

New funding for regulator strengthens energy reforms

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Corporate

The state's energy regulator says a \$27.3 million funding boost over four years will enable it to take action against energy retailers who breach customer protection rules.

The Essential Services Commission has welcomed the additional funding announced in today's state budget.

Commission chief executive John Hamill says it's a vote of confidence in the independent regulator.

"Since 2016, we have rewritten the rules to make energy retailers responsible for what's happening to customers, requiring them to step in early to help customers who are struggling to pay their bills and offer real help to avoid them spiralling into energy debt.

"We have taken action against companies for switching customers without their consent or failing to give adequate notification of planned outages, and we've provided advice to the government on a fairer price for energy," he said.

Dr Hamill says there's more to do, and this new funding will strengthen the reform program in Victoria.

"This funding will enable us to set and enforce compliance with the [Victorian Default Offer](#), implement new rules for billing and marketing to improve transparency of energy offers and fairer contract terms and conditions.

“It will also allow us to exercise broad new investigation, information gathering and enforcement powers to take action when energy companies break the energy rules,” he said.

The new funding coincides with the 1 July 2019 introduction of range of reforms designed to give customers more power over their energy. [Subscribe to the commission's regular newsletters](#) to keep informed about the latest developments.

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