

3.7 Large Customer Forums

As part of our engagement on network tariffs, we held three online Large Customer Forums to directly engage with our Standard Asset Customers (SAC) - Large, Connection Asset Customers (CAC), and Individually Calculated Customers (ICC) and their consultants. The Forums, independently facilitated by [Deloitte](#), were held in August and October 2023, and were attended by 64 and 18 participants respectively. They provided an opportunity for our large business customers to be engaged on, and have their say on, a range of network tariff matters, including pricing windows, two-way tariffs, load control and streamlining of current network tariffs offered to some of these customer classes.

What we heard from our Large Customers

Highlighted below is a summary of the key insights:



- **Time of Use (TOU) windows** - A majority (53%) of respondents stated a preference to introduce a negative demand window. 79% of respondents were comfortable with adding a negative demand window in the middle of the day, with most preferring the 11am to 5pm option. And 67% of respondents either liked or loved the proposed introduction of a 5pm to 8pm peak demand window. A majority (72%) of respondents also stated a preference for refining one tariff structure to accommodate additional windows. 33% of respondents were comfortable with ToU windows applying at high voltage levels (33kv and 66kv)
- **Two-way tariffs** - 53% of respondents expressed that they did not support the proposed 30kW limit. And 37% of respondents stated more information was needed before they could come to an informed conclusion. 47% of respondents indicated a preference for a 2025 implementation timeframe for two-way tariffs
- **Load Control** - 53% of respondents did not support primary and secondary load control tariffs. Respondents expressed a need for more information including what is a primary vs secondary load control tariff and what support the networks may be able to provide customers (e.g. the technology required)
- **Streamlining Tariffs** - There was a preference for a tariff that applies to all large SAC customers with slow transition (3.85 out of 5 preference), as opposed to making changes to all SAC tariffs. A majority (75%) of Ergon respondents stated that more information was required to understand their level of comfort with the removal of seasonal time of use tariffs

For a comprehensive overview of our Large Customer engagement insights on network tariffs and how their insights influenced our Regulatory Proposal, please see Chapter 5 – Engaging with customers, and Chapter 6 – Consultation outcomes: proposed changes in 2025 in our Tariff Structure Statement Explanatory Statement.

For detailed results and insights from the Large Customer Forums, see the [Large Customer Forum folder in the Document Library on the RDP2025 page on our Talking Energy website](#).

3.8 Public Lighting Forum

Ergon Energy Network owns, operates, and maintains about 153,000 public lights and keeps billing records for another 16,300 lights owned and maintained by our customers. Because of the specific nature of public lighting service provision and the relatively small number of public lighting customers, we decided to have a standalone, discrete engagement for public lighting.

Based on our previous engagement approach, the Public Lighting Forum was established in September 2022. The aim of the forum has been to listen to our public lighting customers, which includes 70 Local Councils in the Ergon Energy Network distribution network service area, the Department of Transport and Main Roads and other stakeholders, and to understand their expectations around the future of public lighting and how to best meet the needs of regional Queensland communities.

As with our other engagements, we applied the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum to our public lighting engagement. Topics included the regulatory proposal process, revenue and tariff setting, updates on the 2020-25 period, and our 2025-30 public lighting strategy.

In September 2022, we conducted co-design workshops that shaped our *Public Lighting Engagement Plan*. Since then, our engagement has evolved from sharing information to more active and interactive consultations, allowing customers and stakeholders to influence our *2025-30 Public Lighting Strategy*, smart controllers, LED conversion roll out and pace, and public lighting tariffs.

We have conducted a total of:

- Three engagement sessions during which we discussed the fundamentals of public lighting, our engagement strategy and the regulatory proposal process
- One shared learning session where our public lighting customers shared their experience with and findings on smart public lighting from trials
- One session to discuss options for our smart public lighting strategy
- Two sessions to review the forecast expenditure and charges under various LED deployment scenarios
- Two sessions to review our public lighting customer feedback on the *Public Lighting Issues Paper* and the public lighting strategy set out in our Draft Plan
- Five one-on-one customer sessions during which we reviewed how the deployment of LEDs will impact customers through individual customer impact analysis.

What we heard from our public lighting customers

Our engagement efforts led to the endorsement of Ergon Energy Network's aim for one hundred per cent LED deployment by 2030, in response to our *Public Lighting Issues Paper* and *Draft Plan* published in July and September 2023 respectively.

For a comprehensive overview of the engagement insights obtained and how our public lighting customers' insights influenced our Regulatory Proposal, see Chapter 11 of our Regulatory Proposal, Alternative Control Services (ACS).

For detailed results and insights from our Public Lighting Forum engagements, see our dedicated *Public Lighting Forum page* on our Talking Energy website where all engagement materials including reports, presentations and supporting information are published.

3.9 Land Developer Conversations

As an important customer cohort, we engage with land developers on a regular basis. In recognition of the importance of the services we provide to them and the wider economic and social benefits from the supply of housing stock to our customers in general, we adopted an early 'deep dive' engagement strategy with land developers to identify issues we should consider from a continuous improvement perspective and to inform our future investment plans in relation to service delivery.

As part of our engagement with land developers, we worked in partnership with the Urban Development Institute of Australia to identify several of their members to take part in a customer experience journey mapping exercise in March 2022 that focused on identifying pain points, both positive and negative experiences, and improvements to our land developer connections process. Several initiatives were identified that could be undertaken in the short to medium term, with the insights obtained also informing our wider thinking on matters relating to our Connection Policy 2025-30 and process for the forthcoming regulatory control period.

For detailed results, see [Land Developers' Customer Experience Journey Mapping: Regional Queensland Focus Report, March 2022](#).

For an overview of how these and other engagement insights have influenced our Regulatory Proposal, see Section 5.7 Connection Expenditure, in our Ergon Energy Network Regulatory Proposal 2025-30.

3.10 Energy Retailer Forum and Individual Retailer Conversations

Energy retailers (retailers) are a key industry partner we work with to deliver for our customers. We have an ongoing business-as-usual contact program with key retailers operating in Queensland through regular one-on-one meetings. As part of this regular engagement program, we reached out to retailers in February 2023 to understand the key issues they wished to engage on in relation to the development of our Regulatory Proposal investment and revenue recovery plans.

Not unexpectedly, discussions focused mainly on the Tariff Structure Statement element of the Regulatory Proposal, in particular, our engagement approach, process, and key timeframes, including:

- Engagement milestones and stages of engagement
- Proposed tariff reform objectives and initiatives
- Network tariff streamlining, and
- Network tariff trials update.

Subsequently, we held three collective Retailer Forums, two in July 2023, and one in October 2023, followed by a further series of individual retailer conversations with those who wanted to engage in greater depth. The Retailer Forums, independently facilitated by [Deloitte](#), were attended by 86 participants. Discussions were centred around our 2025-30 Tariff Structure Statement and our proposed direction for tariffs in 2025-30 and beyond - proposed tariff classes, pricing windows, load control, and two-way tariffs and how these topics will vary across different customer segments (residential, small non-residential and large business). We also provided an update on ancillary (fee-based) services, public and security lighting services, and legacy metering services.

What we heard from retailers

Below is summary of the key insights obtained:



- **Limits for Services - Inquiry about limits distinguishing routine and non-routine services**
- **Property Search Processes - Clarification sought on property search methods**
- **After-Hours Fees Concerns - Concerns about removing after-hours fees for ancillary services affecting customer incentives and future costs**
- **Ancillary Services Reduction & Smart Meters - Questions on the reduction in ancillary services and the impact of smart meter rollout**
- **Rate 2B Tariff and Smart Control Devices - Discussion on Rate 2B tariff differentiation for minor and major connections, concerns about unaccounted energy use**
- **Cost Distribution & Meter Faults - Debate over spreading costs across customers, possibly delaying smart meter implementation, and potential retailer impacts from customers switching to default tariffs due to meter faults**
- **TSS Alignment & Energy-Based Tariffs - Inquiry if TSS should align with AEMC's smart meter rule change and if energy-based tariffs are transitional**
- **Storage Tariff Peak Periods - Questions on determining peak periods in storage tariff**
- **Solar Battery Disconnections & Wholesale Prices - Impact of solar battery disconnections on prices and communication of peak price signals, with AEMO engagement underscored**

For detailed results, see the Retailer Forum Outcomes and Summary Reports, which are published on the dedicated [Energy Retailers page](#) on our Talking Energy website.

For a comprehensive overview of how our retailer engagement insights have influenced our Regulatory Proposal, please see Chapter 5 – Engaging with customers, and Chapter 6 – Consultation outcomes: proposed changes in 2025 of our Tariff Structure Statement Explanatory Statement.

3.11 Draft Plan consultation and webinars

In releasing our Draft Plan for consultation and feedback in September 2023, we aimed to build on the customer and stakeholder engagements and conversations undertaken to date.

The consultation period provided customers and stakeholders an additional opportunity to express what matters most to them, in addressing the energy needs of regional Queensland customers and communities, both now and into the future.

Coinciding with the publication of our Draft Plan, and to support customers and stakeholders throughout the Draft Plan consultation period, we also published a series of *Frequently Asked Questions* on our Talking Energy website.

The consultation period was open between 15 September and 13 October 2023 and feedback was able to be provided in three different ways:

- Online Questionnaire: Customers and stakeholders were given the opportunity to complete our online 2025-30 Draft Plan Questionnaire. This questionnaire allowed customers to provide answers to the questions asked throughout the different chapters in the Draft Plan.
- Webinars: We held two webinars with customers and stakeholders to discuss our future plans, answer questions, and provide clarifications to ensure that our Draft Plan was understood.
- Email: Customers and stakeholders also had the opportunity to submit their feedback/submission directly to us via email at RDP2025Connect@energyq.com.au

Online questionnaire submissions

An online questionnaire was made available during the Draft Plan consultation period 3 on our Talking Energy website.

We emailed notification of the Draft Plan release to our near 3,000 Talking Energy subscribers, and all customers and stakeholders who not only actively participated in our engagements to that point, but also those who had been invited to and expressed an interest in participation but may not have actually participated. This was important in ensuring the Draft Plan phase of our engagement broadened the conversation and to ‘test’ the proposals in our Draft Plan with our wider customer and stakeholder base.

As part of the formal Draft Plan consultation, we asked a series of questions:

1. Do you think our Draft Plan appropriately addresses what is important to customers and why?
2. Has anything been missed in our Draft Plan that is important to you?
3. Has anything been missed in our assessment of our operating environment?
4. Do you support our investment priorities for 2025-30? If not, how should we be responding to the future challenges and opportunities?
5. Have we got the balance right between meeting customers’ expectations for a clean, reliable, smart, and affordable electricity supply and efficiently delivering electricity services in the most affordable way?
6. What are your views on our proposed network capital expenditure?
7. What additional information do you require to better understand our network capital expenditure proposal?

8. Which level, if any, of distributed energy resources investment (as outlined in the Draft Plan) do you support and why?
9. What are your views on our proposed support costs?
10. Would you encourage us to invest in systems (e.g. website, online tools) that provide customers with information around energy efficiency and distributed energy resources? If yes, what type of information and support would you find useful?
11. Do you support our current investment approach in transitioning a small proportion of our light commercial and passenger vehicles to electric vehicles or would you prefer us to increase or decrease this transition pace?
12. Do you support us in locating new depots or relocating existing depots (at end-of-life or when constrained) to industrial zoned areas, where it is efficient and possible to do so?
13. What are your views on our commitment to apply a higher productivity factor of 1 per cent than the standard Australian Energy Regulator (AER) 0.5 per cent productivity factor to our operating expenditure?
14. Would you prefer the price increases to be smoothed over the five-year period or alternatively would you prefer a large price increase in the first year of the regulatory control period followed by lower price rises over the remaining four years?
15. What are your views on the application of a Customer Service Incentive Scheme (CSIS) for our business?
16. What are your views on our proposal to continue with the current Service Target Performance Incentive Scheme (STPIS) telephone answering measure?
17. Do you support our proposal to publish regular reports on our customer service performance?
18. What are your views on the potential introduction of a midday pricing window with low or no price to default residential and small non-residential tariffs?
19. What are your views on shortening the peak pricing window to 5pm-8pm for all small non-residential and large business customers?
20. What are your views on the introduction of Time of Use (ToU) demand charges for our Connection Asset Customers (CAC) high voltage customers?
21. What are your views on our transitional plan for introducing two-way tariffs for connections to the low voltage network?
22. How could control load tariffs be changed to respond to changing energy use patterns, including new loads?
23. What issues should we take into account when considering network tariffs to support energy storage?
24. Are there specific aspects of our proposed network tariff changes that you support, oppose, or require more information about?
25. What are your views on the potential change in charging arrangements for legacy metering services from a user-pays approach to recovering the costs from all customers through network charges?
26. Do you support our draft position to adopt the accelerated 100% LED deployment scenario?

27. Do you think we have adequately reflected the feedback received from customers to the Public Lighting Issues Paper? If not, what else do you want us to address in the next phase of our engagement?
28. Responses to the Issues Paper shows customer support for the user-pay approach for smart control devices. What should we consider when developing our Smart Public Lighting Strategy?
29. Has our approach to the public lighting engagement been effective and how can we improve going forward?
30. Do you have any additional feedback on our Draft Plan?

