

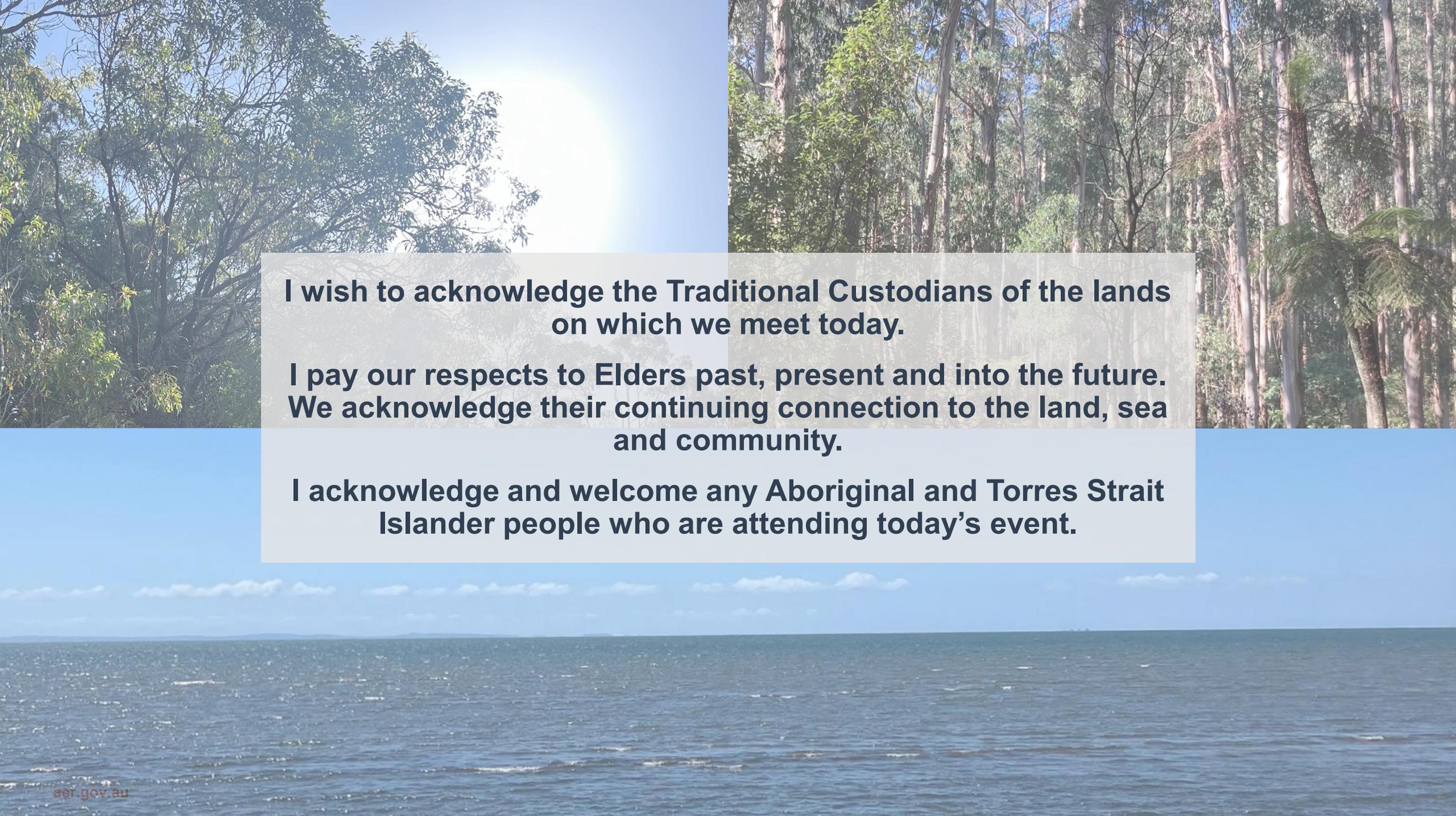
# Retail guidelines review stakeholder workshop

