

24 December 2010

Attn: Mr Tom Leuner
General Manager, Markets Branch
Australian Energy Regulator
GPO Box 520
Melbourne VIC 3001
AERInquiry@aer.gov.au

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the AER Position Paper - Retail Market Performance Reporting November 2010.

The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW investigates and resolves complaints from customers of electricity and gas providers in NSW, and some water providers.

EWON believes that comprehensive performance reporting is essential for the effective and efficient operation of a competitive energy market. Performance reporting is an important tool that enables the regulator to meet its obligations around consumer protection and market stability. Such reporting also provides the basis for the transparency necessary for an informed consumer to participate in the market with confidence.

The proposed hardship program indicators are a crucial step in providing a basis for the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) to undertake its role in monitoring and evaluating the performance of retailer hardship programs and contributing to overall continuous industry improvement and the sharing of best practice approaches.

EWON notes the extensive consultation and thought that has been given to the indicators that the AER is now proposing. While not all of EWON's views were accepted, the final proposals appear to provide the basis for a comprehensive reporting regime for both retail performance and hardship programs.

EWON is aware of retailer concerns about the potential negative use of data provided to the AER. EWON believes that this is balanced by the need for the consumer and the regulator to have accurate data in order to play an effective role in the market.



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If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact me or Chris Dodds,
Senior Policy Officer on 82185250.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clare Petre". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clare Petre
Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW