
Issues Paper Response – Essential Energy

CCP26 Advice to AER re 2024-29 Essential Energy
Regulatory Proposal and AER Issues Paper

Consumer Challenge Panel (CCP) Sub-Panel CCP26

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands on which NSW and ACT electricity networks own and operate their networks and facilities. We honour the customs and traditions and special relationship of those Traditional Custodians with the land as well as those lands where this report is being prepared. We respect the elders of these nations, past, present and emerging.

Confidentiality

To the best of our knowledge this report does not present any confidential information.

1. Executive Summary

Essential Energy (Essential) is one of the first two distribution network businesses to be selected to participate in the Early Signals Pathway (ESP) process set out in the AER's Better Regulation Handbook (Handbook). Within this process, the key role for the CCP in the pre-lodgement phase is to *"assess the quality and robustness of a network's consumer engagement processes and outcomes"*.¹

CCP26 consider that Essential's consumer engagement has largely met the expectations set out in the Handbook.

We observe that Essential has conducted a comprehensive, well planned, well executed engagement program over a period of some 18 months to date. The engagement that we have observed, with community groups, with advisory groups such as the Stakeholder Collaboration Collective (SCC) and the Pricing Collaboration Collective (PCC), and with consumer representatives has been open and sincere, with Essential genuinely willing to listen to customers and take new ideas on board.

The breadth of the engagement program has been commendable, with physical coverage in seven locations across the Essential network footprint in locations as diverse as Broken Hill and Ballina. During this process, Essential has also engaged with specific cohorts of customers for the first time such as indigenous customers and new energy tech providers.

CCP26 have some concerns however, that depth of engagement has not been equally impressive. We have not observed the detailed critical challenge of building block elements that has been apparent in other network businesses.

This Advice responds to the questions posed in the AER's Issues Paper for the Essential Energy Distribution Determination issued in March 2023. We support the scope of targeted review activities proposed by the AER, and conclude that there are too many building block areas that have not been subject to engagement in depth to support acceptance of Essential's proposal at the draft determination stage.

At the heart of the Better Resets Handbook is an assumption that monopoly network service providers will deliver better services for their customers by listening to them. Since our appointment in November 2021, the Consumer Challenge Panel 26 (CCP26) members have observed hundreds of hours of consultation conducted by the three NSW and one ACT distribution businesses. Across all four consultative processes the wisdom of customers has been consistently displayed. In rooms full of technical and regulatory experts, customers offered useful and original insights about their needs and expectations of electricity distributors.

¹ AER, *Better Resets Handbook*, December 2021, p. 9

2. Background

2.1 Context

CCP26 members are acutely aware of external factors that have had an impact on developing the regulatory proposals for NSW and ACT electricity distribution businesses, including:

- COVID 19 which has impacted on electricity use and on methods for engaging with consumers.
- Natural disasters, specifically fires then floods in many parts of NSW and significant ACT National Parks with some communities experiencing multiple events. We also recognise that recovery is still underway for many households, small businesses and their communities.
- Climate change and the transition to net zero emissions are forcing network businesses to adopt new approaches to demand forecasts and network investments.
- The AER's draft decision of the 2023-24 Default Market Offer² is for an increased reference price in the range of a 14.1% -15.4% annual increase for NSW residential customers without controlled load. This reflection of rising electricity costs coupled with other cost of living pressures have resulted in growing numbers of households and businesses experiencing financial stress.
- In November 2020, the NSW Government released the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap (the Roadmap)³. The Roadmap is the State's 20 year plan to transform the electricity system into one that is cheap, clean and reliable. Implementation of the Roadmap is driving new investments in electricity network infrastructure in NSW. It has been determined that costs associated with the Roadmap will be recovered from NSW electricity consumers through network distribution charges. At present, the full extent of the expected Roadmap costs over the next regulatory period are unknown, however they are expected to have a substantial impact on network charges in the 2024-29 period, heightening affordability concerns for many customers.

In identifying these factors, we understand that they have all influenced the nature of engagement and customer expectations. We also recognise and commend the considerable efforts made by staff and contractors of energy network businesses to support impacted communities, households and business; many having been directly impacted themselves.

