



Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

2025-30 Regulatory Determination Proposals

2025 Regulatory Determination Project



Part of Energy Queensland

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1.0 Context

Ergon Energy Network and Energex, part of the Energy Queensland Group of companies are responsible for the distribution of electricity across Queensland. Ergon Energy Network delivers electricity to more than 740,000 homes and businesses across an area that spans 97% of Queensland, while Energex delivers electricity to more than 1.4 million homes and businesses in South-East Queensland.



Part of Energy Queensland

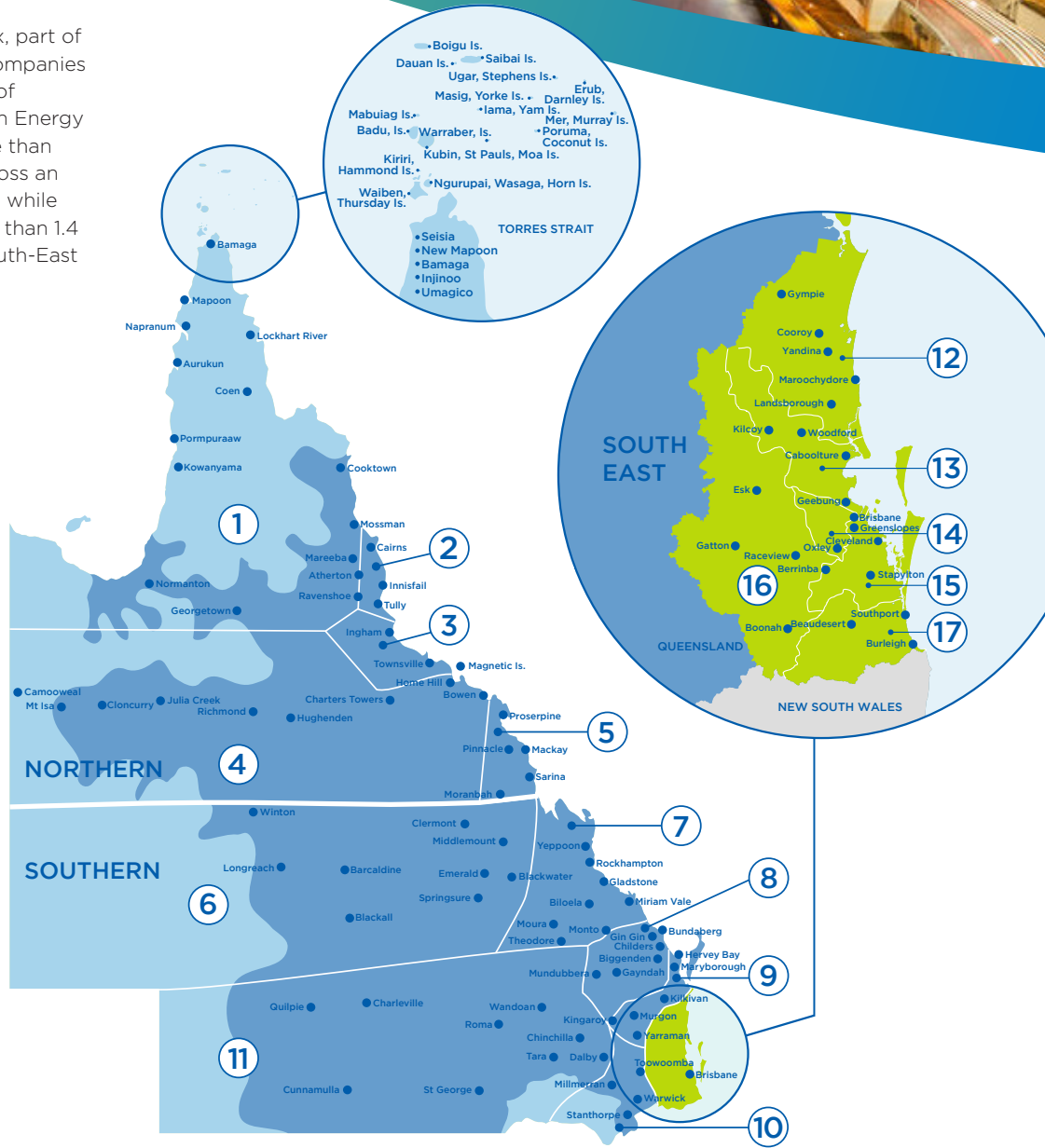
Ergon Energy Network's distribution network supplies North, Central and Southern Queensland.

Around 70% of the Ergon Energy Network runs through rural Queensland, across a vast service area, by far the largest in the National Electricity Market, with lower population densities per network kilometre.



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Energex's distribution network supplies electricity to South East Queensland, servicing high density population areas, including Brisbane Central Business District, the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast areas, as well as the South East's extensive urban and rural areas.



- Ergon Energy Distribution Network
- Ergon Energy Isolated Supply
- Energex Distribution Network

Our 17 service areas

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Far North | 7 Capricornia | 13 Brisbane North |
| 2 Tropical Coast | 8 Bundaberg Burnett | 14 Brisbane Central |
| 3 Herbert | 9 Fraser Burnett | 15 Brisbane South |
| 4 Flinders | 10 Darling Downs | 16 Ipswich Lockyer |
| 5 Pioneer | 11 South West | 17 Gold Coast |
| 6 Central West | 12 Sunshine Coast | |



2.0 Purpose

As Distribution Network Service Providers (DNSPs) we are natural monopolies and, as such, are subject to economic regulation by the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) under Chapter 6 of the National Electricity Rules. Under the current regulatory framework, every five years we submit regulatory proposals and tariff structure statements to the AER, setting out, among other things, our proposed investment plans, revenue allowances and tariff structures for the coming five-year regulatory control period. Through this process, the AER will assess our proposals and set the efficient revenues and prices that we can recover from our customers over the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2030. This process of determining the efficient revenues and prices is referred to as the 'Regulatory Determination' or 'Reset' process.

As part of the process, we are committed to building on our existing business-as-usual engagement activities to ensure ongoing effective, genuine and authentic engagement with our customers and stakeholders throughout Queensland. Together with the insights provided by our customers and stakeholders through our past and current engagements, we will ensure that additional insights from our specific 'reset' engagements will collectively inform and help shape our proposals. This will ensure our business strategy, investments and operations for the 2025-30 regulatory period and beyond, reflect the wider voice of our customers and communities and take account of what matters most to them in the provision of electricity distribution services.

Owned by the Queensland Government, via our two shareholding Ministers – the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment, and the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement – we also align with Government policy to deliver on behalf of our communities across Queensland.

In September 2022, the Queensland Government released the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP), a pathway to energy transition for Queensland. It highlighted a commitment to a renewables energy target of 70 per cent by 2032 and 80 per cent by 2035 with several initiatives that will involve work to be undertaken by Ergon Energy Network and Energex. In addition, the Queensland Government will plan and host the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, with new infrastructure and venues to be built across the state, that together with the QEJP must also be considered as part of our 2025-30 regulatory proposals.

This Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (the Plan) builds on our 2025-30 Regulatory Determination Proposals Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (November 2022), co-designed with customers and stakeholders through interactive online discussions and workshops in the latter part of 2022. Its purpose is to determine, develop, implement and evaluate our customer and stakeholder engagement consultation deliverables in developing customer-centric regulatory proposals to the AER for both businesses.

The Plan sets out the steps that we are taking to deliver regulatory proposals that will be shaped by the input of our customers and stakeholders and that reflect their needs and preferences. It outlines the engagement we will be undertaking and explains why we have chosen to engage with specific customer segments and stakeholders and why we have chosen particular engagement methods.

The Plan considers:

- the scope of what we will engage on and our approaches to ensuring that customers and stakeholders are given the opportunity to shape the parts of our proposals that they can influence,
- the specific customer and stakeholder groups we will engage with and how we will listen to them through the engagement process,
- how we are leveraging our established business-as-usual engagement methods and insights to inform the engagement and discussions to be undertaken,
- our new bespoke engagement channels and techniques to be adopted,
- how we will capture our customers' and stakeholders' feedback and report on how that feedback has influenced our proposals,
- the methods we will use to blend and seek consensus (where possible), and
- the governance and evaluation processes to be undertaken.

3.0 Scope of engagement

3.1 Building on our existing engagement activities and insights

The scope of this Plan is limited to the implementation and evaluation of the communication, engagement and consultation required to support customers, stakeholders and the business in the development of the Ergon Energy Network and Energex regulatory determination submission proposals to the AER. However, it takes account of, and builds on, our existing customer and stakeholder engagement techniques and program of activities undertaken over the past several years since our previous regulatory reset process, where we have evolved and matured in establishing a partnership approach and open, transparent dialogue with our customers and stakeholders.

Insights provided through our business-as-usual Customer and Community Council, other bespoke customer and stakeholder forums and our research and insights program, including the annual Queensland Household Energy Survey, customer journey mapping exercises, and our Voice of the Customer program, will also feature in the engagement activities to be undertaken. These insights will be blended into our engagements to help set the scene for informed conversations and ensure efficiency in the execution of the Plan so we remain focused on the topics and issues that matter most in the timeframes available to engage on the regulatory proposals. See **Section 9.0 Existing Engagement Channels and Techniques** for more information on our existing engagement activities and insights.