In total, we received sixteen submissions on our Draft Plan, with five submissions received via the Online Questionnaire. Two of these submissions were joint submissions – providing feedback on both the Ergon Energy Network and Energex Draft Plans, where three of the submissions were solely in response to the Ergon Energy Network Draft Plan. The submissions received were from a mix of residential and business customers, and consumer group representatives. Where permission has been granted to publish, submissions are available to review in the [Draft Plan Submissions received folder in the Document Library on the RDP2025 page on our Talking Energy website](#).

Webinar submissions

Two webinars were conducted and independently facilitated and reported by [Deloitte](#) to ensure we provided all our customers and stakeholder an opportunity to listen to us outline the key aspects of our proposed investment and revenue plans for the 2025-30.

Feedback received during the webinars has been incorporated into our Regulatory Proposal along with all other submissions received during the consultation process.

The webinars were held on Thursday, 28 September 2023, and Tuesday, 3 October 2023. The webinar recordings (28 Sept 2023) and (3 Oct 2023) are available for viewing in the [Draft Plan Consultation and Webinars folder in the Document Library on the RDP2025 page on our Talking Energy website](#). Both sessions ran for a duration of 90 minutes and were attended by a combined total of 28 participants. Participants attended from our stakeholder groups and included residential and business customers, agricultural customers, retailers, consumer groups, government, and observers from the AER.

The webinar agenda focused on the following:

- Overview of Ergon Energy Network
- Regulatory Determination Process
- Revenue and Affordability
- Capital Expenditure (capex)
- Operational Expenditure (opex)
- Network Tariffs
- Customer Service Incentive Scheme (CSIS)
- Next Steps

Discussion on each of the above topics included a presentation from Ergon Energy Network subject matter experts. Real time feedback and questioning was invited from attendees throughout the webinar with structured slide questions and Mentimeter polls.

For detailed results, please see the Ergon Energy Network Draft Plan Webinars Outcomes and Summary Report, October 2023, which is published in the *Draft Plan Consultation and Webinars folder in the Document Library on the RDP2025 page on our Talking Energy website.*

Email submissions

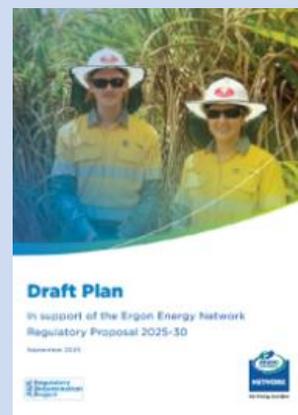
Out of the sixteen submissions received on our Draft Plan, eleven submissions were received via email. Seven of these submissions were joint submissions – providing feedback on both the Ergon Energy Network and Energex Draft Plans, where four of the submissions were solely in response to the Ergon Energy Network Draft Plan.

Where permission has been granted to publish, submissions have been published in the *Draft Plan Submissions received folder in the Document Library on the RDP2025 page on our Talking Energy website.* Three submissions were received where the submitting individuals/organisations requested their submission to remain confidential.

What we have heard from customers

Here's some of what our customers and stakeholders had to say about our Draft Plan:

- Preference for price increases to be smoothed over the five-year period (rather than a larger increase in the first year and lower prices in the following years)
- Participants stated that they felt the expenditure was reasonable, that the transparency Ergon Network maintained was good, and that the balance between sustainability and affordability was greatly appreciated
- Participants requested clarification on the productivity factor, questioning if it was achievable and what the consequences of not meeting this extended goal would be - after receiving clarification participants noted the higher productivity factor seemed like a good idea



For an overview of our engagement insights and how those insights influenced our Regulatory Proposal, please see Section 2.9 - What customers have told us, of our Ergon Energy Network Regulatory Proposal 2025-30.

4 HOW WE ARE RESPONDING

Below is a summary of both the main themes, topics and issues identified by our customers and stakeholders as future energy challenges from their perspective, and of relevance to the issues we engaged them on. They have shared their views on the energy challenges they face personally, as customers, and in their communities, providing insights that have informed our Regulatory Proposal.

Through our engagement activities we continue to hear the following key messages:

- safety should never be compromised,
- electricity affordability is a concern for many customers – both from a cost of living and a business competitiveness perspective,
- our customers want clear and concise information and access to energy usage data to help them make informed choices around their energy solutions with both pricing and non-pricing options available to manage energy costs,
- there is significant interest in renewables and Distributed Energy Resources, with growing concerns around climate change fuelling customer and community expectations around the transition to a low carbon economy,
- good customer service is expected with transparency in customer service performance seen as essential to giving customers confidence in the services delivered,
- our customers and communities value how we go about keeping the lights on, especially our response to severe weather events and other natural disasters, and,
- the economic environment continues to bring ‘energy inclusion and customer vulnerability’ and ‘economic resilience and jobs’ to the foreground.

Table 2 What our customers have told us

Energy Challenge or Opportunity	What customers have told us	How we're responding
<p>Energy affordability</p> 	<p>Affordability of electricity is of paramount concern to customers from both a cost-of-living and cost-of-business perspective.</p> <p>The energy transition impacts on customers differently depending on their circumstances (haves versus have nots).</p> <p>Customers are interested in having greater choice and ways to reduce their energy consumption and therefore their energy costs.</p> <p>Electricity prices impact on the cost of doing business and can flow through into higher prices for goods and services provided by small and large businesses.</p>	<p>Affordability has been a key factor in setting our investment plans and is our foremost investment priority. We are focused on spending only what is prudent and efficient so that our customers pay no more than is necessary for their electricity supply.</p> <p>Our proposal responds to customer concerns on affordability by driving down controllable aspects of our expenditure program without compromising safety or reliability of the network.</p> <p>We will reduce our revenue by applying a 1 per cent productivity factor to opex and capitalised overheads, and self-funding the capital spend above forecast for ICT for the last five years.</p> <p>We will continue to reform our network tariffs to provide opportunities to customers to benefit from low cost electricity in the middle of the day so all customers can benefit from the transition to renewable energy.</p> <p>We will provide new network tariff options for business customers with reduced time periods for peak pricing.</p> <p>We are committed to exploring network tariff and energy efficiency information campaigns and support mechanisms for customers into the future through collaboration with customers, stakeholders, and industry partners.</p>
<p>Transition to smart meters</p> 	<p>Customers have told us they expect the industry as a whole to deliver simplicity, savings, value and choice, that rewards them for their role in the energy transition.</p> <p>Access to smart meter data can help provide energy usage information to customers to assist in making informed energy choices and managing their energy costs.</p> <p>Our customers have expressed a strong interest in how changes in the amount of revenue we recover will impact them through the network tariff they are assigned to by their retailer.</p> <p>Customers generally support the roll-out of smart meters by the end of 2030. However, the costs to maintain legacy 'basic' meters and associated services should be shared across all customers.</p>	<p>The transition to smart meters provides an opportunity for more efficient pricing structures. We will send more targeted and cost-reflective signals to customers so that the recovery of network investment is allocated to customers who use the network more in these peak periods (rather than those who do not).</p> <p>In line with feedback provided, we propose to share the costs of legacy metering services across all customers. This reduces the disproportionate cost burden on customers who will be the last to receive a smart meter, including vulnerable customers.</p> <p>We also propose to accelerate the recovery of legacy meter depreciation to achieve full recovery by the end of 2025-30.</p>

Energy Challenge or Opportunity	What customers have told us	How we're responding
<p>Increased risk of disruptions to our network due to natural disasters or cyber attack</p> 	<p>The increasing frequency of major disruptive weather events and natural disasters is front of mind for customers.</p> <p>Customers are interested in our plans to ensure network resilience into the future.</p>	<p>Our network has long been required to deal with storm, flood, and bushfire events. In recognition that our climate is changing, we will continue with a moderate increased expenditure for our bushfire, flood, and storm resilience programs.</p> <p>We will continue to mature our cyber security capability to reduce the risks of external threats to our network and data.</p>
<p>Uptake of new technologies and increasing export of electricity back into the grid</p> 	<p>DER are seen as potential cost-saving and energy resilience building initiatives if utilised appropriately.</p> <p>Customers believe that the integration of DER into the network requires network pricing / tariff and other solutions to ensure customers can realise and maximise value from their DER investments.</p> <p>While investment in DER integration is expected and desired, customers who are unable to invest in and take advantage of DER should not be financially disadvantaged through energy costs associated with DER integration into the network.</p> <p>Availability and accessibility of energy and associated technologies is inequitable and there is concern around vulnerable customers not having access to innovative technologies or being able to benefit from the growth in renewable energy.</p>	<p>We have chosen a moderate pace of investment for integrating DER into our network to balance the desire of customers to take-up new technologies to export electricity with the needs of those customers who are unable to invest into new technologies.</p> <p>We will continue to reform our network tariffs to spread the benefits of renewable energy across our customer base with low or no network charges during the middle of the day.</p> <p>We expect that our dynamic connection offers will be widely available by July 2028, providing more options to customers around the volume of their exports from rooftop solar and battery storage.</p>
<p>Customer service excellence</p> 	<p>Customers expect good customer service to be a 'given' and do not believe schemes such as the AER's CSIS should be required to ensure good service is delivered.</p> <p>Customers want ease of interaction with us through their preferred communication channels and would like to see greater channel choice and flexibility.</p> <p>Timely and accurate information on a range of topics such as power outage information (planned and unplanned), and information on a range of issues, such as connecting DER is expected.</p> <p>Customers want greater transparency in customer service performance measures and such results to be made publicly available by means of holding us to account for the services we deliver.</p> <p>Where services do not meet minimum standards or expectations, service</p>	<p>We support the feedback from customers and propose that the CSIS should not apply for 2025-30.</p> <p>Given our customers' strong views that we should not be rewarded for good customer service, we also propose that the customer service component (telephone answering) of the Service Target Performance Incentive Scheme should not apply.</p> <p>We will invest in our contact centre and online channels to provide information to customers on DER and energy efficiency.</p> <p>We have committed to review our customer service performance measures and metrics with input from our Customer & Community Council and publish these to improve transparency of our customer service levels.</p>

Energy Challenge or Opportunity	What customers have told us	How we're responding
<p>Renewable and sustainable investments</p> 	<p>improvement plans should be made publicly available and progress regularly reported.</p> <p>Customers care about current and future environmental impacts and how investments to support the transition to net zero emissions may impact customers network prices.</p> <p>Investment in electric vehicles as part of our fleet should be at a 'slow and steady" pace as customers expressed concerns that electric vehicles at this time would not meet Ergon Energy Network requirements due to our vast geographical area with demanding terrain and the need for heavy duty vehicles.</p>	<p>In consideration of customer concerns around the cost of electric vehicles and availability of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and noting customers affordability concerns, we will not proceed with transitioning a small portion of our fleet to electric vehicles.</p>
<p>Energy efficiency in public lighting</p> 	<p>Customers supported the full deployment of LED lights by 2030 due to the financial and environmental benefits.</p>	<p>Our co-designed public lighting strategy provides for a transition to 100 per cent LED public lighting by 2030.</p>

5 EVALUATING OUR ENGAGEMENT

Evaluation has been an important aspect of our regulatory proposal engagement program. We were dedicated to achieving both breadth and depth in our engagement, evidenced by our wide-reaching outreach methods, partner-centric engagements, and efforts to capture diverse customer views. Our activities were designed to accommodate different levels of customer commitment and target broad segments, including those that were traditionally harder to reach.

Integral to our approach was the active participation of our Energy Queensland and Ergon Energy Network Boards and Executive Leadership Team in customer and stakeholder forums, demonstrating their commitment to understanding and addressing issues raised. Additionally, we aligned our engagement program with the AER's Better Resets Handbook and IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum, ensuring that customers and stakeholders were engaged at appropriate levels for each relevant topic.

We maintained thorough documentation and reporting of our engagement activities. Our commitment to accountability, openness, honesty, and transparency was reflected in our two-way communication channels, use of anonymous feedback for evaluation, and the inclusion of customer evidence and network responses in our Regulatory Proposal. This comprehensive approach underscored our dedication to effective and meaningful engagement.

5.1 Key performance indicators and targets

In November 2023, we extended invitations to 473 diverse participants, encompassing a broad spectrum of customers and stakeholders to partake in an engagement activity evaluation survey. Participants were selected from those who have actively engaged in our business-as-usual and bespoke engagement activities throughout the regulatory proposal engagement period to date.

Our aim was to critically assess the effectiveness and quality of our engagements, striving to showcase the comprehensive and nuanced nature of our engagement program. This effort was pivotal in reinforcing and validating the perceptions of key stakeholders regarding our approach to engagement, ensuring our practices not only met but exceeded expectations in fostering meaningful and productive interactions.

