


Economic Regulation Authority

 WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Minutes

Meeting of the Economic Regulation Authority Consumer Consultative Committee

Meeting 1 / 2016

Date & Time: Monday, 14 March 2016, 1:00pm

Location: Ken Michael Room, 4th Floor, Albert Facey House
469-489 Wellington Street

Attendees:	Dr Stephen King	Member, ERA (<i>ERACCC Chairman</i>)
	Mr Paul Reid	Assistant Director Monitoring, ERA
	Ms Caroline Coutts-Kleijer	A/Assistant Director Customer Protection, ERA
	Ms Sarah Lyons	Senior Project Officer, Customer Protection, ERA
	Mr Benjamin Hammer	Chamber of Minerals & Energy of WA
	Mr Charles Brown	Financial Counsellors' Association of WA
	Mr David Moore-Crouch	Property Council of Australia
	Mr Chris Twomey (<i>proxy</i>)	Western Australian Council of Social Service
	Ms Christine Coyne	Aboriginal Affairs Consultant, Christine Coyne & Associates
	Mr Gary Newcombe	Consumer Protection, Department of Commerce
	Mr Marcus Claridge	Energy and Water Ombudsman's Office
Apologies:	Mr Paul Kelly	Executive Director, Licensing Monitoring & Customer Protection (LMCP), ERA
	Mr Tony York	WA Farmers Federation
	Ms Irina Cattalini	Western Australian Council of Social Service
	Mr Matthew Sargeant	Chamber of Commerce & Industry of WA
Absent:		Pastoralists & Graziers Association WA Local Government Association (WALGA)
Presenters:	Mr Chris Twomey	Western Australian Council of Social Service
	Ms Christine Coyne	Christine Coyne & Associates
	Mr Paul Reid	Assistant Director Monitoring, ERA
	Ms Anu Besson	Senior Project Officer, Monitoring, ERA

1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Dr King noted the apologies as listed above and welcomed members to the first meeting of 2016. Dr King advised the following:

- Paul Schollum is no longer working at WALGA and the Authority is awaiting confirmation of a replacement representative.
- Leon Bradley is stepping down as the ERACCC representative for the Pastoralists & Graziers Association. The Authority is waiting to hear of a replacement representative.

Dr King also advised that his term on the ERA's Governing Body will be concluding at the end of June 2016.

2 MINUTES OF MEETING 4/2015 HELD ON 9 December 2015

The minutes were accepted as a true and correct record of the meeting.

3 ERACCC MEMBERSHIP

Dr King advised that the Secretariat will shortly be contacting members to seek their confirmation that their organisation wishes to continue to be on the committee for the 2016-18 term.

4 ERACCC STATUS REPORT

Dr King invited Mr Paul Reid to speak to the LMCP sections of the Status Report. Mr Reid highlighted the following:

- Consultation period for the water licence review recently closed.
- The Authority has received the independent inspector's report on the Shire of Dumbleyung's non-potable water and sewerage infrastructure, and has decided to serve a notice of non-compliance on the Shire.
- The second round of consultation on the *Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers* closed on 26 February. The ECCC will prepare its final advice to the Authority.

Dr King spoke to the remainder of the Status Report, highlighting that both the Access Arrangements for the Dampier to Bunbury Natural Gas Pipeline and for ATCO Gas Australia's Mid-West and South-West Gas Distribution Systems are still under consideration.

Dr King further noted the Australian Competition Tribunal's recent decision to set aside the Australian Energy Regulator's price decisions in relation to four electricity network operators.

5 MEMBER PRESENTATION – 2015 Cost of Living Report

Mr Chris Twomey, WACOSS, presented highlights from WACOSS's 2015 Cost of Living Report which has been produced annually since 2007. The 2015 report compares the adequacy of income against the costs of living in WA using three different low-income models: working family, single parent family and an unemployed single. The report found modest income increases for two of the three models.

Mr Twomey tabled a copy of the 2015 Cost of Living Report.

6 ERA PRESENTATION – 2015 Water Performance Report

Mr Paul Reid, Assistant Director Monitoring, ERA, provided an overview of the performance of water service providers that are licensed by the ERA. Further information is set out in the 2015 Water Performance Report, which is available on the ERA's website.

7 ERA PRESENTATION – 2015 Energy Retailers & Energy Distributors Performance Reports

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Mr Paul Reid, Assistant Director Monitoring, ERA, detailed the key findings in the 2015 Performance Report for Energy Retailers, which included figures showing that competition in the natural gas market has intensified and gas disconnections were higher.

Ms Anu Besson, Senior Project Officer, ERA, provided an overview of the 2015 Energy Distributors Performance Report. The report showed that complaints to WA's electricity distributors are trending downwards.

Both the retailer and distributor performance reports are available on the ERA's website.

8 ERA PRESENTATION – The Stolen Generation – Past & Present

Ms Christine Coyne, Christine Coyne and Associates provided a presentation on the past and present stolen generations, and described the lasting effects that the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families has had on Aboriginal society. Ms Coyne highlighted the importance of including input from Aboriginal communities when designing programs to assist Aboriginal people instead of just relying on mainstream programs.

9 ENERGY OMBUDSMAN'S REPORT

The report was taken as read. Mr Marcus Claridge, Director of Energy & Water, Energy and Water Ombudsman briefly highlighted that complaints are down for electricity, gas and water, and that this coincides with lower levels of complaints reported from other Energy Ombudsmen and the Ombudsmen of other industries.

10 NOMINATION OF MEMBER TO PRESENT AT FUTURE MEETINGS

Dr King noted that there are currently no presentations listed on the agenda for the June ERACCC meeting and therefore encouraged members to consider nominating a presentation on behalf of their organisation. Dr King advised that the Secretariat would be in contact with members prior to the next meeting to seek possible presentation ideas.

11 MEMBER'S ISSUES & QUESTIONS (Questions on notice)

There were no issues raised or questions on notice.

12 CHAIRMAN'S TAKE AWAY & AGREED MESSAGE FOR THE COMMUNIQUE

Dr King thanked Member presenters Mr Chris Twomey and Ms Christine Coyne, and ERA presenters Mr Paul Reid and Ms Anu Besson for their presentations.

Meeting closed at 4:00

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DR STEPHEN KING
CHAIR, ERACCC