Although this Plan covers both DNSPs, the nature and execution of some of elements of the approach and associated activities may vary between DNSP service area, in recognition of the unique needs of customers and stakeholders across the varying remote, regional and metropolitan areas of Queensland and the different priorities and issues they often experience.

3.2 Engagement themes and topics

Our engagement will be focused on several key themes and specifically the related topics that our customers and stakeholders can actually influence through the regulatory proposals engagement. We believe that providing clarity around the topics our customers and stakeholders can influence will help manage expectations and ensure time is provided to have meaningful and in-depth discussions on those topics.

3.3 Engagement themes and topics framework

We have developed a series of overarching themes to guide our engagement discussions with our customers and stakeholders, based on the insights they have provided through our early engagement activities on our regulatory proposals process and business-as-usual engagements. The themes developed are based on the energy challenges and most material issues our customers and stakeholders have told us are important to them (See **Section 8.0 Energy Challenges and Material Issues Informing Our Engagement**). They provide a useful framework in helping group our key overarching topics for engagement together in a way that we believe makes it easy for our customers and stakeholders to understand.



The key overarching themes to be engaged on are, **Reliable, Smart, Affordable and Clean**.



As outlined in our engagement themes and topics framework we see ‘Customer Service Excellence’ at the centre of our business and activities and at the heart of all the themes and topics to be discussed.

As an essential service provider, Customer Service Excellence also includes our commitment to safety which we recognise as a given customer and stakeholder expectation in our strategic planning and operational activities. As such, safety will feature in our narrative, and discussions where relevant, but not as an overarching engagement theme.

Our key engagement themes are elaborated on below:

THEMES	TOPICS
 <p>Reliable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts of climate change and our DNSPs’ role Network resilience Cybersecurity Long term asset strategy Varying dependency on levels of reliability Stand Alone Power Systems (SAPS) Demand management
 <p>Smart</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing customer behaviours and expectations Increase in new technologies (Electric vehicles, batteries etc.) Dynamic Operating Envelopes The role of tariff reform and demand management Smart meter rollout Electrification of new loads Distribution System Operator
 <p>Affordable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our DNSPs’ role in power bills How retailers translate our tariffs Who pays – equitable allocation of costs Intergenerational equity Access to technology and the role of tariff reform Competing challenges – cost versus risk Stand Alone Power Systems (SAPS)
 <p>Clean</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The path to net zero (including cost versus trade-offs) Supporting uptake of distributed energy resources Equitable allocation of costs – tariffs Intergenerational equity

As part of our commitment to making it easy for customers and stakeholders to engage, these themes and topics will be utilised to inform our approach to providing the context and setting the scene in our engagement activities. They will help frame the conversation so that the information, materials provided and language utilised resonates with those participating in the engagements.

3.4 Engagement subtopics, impacts and level of influence

Sitting under the overarching themes and topics outlined above, is an extensive list of ‘subtopics’ that define the specific and more technical elements of our regulatory proposals. These subtopics, vary in relation to the level of influence our customers and stakeholders may be able to exert. We recognise that best practice engagement is founded on transparency and being clear from the outset what topics and related issues can and can’t be influenced and stating the reasons why. Often referred to as the ‘negotiables’ and ‘non-negotiables’, we are committed to being clear and transparent with our customers and stakeholders from the outset of our engagement on the topics they can and can’t influence, while concentrating our engagements on those topics where influence can be applied and realised.

To provide the openness and transparency expected, we have outlined the subtopics pertaining to our regulatory proposals and have assessed the impact of those subtopics on our customers and mapped the level of influence our customers and stakeholders have on these subtopics against the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum.

Information relating to the subtopics, impact and levels of influence can be found in **Appendix I – Subtopics, Impact and Level of Influence** with additional information on the IAP2 Spectrum in **Section 5.3 Applying the IAP2 spectrum of public participation**.

3.5 Addressing issues out of scope

While we are seeking customer and stakeholder views on the range of topics relating to our regulatory proposals and how they can shape our proposals, there are some issues likely to arise through our discussions that are outside of the scope of this particular engagement. Mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that any such issues are still captured by the businesses and addressed with the relevant customers and stakeholders as part of our business-as-usual ongoing commitment to listening, actioning and ‘closing the loop’ on all customer and stakeholder feedback received.



4.0 Our corporate strategy and engagement objectives

4.1 Our corporate strategy

As part of the Energy Queensland Group, we are committed to energising Queensland communities by working together towards empowering an 'Electric Life' for our customers.

We see this as enabling customer choice and supporting the Queensland Government's Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan – beating the target of 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030 and moving to 70 per cent renewable energy by 2032, and 80 per cent by 2035.

We see a future where the energy technology industry booms with new and emerging energy services, markets, and widespread availability of digital solutions.

Our challenge is to stay a step ahead to ensure we can deliver for our customers and the broader community. To do this, we're committed to engaging with our customers and stakeholders, and evolving to be part of the energy transformation, while building our people capability, prioritising safety, keeping the lights on, and addressing our economic sustainability.

We are committed to a best practice engagement approach by working in partnership with our customers and stakeholders, to listen and understand their priorities and preferences, to share and explore options, to evaluate and review the insights and feedback they provide and develop regulatory proposals that reflect their input where possible, both now and into the future.

4.2 Our engagement objectives

In line with our Corporate Strategy and the Customer Strategy that underpins it, through this Plan we aim to realise the following engagement objectives in not only developing our regulatory proposals themselves but for our general engagement processes that will be important to ensuring the sustainability of our engagements and other interactions with our customers and stakeholders into the future.

Our engagement objectives are:

ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
Embed sustainable inclusive engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify our different customers and stakeholders and tailor our approach to obtain their willingness to actively participate. Adopt techniques and tools that are inclusive and responsive to our different customer and stakeholder needs to make it easy for them to participate and engage. Embed inclusive engagement in our business-as-usual engagement activities through customer, stakeholder and employee capacity building. Improve energy literacy amongst our customers and stakeholders for sustainable engagement into the future.
Build understanding and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better explain the role of our businesses in the electricity supply chain and the relationship between our business operations, the services delivered to customers and the price they pay for our network services. Deepen our understanding of what our customers and the broader community really value and expect from us through actively listening to and considering their preferences. Reflect those preferences where possible in our regulatory proposals and business decisions and/or clearly explain why, where relevant, they have been unable to be reflected. Build a greater level of understanding of the energy transformation underway, the impacts on our future ability to deliver for our different customer segments, and communities, particularly as a network provider, and the potential impacts.
Build trust and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance our engagement practices state-wide with our customers and stakeholders in a respectful and transparent manner so they see us as a trusted partner. Foster collaborative relationships and compelling interactions that build trust, mutual respect and enhance our social capital so that customers and stakeholders have confidence we will deliver on our promises.
Customer-focused culture improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for the Board, Executive, senior managers and other business representatives to engage directly with customers and stakeholders to hear first-hand of their experiences, needs and expectations in relation to the delivery of electricity services. Promote greater understanding of the value of customer and stakeholder engagement within the business and how insights obtained can be utilised to inform business decision making. Better connect employees to our Customer Strategy principles – Know our customers, Deliver value, Make it easy – and improve our customer-focused culture at every layer within the business.
Deliver sustainable and acceptable investment plans, business operations and pricing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through deepening our understanding of what customers really value, reflect their needs and preferences in our regulatory proposals and business operations into the future. Gain customer and stakeholder acceptance of our investment plans. Design fair and equitable tariffs that are supported by customers and the wider community.

5.0 Our engagement framework and principles

5.1 Best practice engagement and principles

To realise our engagement objectives, we have adopted a principles-based approach to best practice customer and stakeholder engagement in the outworking of our regulatory proposals' engagement activities. This approach aims to obtain customer and stakeholder insights and ultimately, their acceptance of our investment and revenue recovery plans over the 2025-30 regulatory period and beyond.

Our business-as-usual principles of engagement, developed in partnership with our customers and stakeholders in previous work undertaken, have been informing our general approach to engagement over the past few years. They will continue to guide our engagements with our customers and stakeholders through the regulatory proposals process.

Our principles of engagement are:



We're accessible and inclusive in engaging our many different stakeholders



Our communications are easily understood, timely and appropriate



Open transparency in our decision-making process and outcomes



Our engagement is responsive and improves with feedback measurement.

These principles will form the basis of our continual engagement evaluation process to be conducted throughout our regulatory proposals process. (See **Section 13.2 Evaluation against engagement expectations and principles**).

5.2 Co-designing the engagement strategy

Our principles of engagement were at the core of our approach to developing our overarching Engagement Strategy to support our engagement approach in the development of our regulatory proposals.

In August 2022, we held a five-day online 'Recollective' customer and stakeholder discussion and activity forum together with two online workshops as part of our commitment to directly involving customers and stakeholders from across Queensland in the development of our regulatory proposals Engagement Strategy. The conversations enabled a genuine and authentic co-design to our engagement process.