2.2 CCP26 involvement

CCP26 was appointed in November 2021 with the primary role of providing advice to the AER on the effectiveness of NSW/ACT electricity distribution businesses' engagement activities with their customers and how this has been reflected in the development of their 2024-29 regulatory proposals. Four members were initially appointed to CCP26, but

² [AER - Draft determination - Default market offer prices 2023-24 - 15 March 2023](#)

³ <https://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/nsw-plans-and-progress/major-state-projects/electricity-infrastructure-roadmap>

unfortunately Rob Nicholls was unable to continue after July 2022. CCP26 observed a representative sample of Essential's pre-lodgement consumer engagement activities (See Appendix 1 for details). Due to budget and travel constraints, CCP26 were not able to observe all of Essential's extensive customer and stakeholder engagement program. We chose to focus our observations on Essential's primary stakeholder reference group, the Stakeholder Collaboration Collective (SCC); the stakeholder guidance group for the Tariff Structure Statement (TSS) – the Pricing Collaboration Collective (PCC); and Essential's community deliberative forums. Overall CCP26 has observed more than 60 hours of Essential's consumer engagement activities.

A number of factors are worth noting about CCP26's observations of Essential's consumer engagement:

- CCP26 was appointed around six months after Essential's consumer engagement program commenced, which meant that we did not have an opportunity to observe the early stages of Essential's stakeholder engagement when the engagement program was designed and the engagement vehicles were established.
- This Advice is heavily focussed on phases 2, 3 and 4 of Essential's engagement. Phases 2 and 3 covered the engagement undertaken to inform the Draft Plan, and Phase 4 was the engagement to inform the Regulatory Proposal (see Appendix 2).

This Advice offers CCP26's views on Essential's consumer engagement based on our direct observations and our review of Essential's engagement reports. We are guided by the expectations set out in the AER's Better Resets Handbook⁴ (the Handbook). CCP26 has been asked to respond to the engagement-related questions and the AER's position on targeted reviews identified in the AER's Issues Paper⁵, as well as any non-Handbook topic area issues. Therefore, this Advice responds to Issues Paper questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, and 17.

Essential was selected to be part of the early signal pathway (ESP) process set out in the Better Resets Handbook. Within this process, the key role for the CCP in the pre-lodgement phase is to "*assess the quality and robustness of a network's consumer engagement processes and outcomes*".⁶

As part of the ESP process for Essential, CCP26 provided a Progress Report in September 2022, a Conclusions Report in November 2022 and an Assurance Report in February 2023 dealing with Essential's consumer engagement and its influence on their regulatory proposal. This Advice draws on those reports.

⁴ AER, *Better Resets Handbook*, December 2021

⁵ AER, *Issues Paper, Essential Energy Electricity Distribution Determination 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2029*, March 2023

⁶ AER, *Better Resets Handbook*, December 2021, p. 9

3. The Early Signal Pathway

Question 1. What are your views on our assessment of Essential’s proposal – are there any aspects of the proposal that require deeper or less review?

Question 2. Do you consider that we should accept Essential’s proposal at the draft determination stage?

An important aspect of the ESP process is “targeted review”, described as follows in the Handbook:

“A targeted review differs to our standard approach in the following ways:

- *As consumer engagement expectations are met, we will have greater certainty that the elements of a proposal reflect the preferences and desired outcomes of network consumers*
- *Focussing our assessment on the key drivers and contentious aspects of the proposal, which are the issues that will have a greater influence on whether we accept or reject an element of the proposal*
- *More easily and efficiently examining issues because the network business has followed our standard forecasting approaches, provided supporting evidence in line with our expectations, and consulted with its consumers*
- *Less use of bottom-up analysis where expectations are met.”*

Question 1

In our Conclusions Report, CCP26 recommended the following areas for targeted review by the AER:

- All proposed opex step changes
- Capex ‘investment options’ identified during community engagement workshops
- Regulated Asset Base (RAB) growth in the 2019-24 regulatory period
- New asset class for SAPS
- Tariff Structure Statement, particularly transitional arrangements.

We note there is a close alignment between these areas and the targeted review areas nominated by the AER in the Issues Paper. The notable exception is consideration of RAB growth in the 2019-24 period. CCP26 encourages the AER to review the forecast RAB values, given Essential’s commitment to customers to examine options for reducing the size and growth of its RAB.⁷

We support the aspects of Essential’s proposal which have been identified by the AER for targeted review.

Question 2

Essential reports that the Draft Plan and the Regulatory Proposal have received support from customers:

- Comacon’s final Independent Consumer Report⁸ states:

⁷ Essential Energy, *SCC Meeting 5 presentation pack*, p. 12

⁸ Comacon, *Independent Consumer Report (Final) – December 2022 Essential Energy 2024-29 Regulatory Proposal*, p. 13

“Overall, the SCC has determined that Essential Energy has ...

