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28 November 2022

Con Hristodoulidis
Senior Regulatory Strategy Manager, Policy and Markets Regulation
AGL Energy Ltd

By email: [REDACTED]

Dear Con

Application for exemption under section 35 of the Better Bills Guideline

I refer to your application of 23 August 2022 requesting approval to include several additional messages, which are not required by the Better Bills Guideline (**Guideline**), among Tier 1 information on your customer bills.

The AER has considered AGL Energy Ltd's¹ (**AGL Energy**) application and under section 35 of the Guideline has decided to approve the following requests:

- inclusion of the phrase '*incl. GST*' to the negative better offer message; and
- inclusion of '*please refer to the end of your bill to find out more about how we've calculated this*' to the positive and negative better offer messages.

Under section 35 of the Guideline the AER has decided to not approve the following requests:

- inclusion of '*this calculation is based on your current plan and our Generally Available plans as at followed by the date that the deemed better offer check was performed*', at the end of the positive better offer message (**Qualifier**); and
- inclusion of the word '*latest*' in the negative better offer message.

The AER considers that the rejected additional messages may detract from the billing objective outlined in Rule 25A(3) of the National Energy Retail Rules to enable small customers to easily understand:

- the payment amounts, dates and methods,
- how their bill is calculated and whether it conforms to their customer retail contract,
- their energy consumption and production, and related costs and revenue, to assist with:
 - using energy efficiently,

¹ Including AGL Energy Sales & Marketing Pty Ltd, AGL Retail Energy Pty Limited, AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Ltd, AGL Sales (Queensland) Pty Ltd, AGL Sales Pty Limited, AGL South Australia Pty Limited)

- comparing their customer retail contract with other energy offers available to them,
- considering options for energy supply other than through the distribution system,
- how to dispute or raise a query in relation to their bill,
- how to access interpreter services and seek financial assistance, and
- how to report a fault or emergency.

In particular, these additions may reduce consumer confidence and trust in the accuracy of the better offer message and the underlying calculation by:

- in relation to the inclusion of the word “latest”, confusing consumers about the pool of offers that AGL would need to compare a customer’s current plan against when carrying out the better offer check, and
- in relation to the Qualifier, adding extra information to the better off message that is better suited to the “Further information” section of AGL’s bills.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above, please contact Georgiana Copeland on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Justin Oliver
AER Board member
Australian Energy Regulator