Over the course of the five-days, 30 customers and stakeholders participated in the 'Recollective' session including members of the public, selected by independent panel to reflect a range of demographics, together with members of our Customer and Community Council and other stakeholders. Insights obtained from the 'Recollective' were captured and informed the development of a draft engagement strategy that was further socialised with our Customer and Community Council and other stakeholders at additional meetings before being finalised and published in November 2022.

Subsequently, our 2025-30 Regulatory Determination Proposals Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (November 2022) has helped guide the development of this Plan, which will be implemented to bring the strategy to life in a meaningful and effective manner for our customers and stakeholders.





5.3 Applying the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

As publicly owned and public service entities, we already adhere to the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) approach to best practice engagement as part of our business-as-usual engagement activities. We value the IAP2 Spectrum as a design tool or framework established to assist with the selection of the level of participation that can define the public’s role in any public participation process.

Applying the IAP2 Spectrum will enable us to clearly articulate the different levels of participation we will adopt for our customers and stakeholders depending on the goals, time frame, resources and levels of concern in the decisions to be made. Importantly, the IAP2 Spectrum will assist us in articulating the promise being made to our customers and stakeholders at each level of participation so that clarity is provided on the promise being made and the level of influence they may be able to exert on any given issue or topic to be engaged and consulted on as part of the development of our regulatory proposals.

The IAP2 Spectrum is outlined below:

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis alternative and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.



5.4 Delivering on engagement expectations

Through the AER’s Better Resets Handbook: Towards Consumer Centric Network Proposals (December 2021) [the Handbook] we acknowledge that the AER “encourages network businesses to better engage and have consumer preferences drive the development of regulatory proposals”¹ Specifically, in relation to engagement, we recognise that the Handbook sets out the AER’s “expectations of network businesses on how they will engage with consumers and how the outcomes of that engagement should be reflected in their proposals”² to ensure that proposals submitted reflect the needs and expectations of customers and stakeholders and that this can be clearly evidenced not only to customers and stakeholders themselves, but also to the AER as part of their regulatory proposal evaluation and approval processes.

We welcome the AER’s principled-based approach in their expectations around customer and stakeholder engagement and the value that those principles focused on the following key themes can bring to the regulatory proposal process:

- the nature of engagement
- the breadth and depth of engagement
- clearly evidenced impact of this engagement.

We recognise that the AER undertook significant engagement and consultation with customers and stakeholders in the development of the Handbook and that the engagement expectations outlined in it, align with and reflect what our own customers and stakeholders have told us in relation to their minimum expectations around how they believe we should engage with them more generally.

As such, we commit to sincerely partnering with our customers and stakeholders and equip them to effectively engage in the development of our proposals and tailor our model of engagement methods and techniques to our individual customer and stakeholder requirements. We believe that the Handbook’s themes and principles of engagement provide a valuable framework for us to outline how we will deliver on the engagement our customers, stakeholders and AER expect.

Appendix II – Delivering on Engagement Expectations outlines how we will maximise value from and deliver on these key principles and engagement expectations.

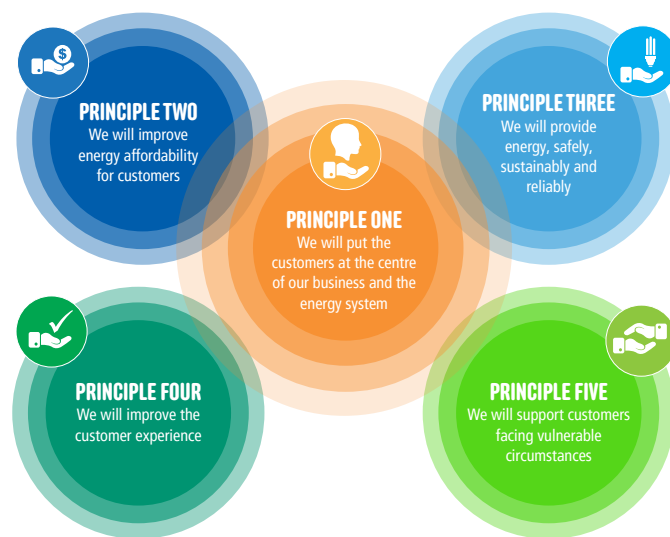
¹ AER Better Resets Handbook: Towards Consumer Centric Network Proposals (December 2021)

² AER Better Resets Handbook: Towards Consumer Centric Network Proposals (December 2021)

5.5 Energy Charter

As a founding signatory to the Energy Charter, we are also committed to working across the energy supply chain to seek better outcomes for our customers and communities. The Energy Charter principles are also forefront of our mind as we develop our regulatory proposals and look to engage our customers and stakeholders through keeping our customers at the centre of our business, deliver an affordable energy supply, provide energy safely, sustainably and reliably, improve the overall customer experience and support vulnerable customers.

The Energy Charter Principles are:

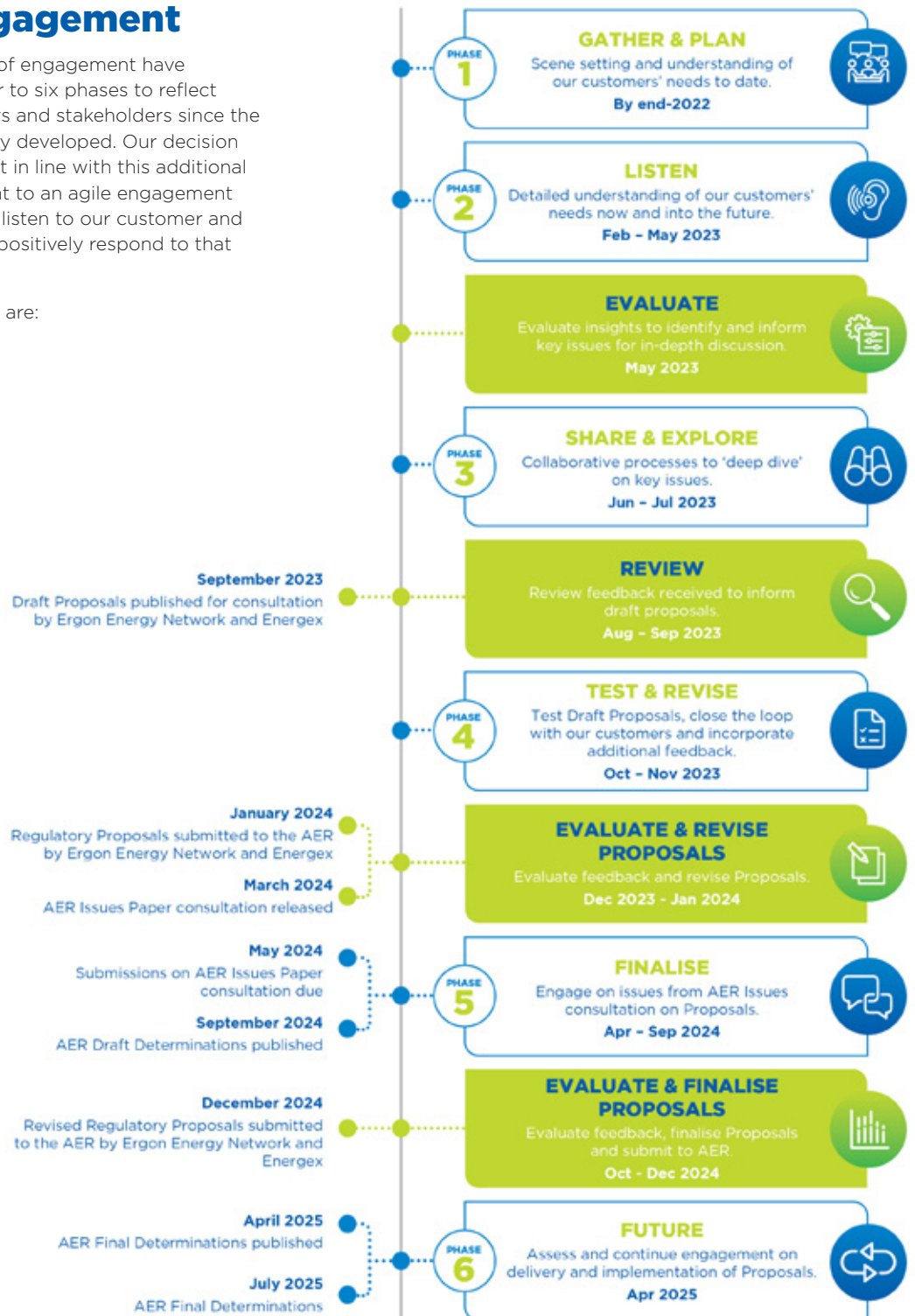


6.0 Engagement phases and associated activities







6.1 Phases of engagement

In developing this Plan the phases of engagement have evolved and been revised from four to six phases to reflect additional feedback from customers and stakeholders since the Engagement Strategy was originally developed. Our decision to revise the phases of engagement in line with this additional feedback reaffirms our commitment to an agile engagement process; to ensure that we actively listen to our customer and stakeholder feedback and that we positively respond to that feedback where possible.

Our revised phases of engagement are:



The purpose and objective for each phase of engagement is elaborated on below.

