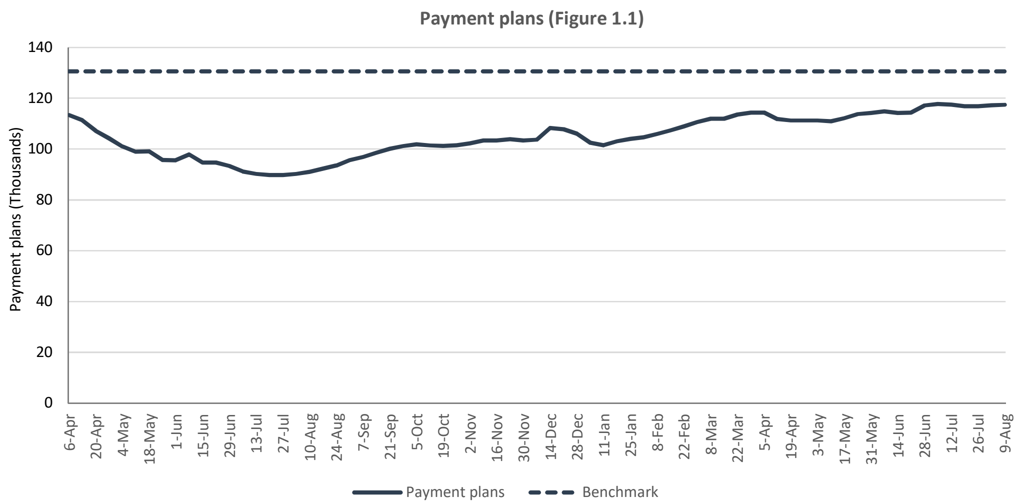
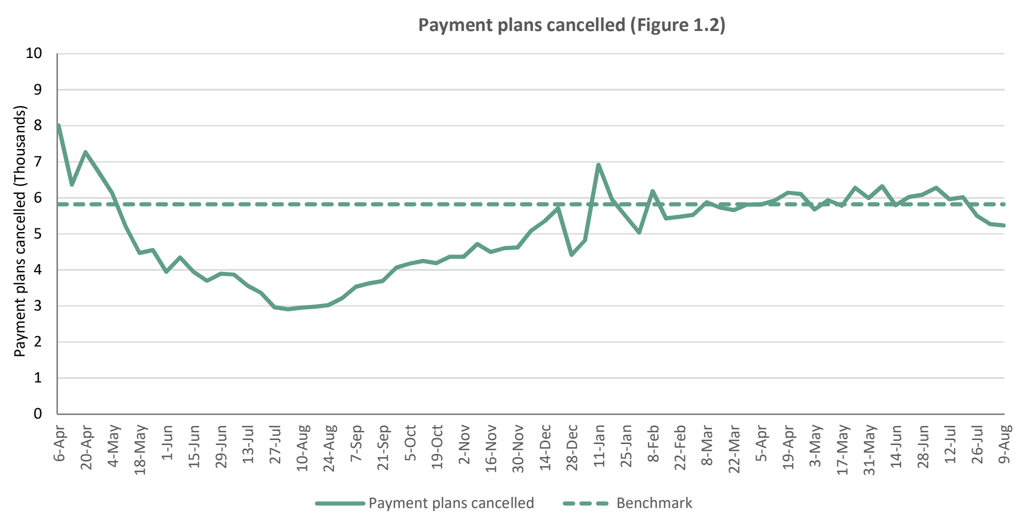
COVID-19 RETAIL MARKET DATA DASHBOARD (as at 9 August 2021)

Notes on chart benchmarks

- Chart benchmarks have been included to enable comparison with pre-COVID levels for each indicator.
- Benchmarks are created by averaging quarterly data from Q3 2018-19 to Q2 2019-20, with the exception of benchmarks for 30-90 day debt and for alternative debt arrangements:
  - 30-90 day debt benchmarks are created using Q4 2018-19 data only.
  - Alternative debt arrangements benchmarks are estimated based on data provided by two Tier 1 retailers in the first half of FY 2019-20.

