

20 May 2025

Charter

Community of Practice on Consumer Vulnerability

Background

The community of practice was established by the Australian Energy Regulator in December 2020, in the course of developing its [Towards energy equity](#) strategy. To support the continued success of the community of practice, this charter was agreed with existing members in May 2025.

Purpose

The community of practice is an informal, collaborative forum that seeks to enhance regulatory approaches to consumer vulnerability across sectors. It aims to do so by providing a supportive environment for regulatory staff to share experiences and insights from their efforts to better understand and support people experiencing vulnerability, including vulnerability that arises from individual circumstances (such as low income or experiences of disability or family violence) as well as vulnerability that arises due to characteristics of regulated markets (such as complexity).

Objectives

The Community of Practice on Consumer Vulnerability aims to:

- **break down silos** by building networks among regulatory staff across sectors and agencies
- **facilitate knowledge sharing** by creating opportunities for regulatory staff to share initiatives, insights, expertise and lessons learned across sectors and agencies
- **promote collaboration** by identifying opportunities for cross-regulator and cross-sector collaboration, coordination and innovation, including joint research and engagement initiatives.

Membership

The community of practice is designed to be cross-sectoral and cross-jurisdictional. Membership is open to interested staff from Australian regulatory agencies and relevant statutory bodies. The list of currently participating organisations is published on the AER website.

Meetings

The community of practice meets online via Microsoft Teams on an approximately quarterly basis. Meetings typically last for 1 hour and include a brief presentation by the chair on recent relevant research and reports, member updates on current and upcoming initiatives, and a discussion or presentation on a specific topic related to regulatory practice and/or consumer vulnerability.

Responsibilities

The AER schedules and chairs meetings and circulates meeting materials. Members propose items for sharing, present topics for discussion and contribute to discussions during meetings. Members are expected to disclose any potential conflicts of interest.

If you are interested in joining the community of practice, email ConsumerPolicy@aer.gov.au. Members will be added to the email distribution list and invited to participate in future meetings.