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Dear Retailers, Metering Coordinators and Local Network Service Providers

Accelerated smart meter deployment – industry guidance on shared fusing

The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance on your obligations and responsibilities relating to the replacement of legacy meters at shared fuse sites. We are aware of scheduling concerns for shared fuse site replacements. Shared fuse sites are particularly complex as all legacy meters that share the fuse must be upgraded simultaneously and require coordination between networks, retailers and metering coordinators. The AER expects local network service providers, retailers and metering coordinators to engage with each other in a collaborative manner to ensure that legacy meters at shared fuse sites are replaced safely, with minimal disruption to customers at those sites.

As you are aware, the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) published the *Accelerating smart meter deployment* final determination and rules in November 2024 with the aim of promoting a fast, efficient and effective deployment of smart meters.¹ The rule change establishes a formal procedure for meter repairs, replacements, or installations at the connection point of one customer where it requires interruption of supply to other customers (shared fusing arrangements).

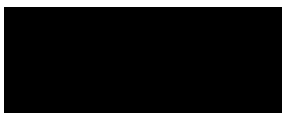
The guidance in the attached 'Industry Letter' outlines our expectations regarding engagement between local network service providers, retailers and metering coordinators in relation to replacements at shared fuse sites.

The AER understands that unforeseen issues may emerge as part of the accelerated smart meter deployment and, where appropriate, we may provide further information and guidance throughout this process.

The information in this industry letter is general guidance only and adherence to this document will not provide a guarantee against enforcement action by the AER. The AER cannot provide a definitive interpretation of the relevant legislation because that is ultimately the role of the courts. The AER will consider potential compliance issues on a case-by-case basis, consider all relevant circumstances, and apply the factors in our [Compliance and Enforcement Policy](#).

We encourage you to engage with us as soon as possible should you have any queries. Please contact [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] or at [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely



[REDACTED]
General Manager
Compliance and Enforcement Branch

¹ AEMC, [Accelerating smart meter deployment rule change](#), completed on 28 November 2024.

Industry Letter – industry guidance on shared fusing

Shared fusing meter replacement process

Procedures for management of smart meter deployments at sites with shared fusing²

A metering coordinator is required to notify the relevant retailer where it is aware that repairing, installing or replacing a metering installation at the connection point of one customer requires interruption to the supply of other customers.³ A metering coordinator is required to do so within 5 business days of discovering a meter on a shared fuse.

Within 5 business days of notification by the metering coordinator, the retailer is required to inform the relevant local network service provider of the shared fuse.⁴

Within 30 business days of notification by the retailer, the local network service provider is required to determine all the National Metering Identifiers (NMIs) requiring an interruption of supply for repair or replacement and then give notice to relevant retailers. Where there are legacy meters to be replaced, the local network service provider is required to determine the date(s) and time(s) for their replacement and give notice via a shared fusing meter replacement notice.⁵

Within 10 business days of receiving a shared fusing meter replacement notice, each retailer must appoint a metering coordinator to replace the relevant legacy meters.⁶

On the date(s) and time(s) prescribed in the notice and service order request, the local network service provider undertakes the outage and the metering coordinator must install the new meter.⁷ The prescribed date(s) and time(s) must be between 25 and 65 business days after the notice is issued by the local network service provider to the retailers. These timeframes may not apply if the site is not accessible, safe or ready, or if the relevant metering coordinator has an exemption.⁸

Shared fusing meter replacement

Local network service providers should be aware of their obligations as part of the shared fusing meter replacement procedure. This includes (but is not limited to):

- identifying NMIs that will be impacted by supply interruptions in shared fusing arrangements once informed of the shared fuse
- issuing shared fusing meter replacement notices to relevant retailers containing information about the replacement date for the legacy meters
- scheduling shared fusing meter replacement dates as required by the procedure
- providing customers with a planned interruption notice.

² Electricity Rules, clause 7.8.10D, pursuant to Schedule 1 [Electricity Amendment Rule](#).

