



Alinta

# Switched on service

Electricity Customer Service Charter

Alinta Sales Pty Ltd





### ***Our Customer Service Charter: For small use customers only***

As noted above, this Customer Service Charter applies to our **small use customers** only. You're considered a small use customer if you consume less than 160MWh of electricity per year. As a rough guide, 160MWh of electricity per year amounts to an annual electricity account of approximately \$28,000 [although that depends on the price you pay for electricity].

We can only sell electricity to small use customers within our licence area. In general terms, this is currently the area of Western Australia that is served by the South West Interconnected System ["**SWIS**"]. The SWIS area extends from Kalbarri in the north to Albany in the south, and also eastwards to Kalgoorlie. The SWIS includes a range of equipment such as powerlines, substations and metering facilities.

At this time, we are not allowed to supply electricity to customers who are connected to the SWIS and consume less than 50MWh of electricity per year. This may change in future if the Western Australian electricity industry is deregulated further.

### ***Changes to our Customer Service Charter***

We may vary this Customer Service Charter from time to time. We'll notify you if any variation results in a change to your rights or obligations as an Alinta customer. At any time, you can ask us to send the latest version of the Customer Service Charter to you, free of charge.

### **OUR ROLE: ELECTRICITY RETAILER**

As an electricity retailer, we're responsible for purchasing electricity and then selling electricity to you. We're also responsible for:

- Establishing and managing your account;
- Dealing with any enquiries you may have about your account; and
- Keeping you informed about issues relating specifically to your electricity supply.

### **WESTERN POWER'S ROLE: ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTOR**

The electricity distributor [referred to in this document as the "**Network Operator**"] plays a vital role in delivering electricity to your premises.

In the areas of Western Australia where we are licensed to sell electricity, Western Power is the Network Operator. As the Network Operator, Western Power is responsible for:

- Operating and maintaining the equipment that delivers power to you [including your electricity meter]; and
- Managing and maintaining the electricity transmission and distribution network that makes up the SWIS.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**

When you call us at Alinta, our friendly and experienced customer service representatives are available to answer your enquiries. If no customer service representatives are available at that moment, your call will be placed in a queue to ensure you speak to someone as soon as possible.

### ***Our commitment to you***

- *When you call our customer service numbers, we aim to answer 75% of all calls within 20 seconds.*

### ***How to contact us***

Our Customer Contact Centre is open Monday to Friday during business hours. We can help you with:

- Account enquiries – including new accounts, final accounts, account transfers and payments
- New connections
- Disconnections
- Reconnections
- Other products and services
- Suggestions and concerns

## **Call 13 13 58**

*[Local call fee from anywhere in WA, excluding mobiles]*

If you're in Australia but outside WA, please call us on **1800 677 945** during business hours [WST].

If you're overseas, please call us on **+61 8 9486 3000**.

Email: **customer.services@alinta.net.au**

Fax: **1800 651 161**

Mail to: **Customer Enquiries, Alinta  
Locked Bag 55, PERTH BC WA 6849**

Online: **www.alinta.net.au**

### ***Customers with special needs***

If you need help to interpret the information we provide, please call **13 13 58** or visit **www.alinta.net.au** for details.

### **TTY Phone – 1300 306 006**

If you have hearing or speech difficulties and have access to a TTY [telephone typewriter] phone, please call us on **1300 306 006**.

### **Telephone Interpreter Service – 13 14 50**

If you have difficulty communicating in English, please call **13 14 50**.



### ***Our marketing communications***

We're committed to providing the highest standards of behaviour in the way in which we market our products and services to you, and we have specific obligations under the *Code of Conduct*. These obligations govern how, where and when we can make contact with you, to protect you from undesirable marketing conduct. We're also required to give you certain information before, at the time or shortly after you enter into an electricity supply contract with us.

The *Code of Conduct* outlines specific service standards that we must follow when selling electricity products and services to you over the telephone, at your premises or electronically, and when collecting or using personal information from you for marketing purposes.