Payment plans





Analysis

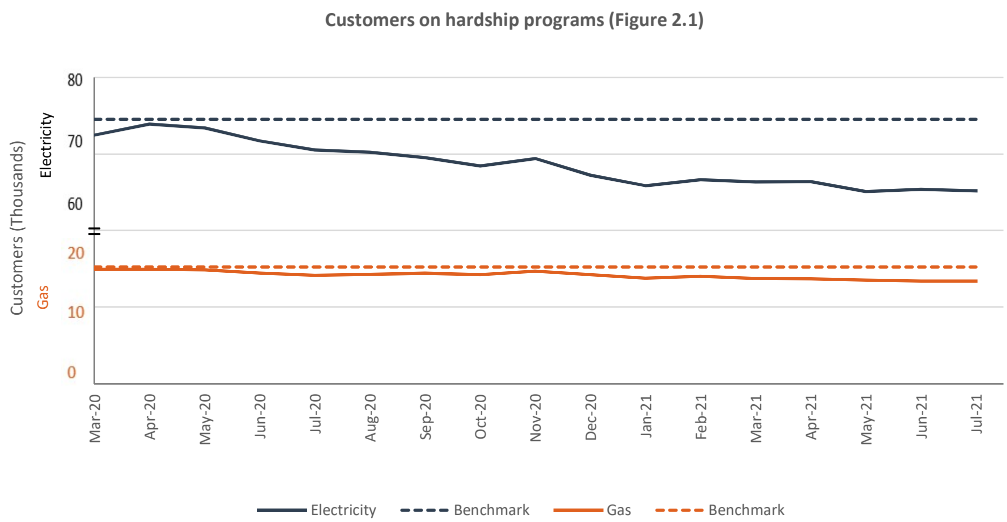
- The number of customers on payment plans decreased at the start of the pandemic. However, in August and September 2020, payment plans increased slightly, driven by a Tier 1 retailer closing its deferred debt program. In 2021, payment plans returned to a similar level as at the start of the pandemic.
- In the past few weeks, the number of payment plans being cancelled for non-payment have decreased. This decrease was fairly consistent across all retailers, and coincides with several lockdowns - perhaps indicating retailers are currently being more cautious in their treatment of customers.

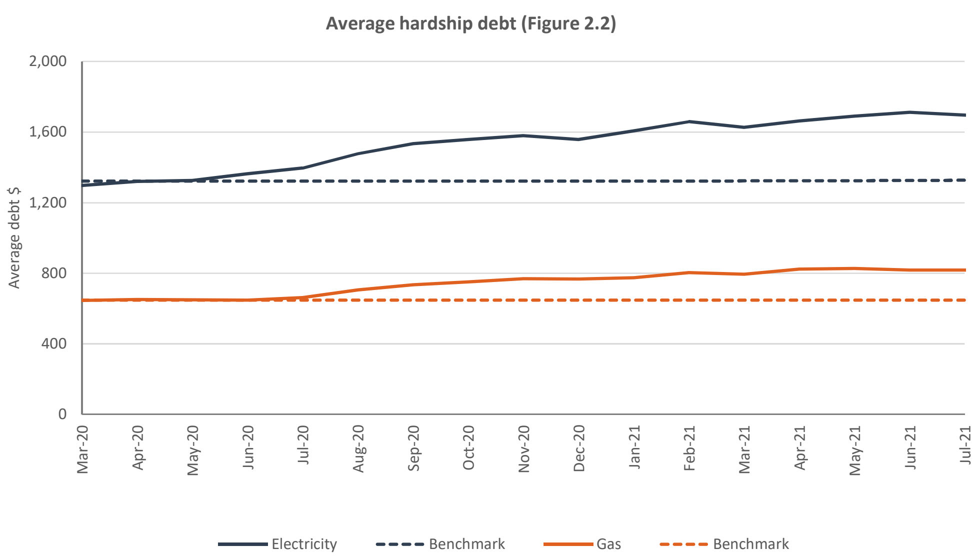
Notes

- *'Payment plan' requires a customer to be paying off an arrears across at least three instalments. This excludes flexible payment arrangements used for convenience or budgeting purposes.*
- *'Cancelled payment plans' are payment plans cancelled by the retailer for customer non-payment.*

COVID-19 RETAIL MARKET DATA DASHBOARD (as at 9 August 2021)

Hardship





Analysis

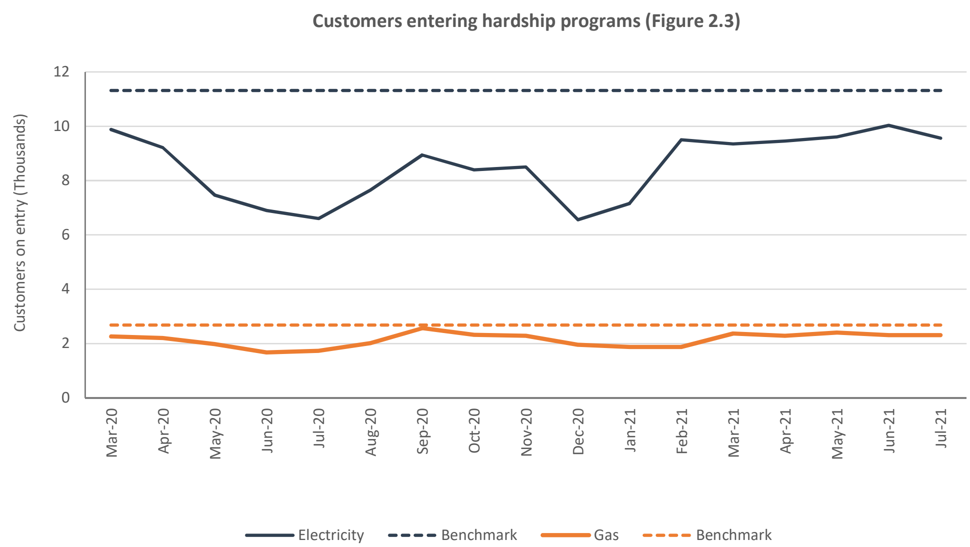
- The number of customers on hardship programs has dropped markedly compared with the benchmark for both electricity and gas. In contrast, the average debt of both electricity and gas hardship electricity customers is now well over 25 per cent higher than the benchmark, implying that the customers who are remaining on hardship programs are accumulating more debt. Additionally, customers entering hardship are entering with more debt than they used to.