³ Electricity Rules, clause 7.8.10D(a), pursuant to Schedule 1 [Electricity Amendment Rule](#).

⁴ Electricity Rules, clause 7.8.10D(b), pursuant to Schedule 1 [Electricity Amendment Rule](#).

⁵ Electricity Rules, clause 7.8.10D(c), pursuant to Schedule 1 [Electricity Amendment Rule](#).

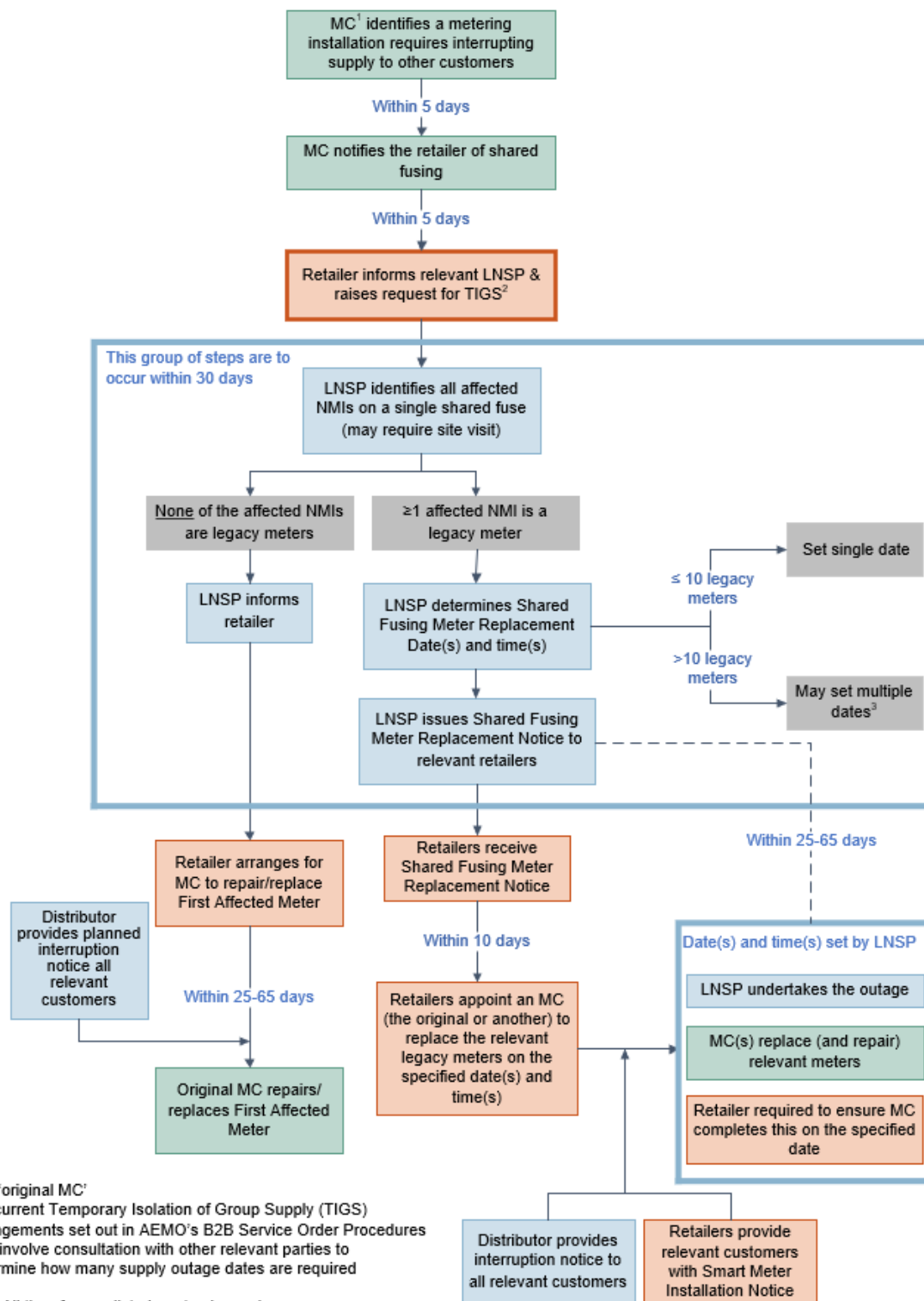
⁶ Electricity Rules, clause 7.8.10D(e), pursuant to Schedule 1 [Electricity Amendment Rule](#).