- *Developed a Regulatory Proposal that the AER can have confidence in accepting that it accurately reflects consumer preferences and desired outcomes.”*
- In the “Customer and Stakeholder Engagement for the 24-29 Regulatory Proposal – Phase 4”⁹, Woolcott report that 96% of participants felt Essential Energy had taken customers’ views into account in the Draft Regulatory Proposal; and 90% of participants agreed that the Draft Proposal reflected their priorities and preferences.

While CCP26 agree that the consumer preferences that were discussed in deliberative forums have largely been reflected in the Regulatory Proposal, we consider that there are too many building block areas that have not been subject to engagement in depth to support acceptance of Essential’s proposal at the draft determination stage.

4. Consumer engagement approach

Question 3. Do you think Essential’s consumer engagement meets the expectations set out in the Handbook in delivering a consumer-centric proposal? Please give examples.

The Issues Paper provides a clear overview of the Essential engagement program, so we do not replicate it here, but rather highlight our observations on the program as a whole. Further reflections on consumer engagement are presented in responses to the relevant Issues Paper questions.

CCP26 consider that Essential’s consumer engagement has largely met the expectations set out in the Handbook.

Essential has conducted a comprehensive, well planned, well executed engagement program over a period of some 18 months to date. We have observed no lessening of the commitment, dedication and enthusiasm shown by Essential staff over that time. It is clear that Essential strive for continuous improvement in engagement, and set themselves a target to improve on their 2019-24 engagement program. They have been well-supported by their community engagement partners Woolcott Research & Engagement. The engagement that we have observed, with community groups, with advisory groups such as the SCC and the PCC, and with consumer representatives has been open and sincere, with Essential genuinely willing to listen to customers and take new ideas on board.

An online Stakeholder Engagement Resource Hub has been provided to provide ‘one stop shop’ access to a range of resources for customers and stakeholders. Meeting packs for SCC meetings are comprehensive and provided well in advance of meetings. Access to SCC and PCC meeting materials and meeting records are readily available. Material for community forums is tested by a separate consumer panel prior to roll-out.

Key executive/general managers are regular participants in engagement activities, while Board and CEO attend selected events.

⁹ Woolcott, Customer and Stakeholder Engagement for the 24-29 Regulatory Proposal – Phase 4, October 2022, p. 55

The breadth of the engagement program has been commendable, with physical coverage in seven locations across the Essential network footprint in locations as diverse as Broken Hill and Ballina. During this process, Essential has also engaged with specific cohorts of customers for the first time such as indigenous customers and new energy tech providers.

CCP26 have some concerns however, that depth of engagement has not been equally impressive. We have not observed the detailed critical challenge of building block elements that has been apparent in other network businesses.

Our observations confirm the strength of the SCC in “providing Essential with guidance on its thinking, informed decisions, assistance with the development of engagement materials, directions to form dedicated sub-groups and identification of where independent experts should present information to participants.”¹⁰ We have noted however, that participation in SCC meetings has dwindled noticeably over the period which is impacting on the capacity of this group to provide the ongoing advice and support that Essential is seeking. CCP26 are not aware of Essential and SCC exploring reasons for reduced attendance of SCC members, and identifying means of addressing any barriers to participation.

5. Regulatory asset base and depreciation

Question 4. Do you have views on Essential’s proposed new asset class for Distributed Energy Resources as set out in its 2024–29 proposal?

Question 5. Do you have views on whether Essential’s proposed regulatory depreciation approach is capable of acceptance at the draft determination stage?

We note that Essential discussed the option of introducing a new asset class for Distributed Energy Resources with the SCC at its meeting on 7 July 2022¹¹, albeit without a discussion of any revenue or bill implications, and the proposal was generally accepted. However, as the AER has not previously encountered a similar asset class proposal, CCP26 supports a targeted review of Essential’s proposal.

CCP26 has no further comment regarding whether the proposed regulatory depreciation approach is capable of acceptance.

6. Capital expenditure

Question 6. What do you think about the proposed scope of the targeted review?