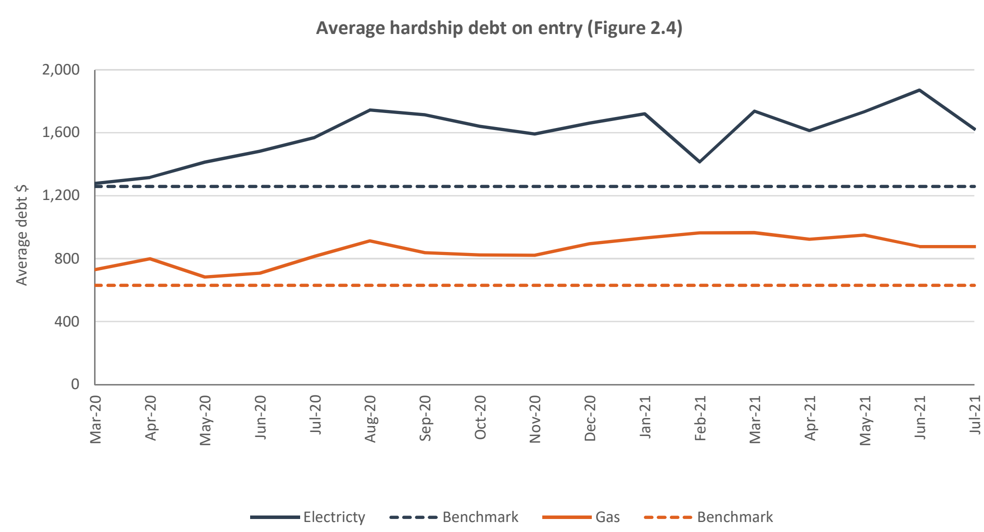
Notes

- *Hardship data is reported on a monthly basis.*

COVID-19 RETAIL MARKET DATA DASHBOARD (as at 9 August 2021)

Hardship





Analysis

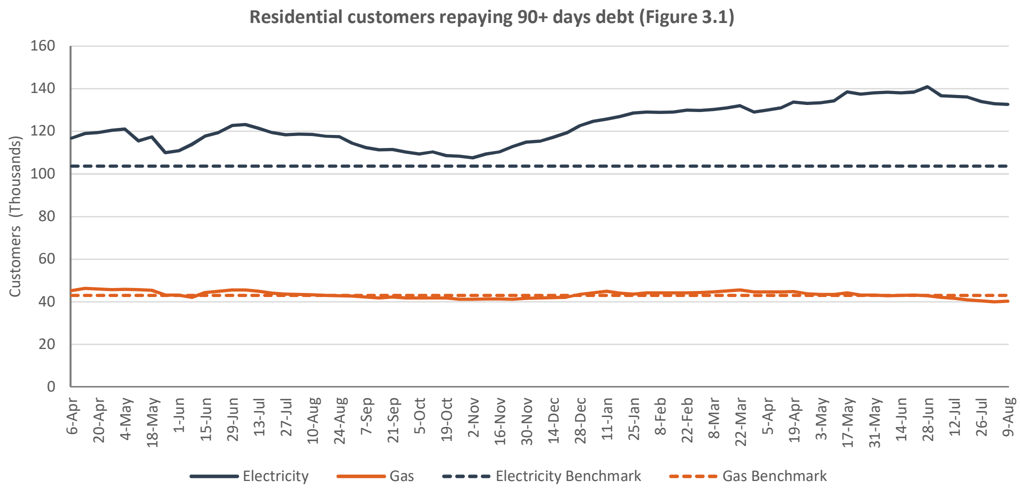
- The number of customers entering hardship programs has been consistently below the benchmark. By contrast, the average debt of those customers entering hardship has been consistently above the benchmark. Taken together, these observations imply that since the start of the pandemic, customers have only been entering hardship programs once they have accumulated larger amounts of debt.

