



24 January 2025

Dear valued stakeholder,

Economic Regulation Authority stakeholder survey results 2024

Last year, we invited around 300 of our stakeholders to participate in our regular stakeholder survey. Thank you to everyone who completed the survey, we appreciate the time you took to give us meaningful feedback.

Overall, we are pleased with the results. Over 90 per cent of respondents were satisfied with our overall performance and that we act in the long-term interests of WA consumers. A similar proportion were satisfied with our engagement and communication approaches.

We would like to share with you some of the detail about the results (attached) and what they mean for us.

Becoming more outwardly focussed

Our Strategic Plan 2024 – 2027, released in December 2023, signalled our intent to continue to become more outwardly focused.

We are improving the readability of our publications, because we want interested stakeholders to more easily understand our decisions and analysis. Although many of our determinations are necessarily technical, we are focussed on simplifying them wherever possible. As an example, we have transformed the way we publish access decisions, replacing what used to be a 600-page document with a simpler overview and short, separate documents on each of the building blocks that make up our decision. Our new website, scheduled to go live by mid-2025, will also make it easier for stakeholders to access news and major project information.

We have actively sought to strengthen and broaden our stakeholder relationships. Our Chair, Steve Edwell, and our Executive leadership team regularly engage with the entities we regulate, like Synergy, Western Power, the Australian Gas Infrastructure Group and ATCO. We also meet regularly with groups that represent customers, including our own Consumer Consultative Committee, the Western Australian Local Government Authority, WA Council of Social Services, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of WA and the Chamber of Minerals and Energy.

We have an open-door approach to one on one stakeholder discussions regarding issues in the markets we regulate

We have also been developing approaches to better understand what customers want, as an input to our decisions. For example, for the first time ever, we undertook a survey of ATCO Gas customers to find out about their preferences when it comes to gas consumption, as part of our decision on ATCO's most recent Access Arrangement. We want our stakeholders to feel heard, with effective input to our decisions.

We aim to work constructively with policy agencies and other market bodies and regulators, including Energy Policy WA, the Australian Energy Market Operator, and the Energy and Water Ombudsman.

I and our Chair have highlighted the ERA's work by presenting at events like the Energy in WA Conference, WALGA Zone meetings and the Property Council's Flick the Switch event.

Overall, the survey results suggest we have been focusing on the right areas and that our stakeholders are seeing the value of initiatives like these.

Areas we will continue to work on

We will continue to seek out and listen to feedback and continue to look for ways we can improve.

Some stakeholders saw innovation as an area where we can improve. One in five respondents were not satisfied that we demonstrate our core value of being "innovative". A similar proportion were not satisfied that we proactively explore solutions to the challenges facing regulated markets.

This was the first time we asked stakeholders about this topic and we plan to explore it further in future surveys. We are continually reflecting on how we can adapt to changing markets by being flexible within the regulatory frameworks that we are charged with administering.

As one example of this, we are taking a highly proactive approach to monitoring Western Power's progress against the requirements of its fifth Access Arrangement including publishing annual progress reports. We also provided Western Power with some funding to improve rural reliability via trial projects and the development of a longer-term plan. We have commenced thinking about how we can adopt similar innovative approaches as we head into AA6.

We are also pursuing opportunities to innovate through our use of technology and data analytics. As part of our IT Systems and Data Strategy, we are trialling the use of the Databricks Platform and Artificial Intelligence. We foresee these technologies as vastly enhancing our ability to understand and analyse the large volumes of complex data to which we have access as a regulator.

We thank you again for your time participating in our 2024 stakeholder survey and look forward to continuing to engage with you throughout 2025.

Yours sincerely



Jenness Gardner
Chief Executive Officer

Attachment: Summary of the ERA's 2024 Stakeholder Survey Results



Economic Regulation Authority

Stakeholder Survey 2024

July 2024

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Economic Regulation Authority (ERA) commissioned Advantage Communications – Research (Advantage), a WA independent research consultancy to conduct a survey of the ERA’s key client stakeholders to determine satisfaction with the achievement of its goals as well as report on its key performance indicators.

The performance evaluation measures included:

- Performance of the ERA in achieving its 2024-27 strategic plan goals
- Agreement that ERA informs stakeholders and incorporates input
- Performance of ERA in demonstrating core values
- Satisfaction that ERA acts in long-term interests of WA consumers
- Satisfaction with ERA engagement methods
- Overall Satisfaction with ERA Performance

The questionnaire framework used for the research was provided by ERA (see Appendix I). Similar surveys were conducted with the ERA’s client stakeholders in 2009, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2019 and 2021. Given the significant differences between the questionnaires in each of the previous surveys, and in particular omissions and additions in 2024, comparisons between surveys can only be shown where there is a definite continuity.

Survey data collection was carried out over a six week period from 20th June 2024 to 24th July 2024.

130 surveys were completed from 185 valid stakeholders (a response rate of 70%) giving a maximum standard error ratio of +/-4.7% at the 95% confidence level, which satisfies the minimum requirements of the Office of the Auditor General for a maximum standard error ratio of +/-5% at the 95% confidence level. *Further details on the research approach are provided in Section 2.*

Following is an overview of the results for the Key Performance Indicators. *Detailed findings are provided in Section 3.*

Performance Indicators

NOTE:

In the survey, respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction or agreement using a rating scale of 1 to 4: very dissatisfied/strongly disagree to very satisfied/strongly agree. The mean score is calculated based on the average rating of the responses.

In this report, ratings percentages, net percentage ratings for both ‘satisfaction’ and ‘agreement’ and mean scores (out of 4) are calculated using only those respondents who have answered any given question i.e. excluding not applicable or refusals.

