October 2011

Lynley

**Quarterly report July – September 2011**

This is my first quarterly report for the Roles under the new contract format. Below is a report for both:

Dispute Resolution Adviser National Electricity Market

Dispute Resolution Adviser National Gas Rules

**Summary**

**Disputes in Stage 1:** nil

**Scheduling Errors**: nil

**Training**: 15 August DMS/DMC training Victoria

**Design:** 22 AugustRetail Support Amendment Rules Disputes process(no documentation)

**Meetings:** 15 C liaison Group meeting documentation, pool interview and catch up.

**Outputs:**

1. Summary Report produced from the 15C group meeting of 20 June (Gas)
2. DMS Training 15 August Melbourne. (Gas and electricity)
3. Interview for pool/ contact existing pool
4. Consultation on the processes for the Retail support amendment rules (gas and electricity)
5. Further updating of DMS/DMC contacts and briefings of new contacts
6. **Summary Report produced from the 15C group meeting of 20 June (Gas).**

The 15C liaison group was established in May and met for the first time on 20 June 2011. It has been established to assist to define and monitor priorities for undertaking the dispute resolution adviser role.

I had previously sent around a short document setting out the purpose the group and invited participation. The meeting on 20 June provided some high level thoughts and ideas for me to finalise. I summarized this into a memo and this was circulated on 13 July and is attached. Jakob Vujcic the then Origin representative on the committee was helpful with this project.

The new liaison group was very effective in assisting me to prioritize and focus my time. The dispute services have been grouped into *Design and maintenance of the current machinery, learning and development and dispute resolution services*.

 The liaison group highlighted the importance of me regularly contacting pool members to keep them interested and also refreshing the pool. *(Maintenance*) The group also provided me with contacts for the design of a dispute process to give effect to the provisions in the Retail Support Amendment Rules. (*Design*)

I was able to start work on a number of the tasks identified.

**2 DMS/DMC Training 15 August (one day) Melbourne. (Gas and electricity)**

I ran Victorian DMS/DMC training on 15 August which provided an overall coverage of the role of DMS contacts and an understanding of the disputes process.

This was well attended at the AER offices with contacts from a range of organizations attending (16 participants). This was run cost effectively as the venue was provided by the AER and the materials had already been developed as part of a series of such programs.

*Participant Comment:* *I enjoyed today’s session very much.  A nice practical approach that defied the opportunity for the session to be very dry and legal.*

*Well done!* DMS contact gas and electricity.

**Next steps:** with the changes that have taken place in NSW it would be good to run another session of this type prior to the end of the year (second quarter).

**3 Interview for pool/ contact existing pool**

I caught up with a number of the pool members by phone and in person and also ensured a final clean up of the extra documents from the last dispute, now that the time for an appeal has lapsed. I also interviewed a potential pool member introduced to me by Geoff Swier.

Given the lack of activity in the disputes area I didn’t feel that it was an appropriate time to appoint any additional pool members.

1. **Consultation on the processes for the Retail Support Amendment Rules (gas and electricity)**

Following the 15C liaison meeting I did some research on how best to approach this (see item 1). I was able to obtain data from the member organisations of the 15C committee and also spoke to Energex, Ergon, and the Queensland Regulator.

It seemed the first step was to explore how disputes might arise and the internal mechanisms/processes for people to consider in first line communications. My DMS contacts in Queensland were very generous in giving me their time. An information session was planned for Victoria for 22 August. Energex, through Rachel Leaver, took the lead on the project, both in notifying potentially interested distributors and also organizing a presentation by Energex’s internal expert, Cara Graham. TRUenergy provided a venue at no charge. Rachel Leaver and Cara Graham were in attendance funded by Energex.

It was a full house with 17 attendees. The presentation was circulated to all attendees.

The feedback was very positive in terms of people understanding the challenges of credit support and the systems required. It was also valuable to me to be able to discuss the practical implementation of a dispute mechanism to support this, particularly given the challenges with the drafting of the dispute provisions.

I am hopeful that with user notes the stage 2 process will work well for disputes of this type. I am ready to begin the drafting of the documentation to give effect to this.

1. **Further updating of DMS contacts and briefings of new DMS and DMC contacts**

We have continued to add and update DMS and DMC contacts. Dominique Chivers has been supportive and effective at implementing these changes promptly.

1. **Next steps**

I will spend some time documenting the dispute resolution provisions for Retail Support (4 above). I expect to meet with the 15C liaison group again in October and will fine-tune the next set of priorities for the quarter October – December.

**Sincerely**

Shirli Kirschner