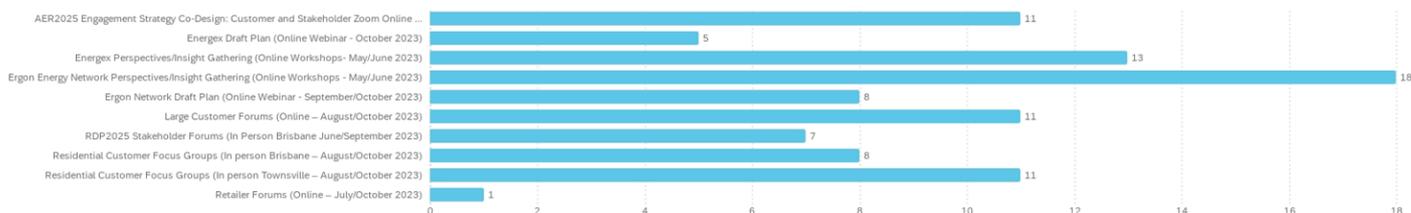
Participants were asked the following questions:

1. Which engagement activity/activities did you participate in?
2. Please rate the level to which we clearly explained the purpose and objectives of the engagement activity/activities you attended?
3. Please rate the quality of our engagement activity materials and presentations?
4. Please rate the level to which you were provided enough time in the engagement activity/activities you attended to explore issues?
5. Please rate the level to which the information we provided you about the engagement activity themes, topics and issues were clear and easy to understand?
6. Please rate the level to which you were able to meaningfully contribute to the engagement activity/activities you attended, based on the content and format we provided.
7. Please rate the level to which the engagement activity/activities that you attended recognised the diversity of our customers and community?
8. How did the engagement activity/activities you attended help improve your understanding of the energy industry and issues discussed?
9. Please rate the level to which you believe your feedback is being incorporated into our future planning?
10. Please rate the overall quality of the engagement activity/activities you participated in?
11. Is there any further information you would like to provide us to help us improve future engagement activities?

In total, we received 75 responses. Due to the dual involvement of our Distribution Network Service Providers, Ergon Energy Network and Energex, and considering the active participation of many respondents in both Networks' activities, it is assumed that the responses received were informed by experiences and interactions with both network businesses in mind.

We have segmented our data into whether the respondent participated in an engagement activity or activities as a 'Customer,' 'Stakeholder' or as 'Both.' This is depicted in Figure 14 below.

Figure 14 Respondent Engagement activity demographic



For our evaluation survey, we adopted a 0-10-point scale that measures a respondent's answers about the quality of performance as either:

- Responded negatively (0-3)
- Responded neutral (4-6)
- Responded positively (7-10).

Average scores were determined from each question amongst all segments from the same 0-10-point scale. Table 3 below demonstrates how our customers and stakeholders have evaluated our engagement performance.

Table 3 How participants evaluated our performance.

Key performance indicator	Positive evaluation (7-10) rating	Neutral evaluation (4-6) rating	Negative evaluation (0-3) rating
Our ability to clearly explain the purpose and objectives of the engagement activities.	89%	8%	3%
The quality of our engagement activity material and presentations.	87%	11%	3%
The length of time participants were provided to explore issues in engagement activities.	85%	12%	3%
The information provided was clear and easy to understand.	83%	15%	3%
Participants had the ability to meaningfully contribute to the engagement activity based on the content and format we provided.	79%	17%	4%
The level to which our engagement activities recognised the diversity of our customers and community.	88%	9%	3%
The level to which participants believe their feedback is being incorporated into our future planning.	60%	31%	10%
The overall quality of the engagement activity or activities they participated in.	81%	14%	6%

What we heard from our customers and stakeholders

Below is a sample of the verbatim comments customers and stakeholders provided regarding the evaluation of the engagement activities they were involved in.

Question 8: How did the engagement activity/activities you attended help improve your understanding of the energy industry and issues discussed?

“The forums included a very comprehensive approach to information and open discussion, both of which helped to improve my understanding of the key issues.”

“It helped, but I still do not know what I do not know.”

“All presenters took time to answer questions and ensure all attendees understood exactly what they were talking about. There was no pressure to skip over things to keep to time.”

“It was a steep learning curve to begin with being new in my role; the information provided was good, I was able to contribute to the process and our views engaged.”

“It made me understand that there are many different issues to take into consideration.”

“It provided background information of which I was unaware beforehand.”

“Confirmed others were facing similar issues and concerns.”

“The attendees of the forum I attended tended to be focused on themselves and not the general conversation that I felt was required. I was a little disappointed but also appreciate that there was little understanding from some on what the whole thing was about.”

“Understanding the energy industry is complex however, the engagement with Ergon Energy Network and its team are engaging with a willingness to explain that in turn has made understanding the energy sector easier.”

“I regret that the RDP2025 Stakeholder Forums lacked the financial detail assumptions, modelling and calculations that would have allowed an in-depth assessment of the financial details we were requested to comment on. This resulted in a superficial review which I found disappointing. I hope this is rectified in the future.”

“I learned a lot, some of the technical information was a bit over my head, however I felt well informed and able to contribute.”

“Some of the issues were difficult to understand, some were not allocated enough time to respond.”

Question 11: Is there any further information you would like to provide us to help us improve future engagement activities?

“If more of the information was provided ahead of the forum, it may have been easier to contribute thoughts on the day. It would also be helpful if there’s an opportunity to provide feedback after the session. For example, if the same discussion questions could be circulated in a survey.”

“Ergon Energy Network needs to be transparent with its stakeholders and provide sufficient time and information for meaningful discussions to take place. I felt like the RDP2025 Stakeholders Forums this year were merely held to get the stakeholders in a room to rubber stamp a process without any concern as to the quality of the outcome.”

“Focus more on your core activities i.e., provide power that is reliable and cost efficient.”

“Some initiatives should be customer led from inception. There should be room for this and a process.”

6 EMBEDDING OUR ENGAGEMENT INSIGHTS IN OUR BUSINESS-AS-USUAL ACTIVITIES

As referenced earlier in this report and our Phases of Engagement, see Figures 3 & 4, phases five and six of our regulatory proposal engagement plan will occur in 2024 and into 2025. With support from our Customer and Community Council and Reset Reference Group we will work towards incorporating the engagement lessons learnt to date and from those future engagement activities into our business-as-usual engagement program as we seek to evolve, improve, and ensure continuous conversation with our customers and stakeholders now and into the future.

In November 2023, we hosted a one-day workshop with the RRG, where we identified further issues that go beyond the current engagement on the 2025-30 Regulatory Proposal investment and revenue recovery plans and will require ongoing customer and stakeholder engagement to effect improved outcomes for customers and to support stakeholders in their work with the business through for example our Customer and Community Council. These topics and issues are included in Table 4:

Table 4 Topics and issues identified for further engagement.

No.	Topics and Issues	Customer category
1	Network tariffs, including glide path and side constraints, dynamic connections, Consumer Energy Resources (CER) integration, and implementation/pricing, and small business, Commercial and Industrial, residential impact analysis, and experience	Network Pricing Working Group and Demand Flexibility and Innovation Working Group
2	Customer Service Incentive Schemes (CSIS), including future services	Customer and Community Council
3	Smart meter roll out plan	Customer and Community Council
4	Innovation and consultation, including Demand Management Innovation Allowance Mechanism (DMIAM)	Demand Flexibility and Innovation Working Group
5	Performance reporting, including costs, coordination, and targets	Customer and Community Council
6	Allocation of legacy metering costs, including Standard Control Services vs Alternative Control Services	Customer Forums
7	Public lighting, including residual costs (reset component) and smart controllers	Reset Reference Group
8	Review and refresh of <i>Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</i> , specifically where to next, and incorporating energy transition education	Customer and Community Council
9	Large scale batteries, including network integration and approach, pricing, and cross subsidies.	Network Pricing Working Group and Demand Flexibility and Innovation Working Group
10	Large projects	Customer and Community Council

However, as part of the workshop we also identified further areas where the RRG would like to conduct 'deep dives' in March 2024 on issues they believe warrant further information to be provided to them to help inform them in the writing of their 'Technical Issues Report' to be submitted as part of the AER's Issues Paper consultation to be held in May 2024. At a high level, these topics include:

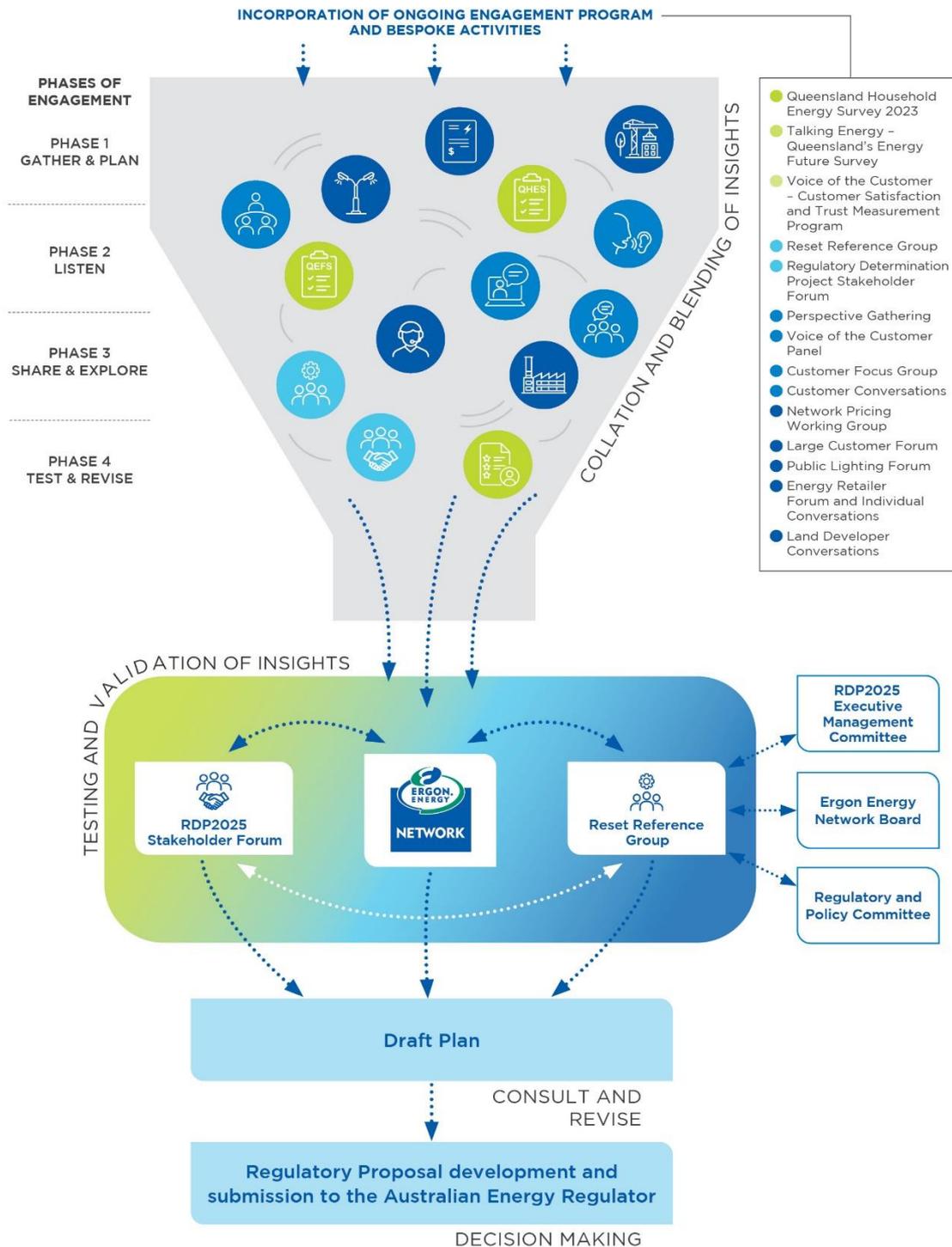
1. Climate change resilience
2. Asset Management Strategy, including management of the capital program, governance and risk.
3. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and customer service requirements
4. Post Implementation Report and capital governance, relating to cyber and ICT, and benefits realisation.