**Making energy plan information more effective**

Stephanie Jolly – Executive General Manager, AER Consumers and Markets

Lois Shedd – Acting Director, AER Consumers team

Walter Batt Abrams and Jess O’Riley – Assistant Directors, AER Consumers team



**I wish to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we meet today.**

**I pay our respects to Elders past, present and into the future. We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, sea and community.**

**I acknowledge and welcome any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are attending today's event.**

# Today's discussion will include ...

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Consultation paper
- 3 Discussion 1: Pain points and opportunities
- 4 Discussion 2: Assessing ideas
- 5 Reflection
- 6 Next steps

## Your feedback will:



- Help us identify opportunities to improve the guidelines
- Inform the changes we consider when developing the draft guidelines

# Introduction

5 minutes

# We are simplifying, improving and combining 4 guidelines



Benefit Change Notice Guidelines



Better Bills Guideline



Customer Hardship Policy Guideline



Retail Pricing Information Guidelines



# These guidelines shape the energy customer journey

**Comparing and choosing energy plans**



Retail Pricing Information Guidelines



**Receiving bills and notifications as a customer**



Benefit Change Notice Guidelines  
Better Bills Guideline



**Accessing payment difficulty assistance**



Customer Hardship Policy Guideline

# In this review, we aim to ...



Achieve intended outcomes for consumers



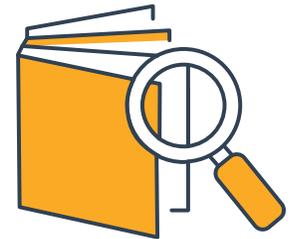
Clarify, simplify and streamline regulatory obligations



Ensure the guidelines can be efficiently implemented and effectively enforced



Ensure that the benefits of any changes exceed the costs



Minimise the potential need for a further review of the guidelines in the next 3–5 years

# Our review will be informed by the broader context



## Regulatory framework

- Guideline constraints in the law and rules
- Secondary settlement points
- Consumer-focused rule changes
- ERCOP updates



## Market context

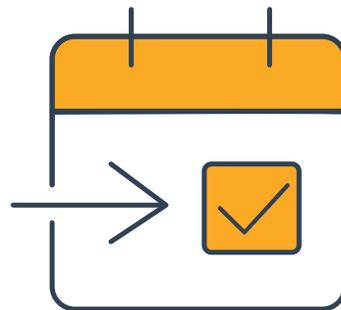
- Consumer energy resources and new energy services
- Smart meter rollout
- Retailer marketing and engagement practices



## Recent learnings

- Consumer protections review
- Better Bills behavioural insights and evaluation research
- Payment difficulty review

# Your feedback today will inform the draft guidelines



# Consultation paper

5 minutes



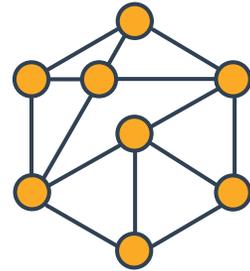
# We are currently consulting on opportunities to ...



Simplify the guidelines



Improve retail communications



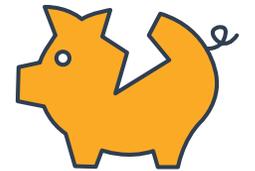
Manage increasing complexity



Make it easier to access a better offer



Improve price transparency



Improve payment assistance information

# We are asking for feedback on these questions

## Approach to combining the guidelines

- How can we make sure the combined guidelines are easy for stakeholders to use, including retailer staff who will be responsible for implementing the requirements?

## Improving retail communications

- How could we adapt the design principles to different communications and where is more specific formatting guidance required?
- How could we make communications more accessible for customers?
- How could benefit change notices be improved to make it easier for customers to understand and take action when their benefit is changing?

## Managing increasing complexity

- How will secondary settlement points change energy plans and energy plan information?
- How could our guidelines make complex energy plan information more relevant and easier to understand?
- How could we improve transparency and reduce customer confusion in relation to energy plan names?