PHASE	PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE	TIMEFRAME	PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE
PHASE 1	 GATHER & PLAN	By end-2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather insights from our business-as-usual engagement activities and other interactions with customers and stakeholders. Gather insights from our existing customer research and insights program of activity and research conducted to date. Gain a further understanding of our customer and stakeholder energy needs and engagement preferences to inform our engagement planning through a customer and stakeholder workshop/online forum. Incorporate all insights and understanding into an engagement strategy and engagement plan outlining our approach and proposed activities to engage with our customers and stakeholders throughout the regulatory proposals process.
PHASE 2	 LISTEN	Feb-May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish our key engagement structures as part of the engagement approach and plan. Engage directly with customers and stakeholders across Queensland to confirm insights and understandings from Phase 1 'Gather & Plan'. Catalogue what customer told us in our engagement conversations about their energy needs now and into the future and identify any gaps and new issues/insights provided. Review conversations undertaken to determine key customer and stakeholder issues to inform in-depth future conversations.
PHASE 3	 SHARE & EXPLORE	Jun-Jul 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore key issues with our customers and stakeholders in-depth and analyse options, including trade-offs that may be required. Gather insights from our in-depth customer and stakeholder conversations and evaluate how these insights and their preferences can influence the regulatory proposals. Develop specific options based on customer and stakeholder preferences to be incorporated into our Draft Proposals.
PHASE 4	 TEST & REVISE	Oct-Nov 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with customers and stakeholders on our Draft Proposals and test options outlined. Explore any additional 'trade-offs' that may be required around preferences and seek common agreement where possible. Commence revision of regulatory proposals based on feedback to Draft Proposals and additional insights and preferences provided. Publish Revised Proposals for consideration.
PHASE 5	 FINALISE	Apr-Sep 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate AER Issues Paper on our revised proposals. Engage with customers and stakeholders to provide information required in informing their response and submissions to the AER Issues Paper consultation. Evaluate customer and stakeholder feedback to the AER Issues Paper and further engage with customers and stakeholders to clarify the insights and feedback they provide through the AER Issues Paper consultation. Consider all insights and feedback received to finalise our regulatory proposals. Submit final regulatory proposals to the AER.
PHASE 6	 FUTURE	Apr 2025 >	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct lessons learned exercise with our customers and stakeholders to inform our engagement activities going forward. Implement 2025-2030 regulatory proposals plans. Monitor and evaluate delivery effectiveness, including reporting on progress against meeting our customer and stakeholder expectations and continually engage with them as part of business-as-usual engagement practices.

6.2 Engagement schedule and activities

As part of our Plan, we have developed an engagement schedule that outlines the different engagement techniques and activities to be undertaken during the different phases of engagement.

For ease of review we have produced an Engagement Schedule and Activity Matrix that should be viewed as a 'live' document to be updated and amended as required as we take account of insights and feedback obtained throughout the engagement process. The Engagement Schedule and Activity Matrix will be an important tool in evaluating what we set out to do at the start of the engagement process and what we actually implemented in practice. Should any amendments to the schedule and activities take place we will record the reasons why and report on those amendments to our customers and stakeholders to ensure transparency in the engagement process.

Appendix III – Engagement Schedule and Activity Matrix outlines the specific engagements to be undertaken by 'target audience' to capture the insights required to inform each step of the phases of engagement.

6.3 Engagement activity plans

Engagement Activity Plans (EAPs) are an activity plan that defines and supports the outworking of the different engagement activities to be undertaken with our customers and stakeholders. An EAP fosters a streamlined approach by outlining the purpose of each specific engagement, the specific audience/s to be engaged, the specific methods and techniques to be utilised in that engagement, the specific objectives to be realised and specific desired outcomes. Additionally, EAPs serve as an important reference tool in not only the planning and communication of engagement activities but also in the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the engagement undertaken.

Our EAPs will include, but not necessarily limited to, information on:

- Background engagement activity information
- Objectives of the activity
- Description of activities
- Issues/risk analysis
- Timeline and duration of activities
- Target audiences – key customers and stakeholders
- Key messages
- Insights from previous engagements and research to inform discussion/materials
- Communication channels
- Evaluation criteria and technique.

EAPs will be used for all engagement activities throughout the engagement process.





7.0 Who we will engage and why

As part of our Engagement Strategy co-designed with our customers and stakeholders, we identified ‘target audiences’ to be engaged and identified why we want to engage with them in the development of our regulatory proposals. This collective identification of ‘target audiences’ correlates with and builds on our existing customer segmentation and stakeholder framework

that have been utilised to provide an effective basis for our customer and stakeholder engagements to date.

Our ‘target audiences’ are outlined below with a high-level summary of the reasons we want to engage with those particular customers and stakeholders in the development of our regulatory proposals.

	TARGET AUDIENCE	ABOUT THIS TARGET AUDIENCE	WHY WE WANT TO ENGAGE THIS TARGET AUDIENCE
GOVERNMENT & REGULATOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Shareholding Ministers ✓ Department of Energy & Public Works ✓ Treasury ✓ AER/Consumer Challenge Panel ✓ Other regulators/ departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a Queensland Government owned corporation, we report to our Shareholding Ministers. We are also influenced by government energy and economic policy positions. • We are regulated by the AER and must comply with various other regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is currently being outworked by the Queensland Government, with potential impacts/considerations on DNSPs. • In addition to the broader project objectives, we are engaging the AER to show how we are engaging to shape our proposals.
CUSTOMER & INDUSTRY ADVOCATES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Residential and Business Advocates ✓ Agriculture Advocates ✓ Developer Representatives ✓ Local Government Advocates ✓ Government departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This audience have the capacity to understand and engage on complex topics, as well as the ability to advocate for their members and communities. • Ergon Energy Network and Energex have established relationships with these customer and industry advocates and government stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore strategic issues and provide guidance regarding the expectations of the customers/communities they represent as trusted advisors. • They are able to provide a ‘reasonableness’ test to critical planning topics that are not able to be prosecuted directly with the other groups.
COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Community Stakeholders ✓ Local Councils ✓ Emergency Services ✓ Edge of Grid Community ✓ Battery Neighbours ✓ Indigenous Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This audience is geographically disperse, representing the diversity of the communities we serve. • They either play a leadership role in their communities or are community members in sections of the network where we are responding to specific challenges or advancing our future grid strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are preparing two separate Regulatory Proposals for our two networks, which have different challenge, and service a vast, diverse state. • It is vital we are informed by the needs and expectations and future visions for the communities we service.

	TARGET AUDIENCE	ABOUT THIS TARGET AUDIENCE	WHY WE WANT TO ENGAGE THIS TARGET AUDIENCE
RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS	Mainstream customers ✓ Reliable representation of residential customer base ✓ Customers who have had a recent interaction with Ergon Energy Network/ Energex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This audience are the mainstream majority of end users of our services, the 'bill payers', who we will need to discuss the issues of cost, connection, and reliability. They also provide individuals' knowledge, interest and insights to confusion over energy issues, and the choices that arise from the changing energy sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual residential consumers make up around 90% of our customer base. Understanding what they value from our electricity networks and services, and what they are willing to pay for, is a fundamental to developing our Regulatory Proposals.
	Future Voices ✓ Energy Innovators ✓ Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This audience provides a window into our future customer base. They are often early adopters/ prosumers, or actively thinking about the energy transition, and can be considered a barometer to changing customer expectations around service delivery, and our social, environmental and governance contribution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To advance the energy transition towards net zero, we know we need to build trust, and grow our social licence to deliver our works program and evolve our service offering. This audience can provide the lens to decisions around our future grid strategy. Understanding what they value from our electricity networks and services, and what they are willing to pay for, is a fundamental to developing our Regulatory Proposals.
	Quiet Voices ✓ Renters ✓ Seniors ✓ Customers with Disabilities ✓ Life Support Customers ✓ Multi-Cultural Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This audience captures some of our quieter voices, who may have interests or experience pain points that lie outside the mainstream. They are also audiences that may be negatively impacted by the energy transition, due to economic or technologies obstacles to participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We see gaps in our business-as-usual engagement across these audiences and must consider how we can ensure they are not impacted un-intentionally by our decisions, or that they are 'left behind' in the energy transition. Understanding what they value from our electricity networks and services, and what they are willing to pay for, is a fundamental to developing our Regulatory Proposals.
BUSINESS CUSTOMERS	✓ Small-Medium Enterprises (SME) ✓ Commercial & Industrial (C&I) - including large energy users ✓ Agriculture Industry ✓ Developers - including their consultants ✓ 2032 Olympics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This audience reaches our small to medium, commercial and industrial and large business customers. They are increasingly active participants in the energy transition, investing in Customer Energy Resources. They are developers and electricity users across all industry segments, from retail to manufacturing, from agriculture to mining. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual business consumers make up around 10% of our customer base. With the energy transition, we must understand the increasing customer-owned energy resources, the electrification of industry, and changing regional economies. Understanding what they value from our electricity networks and services, and what they are willing to pay for, is a fundamental to developing our Regulatory Proposals.
INDUSTRY PARTNERS	✓ Energy Retailers ✓ Electrical Contractors ✓ Solar Installers ✓ *Manufacturers ✓ *Sales channels/ outlets *Of products such as Electric Vehicles and air-conditioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our industry partners are those across our supply chain, from the electricity retailers up, to those that support our end users with their professional services, energy solutions or provide energy resource or related products. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our industry partners are collectively shaping the energy sector. Being an energy system, each plays a role, with new participants/ customer influencers introducing new technologies that will interact with our electricity networks and potentially drive the need for additional network investments.
EMPLOYEES	✓ Board Directors ✓ Senior Managers ✓ Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Board Directors, senior managers and all employees are central to the delivery of positive customer outcomes into the future. Our 7,500 employees live and work in the communities we serve, and so are also our customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Board and managers need to connect deeply with the insights from our engagement with the other groups to successfully inform decision making. Employees must adopt a customer-centric culture. They are also stakeholders to safety imperatives, to efficiency strategies, to system changes and to other strategic change. As customers, our employees can provide perspectives and insights on customer and community needs and expectations.