Note: At the time of publication of this report, the specific details and issues behind these topics have yet to be identified as the RRG will review the Regulatory Proposal submitted with the content of the Regulatory Proposal informing the 'deep dive' information to be requested.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Engagement Plan on a Page

How our engagement insights have helped to shape and inform our Regulatory Proposal



Appendix 2: Engagement Activity Plan

STAKEHOLDER		HOW - ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	Phase 1 GATHER & PLAN 2022	Phase 2 LISTEN Feb-May 2023	Phase 3 SHARE & EXPLORE Jun-Jul 2023	Phase 4 TEST & REVISE Oct-Nov 2023
CUSTOMER ADVOCATES	Residential and Business Advocates	Customer & Community Council	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Residential and Business Advocates	Reset Reference Group	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Residential and Business Advocates	Network Pricing Working Group	-	-	✓	✓
	Agriculture Sector	Agriculture Forum	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Developer Representatives	Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) - Regional Committee	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Representatives from Local Government and Department of Main Roads and Transport	Public Lighting Forum <i>(Note: 1 x Ergon Energy Network and 1 x Energex Forum - number of meetings highlighted to be duplicated)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS	Community Stakeholders	Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP) Roadshows <i>(Note: Ergon Energy Network and Energex speakers at roadshows)</i>	-	✓	-	-
	Community Stakeholders	Energy Queensland Board Stakeholder Events	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Local Councils	Area Manager meetings with local council representatives	✓	✓	-	-
	Local Councils/Community	Disaster Planning Work Groups - District and Local Groups	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Edge of Grid Community	Microgrid Feasibility Engagement	-	✓	-	-
	Battery Neighbours	Local Network Battery Plan Engagement Battery Plan	-	✓	-	-
RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS	Residential customers - reliable representation of customer base <i>(Note: included many customer cohorts also listed below)</i>	Voice of the Customer Panels <i>(Note: 1 x Ergon Energy Network and 1 x Energex Panel - number of meetings highlighted to be duplicated)</i>	-	✓	✓	✓
	Residential customers	Customer Focus Group Workshops - 2 x Ergon Energy Network and 2 x Energex panels CAPEX/OPEX: inc. fleet, property, ICT and DER related investments and Draft Plans	-	-	✓	✓
	Residential customers	Residential Customer Tariff Interviews	✓	-	-	-
	Residential customers	Residential Network Capacity Tariff Trial <i>(Partner: Ergon Energy Retail)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Residential customers who have had a recent interaction with Ergon/Energex	Customer Experience Measurement Survey <i>(Note: Customer Satisfaction [CSAT] based surveys sent to customers post interactions with Ergon Energy Network and Energex)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Community Members	Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) and Net Trust Score (NTS) Survey <i>(Note: 2,500 customers via independent panel annually)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Residential customers - reliable representation of customer base	Queensland Household Energy Survey (QHES) 2023 <i>(Note: circa. 4,200 customers responded)</i>	-	✓	-	-
	Future Voices - Energy Innovators	Solar, Battery and EV owners - Perspective Gathering workshop	-	✓	-	-
	Future Voices - Youth	Young people - Perspective Gathering workshop	-	✓	-	-
	Future Voices - Community Campaign	Online campaign - Talking Energy	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Quiet Voices - Renters	Renters (Tenants) - Perspective Gathering workshop	-	✓	-	-
	Quiet Voices Seniors (Definition - Self Funded Retirees/Pensioners)	Seniors - Perspective Gathering workshop	-	✓	-	-
	Quiet Voices - People living with a disability	People living with a disability - Perspective Gathering workshop	-	✓	-	-
	Quiet Voices - Life Support Customers	Life Support Customer - Perspective Gathering workshop	-	✓	-	-
	Quiet Voices - Culturally and linguistically diverse	Culturally and linguistically diverse - Perspective Gathering workshop	-	✓	-	-
Quiet Voices - Indigenous	Indigenous- Perspective Gathering workshop	-	✓	-	-	

STAKEHOLDER	HOW - ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	Phase 1 GATHER & PLAN 2022	Phase 2 LISTEN Feb-May 2023	Phase 3 SHARE & EXPLORE Jun-Jul 2023	Phase 4 TEST & REVISE Oct-Nov 2023	
BUSINESS CUSTOMERS	Business customers - Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs)	Small Business - Perspective Gathering workshop	—	✓	—	—
		Individual customer interviews - Network Tariffs	—	—	✓	—
	Business customers - Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs)	This customer cohort also represented in Customer and Community Council/Network Pricing Working Group/Agriculture Forum engagements (see above)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Business customers - Developers	Customer experience journey mapping - developers connections process	✓	—	—	—
	Business customers - Large Customers, Commercial and Industrial	Large Customer Forum (x 2)	—	—	✓	✓
	Business customers - Large Customers, Commercial and Industrial	Large customer individual meetings - network tariff impacts	—	—	—	✓
	Business customers - Agriculture	This customer cohort also represented in Customer and Community Council/Network Pricing Working Group/Agriculture Forum/ Large Customer Forum engagements (see above)	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Solar Soak Tariff Desktop Analysis/Trial Partner Bundaberg Regional Irrigators Group)	✓	—	—	—
	Business customers - Sugar Industry	Sugar Mill Forum (x2)	—	✓	✓	—
	ENERGY PARTNERS	Energy Retailers	Energy Retailer Meetings <i>(Note: Main 6 x energy retailers in Queensland - bi-monthly)</i>	✓	✓	✓
Energy Retailer Forum <i>(Note: All energy retailers)</i>			—	—	✓	✓
Annual Energy Retailer Satisfaction Survey			—	✓	—	—
Electrical Contractor		Electrical Contractor Peak Body Meetings <i>(Note: meetings individually with Master Electricians Australia/National Electrical and Communications Association)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Energy Academy Forum <i>(Note: Electrical contractors forums)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
EMPLOYEES	Energy Queensland Employees	Energy Queensland employees (all brands)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Industry Partners	Industry Partners	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix 3: Engagement by numbers

Total numbers overall engagement reach

627 
customers and stakeholders engaged

228 
organisations engaged

171 
engagement events or opportunities

396 
hours of engagement

Reset Reference Group



5 members
25 project meetings
5 workshops
12 deep dives
105 hours of engagement

Voice of the Customer Panel



65 customer perspectives,
2 sessions over
6 hours
35 customers participated
42 hours of engagement
35 hours of deliberative discussions
12 recommendations

Network Pricing Working Group



12 workshops with
7 participants
46 hours of engagement
41 recommendations

Customer Focus Group



2 focus group sessions with participants
30 hours of engagement
16 hours of engagement
6 key discussion topics
63 unique pieces of feedback

Customer Advocate and Stakeholder Engagement



3 RDP2025 Stakeholder forums with participants
74 participants
3 Agriculture forums with participants
22 participants
4 Customer and Community Council meetings with participants
35 participants
35 hours of engagement

Energy Retailer Forums & individual conversations



27 individual meetings
3 forums with participants
86 participants
26 hours of engagement

Large Customer Forum



7 individual meetings
4 forums with participants
109 participants
16 hours of engagement

Public Lighting Forum



14 online sessions
28 hours of engagement
68 local councils plus Department of Transport and Main Roads engaged
12 recommendations
1 Issues Paper,
6 fact sheets,
2 customer impact analyses,
1 smart lighting strategy

Customer conversations



11 small business customers
15 residential customers
26 hours of engagement

Draft Plan



2 online webinar with participants
28 participants
17 public submissions

Social Media



Facebook reach **88,000** LinkedIn reach **25,500**
2,742 individuals and **741** organisations notified of the release of Draft Plan
3288 Talking Energy subscribers with **2.3k** site visits,
36 engaged visitors, **508** informed visitors, **1.1K** aware visitors

Appendix 4: Delivering on engagement expectations

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles	What we have delivered against the engagement theme and principles
THEME – NATURE OF ENGAGEMENT		
PRINCIPLE – SINCERITY OF ENGAGEMENT: understand consumers and reflect their preferences in regulatory proposals to give consumers confidence they have been heard		
<p>Genuine commitment from network businesses extending down from their Boards and Executives to giving effect to consumer preferences</p>	<p>Our Board and Executive will provide due diligence in governance arrangements relating to the development of our proposals.</p> <p>A specific Regulatory Determination Executive Management Committee will be established for the Executive to guide the project and consider insights and preferences provided by external parties.</p> <p>Our Board and Executive will actively participate in our engagements directly to hear first-hand what our customers and stakeholders tell us.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Regulatory and Policy Committee of the Energy Queensland Board met bi-monthly as part of the project governance framework. • Our Regulatory and Policy Committee met with the Reset Reference Group (RRG) bi-monthly to discuss project related issues and progress. • The Ergon Energy Network Board met quarterly as part of the project governance framework. • We established the Regulatory Determination Project (RDP) 2025 Executive Management Committee early to ensure due governance of the project by the Executive. • The RDP2025 Executive Management Committee met twice per month at a minimum. • As the sponsoring body of the RRG, the RDP2025 Executive Management Committee met monthly with the RRG to discussion project related issues and progress. • Members of the Energy Queensland Board and Executive attended the online Recollective customer workshop in undertaken to inform development of the RDP2025 Engagement Strategy. • Members of the Energy Queensland Board and Executive attended the quarterly RDP2025 Stakeholder Forums that not only assisted in designing and agreeing the RDP2025 Customer & Stakeholder Engagement Plan but also provided customer and stakeholder input to business decision making around the Regulatory Proposal. • Members of the Energy Queensland Board and Executive Leadership Team attended the pre-Voice of the Customer Panel customer perspective gathering online workshops, the Voice of the Customer Panel sessions and Customer Focus Group workshops. • Members of the Energy Queensland Board through the Regulatory and Policy Committee and the Executive Leadership Team through the RDP2025 Executive Management Committee met with the RRG on a regular basis to obtain their insights and observations on customer and stakeholder engagement activities undertaken, insights obtained and matters relating to various aspects of the regulatory proposal building blocks.

	<p>Our Draft Plan and Regulatory Proposal, that will be endorsed by the Board and Executive, will clearly outline what our customers and stakeholders have told us through the engagement process and clearly outline how those insights and preferences have been considered and reflected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Draft Plan was published on 15 September 2023 and open for consultation until 13 October 2023. The Draft Plan provided an update on what 'customers have told us' on the issues and topics engaged on up to that point in time and how those insights had been considered by the business. • Our Regulatory Proposal submitted to the AER on 31 January 2024, built on the insights provided through our consultation on the Draft Plan in September/October 2023 and has been endorsed and approved by the Energy Queensland Board and Executive Leadership Team who have taken the customer and stakeholder insights and feedback provided into account as part of their decision-making process on all aspects of the proposal submitted. Chapters throughout the Regulatory Proposal document reference how the insights provided have been considered and influenced those decisions.
<p>Openness to new ideas and willingness to change</p>	<p>We will listen to what our customers and stakeholders tell us through the engagement process and will duly consider their ideas and suggestions raised and explain where their feedback has been able to be incorporated into our proposals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Regulatory Proposal submitted to the AER has built on the insights provided through our consultation on the Draft Plan in September/October 2023 and has been endorsed and approved by the Energy Queensland Board and Executive Leadership Team who have taken the customer and stakeholder insights and feedback provided into account as part of their decision-making process on all aspects of the proposal submitted. Chapters throughout the Regulatory Proposal document reference how the insights provided have been considered and influenced those decisions.
	<p>Where ideas and suggestions have not been incorporated, we will clearly explain why and look at other ways of which they may be addressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See information in immediate row above. • Additionally, through our engagement activities such as our Voice of the Customer Panel, Customer Focus Groups and other online engagements such as our Public Lighting Forum, Retailer Forum and Large Customer Forum webinars, we were able to discuss directly with customers at each iteration of engagement. • Our Draft Plan was published on 15 September 2023 and open for consultation until 13 October 2023. The Draft Plan provided an update on what 'customers have told us' on the issues and topics engaged on up to that point in time and how those insights had been considered by the business how the insights provided in the different engagement activities had evolved our thinking and where suggestions had been either accepted or not incorporated into our Regulatory Proposal and the reasons behind those decisions.
	<p>We will actively encourage our customers and stakeholders, particularly through mechanisms such as our Customer and Community Council, standing forums and the Reset Reference Group established, to challenge us on our thinking and proposals throughout the process – with engagement activities designed and carried out in a manner to allow open and transparent discussion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We met with our RRG on a fortnightly basis, with other ad hoc meetings arranged as required, to ensure regular opportunities for exploration of issues relating to the Regulatory Proposal development. • We established an RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum that brought together representatives of our Customer & Community Council, Agriculture Forum and other stakeholders, including the RRG. The RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum met quarterly in June, September and December 2023 and provided an opportunity for our key customer representatives to be updated on our Regulatory Proposal development, explore key issues and topics and provide an important opportunity for them to be a 'voice' in representing their different customer cohorts interests. The RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum meetings were independently facilitated by Deloitte to ensure independent outworking of Forum proceedings and summary reporting. The Forums were 'workshop' in format design to encourage open and transparent dialogue and maximise participation of all attendees.