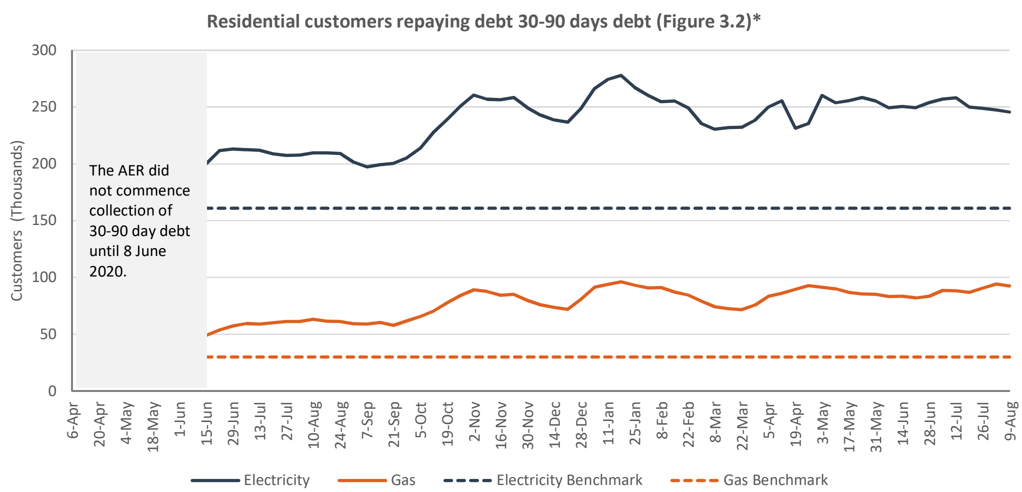
Notes

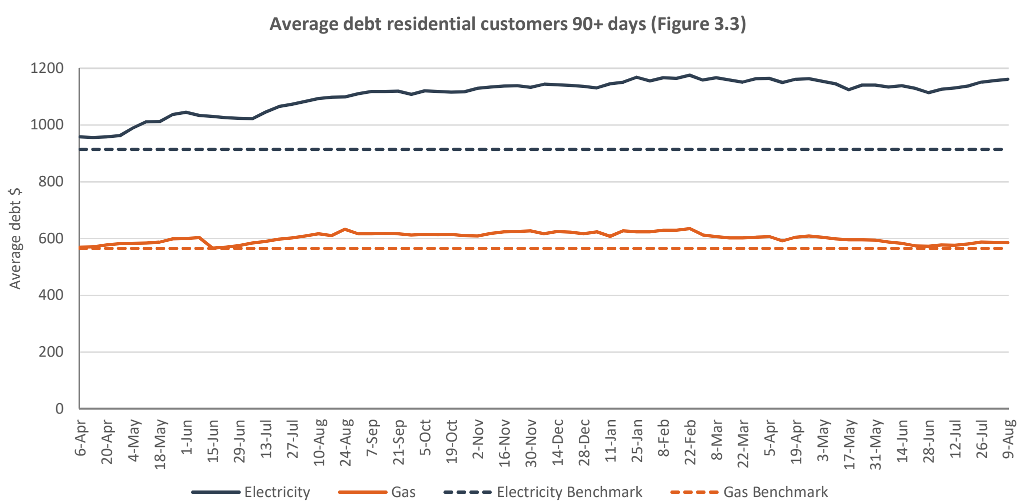
- *Customers entering hardship programs data is reported on a monthly basis. It is the cumulative amount of customers entering programs each month.*

COVID-19 RETAIL MARKET DATA DASHBOARD (as at 9 August 2021)

