

27 September 2023

Dear Retailer,

### **Better Bills Guideline energy rebate message**

The AER has decided to amend its previous decision made under section 37 of the Better Bills Guideline version 2 and published on 10 August that requires retailers to include a statement on small customers' electricity bills as part of Tier 1 information.

The amendment to the AER's decision of 10 August is that the energy rebate message included in that decision will not apply in relation to residential electricity customers in Queensland.

As such, retailers operating in Queensland will not need to comply with the AER's previous 10 August decision in relation to Queensland residential customers electricity bills.

For the avoidance of doubt, the messages contained in the AER's 10 August letter remain unchanged and continue to apply outside of Queensland.

Further, the message contained in the AER's 10 August letter will continue to apply in respect of small business electricity customers in Queensland.

### **The AER's amended decision**

The amended decision under section 37 of the Better Bills Guideline version 2 is as follows.

Effective from 30 September 2023, the following statements must be included as part of Tier 1 information for small customers.

1. For all retailers who sell electricity in South Australia, New South Wales and Tasmania (with the exception of Icon Retail Investments Limited and AGL ACT Retail Investments Pty Ltd (trading as ActewAGL Retail)), the following statement must be included as Tier 1 information on small customers' electricity bills in those states:

*The Australian Government and your State Government are supporting customers to reduce bills. Check the understand your bill section to see if you have received a rebate or concession. More information at [energy.gov.au](http://energy.gov.au)*

2. For all retailers who sell electricity in Queensland, the following statement must be included as Tier 1 information on electricity bills of small customers in Queensland other than residential customers:

*The Australian Government and your State Government are supporting customers to reduce bills. Check the understand your bill section to see if you have received a rebate or concession. More information at [energy.gov.au](http://energy.gov.au)*

3. For all retailers who sell electricity in the Australian Capital Territory, with the exception of ActewAGL Retail, the following statement must be included as Tier 1 information on small customers' electricity bills in the ACT:

*The Australian and ACT Governments are supporting customers to reduce bills. Check the understand your bill section to see if you have received a rebate or concession. More information at [energy.gov.au](http://energy.gov.au)*

4. For ActewAGL, the following statement must be included as Tier 1 information on small customers' electricity bills:

*The Australian Government and your State or Territory government are supporting customers to reduce bills. Check the understand your bill section to see if you have received a rebate or concession. More information at [energy.gov.au](http://energy.gov.au)*

## **Background**

Since the AER published its previous section 37 decision on 10 August, the Queensland Department of Energy and Works (DPW) has advised the AER that the Queensland Government intends to derogate from the current Tier 1 message in order to implement a new Tier 1 message for residential electricity customers.

The Queensland DPW has asked that the AER:

- vacate the application of its 10 August decision to retailers operating in Queensland,
- advise retailers of the change (including that Queensland will derogate from the Better Bills guideline), and
- that the AER will not enforce that aspect of the Guideline from 30 September

The AER considers that given the Queensland Government intends to derogate from the current Tier 1 message it is appropriate that the AER provides certainty to retailers that its 10 August 2023 decision will not apply in the Queensland jurisdiction in relation to residential electricity customers in that state. The AER considers that the decision may also help to mitigate any cost increases associated with having to prepare two versions of the message in Queensland for residential electricity customers.

## **Implementation considerations**

The AER also notes that the dis-application of the 10 August decision to residential electricity consumers in Queensland is occurring shortly before the implementation of the implementation of new billing requirements in the Better Bills Guideline on 30 September and that retailers will be finalising readiness for this based on the AER's 10 August message.

This may result in circumstances where retailers in Queensland are placing the AER 10 August energy rebate message on residential electricity bills as Tier 1 information when they are no longer authorised to do so.

In view of this and recognising the proximity to the 30 September implementation date, we would ask retailers to take steps to remove the AER message as soon as reasonably practicable.

Yours sincerely



Clare Savage  
Chair  
Australian Energy Regulator