<p>Ongoing engagement with consumers about outcomes that matter to them, which allows consumers to 'set the agenda'</p>	<p>Our overall Engagement Strategy and Engagement Plan approach will be developed in partnership with customers and stakeholders to ensure they reflect their needs and expectations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In August 2022, we held a five-day online 'Recollective' customer and stakeholder workshop independently facilitated by SEC Newgate. The purpose of the 'Recollective' workshop was to obtain customer insights and input into key topics, themes and issues and target audiences that needed to be considered as part of the co-design of our Regulatory Proposal Engagement Strategy and related Engagement Plan. • Following the 'Recollective' workshop we further developed our Engagement Strategy and related Engagement Plan in consultation with the RRG and our Customer and Community Council, with both endorsing the final Engagement Strategy and Engagement Plan respectively in December 2022 and March 2023.
	<p>We will adopt phases of engagement that clearly outline and articulate the purpose of each engagement phase, the activities to be undertaken with each 'target audience' and the themes and topics to be explored so that customers and stakeholders have visibility of the overall engagement plan process and can therefore highlight any gaps that we can consider in revising the engagement agenda where required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of our Engagement Strategy and related Engagement Plan we have adopted several phases of engagement to provide clarity on the stage we were in at any time in the engagement and consultation process and subsequently which engagement activities and 'target audiences' would be engaged during each phase and the purpose of that engagement. Our Phases of Engagement are outlined in Chapter 6 of our <i>Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan</i>. • The Phases of Engagement serves as a useful guide in our discussions within the business and externally with our customers, stakeholders and the RRG to set expectations across the engagement program of work and assist in engagement planning on key topics and issues to ensure conversations progressed and achieved outcomes to inform the Regulatory Proposal.
	<p>We will work in partnership with our customers and stakeholders to shape the agenda, topics, and timeline for discussion – specifically through some of our more formal engagement structures such as the Reset Reference Group, Customer and Community Council, Network Pricing Working Group, and other structures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In January 2023, we held an engagement planning co-design workshop with the RRG where we explored and agreed the main topics and themes to be engaged upon following the insights provided by customers and stakeholders through the 'Recollective' workshop process. The session also took account of the timeframe available for engagement and focused on identifying key issues and topics for engagement on what the business and the RRG thought customers would be able to most influence in the timeframe available to engage. • We worked primarily with the RRG on shaping the agenda and content for many of our engagement activities. Different members of the RRG were nominated to lead on providing RRG input to the design of sessions, content and supporting materials of some of the different engagement activities undertaken. • The Network Pricing Working Group (NPWG) members, consisting of the RRG and some other stakeholders, provided direct input to the agenda for the NPWG meetings and issues to be explored.
	<p>Our engagement process will be ongoing and iterative throughout the life of the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a business-as-usual ongoing and iterative engagement program that we built upon in developing a specific engagement program of activity in support of our Regulatory Proposal development. • We recognise and accept that some of our more specific Regulatory Proposal engagement activities occurred later in the process than some of our stakeholders, including the RRG, would have preferred. We have noted this and will take the engagement lessons learnt into our business-as-usual engagement activities and future work around the regulatory determination process.

	<p>Effective evaluation will be undertaken at each step of the engagement process as activities are undertaken with feedback from participants shaping future activities and the overall approach undertaken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We sought verbal feedback from all customers and stakeholders who participated in our engagement activities post completion of those events/meetings and invited additional feedback via additional conversations or email as part of our business-as-usual approach to customer and stakeholder contact and the evaluation approach. • As part of our Voice of the Customer Panel our independent facilitator, MosaicLab conducted post workshop ‘vox pops’ to obtain Panel participant feedback on each session. Additionally, The Ergon Energy Network Voice of the Customer Panel, participants completed a Panel Feedback evaluation survey around the Panel process and asked to rate that process against factors including ‘Influence and Implementation’, ‘Trust’, ‘Collaboration and Overall Process Authenticity’, ‘Clear, Useful and Balanced Information’ and their overall experience in being engaged. The findings of the Ergon Energy Network Voice of the Customer Panel evaluation are available in the Ergon Energy Network RDP2025 Voice of the Customer Panel Process Report June-August 2023 • In November 2023 we conducted an online engagement evaluation survey inviting all customers and stakeholders who participated in our various engagement events to provide their feedback on the quality of the engagements undertaken in terms of meeting their needs and expectations in enabling them to understand the information presented/discussed, enabling them to meaningfully participate and suggestions for improvement
	<p>Flexibility will be at the core of our engagement process so we can respond to customer and stakeholder feedback on ensuring we provide engagement structures and discuss issues that matter to them in the context of the regulatory proposal process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We adopted a flexible approach to our engagement with our customers and stakeholders to ensure that any engagement undertaken was able to accommodate issues of importance to customers and stakeholders, even where they may not have been directly related to influencing our investment or revenue recovery plans. This was important to ensure we fulfilled our commitment to listening to all views and responding as part of the Regulatory Proposal engagement or business-as-usual activities. • Additionally, although we had set agendas for our engagements undertaken, we ensured flexibility within agenda timelines to ‘go at the pace’ of participants in terms of ensuring they had the time required to ask questions and points of clarification so they could fully understand issues engaged upon and therefore meaningfully participate and provide their informed and considered points of view.
	<p>Any issues and matters that arise outside of the scope of the project will still be captured and addressed with participants in our engagement outside of our specific regulatory proposal engagements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We ensured that our engagement activities enabled customers and stakeholders to highlight issues of concern to them even where not directly related to the specific topics and issues that formed our engagement as part of the Regulatory Proposal development. For example, through our Voice of the Customer Panel discussions, participants highlighted many issues around network tariff and customer service education and awareness issues that were still important to capture and respond to even though not directly relating to a specific investment in our Regulatory Proposal. These issues were captured, responded to, and commitments provided by the business to look at future programs of activity to respond to these issues and concerns outside of the Regulatory Proposal process, as part of our business-as-usual customer and stakeholder engagement, research and insights, and communications programs of activity.

<p>Ensure consumer confidence in the engagement process and alleviating concerns consumers may have</p>	<p>We will ensure information is provided in a timely manner, clear in format and in language customers and stakeholders understand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For most of our engagements, we provided advance notice of the topics and issues to be discussed at the high-level before sharing the detailed information through presentations and other materials during activities. • Feedback from any particular engagement content and materials was welcomed and helped inform continuous improvement of the language we used during subsequent engagements, including how we explained complex topics and issues to improve understanding. • For many of our engagement sessions, post the session we shared the presentations and 'Summary and Outcome' reports where relevant to serve as a record of the engagement undertaken, issues raised and response provided. • For our Voice of the Customer Panel we created a specific online 'Hub' on our Talking Energy website to be utilised as a resource for finding information such as fact sheets, videos and other supporting information. • Although some of our engagement materials were peer reviewed by our RRG, we accept that the timeliness of doing so could have been improved in many circumstances and recognise this as an area for improvement into the future.
	<p>We will address issues and concerns raised without delay through open contact and dialogue and 'closing the loop.'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We responded to all issues raised during our engagements either in session or post session where required. • Post our Large Customer Forums and Retailer Forums we held individual meetings/contact with relevant parties to follow up on issues specific to those customers and stakeholders bit suitable for discussion in open forum for confidentiality or other reasons. • Through our Voice of the Customer, Customer Focus Group and other engagements held, we ensured that we 'closed-the loop' on particular topics and issues discussed in previous sessions. This was important in giving customers confidence that we had listened to them in sessions, considered their viewpoints between sessions and were able to explain how their insights provided had influenced our Regulatory Proposal, or where insights provided had not been adopted, to explain why.
	<p>Issues and concerns raised will be recorded in a Customer and Stakeholder Issues Register so they can be appropriately assigned, status tracked, outcomes recorded and shared.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the nature of engagement undertaken a specific Customer and Stakeholder Issues Register as a stand-alone register was not implemented. Rather for each engagement undertaken a 'Summary and Outcomes' report was produced, often prepared by our independent consultants engaged to assist in designing and facilitating our engagements, to ensure independence of reporting. These reports, differing in format between consultants, captured topics and issues with business response and/or commitments into the future recorded. Key issues and themes were identified through this reporting mechanism enabling the business to consider issues raised and respond appropriately.

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles	What we have delivered against the engagement theme and principles
THEME – NATURE OF ENGAGEMENT		
PRINCIPLE – CONSUMERS AS PARTNERS: collaborate with, and where appropriate, empower consumers in developing regulatory proposals		
Collaborate with and empower consumers on an ongoing business-as-usual approach	We have a well-established business-as-usual engagement approach and engagement structures in place that were developed in part from our learnings from our previous 2020-25 regulatory proposals engagement process and our continual review and feedback from customers and stakeholders on how they best like to be engaged and their needs in ensuring their capacity to engage with us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We strive for continuous improvement in our approach to engagement and utilised the lessons learnt from our business-as-usual engagement activities to inform our bespoke engagement activities relating to the Regulatory Proposal. • Additionally, we asked our RRG and other stakeholders, where relevant, to provide their insights into how best we could engage with our customers and stakeholders throughout the engagement program of activity and welcome their advice and insights on engagements they had seen work well by other network providers and organisations. This was particularly most welcome where stakeholders represented specific customer cohorts to be engaged. • Our key stakeholders had significant input to our Engagement Plan to support development of the Regulatory Proposal, with the Engagement Strategy and related Engagement Plan co-designed and endorsed by the RRG and importantly, our Customer and Community Council. • We also adopted a co-design approach to developing our Engagement Strategy with end-use customers through the 'Recollective' workshop process in August 2022.
	We will work through our business-as-usual engagement structures such as our Customer and Community Council and other customer and stakeholder forums to build on the insights received to date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our key stakeholders had significant input to our Engagement Plan to support development of the Regulatory Proposal, with the Engagement Strategy and related Engagement Plan co-designed and endorsed by the RRG and importantly, our Customer and Community Council. • We also shared insights received by customers throughout the engagement process with the RRG, who observed many proceedings, our NPWG, and with our Customer and Community Council through our RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum, obtaining their thoughts on those insights and an opportunity for them to add their own contributions on topics and issues engaged on.

	<p>We will establish bespoke engagement structures specific to our regulatory proposals so we can maximise participation from a broader range of customers and stakeholders for ensure wider collaboration in a way the empowers them to participate through the engagement process (e.g., Reset Reference Group, Voice of the Customer and Community Panels, Network Pricing Working Group, bespoke customer segmented focus groups).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to our business-as-usual engagement activities, we established several bespoke engagement structures for our Regulatory Proposal engagement including for example, a Voice of the Customer Panel, Customer Focus Group held in Townsville, RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum, Network Pricing Working Group (NPWG) and importantly the Reset Reference Group (RRG). • We believe these bespoke engagements provided a valuable and wide-range representation of different customer cohorts and their representatives, and in particular reference to our residential customers, representation of different customers from across the residential base in line with Queensland household demographics. • Through the Regulatory Proposal engagement, as with our business-as-usual engagements relating to small business, we continued to find it difficult to obtain significant input and contributions. Although there were a small number represented in our engagements, we also undertook a specific network tariff research dialogue with some small businesses through a one-on-one approach at a time of their choosing to ensure we could better explore some network tariff issues and understanding with a selection of customers from the small business customer cohort. • Through our experience of engagement on the Regulatory Proposal and the rich insights received, not only on topics and issues, but in the engagement methods and techniques deployed, we will be conducting a review in early-to-mid-2024 to inform our business-as-usual customer and stakeholder engagement program going forward, so lessons learnt are identified addressed and continuous improvement realised.
	<p>We will work in active partnership with our customers and stakeholders to design and outwork our engagement process now and into the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We worked in active partnership with our customers and stakeholders to co-design our Regulatory Proposal Engagement Strategy and related Engagement Plan, based on insights obtained from customers as part of our business-as-usual engagements and bespoke Recollective workshop activities. • Through our experience of engagement on the Regulatory Proposal and the rich insights received, not only on topics and issues, but in the engagement methods and techniques deployed, we will be conducting a review in early-to-mid-2024 to inform our business-as-usual customer and stakeholder engagement program going forward, so lessons learnt are identified addressed and continuous improvement realised.
	<p>We will be open and transparent in sharing insights received to inform our discussions, with insights from any one particular engagement technique adopted, being shared wider to inform future engagements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our approach to our Regulatory Proposal engagement was iterative based on the experience of the different engagement activities undertaken. • We shared the insights from our engagements with stakeholders, in particular the RRG and Consumer Challenge Panel (CCP), who observed many of the engagements and invited their feedback and expert advice as part of our continuous improvement process. • We also engaged the services of independent consultants to advise us in best practice engagement methods and techniques to design and independently facilitate many of our engagement activities and reporting on those activities to ensure we maximised customer and stakeholder input without undue influence from the business.

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles	What we have delivered against the engagement theme and principles
THEME – NATURE OF ENGAGEMENT		
PRINCIPLE – EQUIPPING CONSUMERS: ensure consumers can effectively engage with and provide informed feedback to network business in a manner that maintains independence and integrity of consumer engagement processes		
Equipping, informing, and supporting consumers	We will ask our customers and stakeholders what support they require to effectively engage and respond appropriately (including the manner in which they prefer to be engaged, the materials they required and any associated logistical requirements to attend/participate).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of our 'Recollective' customer workshop held in August 2022 as part of our engagement strategy and planning we identified different customer cohorts to be engaged and explored nit best to engage each of those cohorts based on the lived experience of the customer participants and expertise of stakeholders representing the different customer cohorts. We provided remuneration fees to participants in many of our engagements such as the Voice of the Customer Perspectives Gathering Workshop, Voice of the Customer Panel, RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum and our RRG to acknowledge their participation and where required covered accommodation and travel costs. We developed a suite of fact sheets and video content for our Voice of the Customer Panel in response to feedback form participants to provide information, in a clear easy to understand format, particularly on the complex issues pertaining to network tariffs.
	We will adhere to customer and stakeholder requests for their insights and feedback to remain confidential where this is requested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have fully complied with customer and stakeholder requests for the insights they have provided as an individual to remain confidential. Our 'Summary and Outcomes' reports for many of our engagements enabled insights provided to be reported on in general non-attributed terms with confidentiality in mind where relevant. As part of the formal consultation process on our Draft Plan we asked customers and stakeholders who made formal submissions their preference for publication or for their submission to be kept confidential. Where consent was granted to publish we posted the submission on our Talking Energy website, ensuring that those requested to be kept confidential were not published and only shared with staff and the RRG who had signed confidentiality agreements.
	We will manage engagements and utilise various techniques in a manner that maximise participation from all and avoids 'the loudest' from dominating conversations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We engaged independent facilitators to run our engagement session with our customers and stakeholders in order to ensure balance and independence in proceedings and to ensure all participants in any one engagement were provided an opportunity to participate. We adopted a combination of different engagement techniques in our engagement techniques and activity design, for example, open plenary discussions, Q&A, breakout sessions, small group and table discussions, online chat functions, to cater for different styles of participation preferred by individual customer as and stakeholders who participated.