Overall Satisfaction

Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with the overall performance of the ERA. As can be seen below, overall satisfaction with the ERA is extremely high, with the vast majority (91%) of the 130 client stakeholders who responded to this question in 2024 indicating they were satisfied (*either very satisfied or satisfied*) with the ERA’s overall performance.

Q13 - Satisfaction with Overall Performance	KPI Rating				
	2024	2021	2019	2017	2014
Overall performance of the ERA (<i>n=130</i>)	91%	92%	81%	84%	72%

Q13 - Satisfaction with Overall Performance	Mean Score				
	2024	2021	2019	2017	2014
Overall performance of the ERA (<i>n=130</i>)	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.8

Satisfaction that ERA acts in the long-term interests of WA consumers

92% of all client stakeholders surveyed felt that the ERA acts in the long-term interests of Western Australian consumers, a 2% increase from 2021.

Q6 – Satisfaction that the ERA acts in the long-term interests of Western Australian consumers	KPI Rating 2024	Mean Score 2024	KPI Rating 2021	Mean Score 2021
The ERA acts in the long-term interests of WA consumers (<i>n=119</i>)	92%	3.2	90%	3.1

Stakeholders were asked their level of agreement that the ERA provides opportunities for stakeholders to give input about its regulatory processes and its work and incorporates that input into its processes. 92% of stakeholders agree that it does.

Q2 - Agreement that ERA informs stakeholders and incorporates input		KPI Rating
	2024	
Overall agreement with ERA methods (n=130)	92%	

Q2 - Agreement that ERA informs stakeholders and incorporates input		Mean Score
	2024	
Overall agreement with ERA methods (n=130)	3.2	

Stakeholders were asked their level of satisfaction that ERA is meeting the goals detailed in its 2024-2027 Strategic Plan.

While the question was designed to provide an overall assessment, the individual questions asked of stakeholders were significantly different to those asked in 2021. As such caution should be exercised when comparing 2024 with previous results.

Q1 - Satisfaction with ERA Meeting Goals		KPI Rating				
	2024	2021	2019	2017	2014	
Overall Satisfaction that ERA Meets Goals	89%	84%	77%	80%	67%	
Average of figures in Q1						

Q1 - Satisfaction with ERA Meeting Goals		Mean Score				
	2024	2021	2019	2017	2014	
Overall Satisfaction that ERA Meets Goals	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.7	
Average of figures in Q1						

Satisfaction with Meeting Goals has increased 5% to 89%.

Q1 –Satisfaction with ERA Meeting Goals	KPI Rating				
	2024	2021	2019	2017	2014
a. Effectively monitoring regulatory compliance and dealing with non-compliance	90%				
b. Providing high quality advice to Government (previously d in 2021)	92%	84%	81%	88%	74%
c. Maintaining certainty for the industries we regulate (previously e in 2021)	91%	85%	76%	75%	62%
d. Delivering regulatory decisions and advice that is fair, evidence-based and appropriate	90%				
e. Communicating our decisions clearly and appropriately	92%				
f. Proactively exploring solutions to the challenges facing regulated markets	77%				

Q1 -Satisfaction with ERA Meeting Goals	Mean Score				
	2024	2021	2019	2017	2014
a. Effectively monitoring regulatory compliance and dealing with non-compliance	3.2				
b. Providing high quality advice to Government	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1	2.8
c. Maintaining certainty for the industries we regulate	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.6
d. Delivering regulatory decisions and advice that is fair, evidence-based and appropriate	3.1				
e. Communicating our decisions clearly and appropriately	3.2				
f. Proactively exploring solutions to the challenges facing regulated markets	2.9				

Q2 – Agreement that ERA informs stakeholders and incorporates input	KPI Rating
	2024
a. The ERA provides adequate opportunities for stakeholders to provide input into its regulatory processes	94%
b. The ERA provides adequate information about its work and how it affects my organisation	90%
c. The ERA explains how information provided by stakeholders has been reviewed and incorporated into its processes	91%

Q2 – Agreement that ERA informs stakeholders and incorporates input	Mean Score
	2024
a. The ERA provides adequate opportunities for stakeholders to provide input into its regulatory processes	3.3
b. The ERA provides adequate information about its work and how it affects my organisation	3.1
c. The ERA explains how information provided by stakeholders has been reviewed and incorporated into its processes	3.1

Satisfaction that ERA Demonstrates Core Values

The ERA has performed well in demonstrating core values within a net agreement range of 75% to 98%.

The highest scores were “Integrity” at 98%, and “Professional” and “Respectful” both at 97%.

Only “Innovative” (at 75%) fell below 89%

This year’s Overall Satisfaction rating fell to 92% from 94% in 2021.

Q4 – Satisfaction that ERA demonstrates core values	KPI Rating 2024	Mean Score 2024	KPI Rating 2021	Mean Score 2021
Integrity	98%	3.4	98%	3.3
Excellence	95%	3.2	92%	3.1
Trust	94%	3.3		
Consultative	93%	3.2		
Transparent	89%	3.2	91%	3.2
Professional	97%	3.4	98%	3.4
Impartial	94%	3.2	93%	3.2
Respectful	97%	3.4	97%	3.3
Accountable	90%	3.2		
Innovative	75%	2.9		
Overall Satisfaction that ERA Demonstrates Key Values	92%	3.2	94%	3.2

Satisfaction with the engagement methods of the ERA

95% of all client stakeholders were satisfied with the engagement methods of the ERA.

New question in 2024.

Q8 – Satisfaction with the engagement methods of the ERA	KPI Rating 2024	Mean Score 2024
Satisfaction with the engagement methods of the ERA (n=129)	95%	3.3