

Appendix 4.1: Consumer engagement paper 1

Revised regulatory proposal for the ACT electricity distribution network
2019–24

November 2018

Evoenergy ICT Deep Dive Outcomes Wednesday 8 August and Thursday 16 August 2018

Purpose

Information and communications technology (ICT) is evolving at a rapid pace resulting in many opportunities and challenges. Evoenergy is seeking to exploit these opportunities to improve the safety, reliability and affordability of electricity to end-use consumers.

Evoenergy recently revisited consumer conversations about our approach to ICT investment within Evoenergy's 2019-2024 regulatory proposal. This 'deep dive' was conducted over two sessions to allow for a more considered approach to the topic and to better enable Evoenergy to respond to consumer questions. Participants included members of Evoenergy's Energy Consumer Reference Council (ECRC). Pre-reading and content for presentations were drawn from Evoenergy's regulatory proposal. Spokespersons knowledgeable in the Australian Energy Market provided their perspectives at the event.

Feedback gathered during the deep dive will contribute to the consolidated body of work that makes up Evoenergy's regulatory proposal; it will also inform Evoenergy's future approach to ICT investment in the ACT electricity network.

Conclusions

After both working sessions, the following key outcomes were concluded by participants in the Evoenergy Deep Dive on ICT:

- Evoenergy's approach to ICT should take into consideration:
 - The establishment of an overarching ICT Vision that supports the Mission of the organisation. This Vision could be to strive for a 'smaller, lighter, faster, cheaper' approach to management of the network.
 - Investing in research and education, particularly in partnership with local tertiary education intuitions.
 - The importance of future-proofing operations, particularly with respect to the possible transition away from traditional gas uses within the ACT.
 - A sharper focus on benefits to consumers from investment in ICT.
 - Evoenergy's capacity to share technological innovation through continued contact and engagement with other distribution businesses.
- Evoenergy's movement towards a 'smart network' should take into consideration:
 - That price is not always the only driver to change behaviour. There are many people who will not be bothered, or don't have the capacity, to focus on the savings gained by shifting use from one period in the day to another.
 - Opportunities to gather usage and generation data directly from the consumer, rather than through an energy retailer.
 - Implications of smarter energy networks within the home, or across neighbourhoods, rather than just the broader distribution network.
- The following feedback was provided on proposed investment in the Advanced Distribution Management System (ADMS):

- The expenditure is not unreasonable.
 - The 10 year amortisation period is perhaps unrealistically long.
 - It is important that consumers see benefits in return on investment from the upgraded ADMS.
 - Data security is very important to consumers, both with respect to the ADMS and Evoenergy systems, but also the hardware that is installed in the home, for example, the security of internet/phone communications with meters.
 - Consumers care about the impacts of potential failure of the ADMS if it is not upgraded.
 - The significant growth in the need to collect and process consumption data is recognised.
- With respect to demand management:
 - Consumers want to understand the overall benefit to the community of reducing the impact of 'peaks' in energy usage.
 - Consumers encourage Evoenergy to consider supporting customers to invest in batteries, perhaps through subsidies.
 - Some consumers do not want to be forced to have a 'smart' meter and do not understand whether any potential benefits outweigh costs.

Please contact Giuliana Baggoley, Evoenergy Consumer Engagement Manager on 0459 873 434 to request copies of presentations and papers.

Feedback from our consumers is welcome at any time and best directed to Giuliana Baggoley at the number above, or by emailing consumerfeedback@evoenergy.com.au