## Making it easier to access a better offer

- How could we ensure better offer messages are clear, relevant and trusted?
- Where should customers receive better offer messages and how could we ensure the messages are clear and appropriate for different kinds of communications?
- What should we consider in defining the term 'deemed better offer', including in relation to how better offers are identified and how much a customer would need to save?

## Improving price transparency

- How could we improve transparency of fees and charges in plan information and on Energy Made Easy without making plan information too complex for customers?
- What information would be useful for customers in embedded networks to understand their energy plan and how it compares with others in the market?

## Improving payment assistance information

- What specific changes could we make to the standardised statements in hardship policies to make them more consumer friendly?
- What concession and rebate information should be included on energy bills?

# Discussion 1

## Pain points and opportunities

*35 minutes*

1. Have we appropriately captured the goal of energy plan information in each context?

2. What makes information ineffective at achieving that goal in each context?

**Comparison information**

Prompt customers to consider comparing their plan

3. What could we do to make energy plan information more effective in each context?

**Plan summaries**

Help customers understand and compare key plan features

**Plan information documents**

Help customers understand important details to choose the best plan for them

# Discussion 2

## Assessing ideas

*30 minutes*

1. How **flexible** and **effective** is each idea for prompting customers to compare their plan?

*We will place each idea on the matrix*

2. What are the **risks** of each idea for prompting customers to compare their plan?

*For example, high implementation costs or potential for unintended consequences*

More effective

Less flexible

**Prompt customers to compare their plan**

More flexible

Less effective

1. How **flexible** and **effective** is each idea for helping customers understand and compare key plan features?

2. What are the **risks** of each idea for helping customers understand and compare key plan features?

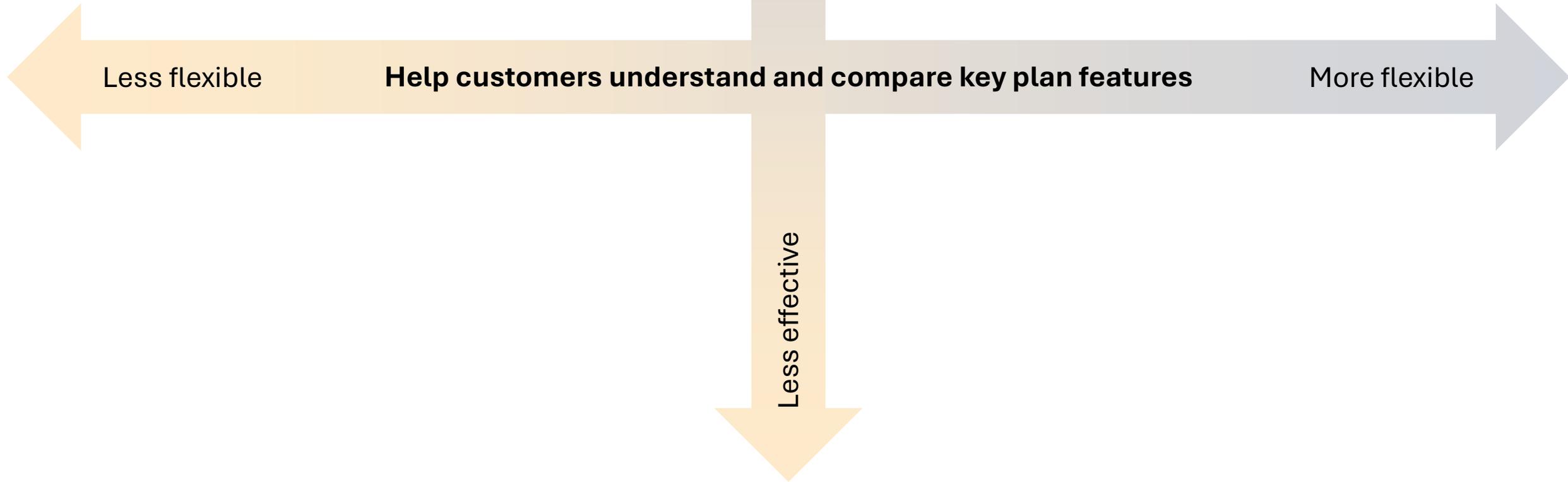
More effective

Less effective

Less flexible

**Help customers understand and compare key plan features**

More flexible



1. How **flexible** and **effective** is each idea for helping customers understand important details to choose the best plan for them?