8.0 Energy challenges and material issues informing our engagement

The themes and topics outlined in **Section 3: Scope of Engagement** have been developed in response to the future energy challenges highlighted by our customers and stakeholders through the energy challenges captured as part of the regulatory proposals engagement strategy co-design ‘Recollective’ sessions held in August 2022 and our business-as-usual engagements on the material issues that matter most.

8.1 Energy challenges identified through the Recollective

Participants in the ‘Recollective’, that included independently selected customers and some of our key customer representatives, described what they see as the energy challenges for them personally, as a customer and their region. Captured and outlined in our Engagement Strategy, the critical energy challenges identified include:

ENERGY CHALLENGE	CUSTOMER AND STAKEHOLDER INSIGHT
Prices charged to the residential customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant investment is needed to manage the energy transition so that it is equitable and fair. • Increased customer charges are a concern.
Prices charged to the business customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business customers are a strong proportion of the Ergon Energy Network and Energex customer base. • Charges for business customers impact the customers of businesses as well as the businesses themselves – there is a flow-on effect.
Household costs and increases in the cost of living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflation and costs to consumers are considered to be high now and are increasing. • Customers are interested in ways to reduce their energy consumption and therefore their costs.
Network resilience in a disruption event or emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increasing frequency of major disruptive weather events is front of mind. • Ergon Energy Network’s and Energex’s plans to create resilience and the investments required are of interest.
Renewable and sustainable investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These investments are supported. • People care about current and future environmental impacts and how these investments may impact customer charges.
Distributed energy resources such as electric vehicles, charging facilities and residential batteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributed energy resources are seen as cost-saving and resilience building initiatives. • Customers view less reliance on the grid as a way to increase energy reliability and reduce the likelihood of outages.
Availability and accessibility of energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a perception that new technology is becoming increasingly important to secure network reliability or energy affordability. • However, it is felt there is inequitable access to some of these technologies across the Ergon Energy Network and Energex customer base.
Labour and infrastructure demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure and trade skills availability are essential to ensure the grid can cope with the increasing supply demands. • This concerns the purchase of assets and the upskilling of those who maintain or operate assets.



8.2 Most material issues

Also informing the key themes and topics for engagement are the insights obtained from our customers and stakeholders through our 'Towards an Electric Life 2030' sustainability engagement exercise. Through this engagement conducted in 2019 and recently refreshed and update in 2022, our customers and stakeholders identified a range of material issues, prioritised by those that matter most into the future.

The primary sustainability topics identified are:

These material issues and the insights obtained from our engagement on our Towards an Electric Life 2030 have also informed the development of the key themes and topics for engagement as part of our regulatory proposals engagement outlined in this Plan.

Primary Sustainability Topics



ENERGY AFFORDABILITY AND VALUE

As an essential part of modern life, affordable clean energy, choice and control, and a sense of value, is important from both a cost of living and a business competitiveness perspective.



SECURITY AND RELIABILITY OF SUPPLY

Power outages have the potential for significant economic and social impacts – we have an ageing distribution network, and an industry challenge of reliably integrating renewables into the energy system.



RENEWABLES AND NET ZERO EMISSIONS

Queensland is targeting net zero emissions by 2050 and energy is a major emissions contributor. Solutions are needed to support the renewable energy and electrification of transport/industry required for effective climate action.



HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Community safety around electricity as a product and our infrastructure, as well as our own workplace health, safety and wellbeing are central corporate responsibilities for Energy Queensland.



TRUST AND SOCIAL LICENCE

'Doing the right thing' will be critical as the energy industry transforms and customers become increasingly empowered. We must engage meaningfully, build trust, report transparently, and be accountable.



CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE

Queensland's exposure to natural disasters (incl pandemics) is increasing, requiring community preparedness, with an effective power restoration response for recovery, and to protect those most vulnerable.



ENERGY INCLUSION AND CUSTOMER VULNERABILITY

Many face 'energy poverty' with health, safety and other social impacts. They require affordable electricity, energy literacy education and 'bill' assistance, and to not be left further behind in the energy transition.



ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND JOBS

Access to competitively-priced electricity and network connections underpins economic growth, and much of Queensland's new economic advantage potential. We also contribute jobs, and traditional and future-focused skills development, and other flow on benefits.

9.0 Existing engagement channels and techniques

9.1 Customer and Community Council

Our Customer and Community Council (the Council) is a long-established engagement forum through which we work in partnership with a range of organisations that represent the interests of our customers and communities across Queensland. It explores strategic issues relating to customer and community needs and expectations, emerging customer and community issues and initiatives in energy infrastructure and services, and the provision of energy solutions across Queensland.

In the lead up to our engagement process for our regulatory proposals we refreshed our Customer and Community Council membership through an expression of interest process, whereby relevant peak bodies and other organisations throughout Queensland were invited to nominate for membership of the Council. Refreshing the Council membership was an important element of our planning for the regulatory proposals engagements to ensure that we had the interests of our diverse customers represented to help inform and guide our regulatory proposals engagement strategy and planning process.

Current membership of the Council covers a broad range of organisations representing the diversity of our customer and stakeholder segments:

- residential (including vulnerable customers and seniors)
- small to medium businesses
- large commercial and industry businesses
- agriculture
- local government
- developers/builders
- professional electrical services
- economic development.

The Council, which at a minimum meets quarterly and is sponsored by our Executive General Manager Customer and Chaired by our Manager Customer Advocacy, has played a key role to date, being engaged in the Recollective engagement strategy process and, in subsequent meetings, has endorsed our engagement approach.

The Council will continue to be one of the key techniques through which we will seek customer and stakeholder involvement and feedback on topics and issues pertaining to our regulatory proposals. We will actively work in partnership with the Council to facilitate discussion and engage with the customers they represent where appropriate and the opportunity arises.

9.2 Customer and stakeholder forums

As part of our business-as-usual engagement activities we also hold a series of regular and ad-hoc customer and stakeholder forums as issues arise. These forums are mainly industry specific across the following sectors and include our:

- Agriculture Forum – a forum consisting of members of organisations representing the agriculture sector.
- Developers Forum – a forum held for developers, builders and their consultants convened when relevant issues and topics warrant.
- Energy Retailer Forum – a forum held with energy retailers providing electricity services throughout Queensland convened when relevant issues and topics warrant (Note: bi-monthly individual meetings also held with the top energy retailers operating in Queensland).
- Public Lighting Forum – a forum held with local council representatives to discuss issues pertaining to street lighting, associated services and tariffs.
- Energy Academy – a forum held with electrical contractors and solar installers providing professional services throughout Queensland convened when relevant issues and topics warrant.

These forums will serve as a key engagement mechanism throughout our engagement process as an efficient and effective technique to capture a range of insights from specific customer and stakeholder segments.



9.3 Voice of the Customer – Customer Satisfaction and Net Trust

As part of our business-as-usual interactions with our customers and stakeholders we conduct regular surveys to identify key issues of concern and measure their levels of satisfaction and trust in our businesses.

Through Our ‘Voice of the Customer – Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) and Net Trust (NTS)’ – survey program we directly survey customers who have had recent interactions with Ergon Energy Network and Energex seeking their feedback on their level of satisfaction the service provided, any issues or concerns they experienced in the delivery of that service and invite feedback on any suggestions for improvement. These insights help inform our day-to-day operations and are fed into our strategic planning. As part of the CSAT program we despatch surveys to our network customers weekly based on the nature of their interaction and touchpoint with the business and receive circa 14,500 completed surveys per annum.

In addition to surveying the weekly direct interactions our customers have with our businesses we also survey customers quarterly via independent panel, to gauge their levels of satisfaction and trust within our businesses regardless of whether they have had a recent interaction or not. The CSAT elements of this quarterly survey help validate the insights obtained by customers who have directly engaged with the business and importantly, provides additional insights into the level of trust they place in us as an essential service provider, with that trust benchmarked against a range of other organisations across different industries.

Combined, our weekly and quarterly Voice of the Customer programs assist us in understanding what is of most important to our customers and provides valuable insights into their evolving needs and expectations – insights that we have considered in developing our engagement approach, and the key themes and topics for discussion as part of our regulatory proposals process.