### ***Changes to tariffs and charges***

The *Code of Conduct* describes how we need to notify you of any changes in our tariffs from time to time.

If you would like information about the tariffs and charges you pay, or any concessions, rebates or subsidies that may be available to you, please call us on **13 13 58**.

### ***Money-saving tips***

We can share information about the most cost-effective and efficient ways to utilise electricity, including typical running costs of major domestic appliances and how to arrange an energy-efficiency audit of your premises.

If you would like more information about saving energy and money, please visit **www.alinta.net.au** or call **13 13 58**.

## **FAULTS AND EMERGENCIES**

### ***Electrical emergency line 13 13 51***

If you experience a fault, supply interruption or emergency involving your electricity supply, please call **13 13 51**.

This is the Network Operator's 24-hour emergency line for:

- Information about the nature of the fault or emergency; and
- An estimate of how long it will take for your electricity supply to be restored.

If you call this number from a fixed line anywhere in Western Australia, you'll be charged the cost of a local call. Higher costs will apply if you use your mobile phone to call.

### ***Your safety in an emergency***

Your safety and the safety of the community is our most important priority, and we're committed to working with the Network Operator to fulfil that responsibility.

Under the *Energy Operators [Powers] Act 1979* [WA] and the *Electricity Act 1945* [WA], the Network Operator has various powers relating to:

- The supply of electricity;
- Access to premises in the event of an emergency; and
- Removal or repair of network equipment.

If an emergency situation occurs (or is likely to occur), we can arrange for the Network Operator to disconnect your electricity supply. For your own safety, you must also allow us and/or the Network Operator to enter your premises in emergency situations to rectify any damage. This will help to restore your electricity supply as soon as possible after the emergency.

## **AT YOUR SERVICE**

### ***New electricity connections***

If you would like to purchase electricity from us, please visit **www.alinta.net.au** or call **13 13 58**.

Once your contract is signed, an Alinta representative will liaise with you to organise all aspects of the connection. We'll organise for the Network Operator to connect and energise your premises within the timeframe outlined in the *Code of Conduct*.

When you open a new account, we need to know if there is anybody living at the supply address who needs life support equipment. This includes any equipment recognised as life support equipment by the Life Support Equipment Electricity Subsidy Scheme, such as peritoneal dialysis machines, heart pumps, certain oxygen concentrators, feeding pumps, suction pumps, apnoea monitors (for children only) and nebulisers (for children only).

### ***Moving premises***

The *Code of Conduct* and our Non Standard Contract specify what your obligations are when you move or vacate premises, and how we calculate your final account.

Please allow at least three [3] business days prior notice for us to organise for your meter to be read and prepare your final account. This will ensure that you only pay for electricity up until the day you leave your premises.

If you would like to open a new electricity account for your new premises, please call us on **13 13 58**. We'll arrange for the Network Operator to connect [if required] and energise your new premises, and establish a new account for your new address.

If you would like to terminate your contract with us, please read your electricity supply contract carefully, as it explains your obligations in more detail.

### ***Your obligations using electricity***

As one of our electricity customers, you have certain obligations to use your electricity in a safe and approved manner. The points below are particularly important:

- The electricity we supply to your premises cannot be used at another address, and electricity we have provided to another address cannot be used at your address.
- You may not supply electricity to any other person unless by agreement with us.
- You must not tamper with or bypass the meter at your property, or allow anyone else to do so.
- You must not prevent or hinder representatives from Alinta or the Network Operator from accessing your premises to read your electricity meter.

Please see your contract for more details about these and other obligations.

### ***Reasons you may be disconnected***

We may direct the Network Operator to disconnect the electricity supply to your premises for a number of reasons, including:

- If it is required for health and safety reasons, or by law;
- If your account is not paid;
- If you deny us, or the Network Operator, access to the meter on your premises for at least 12 consecutive months;
- If you obtain electricity illegally; or
- For any other reason listed in your electricity supply contract.

