

# Supporting compliance with meter maintenance obligations

## **We are seeking feedback on a draft rule to support metering coordinators (MCs) to test, inspect and repair meters**

The Commission's draft rule recognises MCs can find it challenging to meet their obligations to test and inspect metering installations, and repair malfunctions within timeframes specified by NER in certain circumstances where there are challenges outside MCs' control. Specifically, where MCs require support from retailers and large customers to carry out their work and/or there are site issues, including lack of site access and defects at metering installations.

The draft rule also recognises that the current process for MCs to obtain test certificates for high voltage (HV) voltage or current transformers (VT or CT) is inefficient and costly.

To support MCs resolve challenges and improve compliance, the draft rule would amend the National Electricity Rules (NER) to:

- introduce an obligation on the person who appoints an MC (generally, retailers or large customers) to support MCs in meeting their meter maintenance obligations
- expand the exemption framework for meter malfunctions and introduce an exemption framework for testing and inspections to allow MCs greater flexibility to manage situations where a metering installation is not accessible, safe or ready
- introduce an obligation for previous MCs to share the most recent test certificate, where available, with the new MC at a metering installation.

**The draft determination proposes a commencement date of 1 April 2027.** This would allow AEMO approximately nine months after the final rule is made to prepare changes to the relevant procedures, and for industry to update relevant internal processes in preparation for the change.

The draft determination is in response to rule change requests from Yurika, PLUS ES, the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and Intellihub to support MCs' compliance with their obligations to test, inspect and repair meters in accordance with the NER and AEMO's Exemption Procedure for meter malfunctions.

**We are seeking feedback on our draft determination and draft rule by 7 May 2026.** There are a variety of ways to provide feedback, including participating in workshops or bilateral meetings to providing formal submissions. Submissions must be lodged via the Commission's website, [www.aemc.gov.au](http://www.aemc.gov.au).

## **The draft rule introduces new obligations on retailers and large customers who appoint MCs**

The new obligations on retailers and large customers would require them to:

- facilitate a supply interruption at a connection point, including by agreeing the date on which the supply interruption would take place and facilitating access to the metering installation on that date, when requested by the MC
- inform the customer of the date that the MC proposes to test, inspect or repair a metering installation and give any other information the customer needs to be ready for that work to be done, when requested by the MC
- if it becomes aware of a site defect, take reasonable steps to arrange for the defect to be rectified and inform the MC when it has been done.

Requiring retailers or large customers, where relevant, to support MCs to meet their meter maintenance obligations would increase the number of meters being tested, inspected and repaired and result in more accurate meters. This would improve the overall accuracy of

customer billing and market settlement, thereby reducing unaccounted for energy (UFE).

### **The draft rule amends the existing malfunctions exemption framework and introduces an exemption framework for MCs' testing and inspection obligations**

The draft rule requires AEMO to establish and administer a new exemption framework for testing and inspection and amend the existing exemption framework for malfunctions to better account for situations beyond the control of MCs.

Under these draft exemption frameworks, the end date of the exemption would be determined by AEMO on a case-by-case basis in accordance with AEMO's exemption procedures. MCs can apply for this type of exemption specifically where a metering installation is not:

- accessible - eg, where the MC is unable to access the premises or metering installation because the metering installation is behind a locked gate
- safe or ready for the MC to repair a malfunction - eg, where there is a defect at the metering installation, such as poor condition of the meter panel.

Our draft rule would introduce greater flexibility regarding the length of time MCs may be exempt from their obligation to test, inspect and repair meters within timeframes in the NER. This means MCs would have more time to try and test, inspect and repair meters, where a metering installation is not accessible, safe or ready for an MC to repair a malfunction.

### **The draft rule requires MCs to ensure test certificates are accessible for newly appointed MCs**

The draft rule requires the previous MC appointed to a connection point to ensure that the test certificates for a metering installation, where available, are accessible to the new MC at a connection point within 10 business days upon the new MC's request.

The Commission considers that establishing a requirement for MCs to share test certificates would create efficiency through avoiding unnecessary testing costs.

### **The draft rule would promote the National Electricity Objective (NEO)**

In making our draft rule, we have considered the National Electricity Objective (NEO) by applying the assessment criteria as outlined in the consultation paper.

The more preferable draft rule would contribute to achieving the NEO by:

- **Promoting better outcomes for consumers in the long term.** The draft rule would help MCs meet their obligations and, in turn, likely increase the proportion of compliant and accurate meters, which is in the long-term interests of consumers. This is because the draft rule would help MCs obtain the support they need from retailers and large customers to carry out the work necessary to meet testing, inspection and meter repair obligations.
- **Promoting safety, security and reliability.** The draft rule may help MCs manage potential safety threats when seeking to meet their metering maintenance obligations. This is achieved by allowing MCs to apply to AEMO for an exemption from obligations when a premise is not accessible, safe, or ready for a metering installation to be tested and inspected, or for a malfunction to be repaired.
- **Promoting principles of market efficiency.** The draft rule would improve the efficiency of MC operations by helping MCs obtain the support they need from retailers and large customers to fulfil meter maintenance activities. The draft rule would also help avoid unnecessary and duplicative costs for new MCs, as they would not need to re-test a metering installation if it had already been tested by the previous MC within the relevant timeframe.
- **Supporting a smooth implementation.** The draft rule would minimise implementation costs by building on existing frameworks and processes, such as the malfunctions exemption framework and the notification and tracking process for site defects that prevent meters being installed. The Commission has also opted to adopt an outcomes-based approach for the requirement for MCs to share testing certificates. That is, the draft rule does not prescribe a method or means by which MCs must share testing certificates. The draft rule seeks to minimise implementation complexity by setting out clear roles and processes for

market participants and AEMO.

**For information contact:**

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