⁷ Electricity Rules, clauses 7.8.10D(c)(1), 7.8.10D(d) pursuant to Schedule 1 [Electricity Amendment Rule](#).

⁸ Electricity Rules, clauses 7.8.10D(f), 7.8.10D(g), pursuant to Schedule 1 [Electricity Amendment Rule](#).

The process and timeframes for the smart meter installation rollout at premises with shared fusing is summarised below. Additional detail is set out in the [AER's Guidance to retailers: Site Defects, Tariff Structure Changes and Shared Fusing](#).

Figure 1 Shared fusing meter replacement process



Engagement and coordination between local network service providers, retailers and metering coordinators

The AER expects local network service providers, retailers and metering coordinators to engage with each other in a collaborative manner to ensure that legacy meters at shared fuse sites are replaced with minimal disruption to customers at those sites.

Where a shared fuse has more than 10 legacy meters, the AER encourages retailers to engage with the relevant local network service provider and metering coordinators (if applicable) to agree how many supply outage dates are required. An effective schedule will limit the number of outages, and in doing so, minimise disruption for customers on the shared fuse.

As retailers are responsible for arranging for legacy meter replacements in accordance with legacy meter replacement plans, it is essential that retailers establish and maintain clear, regular and ongoing engagement with local network service providers and metering coordinators.⁹ We encourage collaboration to ensure a positive customer experience for both residential and small business customers throughout the deployment program.

We expect that a metering coordinator would discover a meter on a shared fuse when working with retailers through relevant interim targets or when responding to a customer replacement request. This triggers the shared fusing meter replacement process. It is crucial that retailers and metering coordinators initiate replacements at shared fuse sites in line with the legacy meter replacement plans, to ensure that replacements occur in a cost-efficient and timely manner. It is also crucial that there is clear, constructive and advanced engagement between all parties if there are proposed deviations from a legacy meter replacement plan.

Retailers are required to report to the AER within two months of the end of each interim period on their progress replacing meters against the interim targets in the legacy meter replacement plan, including meters replaced, acquired and outstanding.¹⁰ Retailers must also outline remediation plans for any non-compliance to ensure they will meet the replacement deadline.¹¹

We understand that some coordination issues have impacted the rollout's early stages, and coordination has improved since. We encourage all parties to continue to share learnings and adopt consistent approaches where possible to streamline processes.

Safe installation of meters

A key focus for the AER continues to be that meters are replaced in a safe manner. We encourage retailers to engage with metering coordinators and local network service providers throughout this process, particularly where hazards may have been identified at a premises.

We remind local network service providers of their obligations to give all reasonable assistance to metering coordinators in relation to an interruption to replace metering equipment.¹²

It is also our expectation that retailers and metering coordinators will ensure that only appropriately trained and qualified parties replace meters in accordance with the relevant AEMO procedures and applicable national, state and territory safety standards.¹³

⁹ Electricity Rules, clause 11.177.6, pursuant to Schedule 4 [Electricity Amendment Rule](#).

¹⁰ Electricity Rules, clause 11.177.8(a), pursuant to Schedule 4 [Electricity Amendment Rule](#).

¹¹ Electricity Rules, clause 11.177.8(a)(5), pursuant to Schedule 4 [Electricity Amendment Rule](#).

¹² Retail Rules, rule 91A, pursuant to Schedule 2 [Retail Amendment Rule](#).

¹³ Including but not limited to [Service Level Procedure Metering Provider Services](#), Electricity Rules, clause 7.16.6.