

Better Bills Guideline Working Group

Terms of Reference



Objectives

The objective of this working group is to provide a forum, alongside the broader consultation process, for the AER to ensure that the Better Bills Guideline (Guideline) is informed by a variety of perspectives. This may include sharing information, testing ideas and evidence, and ensuring that the Guideline brings about an overall net consumer benefit.

Scope

The working group will cover issues related to the development of the Guideline, including:

- the AER's approach to developing the guideline
- prescription and flexibility
- consumers experiencing vulnerability
- language and terminology
- content
- format
- costs and benefits of changes to existing regulations
- implementation issues.

Additional issues related to the development of the Guideline can be considered by the working group with the agreement of the Chair and group consensus.

Membership

Membership of the working group is limited to a reasonable size to allow for the efficient and focused sharing of information and discussion. Members have been selected to provide a balance between larger and smaller retailers, and a diverse range of consumer advocates that are able to represent a number of segments of consumers.

A single representative for each member organisation should be nominated to attend all meetings. If the nominated representative is unable to attend a meeting, they may send a proxy in their place, who should be informed of relevant details in advance.

Engagement with the working group will augment the consultation processes being undertaken with all stakeholders. The AER will publish the names of member organisations and minutes of each meeting on our website.

Membership of the working group is detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Better Bills Guideline Working Group Members

Organisation	Representative(s)	Role
Australian Energy Regulator	Kathie Standen	Chair
ActewAGL	Dylan Walsh	Member
Alinta Energy	Shaun Ruddy	Member
Aurora Energy	Giles Whitehouse	Member
Australian Energy Council	Ben Barnes	Member
Council on the Ageing	Robyn Robinson	Member
Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW	Rory Campbell	Member
Ethnic Communities Council of NSW	Iain Maitland	Member

Financial Counselling Australia	Julie Barrow	Member
Meridian Energy / Powershop	Lauren Kane	Member
Origin Energy	Daisy Scarborough	Member
Queensland Council of Social Service	Wendy Miller	Member
Tasmanian Council of Social Service	Dr Charlie Burton	Member
Uniting Communities	Mark Henley	Member

Frequency

The working group will meet regularly between July 2021 and January 2022, with no meeting in December 2021.

Additional meetings may be scheduled with the agreement of the Chair and group consensus.

Authority

The working group will provide important feedback and advice to the AER on the development of the Guideline. However, it does not have decision making authority. Where a general consensus is apparent among members this will be recorded by the Secretariat.

Chair and Secretariat

The group is to be chaired by the AER.

The Secretariat function will be filled by the AER. This includes:

- the distribution of the agenda and meeting papers
- recording and distribution of meeting minutes and the meeting schedule.

The AER will distribute the agenda and meeting papers one week prior to each meeting, and distribute draft minutes within one week of each meeting.

Quorum

At least half of the members are required to be present to ensure the quorum of the working group.

Confidentiality

A public record of the working group's agenda and minutes will be maintained by the AER.

Working group minutes will note the key points of the group's discussions and will be published once endorsed by working group members.

Meeting papers and documents will be provided to the working group to allow members to obtain feedback from the groups they represent. Documents provided in-confidence should not be shared with third parties.