We will continue to conduct our Voice of the Customer survey program throughout the engagement process ensuring that the insights obtained feed into our discussions with customers and stakeholders and are considered as part of our regulatory proposals development where appropriate.

9.4 Market research

For the past 11 years, in conjunction with Powerlink Queensland, we have conducted the Queensland Household Energy Survey (QHES), to annually capture and track trends relating to customers’ views on the energy sector, how they are managing household electricity bills and how they use electricity in the home. The QHES also explores customers’ sentiment towards electricity supply, reliability and cost, together with tracking trends in perceptions and attitudes towards new technologies such as solar PV, battery storage, electric vehicles and their propensity to go off-grid. With between 4,000 and 4,500 responses each year the QHES, the largest energy survey of its kind in Australia, provides important customer insights to inform our business direction and decision making.

The 2023 QHES will be conducted in late March/early April 2023 with the results obtained, analysed against trends from previous years, and feed into our overall regulatory proposals customer insights analysis.

Additionally, in the past few years we have also conducted significant customer research through focus groups and customer journey mapping exercises on topics such as customer understanding and preferences on electricity tariffs, electric vehicle owner purchase motivations and charging behaviours, the land developers’ experiences in the connections process and the power outage experience of business customers. This research has been important in informing us of the customer experience and capturing customer insights on a range of issues to inform current and forward business decisions and activities, which are also of relevance to the development of our forthcoming regulatory proposals.

Although no additional regulatory proposal specific market research is planned at this stage, we commit to keeping this option open through consultation with our customers and stakeholders and have allocated funding for such research if required.



9.5 Online/digital

Important in the delivery of our broad-based engagement approach is our commitment to ensuring effective online communications and engagement with our customers and stakeholders. We will utilise our social media channels to effectively communicate our activities and regulatory proposals to our wider customer and stakeholder base, inviting feedback at relevant stages throughout the process.

Additionally, we will maximise use of our existing Talking Energy web-based communication and engagement tool. Talking Energy will allow us to ensure customers and stakeholders are kept up to date with timely and relevant information on our business and the regulatory proposals process and enable us to interact and engage directly online through discussion forum and survey techniques with the near 3,000 subscribers. As part of our engagement process, we hope to increase awareness of Talking Energy and increase the number of subscribers to maximise the number of customers and stakeholders who participate in our regulatory proposals and other engagements into the future.



9.6 Employee engagement

We are also committed to engage with our employees on the development of our regulatory proposals through a variety of engagement methods already adopted by the business including digital communications, focus groups and our annual employee engagement survey.

Digital communication with employees will primarily take place through our Workplace platform. Workplace has become an efficient and effective business-as-usual communication and engagement tool utilised within the business to keep employees up to date with business issues and activities. It also facilitates and empowers employees to have open discussion and dialogue with each other and the Executive on matters of interest. Workplace will provide for communication and engagement on our regulatory proposals through enabling individual and group discussions, online posts/commentary, video (recordings and live) and polls to maximise employee participation and obtain their insights to inform our proposals.

The focus group technique will also be adopted to engage with our employees enabling targeted and focused employee discussions on key business issues and investment plans, particularly where they affect our operational activities and the services provided and carried out by our employees.

We will also capture insights from our employees through our annual Employee Engagement Survey. The survey invites employees to provide feedback on the business's strategic approach and operational activities, the employee experience and other matters, such as how well they feel supported to deliver for our customers. These insights will be important in identifying areas of focus that our employees believe the business should prioritise in our plans for the future, and through our regulatory proposals.

9.7 Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland

As part of our business-as-usual engagement we liaise with and maintain regular dialogue with the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ). This engagement centres on a range of operational matters that impact our customers, in particular the services we provide and the customer experience in interacting with our businesses and their levels of satisfaction with those services. We will continue to collate and analyse the customer insights obtained through our engagement with EWOQ and build on our existing relationship with EWOQ to involve them in our regulatory proposals engagement process where relevant, recognising the role that EWOQ plays in customer advocacy within the energy industry.

9.8 Coordination with Queensland Government engagement activity

As with other engagements undertaken, we proactively seek opportunities to coordinate our engagement activities and discussions with customers and stakeholders with engagement activities undertaken by the Queensland Government where common issues for discussion align.

Specifically, it is expected that given the Queensland Government's public consultation activities and dialogue with stakeholders in relation to the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, that there will be opportunities to coordinate activities where relevant. This coordination will ensure that insights captured from both the Government's and our own engagements are shared to inform both our regulatory proposals and the outworking of the QEJP.



10.0 Bespoke engagement channels and techniques

As part of our Plan, we are not only building on our well-established business-as-usual engagement techniques and structures but have, in consultation with our customers and stakeholders, developed a range of bespoke techniques to provide further opportunities for our customers and stakeholders to participate and ensure their voices are heard.

10.1 Reset Reference Group

As part of our engagement planning, in consultation with our Customer and Community Council, we have established the Ergon Energy Network and Energex 'Reset Reference Group' (RRG). The RRG provides a key mechanism through which we can work in partnership with customer representatives and regulatory proposal process experts to effectively engage in-depth on the process and technical development of our regulatory proposals. Members of the RRG are able to consider the long-term interests of customers, both residential and business, against efficiency and affordability performance indicators.

The RRG Terms of Reference outlines its governance structure and operating procedures. The RRG will meet regularly throughout the regulatory proposals phases of engagement. It consists of the following members selected following an expression of interest to our Customer and Community Council members and other stakeholders with regulatory expertise:

- Rebecca Andrews, Ai Group
- Louise Benjamin, independent consultant
- Gavin Dufty, St Vincent de Paul
- Frank Edwards, Capricorn Enterprise
- Mark Grenning, Energy Users Association Australia
- Robyn Robinson, Council on the Ageing (Chair, RRG)

Our commitment to the success of the RRG is underpinned by four key actions:

1. Our Board and Executive team have provided their strong support for the RRG as an independent body.
2. The RRG will be empowered to challenge us and evaluate the two regulatory proposals with rigor. This includes reflective analysis and feedback in relation to issues as we progress the development of our regulatory proposals.
3. Independent feedback loops across all engagement activities will consider process improvements and enhance opportunities for further dialogue.
4. An independent report will be prepared that reflects the RRG's assessment of the engagement undertaken and how that engagement has shaped the development of Ergon Energy Network's and Energex's regulatory proposals.

Our 2025-30 Regulatory Proposals Executive Management Committee established to oversee the regulatory proposals process, is the Sponsoring Committee of the RRG with both bodies meeting monthly at a minimum to ensure frequent open dialogue and transparency. More information on the Executive Management Committee is outlined in **Section 12.4 Regulatory Determination Project Executive Management Committee**.

Importantly, the RRG will also maintain dialogue with our Customer and Community Council, keeping it updated on its work program and also seek Council members' guidance and input on issues where relevant.

Through Talking Energy, we have established a private group to assist our RRG in their work program, such as sharing documentation and keeping a record of all agendas, summaries of discussions held, presentations delivered and other associated project management materials.

10.2 Network Pricing Working Group

To deliver on our commitment to in-depth engagement on the Tariff Structure Statements (TSSs) associated with our regulatory proposals, we will establish a customer and stakeholder Network Pricing Working Group (NPWG).

The NPWG builds on our work undertaken to date through our Tariff Reform Working Group – Residential (TRWG-R), established in October 2021. The TRWG-R consisted of several customer and stakeholder representatives with the specific objective of developing for customer trial in 2022 and 2023, a potential new residential network tariff that better takes account of cost-reflectivity and customers' 'capacity' required from the network. Established well ahead of the more formal regulatory proposals engagement process period, the TRWG-R was part of our commitment to establish early dialogue on the complex issue of tariff reform in partnership with our customers and stakeholders, enabling us to take on board their feedback and allowing them to influence tariff structure design, initially for trial purposes. Following the work of the TRWG-R a successful network tariff trial has been established with Ergon Energy Retail in regional Queensland, the insights from which will inform the development of the 2025-30 TSSs. The trial insights will also help inform future tariff and TSS discussions with customers and stakeholders.

Building on the successful TRWG-R partnership with customers and stakeholders, the TRWG-R has evolved into a new Network Pricing Working Group (NPWG) established as a Working Group under the Terms of Reference of our Customer and Community Council. The NPWG brings together residential and business customer representatives to 'deep dive' into tariff reform issues pertaining to the TSSs and seeks to achieve mutually acceptable tariff solutions for all customer segments.



10.3 Voice of the Customer Panels

Although we will maximise our existing customer and stakeholder engagement techniques to ensure breadth and depth of our engagement, we also recognise the importance of ensuring the voices of our diverse range of end-user customers are heard in specific relation to our regulatory proposals development.

We will establish two separate Ergon Energy Network and Energex, 'Voice of the Customer Panels' (VCPs), consisting of residential and small-medium business representatives from the different Regional Queensland and South-East Queensland distribution service areas. The two separate VCPs, will enable a tailored and focused discussion with customers by each network business, enabling specific network business issues and plans to be engaged on. This will ensure tailored and specific information is provided and the ensuing discussion is directly relevant to the specific services, experiences and issues our diverse geographically based customers receive from our different network businesses.