Residential debt

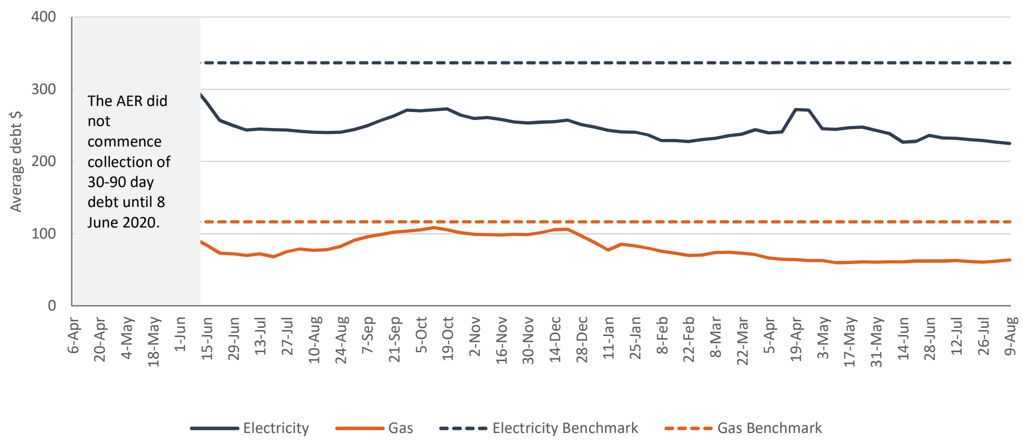




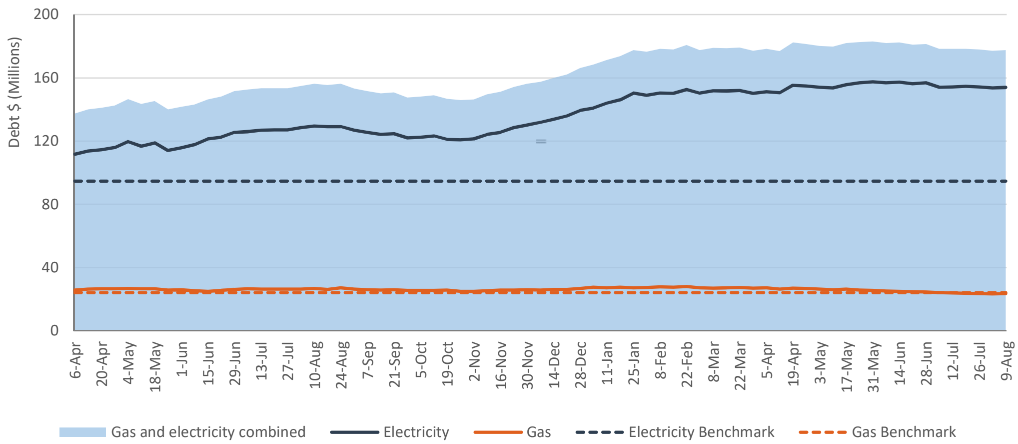


COVID-19 RETAIL MARKET DATA DASHBOARD (as at 9 August 2021)

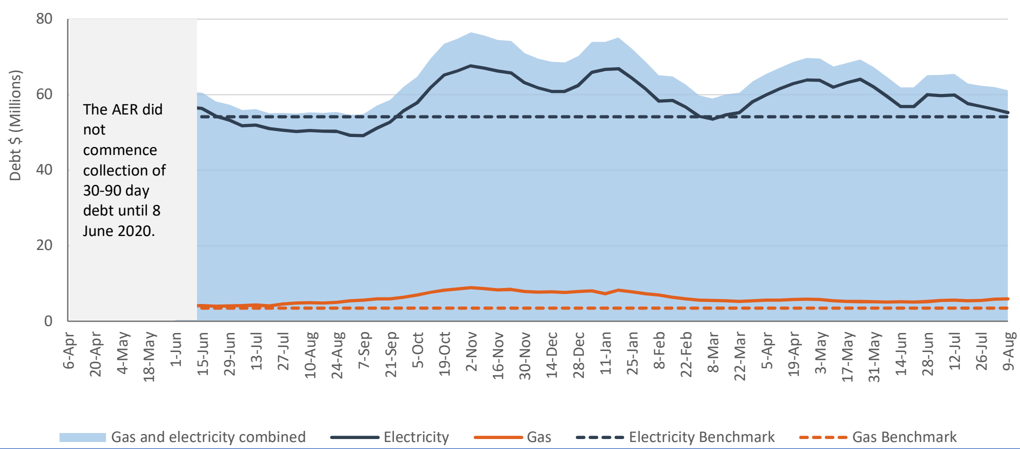
Average debt residential customers 30-90 days (Figure 3.4)*



Residential debt 90+ days (Figure 3.5)