### ***When we cannot disconnect you***

Except in the case of an emergency, there are some situations where we cannot disconnect your electricity. These include:

- If you have made a complaint to the Energy Ombudsman that relates to the reason why your electricity is to be disconnected, and the complaint hasn't been resolved yet;
- If it's after 3.00pm on Monday to Thursday; or after 12.00pm on a Friday;
- If it's a Saturday, Sunday, public holiday or the business day before a public holiday [except where we plan to only temporarily interrupt your electricity supply];
- If you fail to pay a bill by the due date but you have provided us with a written statement from a medical practitioner to prove that you need a continued supply of electricity to protect the health of a person living at your premises [even in an emergency]; or
- For any other reason listed in your electricity supply contract.

### ***Disconnection for failing to pay your account***

Before we ask the Network Operator to disconnect your electricity for failing to pay your account, we will:

- Send you a reminder notice;
- Try to contact you personally by letter, fax or telephone; and
- If you still haven't paid the account, send you a written disconnection warning giving you at least five [5] business days notice that we intend to disconnect your electricity.

You cannot be disconnected for at least 24 business days from the date of dispatch of an account. The *Code of Conduct* details other circumstances where we cannot arrange for your electricity to be disconnected for failure to pay an account [e.g. If the amount outstanding is less than a specified amount and you have agreed to repay the amount outstanding, or the outstanding amount does not relate to the supply of electricity].

If you have trouble paying your electricity bill, please call **13 13 58** to discuss how we can help you.

### ***Disconnection for failing to provide access to your meter***

Before we ask the Network Operator to disconnect your electricity for failing to give access to your electricity meter for more than 12 months, we will:

- Give you at least five [5] business days written notice requesting access to your meter, and advising you that we may need to disconnect your supply;
- Give you an opportunity to provide reasonable alternative access arrangements;
- Inform you of any alternative meters that are suitable for your premises; and
- Try to contact you and send you a disconnection warning giving you at least five [5] business days notice in writing that we intend to disconnect your electricity.

### ***Getting your electricity reconnected***

You can find details about reconnecting the supply of electricity in certain circumstances in the *Code of Conduct*.

If your electricity supply is disconnected because:

- You have not paid your account;
- You have not provided access to your meter; or
- You have used electricity illegally,

you can remedy the situation and then ask us to reconnect your electricity supply. We will then request that the Network Operator reconnect your electricity on:

- The same day, if your request is made before 3.00pm on a business day; or
- The next business day, if your request is received after 3.00pm or on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday.

After we send the Network Operator a request on your behalf, if your supply address is in a metropolitan area [which is defined to include Perth, the Mandurah and Murray local government districts and Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie], the Network Operator must reconnect your electricity:

- Within one [1] business day of receiving our request, if the request is received before 3.00pm on a business day; or
- Within two [2] business days of receiving our request, if the request is received after 3.00pm on a business day, or on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday.

If your supply address is in a regional area, the Network Operator must reconnect your electricity:

- Within five [5] business days of receiving our request, if the request is received before 3.00pm on a business day; or
- Within six [6] business days of receiving our request, if the request is received after 3.00pm on a business day, or on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday.

## YOUR ALINTA ACCOUNT

### *Paying your account*

The *Code of Conduct* describes the kind of information we need to include with your account and how frequently we can issue accounts.

Unless otherwise agreed, you'll receive an account from us approximately once every month. You need to pay by the due date specified in your account. Please note that interest and other charges on overdue accounts will apply in most cases, and these will be detailed in your account.

If you have trouble paying your account by the due date, please call us on **13 13 58** to discuss how we can help you. For example, we may be able to set up alternative payment arrangements with you or redirect your accounts to a third party.

We offer a range of easy payment methods for you to pay your account, including:

- Electronic Funds Transfer;
- BPay; and
- Credit card [Visa or Mastercard] payment online or over the telephone.

### *Financial hardship*

If you're a residential customer who is experiencing financial hardship, we may be able to help you by making alternative payment arrangements with you.

If you would like a free copy of our "Hardship Policy", please call us on **13 13 58**.

