



Energy & Water
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11 June 2010

Lara Morgan
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Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism
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Dear Lara

**National Energy Customer Framework Consultation Draft - Price
Comparator, June 2010**

Thank you for your email dated Tuesday 8 June 2010. As EWON is unable to attend the workshop in Melbourne on Tuesday 15 June 2010, we appreciate the opportunity to provide you with some brief written comments on the Price Comparator Consultation Draft.

In general, we welcome the draft provisions. The proposed Section 243, Division 11, Part 2 of the National Energy Retail Law outlines provisions for the AER to develop and make available an online national price comparator service to assist small customers to compare standing offers and market offers.

Importantly, the draft provisions state that the AER's price comparator must be developed and maintained in accordance with the AER Retail Pricing Information Guidelines. EWON contributed a comprehensive submission to the AER on the recent Issues Paper concerning these Guidelines. Once finalised, these AER Guidelines will provide important detail to complement this new part of the National Energy Retail Law.

Section 243 of the draft also states that this section will only apply to those jurisdictions that 'opt in' by declaring that the section applies to their jurisdiction. EWON understands this to mean that states will have the option to continue to run their own state based price comparator services/websites, or 'opt in' to this AER run service.

EWON is aware that Industry & Investment NSW and IPART are currently developing a NSW price comparator website and associated Ministerial



Guidelines. EWON has strongly supported this initiative and we look forward to the launch of the website and phone hotline later this year. We note that there is a provision in the NSW regulations for a review of the price information disclosure requirements and comparator website after 3 years. Presumably this review point will allow NSW to evaluate the current service in relation to the AER service.

The key issue for EWON is that NSW customers have access to up to date, reliable, accurate plain English information about energy offers (in terms of both pricing and any associated products/offers), so they can make informed decisions to suit their own circumstances.

As we are unable to attend the stakeholder workshop on this draft, can you please advise if the minutes from the workshop, along with the written stakeholder submissions will be made available? To date, NECF materials and written stakeholder submissions have been made available via the MCE website, and this has been an important way for stakeholders to monitor and contribute to the development of the NECF.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact me or Emma Keene, Manager Policy & Research on 02 8218 5250.

Yours sincerely

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