Residential debt 30-90 days (Figure 3.6)*

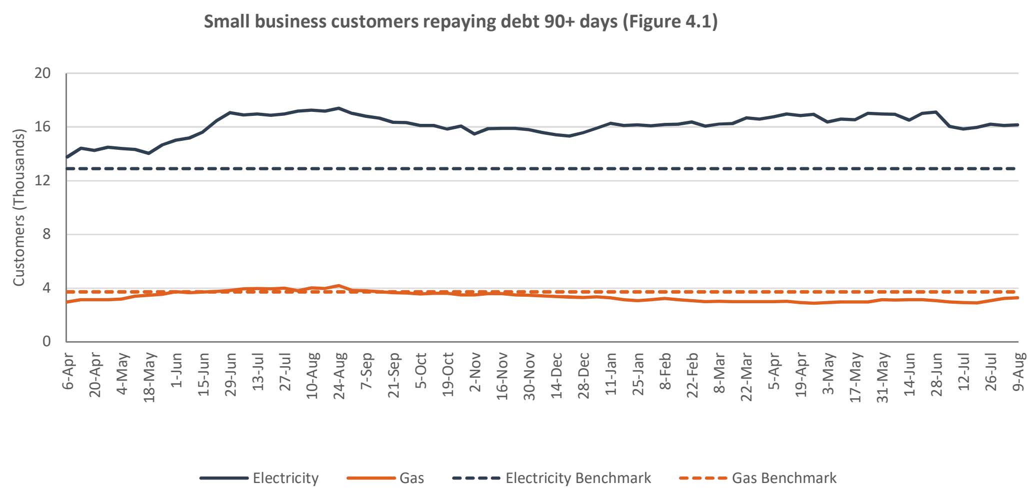


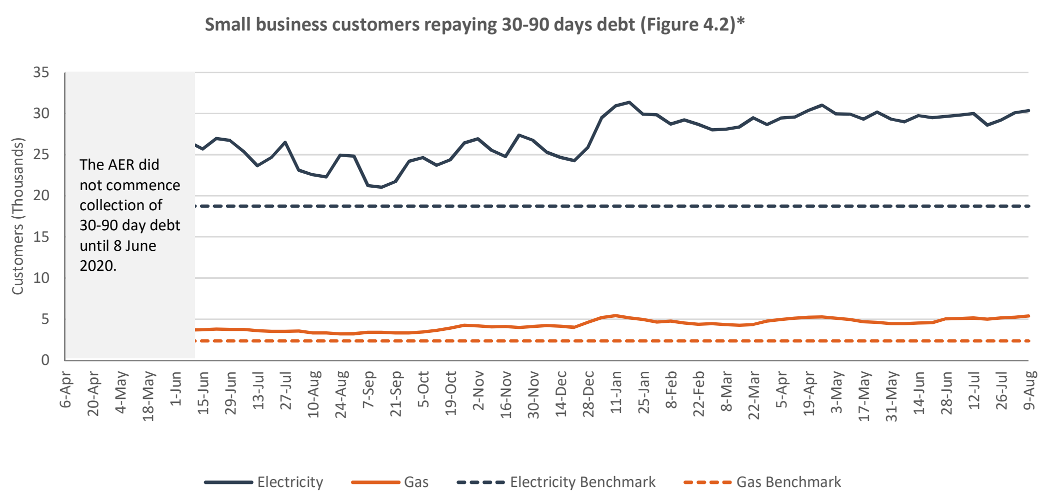
Analysis

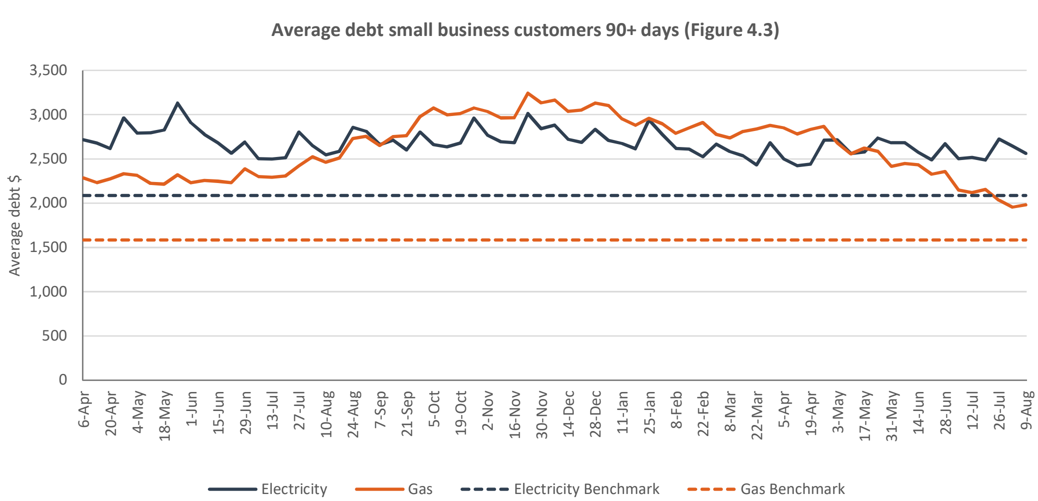
- For 90+ day electricity debt, the number of customers repaying debt has decreased in recent weeks, which was driven by some significant decreases recorded by primary regional retailers. Consequently, with less customers repaying debt, the average amount of debt has increased.
- For 30-90 day debt, the number of customers fluctuated above the benchmark from October 2020 to May 2021, and since May has started to slowly decline.
- ***Notes:***
- *'90+ day debt' is debt that is outstanding for 90 days or more, while '30-90 day debt' is debt that is outstanding for 30 to 90 days.*
- *Customers with hardship debt are not included.*
- *The blue shaded area of Figs 3.5 and 3.6 is the sum of electricity and gas debt.*
- **Fewer retailers submit data for 30-90 day debt as compared with 90+ day debt, thus these charts cover a smaller proportion of the market and are less reliable.*

COVID-19 RETAIL MARKET DATA DASHBOARD (as at 9 August 2021)