<p>Maintaining consumer independence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Equipping, informing and supporting consumers.</i> • <i>Networks and consumer representatives to set out governance arrangements covering interactions.</i> • <i>Networks should publicly declare all remuneration arrangements, benefits and financial support provided to customer representatives.</i> 	<p>We will ensure public disclosure of the membership of any bespoke engagement groups put in place and ask stakeholders to clarify if they are contributing in a personal capacity or representing a particular customer or stakeholder segment or organisation (a record of responses will be kept in our customer and stakeholder management databases).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the members and Terms of Reference of both our Customer & Community Council and Reset Reference Group is publicly available on our Talking Energy website. • As part of our Draft Plan consultation we asked those who made a submission to identify if they were making the submission as an individual or on behalf of an organisation, and if they provided consent to publish that submission.
	<p>At the commencement of all engagements customers and stakeholders will be asked to declare any conflicts of interest so that any conflicts can be managed appropriately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We encouraged all customers and stakeholders who believed they may have had a conflict of interest to declare that potential conflict of interest with the business. Of the two instances that where a potential conflict was raised, we sought advice from the Energy Queensland legal team as to whether or not there was indeed a conflict to be realised and they were resolved appropriately through business-as-usual processes to ensure due diligence.
	<p>The Terms of Reference for our Customer and Community Council, the Reset Reference Group and any other bespoke groups formed for the purposes of the regulatory proposals engagements, such as the Voice of the Customer Panels, will be made publicly available (such Terms of Reference will also outline any remuneration arrangements that apply).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the members and Terms of Reference of both our Customer & Community Council and Reset Reference Group is publicly available on our Talking Energy website. • Our Network Pricing Working Group has been established under the Terms of Reference of our Customer & Community Council and governed by the same Terms of Reference.

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles	What we have delivered against the engagement theme and principles
THEME – NATURE OF ENGAGEMENT		
PRINCIPLE – ACCOUNTABILITY: ongoing engagement should cover delivery of commitments to consumers, particularly in relation to outcomes.		
Transparent reporting and consultation on delivery of commitments	<p>From a project management perspective, we will establish robust reporting mechanisms to ensure that an accurate record of all engagement activities is captured, including commitments made so that their status can be tracked.</p> <p>From a proposals' outcome perspective, we will clearly define in our proposals the outcomes of our engagements and commitments made through the process and track the status of these whilst reporting on their status/progress through our ongoing business-as-usual activities into the future, beyond the 2025-30 regulatory proposal engagement timeframe itself.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where relevant, post our engagement activities we captured and reported on activities through a series of summary and outcome reports that captured proceedings from the engagement, key issues, business responses provided in session and any commitments made or outstanding issues to be addressed captured. These reports have been shared with participants in the engagements and are publicly available on our Talking Energy website to ensure those who were unable to participate could still review proceedings. Any commitments made and/or outstanding issues were revisited at future sessions of the relevant engagements to 'close the loop' with participants. We utilised our business-as-usual issues management approach to ensure issues were captured, status tracked and addressed where necessary. Our Regulatory Proposal, as with our Draft Plan released for consultation in September 2023, provides an overview of our key engagement activities undertaken, which customer cohorts have been engaged and a summary of insights provided. Importantly, they have outlined how the insights provided have evolved our thinking and decision making in developing the plans put forward in the Regulatory Proposal. Additionally, we will be consulting our Customer & Community Council, as our key customer and stakeholder engagement mechanism, to look at how we can work with them to ensure regular reporting and scrutiny of our Regulatory Proposal investment and revenue recovery plans and activities over the remaining and future regulatory periods, where issues raised through the engagement process, can continue to be discussed and explored into the future.

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles	What we have delivered against the engagement theme and principles
THEME – BREADTH AND DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT		
PRINCIPLE – ACCESSIBLE, CLEAR AND TRANSPARENT ENGAGEMENT		
Transparently set out engagement plans (outlining objectives, engagement issues/topics and level of participation and influence consumers can expect)	<p>Our 2025-30 Regulatory Proposals Engagement Strategy and our associated Engagement Plan, developed in partnership with our customers and stakeholders, sets out or engagement approach, objectives, issues/topics to be explored and the level of influence our customers and stakeholders can expect.</p> <p>We have adopted the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation as the framework through which we will clearly map out the level of influence our customers and stakeholders can expect on the key topics/issues to be engaged on.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Engagement Strategy and Plan set out at a high-level the approach, objectives, issues and topics to be explored with our customers and indicated the level of influence customers could have on those topics and issues mapped against the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum. • We acknowledge that the scope of issues to be engaged upon with our end-use customers narrowed during the early phases of engagement with a key focus on network tariffs (across all customer classes) and customer service/the Customer Service Incentive Scheme. In consultation with our Reset Reference Group, we balanced the number of topics and issues for engagement against time constraints given some of our bespoke customer engagement activities commenced later in the engagement process than we had originally planned. • For both our Reset Reference Group and RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum engagements, we outlined the topics and issues to be discussed and the level of influence or insights being sought at the beginning of meetings to provide clarity on the purpose of those engagements and ensure insight/feedback outcomes were achieved. The scope of issues and topics explored with the Reset Reference Group and RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum were wider than some of our bespoke end-use customer engagements, with some more in-depth information on issues shared with these more informed audiences. • The IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation was utilised to determine the design, content and format of our engagement activities. For further information on our assessment against this point please also see the assessment referenced in the immediate above points made.
Set consultation timeframes with regard to the complexity of the issues and provide consumers with adequate time to understand and assess	<p>Through our Engagement Plan and associated engagement planning matrix we have outlined our Phases of Engagement and when we expect particular engagements with particular 'target audiences' to be realised to enable early identification of proposed activity.</p> <p>Engagement Action Plans will be developed for our key engagements to provide clarity to customers and stakeholders on the purpose, objective and timeframes associated with the engagement activity to be undertaken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Phases of Engagement developed as part of our co-designed Engagement Strategy and Engagement Plan and endorsed by our Reset Reference Group and Customer and Community Council, has remained at the core of our engagement planning and execution. The Phases of Engagement have ensured we have kept on track to obtain insights from our customers and stakeholders, publication of our Draft Plan for consultation, and due consideration by the business of all insights and feedback received to influence the evolution of our thinking and decision making in regard to the investment and revenue recovery plans outlined in our Regulatory Proposal. • We initially created an Engagement Action Plan template to be utilised for our engagements. However, in engaging external consultants to plan and facilitate our key engagements, we worked within each of their existing engagement project planning processes and project management tools, and processes, formats and reporting mechanisms they already had in place in terms of communicating with participants involved in the engagements. This proved to be a more efficient process and avoided needless duplication of engagement related work and communication with participants that separate business Engagement Action Plans would have created.

Adopt different engagement methods on different aspects of issues where required	We will adopt a range of engagement techniques to best engage with our diverse customer and stakeholder segments and tailor those engagements to their specific needs where appropriate as well as the issues to be discussed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of our engagement program of activities we adopted different engagement methods, techniques and formats depending on the issues, topics and cohorts to be engaged. Our Regulatory Proposal and this Engagement Summary Report outlines the different approaches undertaken. Diversity in adopting different engagement methods was key to maximising participation by different customers and stakeholders in meeting their needs and expectations in relation to the engagement program of work.
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Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles	What we have delivered against the engagement theme and principles
THEME – BREADTH AND DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT		
PRINCIPLE – CONSULTATION ON DESIRED OUTCOMES AND THEN INPUTS: consumers should guide the development of proposals through consultation with them on the outcomes they want from the proposal and how they would like to be engaged with in the development of the proposal.		
How consumers would like to be engaged in and guide the development of the proposal	<p>Our 2025-30 Regulatory Proposals Engagement Strategy, and subsequently the Engagement Plan, has been developed based on early engagement with customers and stakeholders through a co-design approach in the form of our 'Recollective' online engagement forum and discussions in August 2022 and subsequent Customer and Community Council and Reset Reference Group engagement planning discussions.</p> <p>We will listen and act on customer and stakeholder feedback provided throughout the engagement process to continually respond and address their evolving needs and expectations where required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In August 2022, we held a five-day online 'Recollective' customer and stakeholder workshop independently facilitated by SEC Newgate. The purpose of the 'Recollective' workshop was to obtain customer insights and input into key topics, themes and issues and target audiences that needed to be considered as part of the co-design of our Regulatory Proposal Engagement Strategy and related Engagement Plan. Following the 'Recollective' workshop we further developed our Engagement Strategy and related Engagement Plan in consultation with the RRG and our Customer and Community Council, with both endorsing the final Engagement Strategy and Engagement Plan respectively in December 2022 and March 2023. Feedback from participants in our engagement activities from any one engagement was reviewed and considered by both the business and our engagement partner agencies to ensure continuous improvement was implemented in responding to customer and stakeholder needs and expectations as the engagement program evolved. Feedback on materials, presentations, language utilised by presenters and format of information being presented was instrumental in ensuring we improved customer participation but also their understanding of issues engaged upon to ensure they were equipped to have informed and meaningful conversations.
Focus consultation on long-term outcomes and not confined to the period covered by the regulatory proposal and to take account of changing circumstances into the future	Our regulatory proposal engagements and issues to be explored, build on our existing business-as-usual engagement approach and conversations. They will inform our future engagement strategy and discussions into the 2025-30 and beyond particularly in recognition of the long-term nature of many of the key topics and issues likely to be raised in conversations, such as the evolving energy transition and the role our businesses play in that transition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the engagements on our Regulatory Proposal, we have committed to our customers and stakeholders that all insights, whether it be on topics and issues engaged upon, or the engagement methods and techniques deployed, would help us develop an ongoing conversation with them into the future. We are committed to continuing to engage and discuss issues engaged upon, and others realised through the Regulatory Proposal, with our customers and stakeholders into the future, for example, setting up bespoke regulatory proposal engagement forums such as the Network Pricing Working Group as a business-as-usual forum into the future to continue the conversation on current and future network tariff reform.
Consult consumers on their desired outcomes and craft the inputs of	We will consult our customers and stakeholders on a range of topics/issues relating to our regulatory proposals and ensure that the insights and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout our Regulatory Proposal we have highlighted the insights and feedback received by our customers and stakeholders and referenced how they have influenced our thinking and decision making in the different aspects of

<p>the proposal to deliver the desired outcomes</p>	<p>provided shape the development of those proposals and clearly articulate where those insights and feedback have influenced decision making to deliver the outcomes they desire and expect where possible.</p>	<p>our investment and revenue recovery plans. This engagement report also provides a summary of the key insights and feedback provide through our different engagements held.</p>
	<p>Where desired outcomes have not been achieved, we will clearly explain why this is the case to provide understanding and due respect.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While customers were supportive of a slow and steady transition of fleet (e.g. trucks and cars) to electric vehicles, they noted access to charging infrastructure and differences in terrain across Queensland compared to other distribution networks, as well as concerns about the costs to do so, particularly for vulnerable customers. Noting customers affordability concerns, we have made a decision to remove the additional capex relating to the transitioning a small portion of the fleet to electric vehicles. See Chapter 5.9, Other non-network capital expenditure, of our Regulatory Proposal.
<p>Engagement may go beyond individual components of the proposal (e.g., reliability, affordability, sustainability), to explore a consumer's lived experience within the energy system – including customer services and interactions with the network</p>	<p>We will engage and consult our customers and stakeholders on a wide range of issues relating to the regulatory proposals, with the customer experience and service interactions forming part of those discussions.</p> <p>One of our key engagement themes developed is 'Customer Service Excellence' that will ensure the 'lived experience' of our customers and stakeholders is captured through our discussions – we also recognise the importance of that lived experience in not only informing potential options around our investment plans but also in improving and tailoring our engagement and communications more generally with our customers and stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We acknowledge that the scope of issues to be engaged upon with our end-use customers narrowed during the early phases of engagement with a key focus on network tariffs (across all customer classes) and customer service/the Customer Service Incentive Scheme. In consultation with our Reset Reference Group, we balanced the number of topics and issues for engagement against time constraints given some of our bespoke customer engagement activities commenced later in the engagement process than we had originally planned. • However, through engagements such as our 'Recollective' workshop, Perspectives Gathering Workshops, Voice of the Customer Panel, Customer Focus Group held in Townsville sessions, we were able to capture the lived experience of participants on a wide range of energy related issues. • As referenced opposite, one of our key engagement themes developed a part of the co-design engagement strategy and planning process was 'Customer Service Excellence', with topics such as the Customer Service Incentive Scheme and ICT - Customer Enablement (interactions with the business) being consulted on through our Voice of the Customer Panel and Customer Focus Group held in Townsville engagements respectively. Our Regulatory Proposal and this Engagement Summary Report provides an overview of the discussions on those topics and associated issues and how the insights and feedback obtained evolved our thinking and decisions on our related investment plans – informed by the current lived experience, and future needs and expectations of what our customers told us.