2. What are the **risks** of each idea for helping customers understand important details to choose the best plan for them?

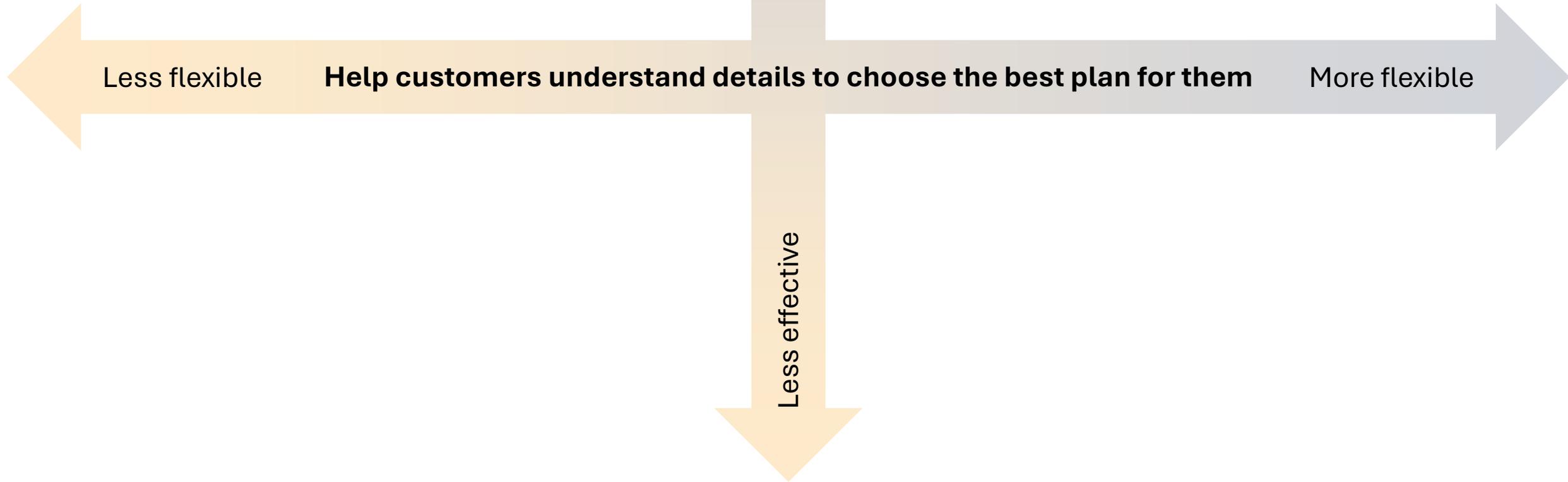
More effective

Less effective

Less flexible

**Help customers understand details to choose the best plan for them**

More flexible



# Reflection

*5 minutes*

# Reflection

What are some common themes in what makes an idea effective?

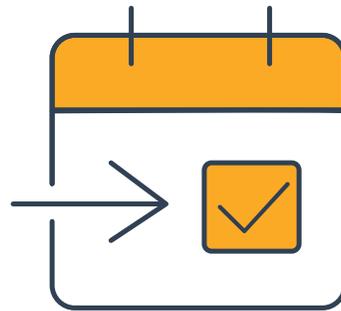
What are some common themes in the risks associated with different ideas?

# Next steps

*5 minutes*

# This round of consultation closes on 23 December 2025

If you are unable to lodge a written submission, we are happy to accept verbal feedback provided in consultation meetings



# Thank you

If you have any questions or feedback related to this review, please contact the AER Consumers team at:

Consumers@aer.gov.au

Or you can book a consultation meeting up to 22 December [here](#):