CCP26 observed engagement on resilience expenditure in the community deliberative forums during Phases 2 (on line) and 4 (in person) of the engagement program. It was clear from the participants’ responses and comments that there was a high level of support for a package of initiatives to address both resilience and integration of consumer energy resources into the network. The strength of this support was undoubtedly influenced by

¹⁰ Essential Energy, 2024-29 Regulatory Proposal, Jan23, p. 24

¹¹ Essential Energy, SCC Meeting 17 presentation pack, p. 13

many participants' recent experiences with bushfire and flood events. The degree of support was reinforced in the final round of deliberative forums when customer preferences for the expenditure were re-tested given the projected bill increases as a result of increases in interest rates and inflation.

Some differences between the views of different customer cohorts were apparent in the engagement discussions on resilience investment options. While residential customers were generally very supportive of the most ambitious resilience mitigation investments, other customer cohorts were not. For example, residential customers supported investment in 400 SAPS and 25,000 composite poles. C&I customers however, were more circumspect and considered that 100-200 SAPS and 5,000 composite poles would be appropriate. How these different views were reconciled in the proposal is not apparent. The final proposal includes 11,000 composite poles and 400 SAPS¹². We understand that the number of composite poles was reduced from 15,000 to 11,000 following economic evaluation and the availability of climate modelling results.

CCP26 are aware that the SCC were consulted on resilience and ICT investments on 23rd June¹³, and augex on 21st July¹⁴.

We have not observed detailed review of the areas identified in the Issues Paper for targeted review, therefore support the proposed scope of the targeted review of capex.

7. Operating expenditure

Question 7. What do you think about the proposed scope of targeted review?

CCP26 have not observed in-depth review of Essential's opex forecasts, including step change forecasts. Given the customer focus on affordability and the "need to keep costs as low as possible for customers",¹⁵ we consider this to be an area which warrants closer scrutiny by customers and their representatives.

We support undertaking a targeted review of Essential's forecasting approach relating to base opex on the basis that it is inconsistent with the expectations set out in the Handbook.

CCPP26 commend Essential for proposing a negative step change which reflects savings in electricity and fuel costs arising from installation of solar panels at 20 depot sites, and moving a proportion of its fleet vehicles to electric. We believe that identifying this step change is a tangible acknowledgement by Essential of the affordability concerns consistently raised by customers.

We support targeted review of the remaining 4 step changes on the basis that they have not been reviewed in detail by customers/customer representatives, and:

¹² Essential Energy, 2024-29 Regulatory Proposal, Jan23, p. 49

¹³ Essential Energy, *SCC Meeting 16 presentation pack*, p. 15

¹⁴ Essential Energy, *SCC Meeting 18 presentation pack*, p. 13

¹⁵ Essential Energy, 2024-29 Regulatory Proposal, Jan23, p. 9

- the cost of the Future Networks step change has increased materially since the draft plan
- both Ausgrid and Endeavour have elected to absorb any increases in costs associated with changes to the GSL scheme in New South Wales, whereas Essential has not.

8. Customer Service Incentive Scheme

Question 12. *Do you have any views on the proposed application of any of the above incentive mechanisms?*

Customer service metrics were discussed with community deliberative forums and other stakeholders in Phase 1 of the engagement program with a view to introducing a new Customer Service Incentive Scheme (CSIS) to replace the telephone answering time measure within the current Service Target Performance Incentive Scheme. Participants were presented with a range of customer service metrics developed by Essential and were invited to discuss each one and rank them by importance. Customers were also invited to suggest other measures for consideration. Of the measures presented, communicating accurate planned outage timeframes, and providing an estimated time to restore power for unplanned outages, and its accuracy, were considered most important to measure¹⁶. Feedback from a customer survey, input from the SCC and assessment of measures already in place in the business resulted in the following measures being proposed for the new CSIS:

- Providing an estimated time to restore unplanned outages and giving updates
- How easy it was to deal with us
- Average time to resolve customer complains¹⁷.

Weightings to apply to each of these measures were reviewed and amended by participants in the Phase 4 community deliberative forums, and endorsed by the SCC.

CCP26 consider that the engagement on the new CSIS has been robust, and that the proposed design of the scheme is supported by customers.

9. Tariff Structure Statement

Question 17. *Do you consider that Essential's proposal provides reasonable balance between progressing tariff reform against customer impacts?*

The Handbook sets out the AER's expectations that in preparing their Tariff Structure Statements, network businesses will demonstrate "significant stakeholder engagement and broad stakeholder support".