## ***How your electricity account is calculated***

The amount we bill you is based on a reading of the electricity meter at your premises. Your meter measures how much electricity you have used, and gives us an accurate, up-to-date record of your electricity consumption. Electricity meters are read every month for most customers and every two months for others.

The Network Operator is obliged to provide you with historical consumption data if you request it. You can also ask us to arrange a reading of your meter as outlined below.

### ***Our commitment to you***

- *If you would like a final reading and give us 3 business days notice, your meter will be read on the week day you nominate.*
- *If you would like your meter re-read because you believe the meter reading was incorrect, we'll organise for your meter to be re-read and advise you of the result within 7 business days of your request.*

The Network Operator charges us for each meter reading, so if you ask us to re-read your meter, and there was no error in the original meter reading, you'll be charged a fee. If an error has been made, you will not be charged a fee and we'll adjust your account for any undercharging or overcharging caused by the error.

### ***Meter testing***

If you think your meter may be faulty, you can ask us to arrange a test of your meter. You need to pay us a fee for arranging the test, which covers the amount that the Network Operator charges us, but we'll refund this amount to you if the meter is found to be faulty. We'll also adjust your account for any undercharging or overcharging caused by a faulty meter.

### ***Estimated accounts***

If for some reason we don't have an actual meter reading available when we prepare your account, we'll provide you with an estimate of your electricity consumption in order to calculate your account.

If we have estimated the amount of electricity, we'll let you know on your bill, and we're happy to provide you with the basis of our estimation if you ask for it.

If your account has been estimated, but we then receive actual metering data, we'll adjust your account to reflect any differences in the charges. This is to stop you being disadvantaged as a result of receiving an estimated account.

## Tariffs

Your tariff, which is the price you pay for the electricity you use, will be specified in your contract. This amount will vary depending on your contract. If circumstances change that affect your tariff [e.g. if your electricity use changes significantly], we'll let you know about the change of price in writing.

If we undercharge or overcharge you for electricity, we'll follow the procedures outlined in the *Code of Conduct*, which limits our rights to recover undercharged amounts from you. If you would like further information about these procedures, please call us on **13 13 58**.

## Service Standard Payments

We aim to provide you with the best possible service at all times. In the *Code of Conduct*, you'll find details of certain circumstances in which you may be eligible to apply for service standard payments. These include:

- If we fail to follow any of the required procedures before disconnecting you for failure to pay a bill, we must pay you \$50 for each day that you were wrongfully disconnected, up to a maximum of \$250.
- If we fail to arrange the reconnection of your electricity supply within the required timeframes, we must pay you \$50 for each day that the reconnection is late, up to a maximum of \$250.
- If you make a written query or complaint, we must acknowledge your query or complaint within 10 business days, and respond by addressing the matters in the query or complaint within 20 business days. If we fail to acknowledge or respond to your query or complaint within these timeframes, we must pay you \$20.

You can apply to receive a service standard payment within 3 months of the date when you believe we failed to meet the required service standards. Please note, only one payment can be made to each affected supply address for each service standards failure.

If our failure to comply with the required service standards is because of events or conditions outside our control, or the Network Operator's control, we are not liable to make service standard payments.

## PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Your privacy is extremely important to us, so:

- We will keep your personal information confidential;
- We will only use your personal information for our business purposes [e.g. for debt collection purposes or to fully investigate complaints]; and
- We will not pass your personal information to anyone else unless we are required to do so by law, or you give us permission to do so [including where we are allowed to under your electricity supply contract].

We'll make sure that our marketing representatives keep your personal information private and confidential. Please see the *Code of Conduct* for more details about our obligations in this regard.

We may provide you with joint promotional offers in conjunction with other third parties. These promotional offers are developed in line with your needs, but if you would rather not receive this information, please call us on **13 13 58**.

## YOUR FEEDBACK IS VALUABLE

At Alinta, we are committed to delivering the highest levels of service to you. If our efforts do not meet your expectations, we'd like to know so we can prevent it from happening again. We also appreciate any positive feedback from you so we know whether we're achieving our customer service goals.

