

ECGS Notice of closure for gas infrastructure

The Commission has made a final rule requiring six gas facility types to report to AEMO if they permanently cease supply of covered gas services

The final rule provides increased transparency to support the reliability and supply adequacy of the ECGS

The Commission has made a final rule that amends the Gas Statement of Opportunities (GSOO) and the Victorian Gas Planning Report (VGPR) provisions of the National Gas Rules (NGR) to require GSOO reporting entities for six facility types to report, in advance, to the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) on the closure of gas infrastructure.

The final rule, by providing more advanced information and therefore transparency to the market, benefits market participants, governments, regulators, and policymakers by providing them with more timely information on gas supply and delivery infrastructure closures in the East Coast Gas System (ECGS). By further reducing information asymmetries this helps enable participants and governments to respond in an informed and efficient manner to any potential gas supply shortfalls.

This rule change is one of four rule changes that together seek to extend the reliability and supply adequacy (RSA) Framework for the ECGS. The intention for the extended Framework is to equip AEMO and market participants with tools to respond to any threat of gas supply shortfalls.

The final rule introduces a notice of closure reporting obligation into the GSOO and VGPR

Up until now, while participants have provided a range of actual and forecast planning and infrastructure information under the GSOO which can be used to gather insights into permanent closures, there has been no formal obligation to give advanced notice if gas infrastructure is permanently closing.

The final rule ensures there is a formal obligation for closure information to be reported transparently and in advance. The obligation:

- Applies to six infrastructure types that meet the Bulletin Board reporting threshold, i.e. with a nameplate rating of 10TJs/day or more, due to the impact they could have on reliability. These are:
 - Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) import facilities
 - Production facilities
 - Pipelines
 - Compression facilities
 - Storage facilities
 - Blend processing facilities.
- Applies to a reportable closure decision (the reporting trigger), which is the decision of a facility to permanently cease supply of covered gas services

The Commission has removed blended gas distribution systems from the final rule because the intent of the obligation is to require information from infrastructure that could materially impact the reliability and supply adequacy of gas to customers.

Information on reportable closure decisions is reported to AEMO through the GSOO and VGPR survey process

AEMO relies on GSOO reporting entities to provide information that is accurate and timely through a GSOO survey, with the survey comprising questions that are relevant to the particular GSOO reporting entity. The final rule requires the GSOO reporting entity to report

a closure to AEMO through the usual GSOO survey process. The survey is also used to inform the VGPR.

In response to stakeholder feedback, the final rule requires AEMO to publish a notice on its website for all reportable closure decisions, including those disclosed during the GSOO survey process. This means that information will be made available to the market at the earliest available opportunity without creating an additional reporting burden.

AEMO will publish a notice if closure information comes forth outside the GSOO and VGPR survey cycle

The final rule ensures any new information that comes forth outside of a planning report publication cycle in relation to a reportable closure decision would be captured and reported by AEMO. The process would include:

1. GSOO reporting entity identifies new information after responding to a GSOO survey
2. GSOO reporting entity provides new information to AEMO as soon as practicable
3. AEMO publishes a notice with new information as soon as practicable
4. AEMO considers whether it is appropriate to publish a supplement to either the GSOO or VGPR

The advanced notice of closure obligation promotes timely reporting to the market

The final rule requires reporting entities to inform AEMO as soon as practicable after a reportable closure decision is made to permanently cease supply of covered gas services, and where practicable, at least 36 months prior to the intended date for cessation of supply.

On receipt of a reportable closure decision AEMO will be required to publish a notice on their website.

We consider that there is benefit in the reporting entities providing as much notice as possible. As a result, the definition of a reportable closure decision is not strictly time-bound and could be made, and therefore reported, before the 36 months' notice period.

In circumstances where the intended date for cessation of supply is within 36 months of the reportable closure decision, a GSOO reporting entity must provide reasons in writing to AEMO for why it has not been able to provide 36 months' notice. These reasons will be published.

The Commission has considered the benefit of providing advanced notice of closure to market participants with sufficient time to respond to any reliability threats against the potential limitations of constraints of any specific notice period.

Requiring a strict minimum notice period would create practical difficulties in circumstances where a reportable closure decision happens within 36 months for some unforeseen circumstance. In order to set a minimum notice period and account for these sorts of circumstances, the Commission would need to develop an exemptions framework or other mechanism to address non-compliance risks. We consider that this would create regulatory complexity that is not proportionate to either the problem or potential benefit.

Importantly, the notice of closure obligation is subject to the existing GSOO compliance framework and civil penalty provisions. The Commission is satisfied that the existing compliance framework and tier 1 civil penalties relating to the GSOO will promote compliance with the notice of closure obligation.

The final rule commences on 18 September 2025 and includes reportable closure decisions from the 2026 reporting year

The final rule, and the obligation on GSOO reporting entities to notify AEMO of any reportable closure decision either through the GSOO survey or an update, commences on 18 September 2025, so that the information can be made available in the 2026 GSOO and VGPR. We have provided certainty to stakeholders by including transitional arrangements for AEMO to update the GSOO Procedures by 5 March 2026. Importantly the Commission considers that any reporting entity that responds to the 2026 GSOO survey prior to 18 September 2025 must update its survey response to account for this Amending rule.

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