Participants in the VCPs will be selected to ensure a representative cross-section of customers are included. It is anticipated they will meet in both person and online throughout the engagement process to consider a range of topics and issues relevant to their specific network service provider's operations, investment and revenue recovery plans to be developed. It is anticipated that circa 40-50 customers will participate in each VCP. We believe the VCP engagement will deliver a rich, diverse, sometimes broad and often in-depth conversation and analysis of issues and play a key role in directly involving customers in the trade-offs to be made between different customer preferences in the development of our regulatory proposals.

We recognise that the success of the VCP approach will require the VCPs to be independent of the business, requiring independent facilitation to truly capture and reflect the views of customers who participate in that process. As such, along with some other engagements outlined in this Plan we will engage the services of an external engagement agency to support us in delivery of this key engagement technique. We also commit to our RRG being involved in overseeing the procurement and agency selection process to provide reassurance in the design of the VCP engagement to be implemented.

The concept of the VCP initiative is a key component of our regulatory proposals engagement and builds on our extensive and well tested business-as-usual customer survey program outlined in **Section 9.3 Voice of the Customer – Customer Satisfaction and Net Trust**.

10.4 Focus groups

To further obtain insights on issues and topics from our customers and stakeholders we will hold a series of focus groups with specific 'target audiences' to allow time for in-depth discussion, particularly on complex issues and topics that warrant more detailed attention and exploration.

Focus groups will enable us to narrow in on key issues and topics where relevant and ensure that customers and stakeholders have an opportunity to have dedicated 'air-time' to voice their opinions and views in-depth. As with our Voice of the Customer Panels, to ensure independence in reporting, we expect that many of our bespoke focus groups will be independently facilitated through engaging the services of an independent engagement agency.

10.5 Individual discussions and surveys

We acknowledge that not all of our customers and stakeholders will be receptive to group orientated discussion and engagement activities. Individual discussions, such as customer and stakeholder interviews, together with targeted surveys on topics of interest and relevance to different customers and stakeholders are often a useful technique through which to create a 'safe space' for such customers and stakeholders. Additionally, individual discussions and surveys allow particular customers such as our small-medium size, large and commercial and industrial business customers who may not have the time to participate in engagement events due to their business operations, to still provide their input.

We believe that individual surveys, when designed appropriately and meaningfully with a clearly defined purpose, can play an important role in ensuring breadth of engagement with customers and stakeholders throughout the regulatory proposals process.

As such, our Plan, allows for individual discussions and surveys with customers and stakeholders at different points in the engagement process.

Surveys will also be an important tool in capturing customer and stakeholder feedback to enable us to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our engagement activities throughout the engagement process.

10.6 Site visits and tours

Where relevant, site visits and tours of our business locations, network assets, and planned areas for future infrastructure projects will be organised to provide opportunities for our customers and stakeholders to have a more interactive first-hand experience as we seek to bring our discussions to 'life'. It is expected that such site visits and tours will be centred in locations where significant asset investment is proposed.



11.0 Blending our engagements and insights

Given the breadth and varying nature of our existing and bespoke engagement channels and techniques to be utilised in outworking our engagement we recognise the need to ensure each are coordinated efficiently and effectively. Importantly, we recognise the need to ensure that the insights obtained from these channels and techniques are blended to provide informed discussions and ultimately realise a holistic view of our customers' and stakeholders' preferences in relation to the key themes and topics to be engaged.

Existing customer insights obtained through our previous and current engagements will be utilised to set the scene, provide context and background material for the discussions to be had with our customers and stakeholders on our regulatory proposals. This will allow us to test the validity of what we have heard to date, identify gaps in our knowledge and capture new thoughts and opinions not previously voiced. Blending insights obtained throughout our six phases of engagement will be key to ensuring that insights obtained at any one-time in the engagement process are duly considered and inform discussions in the future phases of engagement in a structured and meaningful manner.

Through utilising our key themes and topics framework as outlined in **Section 3.3 Engagement themes and topics framework**, we will capture, categorise and blend the insights obtained to build a 360 view of our customers' and stakeholders' preferences, including the varying preferences that may exist. This will be important in our analysis of insights provided as we draft our proposals and then test those proposals with our customers and stakeholders, including the trade-offs that may need to be considered.

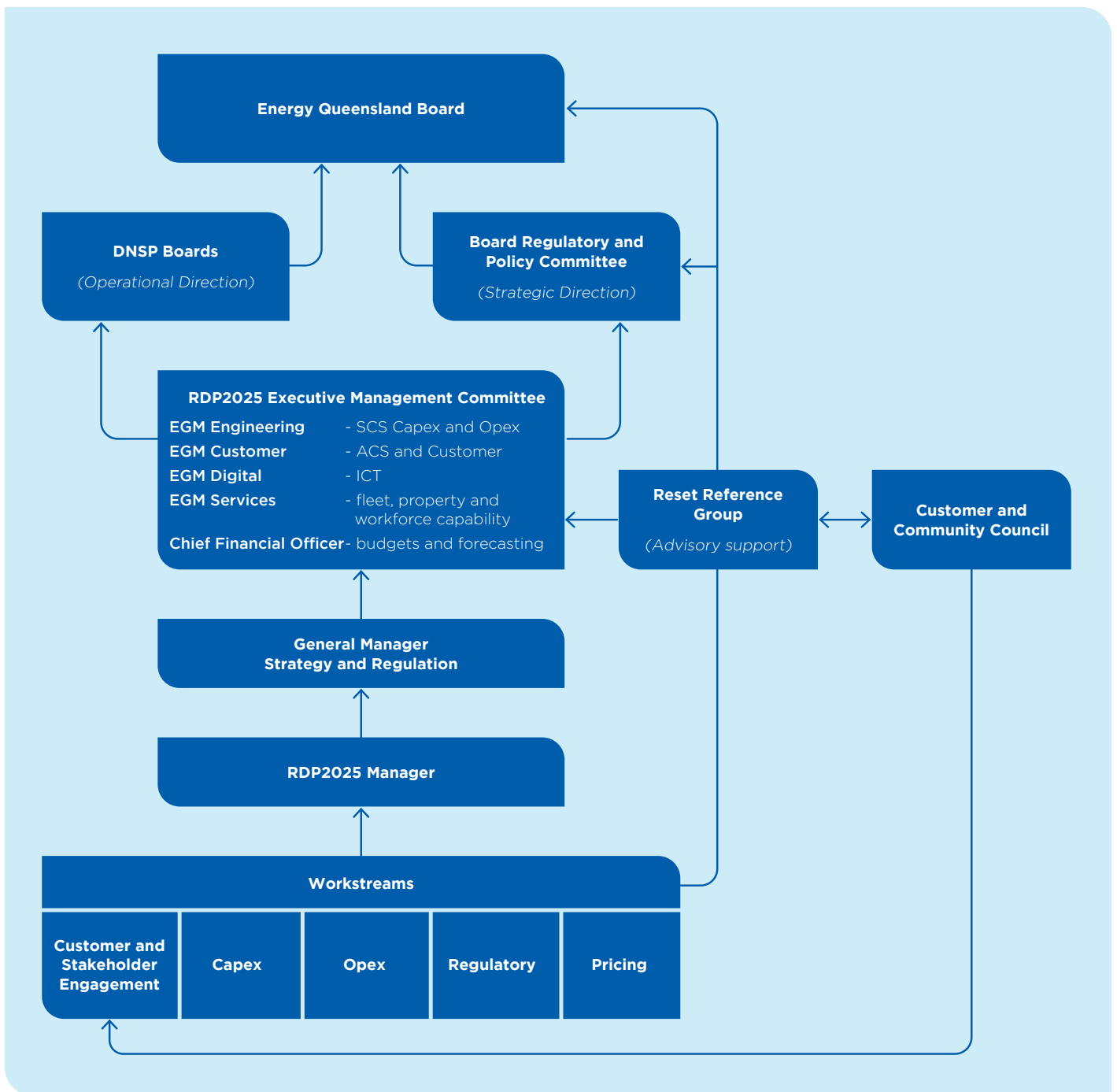


12.0 Governance and project management

As part of our Governance and project management approach to ensure the successful delivery of this Plan and the development of our regulatory proposals we have put strict governance and project management structures in place. We believe that outlining our governance and project management approach will give our customers and stakeholders not only transparency in our overall approach but also confidence that accountability and ownership in the delivery of this Plan and the

subsequent development of our regulatory proposals based on the insights of our customers and stakeholders, rests with not only the immediate project team but with senior managers, the Executive and our Board.

A summary of our governance and project management structure is provided below:



12.1 Board participation

Ergon Energy Network and Energex as part of the Energy Queensland Group of companies are governed by a Board of Directors that provide governance, oversight and strategic direction to fulfil the objectives of the business.

12.2 Regulatory and Policy Committee

Under the Energy Queensland Board Charter, a specific Regulatory and Policy Committee (RPC) of the Board is constituted. The RPC has a key governance role providing recommendations to the Board on issues within the scope of the Committee and has a key role in providing governance around the development of our regulatory proposals. The RPC meets quarterly and is provided with progress reports on the regulatory proposals process and activities, including matters associated with our engagement program.