Small business debt

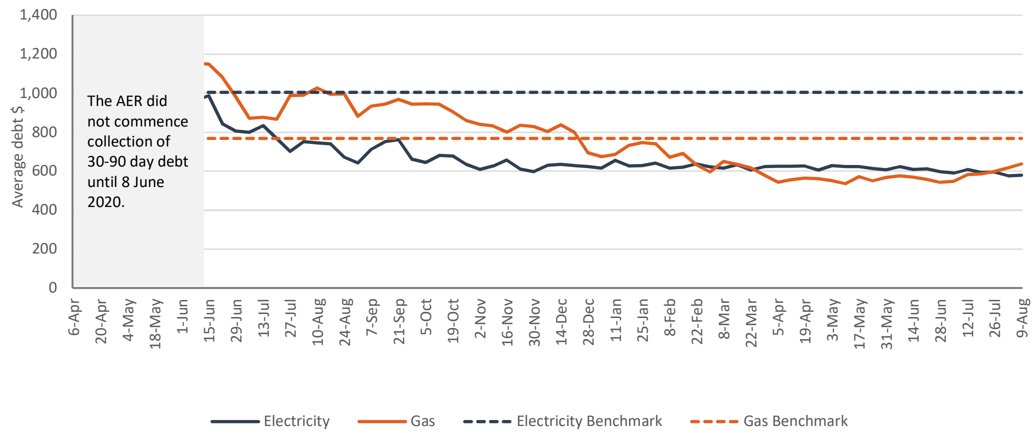




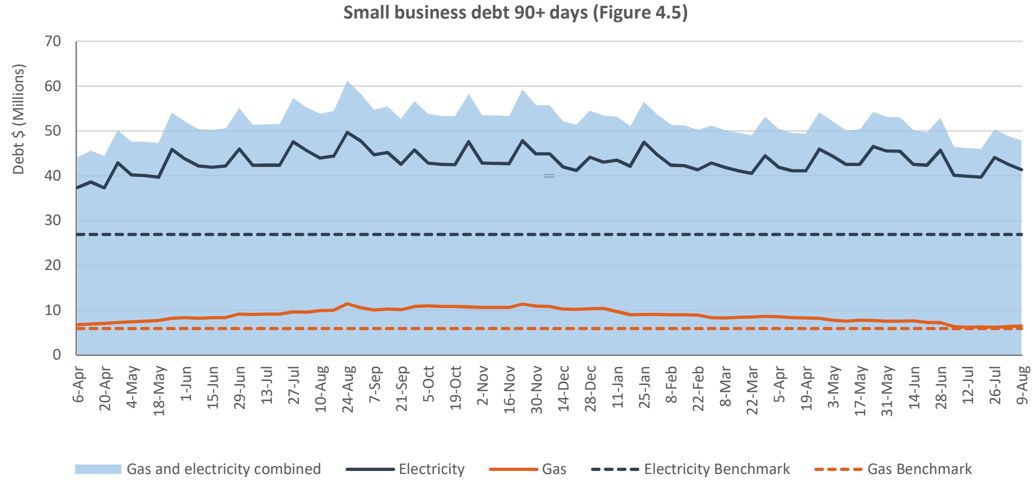


COVID-19 RETAIL MARKET DATA DASHBOARD (as at 9 August 2021)

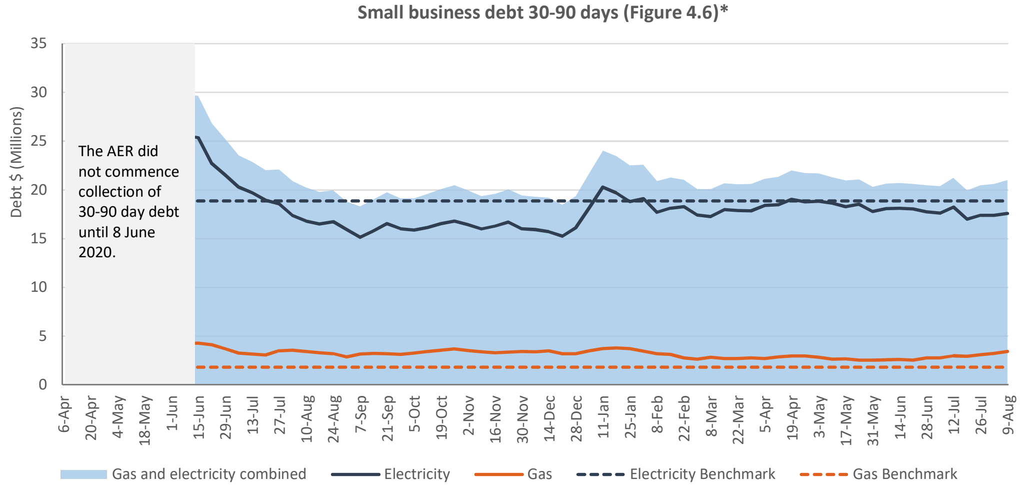
Average debt small business customers 30-90 days (Figure 4.4)*



Small business debt 90+ days (Figure 4.5)



