

Working together to better protect people experiencing family violence

The state's energy regulator is working with family violence specialists and the energy industry to put in place safeguards for energy customers who are dealing with family violence.

In a paper released today, the commission outlines how energy retailers can improve their processes to provide safe and effective support to customers and staff experiencing family violence.

Essential Services Commission chair Ron Ben-David says energy sector workers deal directly with people experiencing family violence.

'Our aim is to ensure energy companies can deliver the support and protection vulnerable customers need, particularly in terms of privacy and information security.'

The paper, entitled Providing Family Violence Support, looks at five overarching strategies energy businesses can adopt to ensure they are providing the right kind of support at the point it is needed.

Dr Ben-David says when it comes to family violence, regulators need to think beyond markets and competition, and instead focus on the safety and welfare of customers and staff.

'Our immediate focus is on creating an open and constructive dialogue between energy retailers, family violence experts and the commission,' he said.

'None of us should presume to have all the answers, but we should all commit to searching for them,' Dr Ben-David said.

The commission is seeking comments on its issues paper until 7 December 2018, with draft changes to the Energy Retail Code released in early 2019. Find information on how to submit and additional information on the project at: <https://www.esc.vic.gov.au/family-violence>.

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