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles	What we have delivered against the engagement theme and principles
THEME – BREADTH AND DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT		
PRINCIPLE – MULTIPLE CHANNELS OF ENGAGEMENT: to gain a comprehensive understanding of consumer preferences.		
<p>Direct engagement with consumers (taking account of consumers underrepresented and preferences of consumers in how they like to be engaged)</p>	<p>We have identified a list of ‘target audiences’ and preferred engagement techniques in consultation with our customers and stakeholders as part of our early engagement on developing our 202-25 Regulatory Proposals Engagement Strategy and subsequent Engagement Plan – this consultation highlighted the need to engage with particular customer segments who are often underrepresented with these accounted for in our Engagement Plan.</p> <p>We will develop an extensive engagement program of activity and tailor our techniques to engage directly with all of our customers and stakeholders to ensure they can participate, and their voice is heard.</p> <p>We will establish two distinct ‘Voice of the Customer Panels’ (VCPs) to consist of a range of customers in each DNSP service area to directly engage with customers.</p> <p><i>(Note: reference to ‘two distinct Panels’ and ‘each DNSP’ reflects the Engagement Strategy and Engagement Plan being developed for both the Ergon Energy Network and Energex regulatory proposals).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In August 2022, we held a five-day online ‘Recollective’ customer and stakeholder workshop independently facilitated by SEC Newgate. The purpose of the ‘Recollective’ workshop was to obtain customer insights and input into key topics, themes and issues and target audiences that needed to be considered as part of the co-design of our Regulatory Proposal Engagement Strategy and related Engagement Plan. • Our Voice of the Customer Panel was independently recruited with the Panel membership reflective of the regional Queensland residential population in terms of regional representation and demographics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In August 2022, we held a five-day online ‘Recollective’ customer and stakeholder workshop independently facilitated by SEC Newgate. The purpose of the ‘Recollective’ workshop was to obtain customer insights and input into key topics, themes and issues and target audiences that needed to be considered as part of the co-design of our Regulatory Proposal Engagement Strategy and related Engagement Plan • Feedback from participants in our engagement activities from any one engagement was reviewed and considered by both the business and our engagement partner agencies to ensure continuous improvement was implemented in responding to customer and stakeholder needs and expectations as the engagement program evolved. Feedback on materials, presentations, language utilised by presenters and format of information being presented was instrumental in ensuring we improved customer participation but also their understanding of issues engaged upon to ensure they were equipped to have informed and meaningful conversations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We established an Ergon Energy Network Voice of the Customer Panel, independently recruited with the Panel membership reflective of the regional Queensland residential population in terms of regional representation and demographics. The Panel consisted of a meet and greet and five full day online workshops (Ergon Energy Network – meet and greet and four full day and one hybrid in-person/online workshop) between June - October 2023 focusing on exploring issues relating to network tariff reform and customer service/Customer Service Incentive scheme discussions. More information on the Voice of the Customer Panel is available in this report on Page 28..

<p>Direct engagement with consumer representatives</p>	<p>We will continue to build on our existing business-as-usual engagement structures in place by working with our Customer and Community Council, Network Pricing Working Group and various standing customer and stakeholder forums to obtain their input into our engagement design, discussions, and proposals development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We continued to meet with our Customer & Community Council, Agriculture Forum and other stakeholders incorporating them into one RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum that met in June, September and December 2023. This Forum provided an efficient format through which to engage customer advocates and other stakeholders on matters relating to the development of the Regulatory Proposal. Further information on the RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum is available in this report on Page 40. Additionally, our Tariff Reform Working Group – Residential completed its work with a new Network Pricing Working Group (NPWG) was established to cover network tariff related issues relating to all customer cohorts and tariff classes, consisting of members of the Reset Reference Group, our Customer & Community Council and others from across the energy industry. The NPWG is currently being transitioned to a new business-as-usual forum that will extend beyond this regulatory proposal process timeframe. Further information on the NPWG is available in this report on Page 23.
	<p>We have established a Reset Reference Group of customer representatives and regulatory experts to explore topics/issues in depth, in particular on the more technical aspects of our proposals with their insights and feedback helping shape our engagement approach and discussions to be held with our wider customers and stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reset Reference Group (RRG) met with the business fortnightly, and on ad-hoc basis as required, to discuss a range of matters, topics and issues, relating to relating to the development of our investment and revenue recovery plans relating to the Regulatory Proposal. Further information on the RRG is available in this report on Page 21. Members of the RRG also observed and participated in our engagement activities with our customers and stakeholders to hear first-hand the conversations that took place and the insights and feedback provided. RRG membership changes took place through the process due to conflict of interests arising for two original members, with the Terms of Reference also updated in July 2023 to reflect agreed changes to terminology and reporting preferences.
<p>Understand, represent, and balance the interests of all consumer cohorts, identify competing interests and seek to develop agreed positions with consumers and set out competing interests in relation to the elements of the proposal where agreement is not possible</p>	<p>We will actively listen to understand all of our customers' and stakeholders' needs and expectations and identify their priorities through collaborative exploration of what matters most.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As reported in our Regulatory Proposal and this Engagement Summary Report our engagement program of activity provided us an important opportunity to actively listen to our customers and stakeholders to understand their needs, preferences and live experience in relation to energy and the electricity services we provide as a Distribution Network Service Provider. We were able to gain a strong understanding of what matters to them most within the energy context and believe we have struck an appropriate balance amongst the different views relating to those matters in our Regulatory Proposal.
	<p>Engagement techniques adopted, such as our Voice of the Customer Panel, Customer & Community Council, Reset Reference Group and Network Pricing Working Group will play an important role in working in partnership with us to assess competing customer and stakeholder preferences and forming agreed positions where possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Voice of the Customer Panel, Customer & Community Council, Reset Reference Group and Network Pricing Working Group all played an important and key role in working in partnership with the business in engagements in exploring a variety of issues relating to the Regulatory Proposal. These engagement structures enable open, transparent discussions with customers and stakeholders invited to challenge us on our position and press us on matters to evolve our thinking and decision making. Information on each of these engagement structures, proceedings and associated insights are outlined throughout this Engagement Summary Report and in Chapter 2 – Customer and Stakeholder Engagement of our Regulatory Proposal.
	<p>In our Draft Plan and Regulatory Proposal, we will clearly identify and articulate where agreed positions from our customers and stakeholders have been achieved and how they have influenced our proposal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Engagement Summary Report provides an overview of the different engagements held and insights and feedback provided by customers and stakeholders in the development of our Regulatory Proposal. Throughout the different chapters in our Regulatory Proposal, we have outlined how the different insights and feedback on different topics and issues has evolved our thinking and influenced our investment plans and revenue recovery decisions contained within the Regulatory Proposal.

	<p>In our Draft Plan and Regulatory Proposal, we will clearly identify where competing interest have led to agreement not being achieved and explain where the business position on our proposal has taken this into account.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While customers were supportive of a slow and steady transition of fleet (e.g. trucks and cars) to electric vehicles, they noted access to charging infrastructure and differences in terrain across Queensland compared to other distribution networks, as well as concerns about the costs to do so, particularly for vulnerable customers. Noting customers affordability concerns, we have made a decision to remove the additional capex relating to the transitioning a small portion of the fleet to electric vehicles. See Chapter 5.9, Other non-network capital expenditure, of our Regulatory Proposal.
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Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles	What we have delivered against the engagement theme and principles
THEME – BREADTH AND DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT		
PRINCIPLE – CONSUMERS’ INFLUENCE ON THE PROPOSAL: consider the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation and its different levels of participation and range of influence on the proposal.		
<p>Consider the IAP2 spectrum in consumer engagement on the proposal</p>	<p>As with our business-as-usual engagement approach, we have adopted and embedded the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation in our engagement approach to the regulatory proposals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We utilise the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum as our business-as-usual engagement framework in our customer and stakeholder engagement program of activity. The IAP2 Spectrum has been and continues to be at the core of our engagement relating to our Regulatory Proposal and has guided our conversations with customers and stakeholders enabling us to be clear what level of influence they may have on any topics or issues discussed at any point in time.

<p>Networks and consumers to consult each other on the range of issues consumers can have influence over</p>	<p>We will consult our key customers and stakeholders such as the Reset Reference Group, Customer and Community Council amongst others, on the key themes, topics and subtopics (issues) pertaining to the regulatory proposals and in doing so identify and agree the range of issues that customers and stakeholders will be able to influence, with these forming the core elements of our engagement discussions so we remain focused on maximising customer and stakeholder input to what they can actually influence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of our Recollective' co-design Engagement Strategy process we were able to group topics and issues raised into six distinct themes: Affordable, Clean, Smart, Reliable and Customer Service Excellence (See Engagement Themes and Topics, Page 9). • Additionally, following a co-design engagement planning workshop with the Reset Reference Group (RRG) in January 2023, we considered the key topics and themes to be consulted on via our Voice of the Customer Panel engagement, taking account the time required to engage on issues, the time available for engagement and issues that customers could most influence. Subsequently, it was agreed that the Voice of the Customer Panel should focus on network tariff reform and customer service, including the Customer Service Incentive Scheme (CSIS). These two issues formed the core engagement discussions with our Panel. (See Section 3.3 - Voice of the Customer Panel, page 29) • Separate to the Voice of the Customer Panel, in August and October 2023 we held two Customer Focus Group sessions in Townsville, to engage customers on the topics and issues pertaining to optional investments in Distributed Energy Resources, ICT- Customer Experience Enablement, Property and Fleet. This provided a further opportunity for key insights to be provided by customers in trading-off levels of service and the speed at which we make investments in these areas. (See Section 3.4 – Customer Focus Group, page 34). • In addition to several 'deep dive' session held with our RRGs on some of the more technical aspects of our Regulatory Proposal, we also consulted our RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum on our collective plans outlined in our Draft Plan that was open for consultation from 15 September to 13 October 2023. Prior to publication of our Draft Plan, we engaged and consulted our key RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum members on all aspects of the more technical details of those plans, such as opex, capex, tariff structures and other issues. This was to provide an opportunity for our more informed stakeholders to provide feedback on our Draft Plan before we finalised the Draft Plan for consultation with our wider stakeholders and customer base. See RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum Outcomes and Summary Report September 2023).
	<p>We will map key themes, topics and subtopics developed to the level of influence customers and stakeholders may be able to exert on any particular topic of issue to provide clarity on the 'negotiables' and 'non-negotiables while explaining these categorisations so that customers and stakeholders are informed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan, March 2023, provided an overview of the different topics and issues relating to development of our Regulatory Proposal and the level of influence that customers may be able to exert on each topic and issues mapped against the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. See the Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan, March 2023, Appendix I: Engagement Sub-Topics, Impacts and Level of Influence.. • We acknowledge that the number of topics and issues engaged and consulted on in depth as part of the bespoke engagements relating to our Regulatory Proposal were not as extensive as originally planned, due to time constraints, however many customer insights from our business-as-usual program of activity touch on many of those issues and together with the bespoke engagements we have blended all insights to form a holistic customer and stakeholder view to inform our Regulatory Proposal. • The IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation framework was explained to customers and stakeholders in our engagement activities where relevant, with level of influence and input being sought from participants outlined.

Encourage consumers to test assumptions and processes that underpin the proposal	As part of our engagement approach and the techniques developed, we will ensure that they are structured in such a manner that provides opportunities for our customers and stakeholders to 'deep-dive' into topics/issues where relevant to explore different options and test assumptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of our commitment to ensuring the business did not lead customers and stakeholders during discussions we engaged the services of four separate agencies to independently facilitate and report on the different engagements held throughout the engagement process. This level of independence, combined with adoption of different engagement formats, ensured that proceedings were structured in a way to maximise customer and stakeholder participation, and even enable proceedings to 'go at the pace' of the participants in any particular engagement to ensure time for understanding to enable meaningful contributions. Through our engagements such as the Voice of the Customer Panel, Customer Focus Group and Public Lighting Forum we provided for conversations to be revisited at each of the respective sessions to test assumptions and explore different options on the topics engaged upon – an important element in providing customers confidence that their insights had been duly considered and explored further as new information came forward, such as pricing impacts of previous preferences identified.
Provide additional resources and commission independent analysis to support consumers in testing assumptions and process where they are not equipped to do so	Subject to due governance and benefits analysis, we will make budget available to our Customer and Community Council, Reset Reference Group, Network Pricing Working Group and Voice of the Customer Panels to commission research or other support required in the operation of their activities where that is required to test assumptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through our engagements with our key structures such as our Voce of the Customer Panel, Customer and Community Council, Reset Reference Group (RRG), RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum and Network Pricing Working Group (NPWG) no specific external research was highlighted outside of the research already planned by the business as part of the engagement process (e.g., Queensland Household Energy Survey 2023 and research and customer interviews and impacts analysis relating to network tariffs). However, we have kept the option open for further research or engagements to be undertaken in 2024, particularly to support the RRG and NPWG in their program of work post submission of the Regulatory Proposal in January 2024 and the Australian Energy Regulator's Issues Paper consultation process in April/May 2024.
	We will also build on our business-as-usual approach to working in partnership with our customer representatives and stakeholders to identify and consider application of resources and funding of specific engagements, research or other support that may be deemed valuable by both parties in collecting customer and stakeholder insights to inform dialogue around the regulatory proposals process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See information provided in the immediate row above. In addition, we have committed to undertaking a review of our business-as-usual customer and stakeholder engagement in 2024 to ensure that the insights and lessons learnt from our engagements on the Regulatory Proposal can be fully analysed and inform our continuous improvement in meeting our customer and stakeholder needs and expectations in relation to engagement and consultation both now and into the future. Resourcing, research, and customer advocacy support will be explored as part of our review.