Small business debt 30-90 days (Figure 4.6)*



Analysis

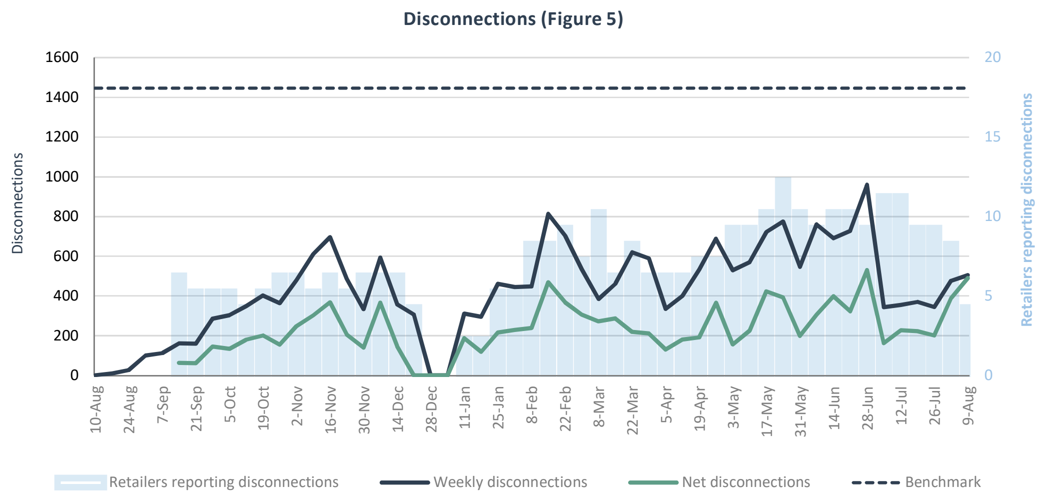
- Average 90+ day electricity & gas small business debt has been consistently higher than the benchmark and follows a cyclical monthly pattern (which may be related to billing administration cycles).

Notes

- *Only a few retailers submit small business gas debt data.*
- *The blue shaded area of Figs 4.5 and 4.6 is the sum of electricity and gas debt.*
- **Fewer retailers submit data for 30-90 day debt as compared with 90+ day debt, thus these charts cover a smaller proportion of the market and are less reliable.*

COVID-19 RETAIL MARKET DATA DASHBOARD (as at 9 August 2021)

Disconnections



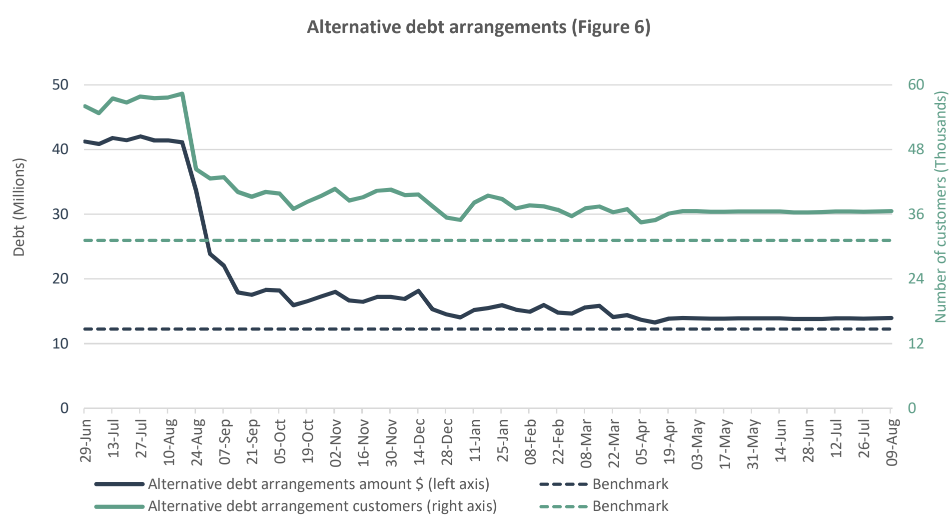
Analysis

- Disconnections were lower in July, corresponding with the AER enacting its standby Statement of Expectations in NSW, South Australia and SE Queensland in response to COVID-19 lockdowns.
- While disconnections have fallen substantially in NSW and South Australia, there has been a very large increase in regional Queensland disconnections over the past two weeks.
- A Tier 1 retailer that typically reports the majority of disconnections reported zero disconnections and reconnections for the week of 9 August.

Notes

- *'Net disconnections' includes all disconnections where the customer has not been reconnected (by the same retailer at the same address) by the end of that reporting week.*
- *Bars show the number of retailers who have reported disconnections for any given week.*

Alternative debt arrangements



Analysis

- The significant drop in alternative debt arrangements during August 2020 was primarily the result of a Tier 1 retailer closing its deferred debt program. There were also a number of smaller retailers who stopped offering alternative debt arrangements from 31 July.
- Current levels of alternative debt arrangements incorporate deferred debt accumulated during the pandemic as well as arrangements available prior to Covid-19 (see benchmarks). Current levels are only about 10% higher than benchmark levels, suggesting that most of the remaining alternative debt arrangements are not a result of COVID-19.

Notes

- *This indicator captures 'alternative debt arrangements' not captured by our usual payment plan, hardship or debt indicators. At the start of the pandemic, many retailers allowed customers to defer bill payments or utilise alternative debt arrangements rather than placing customers on payment plans or hardship programs.*
- *Currently, the vast majority of alternative debt arrangements are reported by two Tier 1 retailers.*