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REGULATOR

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3 October 2014

Dear Mr Pierce 

Customer access to information about their energy consumption

The Australian Energy Regulator welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Australian Energy Market Commission's (AEMC) draft rule determination on the National Electricity Amendment (Customer access to information about their consumption) Rule 2014 and the National Energy Retail Amendment (Customer access to information about their energy consumption) Rule 2014 (draft rule determination).

The customer access to consumption information rule change request, which the COAG Energy Council initiated, proposes a number of amendments to both the National Electricity Rules and the National Energy Retail Rules that seek to develop increased demand-side participation in the National Electricity Market.

This rule change is one of the Power of Choice reforms recommended by the AEMC in late 2012, and subsequently endorsed by the COAG Energy Council. Other related rule changes currently being considered by the AEMC include improvement to metering, pricing and customer participation in generation and demand-side management. The AER supports these Power of Choice reforms. They can reduce both market distortions and costs to consumers—by empowering them to manage their energy use and save on energy costs by shifting their consumption away from peak times. They will also deliver fairer outcomes for those customers that do not impose higher loads on the grid.

Consistent with our May 2014 submission,¹ we support the proposed amendment to Electricity Rule 7.7(a), which will give customers better access to their consumption data and information about their electricity use, and enable them to share their data with approved service providers. More specifically, the rule change is expected to:

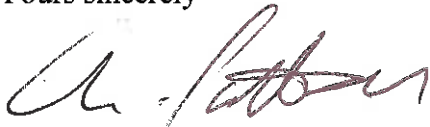
- improve customers' awareness of their electricity consumption and use patterns
- enable more informed choices about d services that better suit their circumstances
- promote efficient retail electricity markets through innovative products and services.

Our previous submission focused on the proposal for the AER to develop a metering data common terminology guideline.² In the submission we considered that metering data does not need to be prescribed in a regulatory instrument, such as a guideline. In our view the proposed amendment to the Energy Retail Rules, which requires retailers and distributors to provide information relating to the use of metering data, is likely to achieve the policy intent of this rule change request without the need for further prescription in a guideline. We welcome the AEMC's decision not to proceed with this particular rule change proposal.

The draft rule determination requested comments on a number of issues, including the commencement date of the rules, the Energy Market Working Group's proposal to allow third parties to request energy consumption data directly from the Australian Energy Market Operation and when data requests are free of charge or subject to a reasonable fee. We do not have specific comments in response to these issues.

If you have any queries relating to this submission, please contact Anthony Bell, Director, on 03 9290 6914.

Yours sincerely



Chris Pattas
General Manager
Australian Energy Regulator

¹ AER submission to AEMC rule change on customer access to information about their energy usage, 30 May 2014, p. 2.

² *ibid.*