

Final decision

Evoenergy Model Standing Offer for Basic
Connection Services

August 2026

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1 Purpose

On 1 May 2026, Evoenergy submitted its Model Standing Offer for Gas Basic Connection Services to us for approval.

Our final decision is not to approve the model standing offer (MSO). This decision document sets out our assessment of the issues.

Copies of approved MSOs and related decisions can be found on our website.

1.1 Background

An MSO is a contract between a gas distribution network service provider and a customer connecting to the network. It sets out the terms and conditions for the provision of a basic connection service.

The Australian Energy Market Commission's *Updating the regulatory framework for gas connections* Rule change introduced mandatory charges for gas connection services and required relevant distributors to amend or submit MSOs for approval by the AER.

The relevant assessment requirements are contained in the National Gas Rules. These include the requirements for the terms and conditions of a basic connection service MSO under rule 119C, the matters the AER must be satisfied of before approving a MSO under rule 119D, and the connection charge criteria under rule 119M.

2 AER's decision

2.1 Legal framework

Under rule 119D of the National Gas Rules, we may approve a proposed MSO to provide a basic connection service if we are satisfied that it meets the relevant approval requirements. These include that the service is likely to be sought by a reasonable number of retail customers, the connection charges are consistent with the connection charge criteria, the terms and conditions are fair and reasonable, and the terms and conditions comply with applicable requirements of the energy laws.

Under rule 119D(6) of the National Gas Rules, we must publish notice of our decision to approve a proposed MSO, together with reasons for the decision. The requirements for the terms and conditions of a basic connection service MSO are set out in rule 119C, and the connection charge criteria are set out in rule 119M.

2.2 AER assessment

We assessed the MSO against the requirements in rules 119C, 119D and 119M of the National Gas Rules and considered whether the proposed terms, conditions and connection charging arrangements were fair, reasonable, clear and compliant with the relevant energy laws.

In assessing the MSO, we sought further information and clarification from Evoenergy on matters including the scope of the basic connection service, the information customers may need to provide, site condition requirements, connection charges, customer-side works and costs, connection timeframes, limitation of liability provisions, customer information, website material and dispute processes. We considered these matters important because clear information about processes, costs and timeframes supports informed customer decisions and reduces the risk of future connection disputes.

Evoenergy provided further information and revisions addressing a number of these matters. However, we are not satisfied that the MSO meets the requirements in rule 119C(2)(b) of the National Gas Rules because it does not specify timeframes for commencing and completing connection work. This is also relevant to rule 119X, which requires a distributor to use its best endeavours to ensure connection work is carried out within the applicable time limits fixed by the connection contract.

We also identified concerns with the limitation of liability provisions, because Evoenergy's position appears to be that it is liable for negligence or wilful misconduct only where consumer guarantees apply. We do not consider this reasonable. In our view, Evoenergy should remain liable for negligence or wilful misconduct even where consumer guarantees do not apply.

For these reasons, we are not satisfied that the MSO meets the approval criteria in rule 119D.

Table 1 provides an overview of the broad categories against which we assessed the MSO and where those requirements are addressed, or not sufficiently addressed, in Evoenergy's MSO.

Table 1: Assessment of Evoenergy’s Model Standing Offer for Gas Basic Connection Services against the National Gas Rules

Category and corresponding National Gas Rules (NGR) references	Where addressed in Evoenergy’s MSO
Description of the basic connection service and scope of the offer NGR 119A; 119C(2)(a)	Clause 6; Schedule 1; Schedule 3.
Timeframes for commencing and completing connection work NGR 119C(2)(b); 119X	Clause 8. The MSO provides that connection work will occur at a time agreed with the applicant once relevant preconditions are met. We are not satisfied this meets NGR 119C(2)(b) because the MSO does not specify timeframes for commencing and completing connection work, and NGR 119X contemplates applicable time limits in the connection contract.
Contestable service qualifications, safety and technical requirements NGR 119C(2)(c); 119C(2)(d)	Clauses 9 and 10; Schedule 1; Schedule 2.
Connection charges and payment arrangements NGR 119C(2)(e); 119C(2)(f)	Clause 7; Schedule 4.
Connection charge criteria NGR 119M(1)–(4)	Clause 7; Schedule item 3; supporting charge material.
Declaration and basis for applying the connection charge criteria NGR 119C(3)(a)–(b)	Evoenergy submission; clause 7; rule 119M supporting material.
Service likely to be sought by a reasonable number of retail customers NGR 119D(1)(a)	MSO generally; recent connection volume information. There is currently sufficient evidence that a reasonable number of customers are served in Evoenergy’s service areas, although connection volumes are low and variable. Evoenergy has indicated that it intends to seek an exemption from the requirement to maintain a basic connection MSO from 1 October 2026.
Fair and reasonable terms and conditions	Clauses 13 and 14; MSO generally.

NGR 119D(1)(c)	We are not satisfied that the terms and conditions are fair and reasonable because the limitation of liability provisions appear to limit Evoenergy's liability for negligence or wilful misconduct to circumstances where consumer guarantees apply.
Compliance with applicable energy laws and dispute arrangements NGR 119D(1)(d); relevant energy laws	Clause 22; MSO generally.
Matters the AER must have regard to NGR 119D(2)	National gas objective; geographical characteristics of Evoenergy's service area. We had regard to the national gas objective and the geographical characteristics of Evoenergy's service area, including expected low connection demand due to the ACT Government's ban on new gas connections and remaining demand largely concentrated in the NSW portion of Evoenergy's network.
Publication of decision NGR 119D(6)	This decision document.

2.3 Consultation

Under rule 119D(5) of the National Gas Rules, we may engage in public consultation before deciding whether to approve a proposed MSO to provide a basic connection service or a class of basic connection services.

To assist our decision on this matter, we engaged directly with Evoenergy during the assessment process and sought further information on the matters outlined above.

We decided not to undertake broader public consultation because the key issues preventing approval were identified through direct engagement with Evoenergy.

For these reasons, we do not consider it necessary to engage in public consultation. However, in future MSO assessments, there may be cases where we determine that public consultation is beneficial.

2.4 Conclusion

In accordance with the National Gas Rules, on 24 July 2026 we decided not to approve Evoenergy's Model Standing Offer for Gas Basic Connection Services as we are not satisfied that the MSO meets the requirements of NGR.

Glossary

Term	Definition
AER	Australian Energy Regulator
Basic Connection Charge	The charge for providing a Basic Connection Service, determined in accordance with the National Gas Rules.
Basic Connection Service	A basic connection service for a retail customer connecting to a gas distribution network, as described in the approved Model Standing Offer.
JGN	Jemena Gas Networks
NGL	National Gas Law
National gas objective	The objective set out in the National Gas Law that guides the making of decisions under the national gas regulatory framework.
Residential Meter Kit	The standard meter kit used by JGN to provide the Basic Connection Service where the relevant site condition requirements are met.
Retail customer	A customer within the meaning of the National Gas Rules seeking connection to the relevant gas distribution network.
MSO	Model Standing Offer
NGR/the Rules	National Gas Rules