



Extension to the introduction of metering coordinator planned interruptions final determination

The Commission has extended the time for making a final determination on the *Introduction of metering coordinator planned interruptions* rule change request until 21 May 2020 to allow for further consultation on an appropriate solution.

Reason for an extension

Determining the most appropriate method for installing a new meter where the customer shares a fuse with one or more other customers is complex and difficult. A number of solutions have been suggested to resolve this issue over the last few years, with differing costs and benefits.

In the draft determination the Commission made a more preferable draft rule, as the proposed rule introduced consumer protection risks.

The Commission received 25 submissions to the draft determination. Along with suggestions for minor amendments to the more preferable draft rule, a cohort of stakeholders proposed an alternative solution to resolve the underlying issue.

The Commission requires time to assess and consult on the costs and benefits of the alternative solution, and amendments to the draft determination to determine the solution that best addresses the long term interests of consumers.

The alternative solution proposed by some stakeholders

The proposed alternative is that distributor be required to install separate isolation devices for each of the premises with shared fusing at the first supply interruption to install a new meter. This alternative solution has not been considered in detail previously, with costs, cost allocation, complexities and how the solution would work in practice unknown. Stakeholders have also not had a chance to review the proposed alternative solution and provide feedback.

Further consultation

The Commission will be consulting further with stakeholders on possible solutions to allow for the installation of meters where there is shared fusing. This consultation will consider the most appropriate solution, including both amendments that could improve the operation of the draft rule, and an alternative solution proposed by a cohort of stakeholders in submissions to the draft determination. The Commission will hold a webinar to discuss stakeholder feedback on the draft determination. Information for stakeholders interested in being a part of this consultation can be found on the rule change project page on our website.

The rule change

The rule change, initiated on 29 August 2019, proposed that metering coordinators be allowed to arrange for planned interruptions of an unlimited number of customers for the purpose of installing, replacing, repairing or maintaining metering equipment.

The aim of the proposed rule was to reduce delays in meter installation, as well as the costs associated with meter installation where the customer shares fusing with another customer. Meter installation timeframes were introduced with the metering installation timeframes rule change in December 2018, however, there were a number of exceptions to

the timeframes including where the installation of the meter would require interrupting supply to one or more other customers.

A more preferable draft rule was published on 19 December 2019. The Commission made a more preferable draft rule to mitigate consumer protections issues, including the lack of a direct relationship between the metering coordinator and the impacted customers, and a lack of recourse for consumers should the rules be breached.

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The time for making a final determination has been extended to further consider the most appropriate solution which best meets the long term interests of consumers.