

Electricity Distribution Code customer service standards draft decision

Submissions received through Engage Victoria

Date submitted: 7 May 2020

Submission written by: Anonymous

Do you have any comments on the Electricity Distribution Code draft decision on customer service standards?

Can you please fix the numbering of the life support provisions in the code (and the Energy Retail Code)?

They no longer match with the corresponding penalties in the Essential Services Commission (Energy Industry Penalty Regime) Regulations 2016, because of recent changes to the Electricity Distribution Code (and the Energy Retail Code).

Date submitted: 13 May 2020

Submission written by: Geoffrey Prudames

Do you have any comments on the Electricity Distribution Code draft decision on customer service standards?

I agree with the proposals for the GSL concerning levels, progressive payments, and more information on reasons for planned and unplanned outages. I would suggest there should be some consideration of when planned outages are cancelled. Our heating is only electricity and we tend to leave when an outage is planned. It is frustrating to have left and then some time after the outage was planned to begin to be told it has been cancelled. Some penalty for untimely notification might be considered. I support electronic notifications rather than postage of snail mail. We do not get mail delivery and so have a 50 km round trip to sometimes only get an Ausnet notification.

I have a comment on feed in rates. Given that feed in is usually when peak rates are being charged for electricity, the difference between the feed in rate and the rate that the user of that fed in power is being charged seems to me to be excessive. Some mark up is reasonable, but at the moment that mark up is of the order of 200%.

Thank you for a well thought out and presented set of proposals.

Date submitted: 1 July 2020

Submission written by: Victorian Council of Social Service

Do you have any comments on the Electricity Distribution Code draft decision on customer service standards?

VCOSS would like to acknowledge the ESC's sustained and flexible efforts in seeking feedback on this work at this time.

As the peak body for the state's social and community service sector, VCOSS is highly conscious of the importance of reliable essential services for Victorians experiencing disadvantage, and we monitor regulatory developments with a view to their implications and fairness for all Victorians.

In this case, the proposed rule changes on planned outage communications, guaranteed service level (GSL) scheme payments, and other new reporting requirements appear to be well-balanced and sensible updates. In particular, updates to facilitate better retailer-distributor information-sharing on customer contact details, enable opt-in electronic notifications of outages, and more timely GSL compensation payments, are positive developments.

VCOSS has also previewed the detailed response from the Consumer Action Law Centre and encourages the ESC to give further consideration to the additional issues raised in that response. Of specific note are the challenges of effective notification for households within embedded networks, and the creative suggestion on encouraging electricity distributors to build trust and engage with local community service organisations when providing advance notice to communities on testing rapid earth fault current limiter equipment as required by bushfire safety regulations.