Essential has undertaken significant engagement on tariffs. Tariffs featured on the agenda for the community deliberative forums in phases 2 and 4 of the engagement program.

¹⁶ Essential Energy, 8.03 Customer Service Incentive Scheme, Jan23, p. 5

¹⁷ Essential Energy, 8.03 Customer Service Incentive Scheme, Jan23, p. 8

Essential established the Pricing Collaboration Collective specifically to engage in more detail on pricing elements and to focus on design of the Tariff Structure Statement. They also hosted a 1 day deep dive on tariffs. Essential engaged deeply and collaboratively with the PCC.

An area where differences in consumer and stakeholder preferences emerged from the engagement was in tariff design and how to approach the transition to new cost reflective tariffs, specifically adoption of the sun-soaker tariff as the default, the speed at which customers should be transitioned to the new tariff, the provision of a 1 year grace period for customers with faulty meters, and the ability to opt out to a flat tariff. The different stakeholder views were considered by the PCC in their meeting in November 2022 using a principles-based approach to assess the various options and identify the recommended options to take forward. Clear explanations of the rationale for each decision were provided. This analysis is also provided in the Tariff Structure Explanatory Statement.

Essential's proposal, supported by the PCC, outlines a transition to the sun-soaker tariff at a faster pace than customers had preferred. The decision to adopt this transition strategy relied on the view that "Customers are better off on our proposed Sun Soaker two-way tariff"¹⁸. Customer impact modelling is presented to show that residential and small business customers with no solar, average existing solar installations and large solar installations across a range of annual consumption scales will all be better off moving from a flat rate tariff to a sun-soaker tariff. CCP26 question whether this applies for all customer load profiles, and whether further examination of the impact of the customer load profile on estimated DuoS charges may identify cohorts of customers who will not benefit from the transition. This may reveal customer cohorts who need additional support or time to transition.

10. Systemic consumer engagement issues across NSW/ACT

Customer Service Incentive Scheme

It is now three years since the AER introduced the CSIS scheme. During the NSW/ACT regulatory resets we have observed a range of customer responses to proposed models and different levels of sophistication in approaches to designing a scheme. It is too soon to commence a formal review of the scheme, but we do consider that it may be useful to provide an opportunity to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of models that have been adopted and what emerging best practice might look like. In particular we are interested in how models can be designed to align with strategic initiatives and produce concrete, forward-looking benefits to customers.

¹⁸ Essential Energy, 12.01 Tariff Structure Statement, p. 35

Good governance

In the *Better Resets Handbook*, the AER places a strong focus on ensuring the independence and integrity of consumer engagement processes. The Handbook sets out the following expectations to ensure independence¹⁹:

- Consumer representatives should clearly declare any interests that may be perceived to conflict with those of the consumers they are representing and provide details on how they're managing any conflicts of interest;
- Networks and consumer representatives should transparently set out all governance arrangements covering their interactions in the development of a regulatory proposal, including arrangements in place to ensure the independence of consumer representatives;
- Networks should publicly declare all remuneration arrangements, benefits and financial support provided to consumer representatives.

CCP26 strongly support these expectations which we believe form the bedrock of good governance for the engagement process and serve to instil confidence in its integrity. However, we note that not all of the businesses we have observed prioritise compliance with these expectations. In our view, best practice requires that documentation of governance arrangements including remuneration arrangements, and conflict of interest declarations are developed and maintained, and are available in the public domain. In addition, businesses should demonstrate that they are appropriately managing any conflicts throughout their engagement processes.

Essential partially complies with these requirements. In Essential's case, we note that the Stakeholder Collaboration Collective Terms of Reference (dated October 2021) which sets out the Terms of Reference for the SCC including remuneration arrangements is available on the restricted SCC Communications Hub website. While the Terms of Reference state that conflict of interest will be managed by topic, CCP26 have not sighted a publicly available conflict of interest register. CCP26 have not sighted a Terms of Reference document for the PCC.

Business-As-Usual engagement

The *Better Resets Handbook* expects networks to engage with consumers as an ongoing business-as-usual process, rather than a one-off process only undertaken in preparing for regulatory resets. Each of the NSW and ACT network businesses developed bespoke engagement processes to help inform their regulatory proposals. These processes typically operated in parallel with regular business-as-usual processes, varied widely and included a diversity of methods including citizens jury processes, deliberative forums, focus groups and one-off discussion groups. In all of these settings we observed groups of passionate, thoughtful, committed customers who were able to absorb sometimes quite complex material, and make valuable and insightful contributions to the network business's service offerings and future plans. We challenge all businesses not to waste these valuable assets, and to consider how to harness the knowledge, insights and interest built up through the various customer and stakeholder groups established to participate in engagement activities for the current regulatory reset, with a view to creating new mechanisms for deeper ongoing customer engagement as a regular part of their ongoing business operations.

