

CUSTOMER ADVOCACY GROUP CHARTER

Purpose and Duties

The purpose of the Customer Advocacy Group is to provide a forum where matters relating to Essential Energy's NSW network customers can be highlighted and discussed with Committee members who represent the customer base and the diversity of the community Essential Energy serves.

The Customer Advocacy Group (the Committee) shall consist of a maximum of 12 members and;

- is a voluntary, non-political committee (no sitting fees);
- provides a forum to share and discuss matters relating to Essential Energy's network customers;
- provides a forum for Committee members to raise issues affecting their representative organisations and communities in relation to the supply of electricity to Essential Energy's network customers.

The Committee will:

Act as a forum for consultation between NSW network customers within Essential Energy's distribution area and Essential Energy on;

- The effect on customers within its distribution district of any proposed changes in the way in which the distributor operates,
- Any improvements in the way in which the distributor operates that the Committee believes would benefit customers within its distribution district,
- Such other matters as the distributor and the Committee agree should be the subject of such advice.

The Committee will also:

Provide information and advice on topical issues raised by Essential Energy;

- provide information and advice on the provision of connection and customer services to NSW network customers,
- engage community agencies and service providers (where appropriate) to seek further information and advice on topical issues
- relay information to their constituents/organisations and proactively gather information/feedback from their constituents to submit to Essential Energy
- advise Essential Energy of issues or topics affecting their organisation and/or communities;
- promote the just, equitable and effective delivery of services.

The Committee will act in accordance with all relevant Company Policies and

regulations including:

- Electricity Supply Act 1995 (section 89, 90 and 91)
- CCEP0002 Governance
- CCEP0002.01 Preventing Fraud and Corruption
- CEOP2036 Travel and Related Expenditure
- Essential Energy's Code of Conduct

Authorities

The Acting Chief Executive Officer (Acting CEO) has approved the formation of the Committee and given it the following authorities:

- to meet, share and provide feedback to Essential Energy on network services for NSW network customers;
- to meet, share and engage consumer and community groups on topics as requested by Essential Energy.

Membership

The Committee shall consist of representatives of organisations and communities serviced by Essential Energy and act as a conduit for informational purposes to groups including:

- consumer groups
- low-income households
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- people from non-English speaking backgrounds
- people with disabilities
- domestic customers
- Industrial and commercial customers
- Rural and remote customers
- primary producers;

Committee members may have an association with more than one of the sectors/groups specified above. This association is for general information purposes, not for the purpose of lobbying specific interest for specific parties.

Relevant organisations and/or community groups may be invited by Essential Energy to elect a representative to become a Committee member.

Members of the Committee or delegates will attend all scheduled meetings.

Members may appoint an alternative representative to attend Committee meetings when the appointed representative is unable to attend. Representatives will advise the Secretariat when an alternative representative will be attending a meeting, and will ensure that the alternate representative is fully briefed for such a meeting.

Terms of membership include:

- Members must be located within Essential Energy's distribution area;
- Two year term with option to apply for a further one term renewal only. Maximum membership length will be four years;
- Renewal requests must be received in writing one month prior to the end of the initial two year term. Renewal requests will be considered by the Acting CEO;
- Membership can be terminated at the sole discretion of the Acting CEO;
- Membership can be resigned on the provision of a resignation letter to the Secretariat with one month's notice;
- Member inductions will be carried out by the Secretariat as required and will include relevant company policies.

Annual Report

The Committee will provide an annual report on their community engagement activities to demonstrate active dialogue is being sought from groups and communities that members represent. The report will include:

- Information on the groups that have been engaged, the topics covered and the feedback gained with supporting details such as dates and method of engagement;
- The annual report is based on the financial year calendar and is required by the close of business on 30 June each year;
- The report will be delivered by email to the Secretariat for provision to the Acting CEO and internal stakeholders;
- The report may be included in the Annual Report and other communication channels such as Essential Energy's website.

As part of the annual report process, Committee members will undertake a peer review based on performance and contribution to the Committee.

Meetings

Committee meetings shall consist of two meetings per year. All meetings will be held by videoconference or teleconference and face to face when required. In accordance with Essential Energy's CEOP2036 Travel and Related Expenditure Policy, certain expenses may be claimed.

- Secretariat will aim to book meetings one year in advance prior to the end of the calendar year.
- Ad hoc, issues based meetings and communications via email will also be required in addition to scheduled meetings.

The agenda and papers providing information on matters for discussion

should be provided three business days before each meeting to allow sufficient time for due consideration of the content.

Chairing:

The Acting CEO is the Chairperson and will delegate chairing responsibilities when applicable.

Secretariat

Appropriate secretariat support will be provided by Essential Energy to the Committee. The Secretariat includes the Manager Customer Services and relevant supporting team members. The Secretariat will perform the following tasks:

- Scheduling of meetings
- Assembly of material (to ensure Committee members receive background information) for Committee meetings, including the liaison with Essential Energy and Committee members to establish the agenda
- Prepare and distribute minutes and agreed actions within ten business days of the meetings
- Coordination of reports
- Induction/briefing of new Committee members
- Processing of expense claims related to the CEOP2036 Travel and Related Expenditure Policy
- Any other tasks contemplated by this Charter.

Travel and expenses

Travel relating directly to Committee meetings must follow Essential Energy's CEOP2036 Travel and Related Expenditure Policy:

- The Secretariat will organise travel and accommodation in accordance with CEOP2036.
- Reimbursement for travel and associated costs will be made in alignment with CEOP2036 and ATO guidelines.
- Committee members must submit a Customer Advocacy Group Expense Claim Form, signed by the member and Essential Energy representative along with tax invoices to support reimbursement.

Reporting and Disclosure

The Secretariat will report routinely to the Acting CEO and as required to individual Executive Leadership Team members on the activities of the Committee. Reports will be provided to the Executive Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee as requested. The Secretariat is accountable for reporting.

Media

The following principles apply regarding interaction with media:

- The Committee will direct media enquiries regarding the Customer Advocacy Group to the Essential Energy Secretariat who will contact Essential Energy's Corporate Media Manager;
- Committee members are to disclose to the media, that any comments they make regarding the Customer Advocacy Group and topics covered in the meetings, are their opinion only;
- Any joint statements will be reviewed by the Committee prior to release.

Code of Conduct

The Committee is committed to the application of and adherence to Essential Energy's Code of Conduct.

Committee members are to disclose any conflict of interest that may arise. If a Committee member sites a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interested prior to a meeting they must contact the Secretariat and request a Conflict of Interest Form. The Committee member is required to fill out this form and return to the Secretariat. The Secretariat will provide the form to the Acting CEO for review. The Committee member will leave the meeting for that item to allow the other Committee members to discuss the matter or to decide to invite the relevant Committee member to return for discussion of the matter. If a conflict of interest is raised during the meeting the same procedure will be followed.

Confidentiality

Essential Energy recognises the need for open debate on issues related to electricity distribution in NSW. Essential Energy expects confidentiality from all parties present at the meeting and Essential Energy shall resolve what topics may be treated otherwise than as confidential.

Audit

Essential Energy's Internal Audit Team will conduct a review of the governance, administration and financial transactions of the Committee.

Review of Charter

The Acting CEO may approve changes to this Charter at any time.