

Communique

WA ACE Forum

26 April 2022 meeting

The tenth meeting of the Western Australian Advocacy for Consumers of Energy (WA ACE) Forum was held on 26 April 2022.

Economic Regulation Authority

Paper

Members were provided with an overview of the (ERA) Access Arrangement 5 Issues Paper. The ERA outlined that the costs of the transmission and distribution infrastructure has a substantial impact on the underlying cost of providing electricity to customers, and that Western Power has proposed expenditure to modularise the grid, expand the powerline undergrounding program and improve their Communications and Information Technology systems within its access arrangement proposal.

Findings of the Independent Review into Christmas 2021 Power Outages

The Independent Reviewer (Michelle Shepherd) for the *Independent Review into Christmas 2021 Power Outages* thanked the Forum for providing valuable customer insights during the 22 February 2022 WA ACE Forum. The Independent Reviewer outlined how the Forum's previous feedback had helped shaped the recommendations in the Final Report.

communications following Independent Review into Christmas 2021 power outages

Western Power outlined the work program to respond to recommendation five (customer communications) of the Independent Review into Christmas 2021 Power Outages. Members discussed the benefits of communicating to customers before and during an outage and how this can occur via a range of communication channels.

Update on the Esperance Energy Supply program

Members were advised that Horizon Power's Esperance Energy Transition Plan will provide financial support for 258 private residential and 41 business customers to purchase like-for-like energy efficient electric appliances, to replace their existing natural gas appliances. Local tradespeople can register with Horizon Power to participate in the scheme.

Residents impacted by the March 2023 cessation of supplies to the gas distribution network in Esperance can now engage with these registered tradespeople to install electric appliances. The Department of Communities has a separate program and will arrange for social housing properties connected to the Esperance gas distribution network to switch from natural gas to energy efficient electric appliances.

WA ACE Program and Expert Consumer Panel update

Members were informed of the activities of the Expert Consumer Panel (ECP), including the Reserve Capacity Mechanism review and drafting of a submission in response to the Economic Regulation *Proposed revisions to the access arrangement for the Western Power Network 2022/23 – 2026/27 Issues paper (ERA Issues Paper)*.

Forum members were advised of the awarding of a small grant to Dynamic Analysis to undertake a high- Fifth Access Arrangement on behalf of the Expert Consumer Panel to help inform the P Paper.

About the WA ACE Forum

The WA ACE Forum brings to together consumer representative bodies from across Western Australia to provide consumer insights to the energy sector, supporting informed, valuable contributions to the energy debate in Western Australia. The WA ACE Forum meets five times a year.

The WA ACE Forum is not a decision-making body, nor is it required to form consensus. Accordingly, this