¹⁹ AER, *Better Resets Handbook, Towards Consumer Centric Network Proposals*, December 2021, p. 14

Use of independent research budgets

Despite research budgets being available to various customer panels during the NSW/ACT regulatory resets, we have not observed any panels making use of this funding. Given the novel issues raised during this round of resets we consider it unlikely that there was no need for expert advisory services. We are therefore unsure why these opportunities are not being pursued. If this trend continues, we encourage a conversation with consumer representatives to explore what other steps could be put in place to support and equip them to engage with regulatory reset engagement processes.

Value for money in engagement programs

The CCP26 has observed engagement programs growing significantly in scale and cost. We have not seen any business report on the total cost of their programs, and as such we can not offer a view on the value for money derived from the various engagement programs. It would be useful if the Handbook offered guidance on whether engagement programs ought to demonstrate value for money.

Appendix 1 – CCP26 observations of Essential’s pre-lodgement engagement

Activity	Date	Format	Hours	Observer(s)
SCC Meetings	2/12/2021	Online	2	-
	17/12/2021	Online	2	Mark Henley
	3/02/2022	Online	2	Rob Nicholls, Robyn Robinson, Mark Henley
	17/02/2022	Online	2	Rob Nicholls
	3/03/2022	Online	2	Rob Nicholls
	31/03/2022	Online	2	Rob Nicholls
	14/04/2022	Online	2	Mark Henley
	2/05/2022	Online	2	Rob Nicholls
	12/05/2022	Online	2	-
	26/05/2022	Online	2	-
	9/06/2022	Online	2	Rob Nicholls
	23/06/2022	Online	2	Rob Nicholls
	7/07/2022	Online	2	Rob Nicholls
	21/07/2022	Online	2	-
	1/08/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
	18/08/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
<i>Launch of Draft Plan</i>	1/9/2022	Online	2	Mark Henley
	16/09/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
	13/10/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
	27/10/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
	24/11/2022	Online	2	-
PCC Meetings	22/02/2022	Online	2	-
	22/03/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
	19/04/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson

	16/05/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
	12/07/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
	9/08/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
	2/11/2022	Online	2	Elissa Freeman
Tariffs Briefing	21/1/2022	Online	1.5	Mark Henley
Tariffs Deep Dive	4/06/2022	In person	6	-
Phase 2 Customer Forums				
Dubbo Part 1	15/02/2022	Online	2	
Dubbo Part 2	1/03/2022	Online	2	
Wagga Wagga Part 1	16/02/2022	Online	2	
Wagga Wagga Part 2	2/03/2022	Online	2	
Broken Hill & Inverell Part 1	21/02/2022	Online	2	
Broken Hill & Inverell Part 2	7/03/2022	Online	2	Mark Henley
Taree & Ballina Part 1	22/02/2022	Online	2	
Taree & Ballina Part 2	8/03/2022	Online	2	
Bega & overflow – part 1	23/02/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
Bega & overflow – part 2	10/03/2022	Online	2	Robyn Robinson
Phase 3 Customer Forums				
Taree	17/05/2022	In person	3	-
Inverell	18/05/2022	In person	3	-
Ballina	19/05/2022	In person	3	-
Wagga Wagga	24/05/2022	In person	3	-
Bega	25/05/2022	In person	3	-
Broken Hill	1/06/2022	In person	3	-
Dubbo	7/06/2022	In person	3	-
Phase 4 Customer Forums				
Wagga Wagga	5/09/2022	In person	3	Mark Henley
Bega	6/09/2022	In person	3	-
Ballina	13/09/2022	In person	3	Robyn Robinson

Inverell	14/09/2022	In person	3	-
Taree	15/09/2022	In person	3	-
Dubbo	10/10/2022	In person	3	-
Broken Hill	11/10/2022	In person	3	-
Customer Advisory Group Meeting	8/11/2022	In person	6	Robyn Robinson

Appendix 2 – Essential Energy Engagement Plan

Our engagement plan



Essential Energy, 2024-29 Regulatory Proposal, p. 25