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles	What we have delivered against the engagement theme and principles
THEME – CLEARLY EVIDENCED IMPACT OF THIS ENGAGEMENT		
PRINCIPLE – PROPOSALS LINKED TO CONSUMER PREFERENCES: establish a clear link between consumer research and engagement, a network business’s representation of the outcomes desired by consumers and how the proposal gives effect to those outcomes.		
Outline clear link between consumer research and engagement, the network business’s representation of consumers preferences and how the proposal gives effect to those outcomes	<p>Our Draft Plan and Regulatory Proposal, that will be endorsed by the Board and Executive, will clearly outline what our customers and stakeholders have told us through the engagement process and clearly outline how those insights and preferences have been considered and reflected.</p> <p>For ease of reference, we will adopt the ‘You said,’ ‘We heard,’ ‘We propose’ framework to clearly identifying and articulating how our customer and stakeholder preferences have given effect to the outcomes in our regulatory proposals.</p> <p>This framework will be applied throughout the engagement process in our engagement activities and discussions where relevant, not just in the Draft Plan and Regulatory Proposal documents themselves so customers and stakeholder have confidence and trust that we are actively listening and responding at every step.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Draft Plan released on 15 September 2023 and open for consultation to 13 October 2023 was approved by the Ergon Energy Network and Energy Queensland Boards and the Executive Leadership Team post their review of all customer and stakeholder insights received on the topics and issues engaged upon. • Our Regulatory Proposal submitted to the AER on 31 January 2024 was approved by the Ergon Energy Network and Energy Queensland Boards and the Executive Leadership Team post their review of all customer and stakeholder insights received on the topics and issues engaged upon, including those received on our Draft Plan. • Both the Draft Plan at the time of publication, and the Regulatory Proposal outline and reference how the insights received from our customers and stakeholders shaped and evolved our thinking and decision-making on our investment and revenue recovery plans. <p>As with our Draft Plan (See Draft Plan, Chapter 2: Customer & Stakeholder Engagement) our Regulatory Proposal, outlines at the high level what our customers and stakeholders told us on key topics and issues around the ‘energy challenges’ and how we have responded in our Regulatory Proposal. . (See Regulatory Proposal, Chapter 2 Customer and Stakeholder engagement, clause 2.9 – what customers have told us)</p> <p>Our engagement process kept the ‘You said’, ‘We heard’, ‘We propose’ framework in mind when executing our engagements, a framework that was useful in recapping conversations held in previous engagements sessions and identifying how the insights obtained in any one engagement had been considered by the business. This approach was also important in giving participants confidence that the business had listened, reported a true and accurate record of insights and responded in a way that was satisfactory to customers and stakeholders who participated in the different engagements undertaken.</p>
Seek to find mutually acceptable solutions where divergent consumer views exist and where they exist show how they have been balanced	<p>Throughout the engagement process we will enable customers and stakeholders to provide their insights and feedback in a ‘safe environment’ and explore with them in depth topics/issues where divergent views exist where relevant by facilitating opportunities for those views to be further explored and balanced where possible.</p> <p>In our Draft Plan and Regulatory Proposal, we will clearly identify and articulate where agreed positions from our customers and stakeholders have been achieved and how they have influenced our proposals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of our commitment to ensuring the business did not lead customers and stakeholders during discussions we engaged the services of four separate agencies to independently facilitate and report on the different engagements held throughout the engagement process. This level of independence, combined with adoption of different engagement formats, ensured that proceedings were structured in a way to maximise customer and stakeholder participation, and even enable proceedings to ‘go at the pace’ of the participants in any particular engagement to ensure time for understanding to enable meaningful contributions. • As with our Draft Plan released on 15 September 2023 and open for consultation to 13 October 2023, the different chapters of our Regulatory Proposal submitted to the AER on 31 January 2024 outlines how the insights provided by customers and stakeholders have been considered and influenced our investment and revenue recovery plans.

	<p>In our Draft Plan and Regulatory Proposal, we will clearly identify and articulate where competing interests have led to agreement not being achieved and explain where the business position on our proposals has taken this into account.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See information provided in immediate row above.
<p>Release a comprehensive draft regulatory proposal for stakeholder comment and engage with consumers beyond those consulted with in preparing the draft proposal</p>	<p>We will publish our Draft Plan in September 2023.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Draft Plan was published on 15 September 2023 and open for consultation until 13 October 2023. The Draft Plan provided an update on what 'customers have told us' on the issues and topics engaged on up to that point in time and how those insights had been considered by the business.
	<p>We will invite both formal and informal submissions and feedback on those proposals not just from those customers and stakeholders involved in our engagement activities but also cast the net wider to invite submissions and feedback from across our wider customer and stakeholder base.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the formal consultation process on our Draft Plan we asked customers and stakeholders who made formal submissions their preference for publication or for their submission to be kept confidential. Where consent was granted to publish we posted the submission on our Talking Energy website, ensuring that those requested to be kept confidential were not published and only shared with staff and the RRG who had signed confidentiality agreements. • As part of our Draft Plan consultation process we emailed all customers and stakeholders who either participated in, or had registered an interest in attending one of our engagement sessions, together with our wider extensive stakeholder list, our Large Customer database, retailer database and public lighting database, in addition to the near 3,000 customers and stakeholders who are registered to our Talking Energy subscriber list. This ensured that the Draft Plan and information on the related consultation was 'cast wide' to provide others who may not have participated directly in a specific engagement or related conversations to have their say. • As part of the Draft Plan consultation we held two Draft Plan webinars to explain the content of the Draft Plan to our customers and stakeholders, emphasising that verbal insights and feedback received would be taken as a 'submission'. We also provided Draft Plan webinar participants the opportunity to revisit the conversations held in the webinars through the 'Menti' platform to add further commentary in the week post each webinar, providing and opportunity for further feedback to be provided post reflection of the conversation. • Although we conducted a formal submission exercise on our Draft Plan, we specifically committed to ensuring and communicated to all of our customers and stakeholders that all feedback received before, during and post the more formal Draft Plan consultation, was valued equally and would be considered in evolving our thinking and decision making on our plans.
	<p>We will provide clear information on the submission process and timeframes to manage different customer and stakeholder needs and expectations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As referenced in the information provided in the immediate row above all information before, during and post the Draft Plan consultation has been considered and evolved our thinking and decision-making on our Regulatory Proposal. • However, the 'formal Draft Plan consultation was open from 15 September to 13 October 2023 with information on the Draft Plan and related process emailed to a wide range of customers and stakeholders as outlined above. • More information the Draft Plan and consultation process is provided in Section 3.11 of this document, page 50.

	<p>We will adopt different engagement methods to invite submissions through a range of techniques to maximise customer and stakeholder feedback and strive to make it easy for them to do so.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the Draft Plan consultation we held two Draft Plan webinars to explain the content of the Draft Plan to our customers and stakeholders, emphasising that verbal insights and feedback received would be taken as a 'submission'. We also provided Draft Plan webinar participants the opportunity to revisit the conversations held in the webinars through the 'Mentimeter' platform to add further commentary in the week post each webinar, providing and opportunity for further feedback to be provided post reflection of the conversation. • In addition to the verbal insights and feedback received during the Draft Plan webinars, we also invited submissions via email and a specially designed online questionnaire. The latter invited responses to all questions outlined in the Draft Plan, providing customers and stakeholders the option of answering all or select questions depending on their topics and issues of interest.
<p>On submission of regulatory proposal to the AER set out how the network has responded to feedback on the draft proposal</p>	<p>We will clearly articulate how we have responded to customer and stakeholder feedback on our formal Draft Plan on submission of our revised regulatory proposals to the AER, identifying and linking the feedback received to what may change and the reasons for any change in what is then proposed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The different chapters of our Regulatory Proposal submitted to the AER on 31 January 2024 outlines how the insights provided by customers and stakeholders, including those on our Draft Plan, have been considered and influenced the evolution of our thinking and decision-making on our investment and revenue recovery plans.

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles	What we have delivered against the engagement theme and principles
THEME – CLEARLY EVIDENCED IMPACT OF THIS ENGAGEMENT		
PRINCIPLE – INDEPENDENT CONSUMER SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSAL: encourage consumers to express support for the proposal developed.		
Invite submissions on Draft Plan	<p>We will publish our Draft Plan in September 2023.</p> <p>We will invite submissions on our Draft Plan from all of our customers and stakeholders (See further information on our Draft Plan approach above)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Draft Plan was published for consultation in September 2023 and provided an update on what ‘customers have told us’ on the issues and topics engaged on up to that point in time and how those insights had been considered by the business. • We invited submissions to our Draft Plan over a four-week period from 15 September to 13 October 2023. • We enabled submissions to be made via email, or through a specially design online questionnaire to the questions posed in our Draft Plan, and also welcomed verbal submissions through online discussion and contributions on our Draft Plan webinars held to talk customers and stakeholders through the Draft Plan, with verbal contributions recorded. • It is important to note that although we held a formal consultation on the release of our Draft Plan we consider all insights and feedback received through all engagements undertaken as ‘submissions’ that have been blended together to evolve our thinking and influence our decision making on our Regulatory Proposal. • We also convened our RDP2025 Stakeholder Forum in early September 2023 ahead of the release of the Draft Plan to provide key stakeholder insights into the Draft Plan content and encouraged them to make formal submissions and bring the Draft Plan consultation to the attention of their members / different customer cohorts they represent, and for example encourage participation in the Draft Plan webinars. • We also ensured all participants in all our engagements were emailed and made aware of the Draft Plan consultation and submission process encouraging them to take up the option of making a more formal submission on the Draft Plan.
Consider independent report setting out consumer perspectives on the proposal (providing consumer view on the effectiveness of the pre-engagement lodgment process in identifying consumer preferences and outcomes and how they have been incorporated into the proposal)	We will ask our Reset Reference Group to provide an independent report on the effectiveness of our engagement approach and our incorporation of customer and stakeholder insights in our regulatory proposal development and how they believe we have reflected feedback received in our proposals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Reset Reference Group (RRG) made a submission on our Draft Plan through the formal consultation process outlining their observations and thoughts on our engagements undertaken up to that point in time and our consideration of the insights and feedback obtained through those engagements on our plans outlined in the Draft Plan. • In February 2024 the RRG will provide an additional independent report on our engagements to the point of submission of our Regulatory Proposal and provide an update on their observations and thoughts on how our Regulatory Proposal submitted has captured, considered and reflected the views of our customers and stakeholders. • Additionally, as part of the AER Issues Paper and related consultation, the RRG will submit an additional report on the technical aspects of our Regulatory Proposal. This will follow a series of further meetings and ‘deep dives’ the business will have with the RRG on aspects of the Regulatory Proposal post submission and their review thereof.

Where support for a proposal is not obtained by consumers, provide a feedback loop to consumers to explain why alignment of consumer preferences was unable to be achieved	In our revised proposals we will acknowledge and explain where any alignment of customer and stakeholder preferences was not achieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our revised Regulatory Proposal will be submitted to the AER in December 2024. As with our Regulatory Proposal, it will outline how any insights and feedback received prior to the submission of the Regulatory Proposal in January 2024 has further evolved our thinking and decision-making on our investment and revenue recovery plans. This will involve clearly outlining how additional insights and feedback has been considered and preferences adopted or not achieved.
	We will continue to engage with our customers and stakeholders beyond the regulatory proposals' submission to the AER to further explore their preferences into the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout the Regulatory Proposal engagement process we have committed to our customers and stakeholders to take the insights and feedback on the topics, issues and engagement methods and techniques deployed and incorporate them into our business-as-usual decision-making processes and engagement practices. We have committed to a review on many issues, such as customer service measures and metrics, and network tariffs with our Customer & Community Council and Network Pricing Working Group. We are committed to undertaking a review of our Customer Strategy and engagement framework and activities going forward as part of our continuous improvement in ensuring ongoing conversations and exploration of preferences on a range of issues into the future with our customers and stakeholders.