

## Retail Market Review – Reference Group

# Terms of Reference

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this reference group is to provide a regular forum, alongside the wider consultation process, for the commission to:

- obtain a variety of perspectives, insights and knowledge to inform our approach to the work program
- receive feedback and briefings to ensure we understand the concerns and issues the sector and consumers face.

### **Scope**

The scope of the reference group is to cover all aspects of the work program. That is, both those relating to code changes and those relating to pricing methodologies and the competitiveness review.

### **Authority**

The reference group is an important forum through which members can provide feedback to the commission, however group does not have any decision making authority. Furthermore, it is not envisaged that this group is required to vote on issues. Where a general consensus is apparent this will be recorded by the secretariat.

### **Membership**

To ensure the reference group can fulfil its objectives in an efficient manner, membership of the organisation is kept to a reasonable size and be focused on ensuring a broad spectrum of stakeholders are involved.

It is filled on the basis of the alignment between their skills and experience and the objectives of the reference group, following an open expression of interest process.

Engagement with the reference group will not take the place of open, public consultation with all stakeholders.

The commission will publish the names of member organisations on our website. It is anticipated that all members will at some point be invited to present to the group on matters relating to their expertise.

Membership of the reference group is set out in table 1.

**Table 1. Reference group membership**

Organisation category	No.	Member organisations
Consumer Advocacy Organisations	4	Brotherhood of St Laurence, Consumer Action Law Centre, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Victorian Council of Social Services
Retailer (AEC members)	2	AGL, Red Energy
Retailer (non-AEC member)	1	Powershop
Retailer ('new energy' service provider)	1	Onsite Energy Solutions,
Retailer Industry body	1	Australian Energy Council
Ombudsman	1	Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria
Research institutes/academic/policy experts	1	Centre for Urban Research (RMIT)

Relevant policy departments and regulators will be invited as observers.

## Frequency

The reference group will meet on a monthly basis unless otherwise deemed necessary by the chair or group. A forward calendar of meetings is attached to this terms of reference.

## Duration

Initially, the reference group will be convened to the end of January 2019, to align with the timing of key deliverables. In late 2018, we will canvas stakeholder views on extending the reference group into 2019.

## Chair and Secretariat

The group is to be chaired by Essential Services Commission

The secretariat function will be filled by the commission. This includes:

- the distribution of the agenda and meeting papers in preparation of the meetings
- recording and distribution of meeting minutes and forward meeting schedule

- recording of items that require further formal consideration

The commission will endeavour to distribute agendas one week prior to each meeting, and to distribute minutes within one week following. Minutes will be published once endorsed by the group.

## **Quorum**

At least one third of the members required to be present to ensure the quorum of the reference group.

## **Confidentiality**

It is important that members feel free to contribute honestly and that there is a level of trust between the members.

All electronic and written documents are for stakeholder reference group members with the expectation that members will distribute these documents only for obtaining feedback from the groups they represent.

## ATTACHMENT: Retail Market Review - Reference group forward calendar

Meetings will be held at the ESC offices unless otherwise specified.

Dates may change as deemed necessary by the chair or group.

#	Date	Time
2	22 May 2018 (Tuesday)	10:00-11:00am
3	19 June 2018 (Tuesday)	10:00-11:00am
4	17 July 2018 (Tuesday)	10:00-11:00am
5	21 August 2018 (Tuesday)	10:00-11:00am
6	18 September 2018 (Tuesday)	10:00-11:00am
7	16 October 2018 (Tuesday)	10:00-11:00am
8	20 November 2018 (Tuesday)	10:00-11:00am
9	18 December 2018 (Tuesday)	10:00-11:00am
10	15 January 2019 (Tuesday)	10:00-11:00am
<i>We will review the ongoing need for a reference group in late 2018 and schedule additional meetings if necessary</i>		