



3 May 2016

Simon Kidd
Assistant Director
Australian Energy Regulator
GPO Box 520
Melbourne VIC 3001

By electronic lodgement: AERInquiry@aer.gov.au

Dear Mr Kidd

Response to April Consultation Document – Draft Sustainable Payment Plans Framework

I refer to the issues raised for further consideration in relation to the Draft AER Sustainable Payment Plans Framework (**Framework**), circulated in the additional consultation document by the Australian Energy Regulator (**AER**) on 26 April 2016.

Origin Energy (**Origin**) maintains its position that it considers there would be benefits to having a list of retailers that have adopted the Framework on the AER website, and agrees with the benefits listed by the AER in the additional consultation paper.

As stated in its response to the March consultation document, Origin does not support a requirement to commence all payment plan conversations by asking the customer what they can afford. Origin strongly supports a more flexible approach, as outlined in the additional consultation document. Origin considers it unnecessary to extend this requirement to customers discussing payment plan options for budgeting purposes only (where timing and frequency of bills is the issue, not affordability *per se*) and suggests that the Framework should be amended to reflect this.

If the AER agrees to amend the Framework in-line with the comments above, Origin supports the AER's current intention to publicly release the final Framework by 1 July 2016, and work towards publishing a list of retailers who have adopted the framework around late October 2016.

Origin would be happy to discuss any matters raised within this response with the AER. Please contact Ben Hercus (Manager, Retail Compliance) in the first instance on (03) 8665 7517.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Briskin".

Jon Briskin
General Manager, Retail Customer Operations