If you would like to give us feedback on our service, please contact us:

- Call **13 13 58**
- Mail your comments to  
**Customer Services, Alinta  
Locked Bag 55, PERTH BC WA 6849**
- Fax your comments to **1800 651 161**
- Email your comments to **customer.services@alinta.net.au**

### *Our commitment to you*

- *If you have a complaint about us or one of our alliance partners or service providers, we guarantee that it will be taken seriously and fully investigated.*
- *If you write to us, we'll respond within 7 business days of receiving your letter, fax or email.*
- *If you call us, we'll do our best to solve the problem right then. If that's not possible, we'll call you back at an agreed time with a solution. Otherwise we'll give you the name and phone number of a person who will help you.*

### ***If you have a complaint***

Our complaint handling policy was developed in accordance with the *Australian Standard on Complaints Handling* and the *Code of Conduct*. Our policy addresses how we deal with complaints, how we distinguish general queries from complaints, and how and when we will respond to you if you make a complaint.

If you have a complaint, our Customer Contact Centre will usually be your first point of contact. Our friendly staff members are trained to handle and resolve disputes, so your complaint will be responded to immediately during your initial conversation.

If we're not able to resolve your complaint immediately, it will be escalated. We'll respond within seven (7) business days of receiving the escalated complaint. We'll involve the relevant people within Alinta [including senior management when necessary] to help resolve your complaint.

If you would like further information about our complaints handling process, please call us on **13 13 58**.

### **Contacting the Energy Ombudsman**

If you're not satisfied with the resolution of your complaint, you can contact the Energy Ombudsman, an independent external dispute resolution body which helps to mediate and resolve customer disputes. There is no charge to you for this service.

The Energy Ombudsman for Western Australia can be contacted:

- By phone: 08 9220 7588  
Freecall: 1800 754 004  
[mobiles charged at applicable rates]
- By email: [energy@ombudsman.wa.gov.au](mailto:energy@ombudsman.wa.gov.au)
- Online at: [www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/energy](http://www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/energy)

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

#### **Business enquiries 13 13 58**

Monday to Friday during business hours  
[customer.services@alinta.net.au](mailto:customer.services@alinta.net.au)  
[www.alinta.net.au](http://www.alinta.net.au)

#### **Electrical emergencies 13 13 51**

7 days a week, 24 hours a day  
[www.westernpower.com.au](http://www.westernpower.com.au)

#### **For more information about your electricity supply**

You can find out more about your electricity supply from the following sources:

- Economic Regulation Authority  
[www.era.wa.gov.au](http://www.era.wa.gov.au)  
Phone: 08 9213 1900
- Office of Energy  
[www.energy.wa.gov.au](http://www.energy.wa.gov.au)  
Phone: 08 9420 5600
- Director of Energy Safety  
[www.commerce.wa.gov.au/EnergySafety/](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/EnergySafety/)  
Phone: 08 9422 5200

If you would like a copy of the *Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers*, please visit [www.era.wa.gov.au/2/421/51/codes.pm](http://www.era.wa.gov.au/2/421/51/codes.pm)

The Code regulates and controls the conduct of electricity marketing agents, retailers and distributors, defines the required standards of conduct in the supply and marketing of electricity, and protects you from undesirable marketing conduct.

If you would like a copy of *The Electricity Industry [Customer Contract] Regulations 2005* [WA], please visit [www.slp.wa.gov.au](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au)

The regulations outline the matters that need to be addressed in your contracts within the electricity industry.

There is also a wide range of legislation in place to govern the electricity industry in Western Australia. This includes the:

- *Electricity Industry Act 2004* [WA];
- *Energy Operators [Powers] Act 1979* [WA];
- *Electricity Corporations Act 2005* [WA]; and
- *Electricity Act 1945* [WA].

If you would like information about those or other relevant documents [or copies of them], please visit the Office of Energy website at [www.energy.wa.gov.au](http://www.energy.wa.gov.au), or the State Law Publisher website at [www.slp.wa.gov.au](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au)





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