Through both the RPC and other Board activities our Board of Directors are highly engaged in our regulatory proposals process and are committed to being directly involved in our engagement activities and conversations with customers and stakeholders. Through the RPC the Board will also meet regularly with the RRG to hear directly from them on issues of importance to the RRG's work program and exploration of the insights obtained through our engagement activities.

The Board will also be responsible for endorsing the regulatory proposals before they are submitted to the AER and as part of that process will consider and reflect on the engagements undertaken to ensure that customers and stakeholder insights are reflected where possible, and where not, explanation has been provided.

12.3 Ergon Energy Network and Energex Board

Under the Energy Queensland governance structure there is a subsidiary DNSP Board as part of the governance structure pertaining to Ergon Energy Network and Energex.

The DNSP Board provides operational direction to the business for the regulatory 'reset' and regulatory proposals development through overseeing the ongoing strategic alignment of matters pertaining to the operations of the DNSPs and the regulatory reset process with the overall corporate strategy.

The DNSP Board approves key deliverables in relation to the development of our regulatory proposals prior to external release associated with the risk profiles and certifies assumptions and forecasts as required by the National Electricity Rules.

12.4 Regulatory Determination Project Executive Management Committee

To ensure additional due diligence in governance around the regulatory proposals process we have established a bespoke 2025-30 Regulatory Determination Project (RDP2025) Executive Management Committee to oversee delivery of the associated program of work, including the delivery of this Plan. The RDP2025 Executive Management Committee consists of the following business Executives:

- Executive General Manager, Customer (Michael Dart)
- Executive General Manager, Engineering (Peter Price)
- Executive General Manager, Digital (Marianne Vosloo)
- Acting Executive General Manager, Services (Karen Stafford)
- Chief Financial Officer (David Malek)

The RDP2025 Executive Management Committee provides day-to-day advice and direction to the regulatory proposals project team and acts as a conduit to the wider Energy Queensland Executive Management Team, the Chief Executive and the Board. Additionally, the RDP2025 Executive Management Committee serves as the sponsoring body of the RRG, meeting regularly with the RRG to ensure frequent open and transparent dialogue on progress of the regulatory proposals process, including the engagement approach and activities.



12.5 Regulatory Determination Project Team

Our General Manager, Strategy and Regulation together with a team of regulatory and project management experts – the RDP2025 Project Team – within the business will oversee the development of our regulatory proposals and associated processes, including the management of all internal business activities and coordination to ensure the business is prepared for, and information sourced to support the engagement activities outlined in this Plan. The RDP2025 Project Team will also lead in liaising with our Board and Executive Management Committee, together with our Shareholder, AER, Consumer Challenge Panel (CCP) and RRG on all relevant matters relating to the specific details required from a governance and project management perspective around the regulatory proposals.

Our Customer Advocacy and Community Strategy teams of advocacy, engagement, customer experience and research and insights professionals will take the lead on the execution of our Plan and associated activities. Over the years, they have established productive relationships with many of our key customer representatives and other stakeholders throughout Queensland and as part of our business-as-usual engagement activities are well versed in utilising appropriate engagement techniques for our different audiences to capture customer and stakeholder insights to inform business planning and decision-making. We believe continuity in these relationships will be important in ensuring trust and confidence in the engagement process is maintained and will provide dedicated engagement resources to ensure effective delivery of the Plan.

Additionally, our Corporate Affairs team and subject matter experts on topics and issues from across the business will also support our engagement activities.

12.6 Records management

Specific regulatory proposals customer and stakeholder files and databases have been created and will be used to document, record and report on all customer and stakeholder engagement activity, associated documents and communications.

A dedicated Customer and Stakeholder Issues Register (CSIR) has been established to record specific issues raised, track the status of those issues and keep a record of responses to those issues to evidence we have addressed those issues and 'closed the loop' with the individual customers and stakeholders who raise issues during the course of the engagements relating to our regulatory proposals.

12.7 The AER and Consumer Challenge Panel

For all engagement activities held we commit to inviting the AER and the appointed Consumer Challenge Panel (CCP) to observe our engagement activities as part of their work in evaluating the effectiveness of our engagement and how we have considered customer and stakeholder feedback in our regulatory proposals.

We will also hold regular meetings with the AER and the CCP separate to the other customer and stakeholder engagement activities held, to discuss progress around our regulatory proposals development, and seek their early feedback on that progress and on the engagements they have observed so that any issues or concerns can be addressed where required.



13.0 Evaluation

13.1 Continual evaluation

Evaluation of the effectiveness and success of our customer and stakeholder engagement will be continual throughout the engagement process. This evaluation will be guided by the expectations and feedback provided by our customers and stakeholders at every step of the engagement process so that, where required, improvements can be made to ensure that we deliver our engagement program in line with their expectations; that we are putting our engagement principles into practice; and that we are on track to fulfill our engagement objectives.

The feedback received from activities undertaken will be evaluated to determine any common themes emerging in our engagement practices and suggestions for how we can modify our approach and improve in line with our customer and stakeholder engagement needs and expectations.

We are committed to capturing customer feedback on the outworking of our Plan and associated activities and will implement a robust evaluation process for each engagement, capturing the evaluation technique to be adopted in the relevant Engagement Action Plan (EAP), referenced in **Section 6.3 Engagement activity plans**.

13.2 Evaluation against engagement expectations and principles

We will regularly review and evaluate our progress against the engagement expectations and principles outlined by inviting customer and stakeholder feedback on our:

- progress against our commitments on the engagement themes and
- application of our engagement principles as outlined in Sections
 - **5.1 Best practice engagement and principles**
 - **5.4 Delivering on engagement expectations** and
 - the associated, **Appendix II – Delivering on Engagement Expectations**.

We have developed a series of key questions that we will embed in our evaluation process and report on throughout the engagement process to ensure we listen and act where required to ensure the effectiveness of our engagement activities in line with our customer and stakeholder expectations.

With our principles of engagement as the framework for our evaluation we will ask questions along the lines of those identified below, and where appropriate utilise a scale approach to produce metrics for ease of evaluation:



We're accessible and inclusive in engaging our many different stakeholders

- How accessible and inclusive would you rate the engagement undertaken?
- How approachable and available were we for you to ask questions?
- Did we recognise the diversity of our customers and communities (for example geographic, customer segments) in the engagement?
- How well did we provide options for you to engage?
- What is your preferred method of engagement?
- Have you been provided with information for where and how to provide feedback?



Our communications are easily understood, timely and appropriate

- How clearly did we explain the purpose of our engagement?
- Do you believe we achieved the objectives set through the engagement?
- How would you rate the quality of the materials/presentations provided to you (e.g. ease of understanding, format etc)?
- Was the information provided sufficient to enable you to meaningfully participate?
- Did the engagement provide enough time for issues to be explored?



Open transparency in our decision-making process and outcomes

- How transparent were we in providing you with information on topics and themes that formed the basis of the engagement?
- Were you satisfied that all necessary information was provided to inform discussions?
- Were there any gaps in information you think would have made the engagement more transparent?
- How clearly did we explain our position on topics discussed and the decision-making process?
- How satisfied are you with the outcomes from the engagement?



Our engagement is responsive and improves with feedback measurement

- How would you rate the overall quality of our engagement?
- How well did we respond to your enquiries/requests?
- How would you rate the timeliness of our response?
- Do you understand how your feedback has or has not been incorporated and the reasons as to why?
- What suggestions do you have for us to improve on our engagements into the future?

13.3 Customer and stakeholder independent evaluation

As referenced earlier in this Plan, we recognise the importance of independent facilitation in some of our engagement activities, particularly those outlined in **Section 10.0 Bespoke Engagement Channels and Techniques** for example, the Voice of the Customer Panels and other bespoke customer and stakeholder focus groups and interviews. As part of our procurement of an independent engagement agency to support the execution of these engagement activities, we will also request that they provide an independent report that captures and reflects the insights and preferences of our customers and stakeholders who participate, together with additional independent reporting of what measures our customers and stakeholders believe we have successfully reflected and where necessary balanced these in our regulatory proposals.

13.4 RRG independent evaluation report

As part of the evaluation process our Reset Reference Group (RRG) will produce an independent report that outlines their observations and evaluation of the effectiveness of our engagement with our customers and stakeholders. Importantly, this report will also include their independent view of the extent to which our regulatory proposals have taken our customers' and stakeholders' feedback and insights into account and if those proposals reflect their priorities, needs and expectations into the future.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX I - Engagement Sub-Topics, Impacts and Level of Influence

Appendix 1.1 Issues upon which we will Consult, Involve and Collaborate

TOPIC	OVERVIEW	DNISP	IMPACT ON CUSTOMERS	IAP2 LEVEL
Context				
▶ Affordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Distribution Network Service Providers' (DNSPs) role in power bills How retailers translate our tariffs Who pays – equitable allocation of costs Intergenerational equity – equitable share of costs over time not leaving next generation with extra cost Access to technology and the role of tariff reform Competing challenges - cost versus risk Stand Alone Power Systems (SAPS) 	Energex Ergon	High	Involve
▶ Smart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing customer behaviours and expectations Increase in new technologies (Electric vehicles, batteries etc.) Dynamic Operating Envelopes The role of tariff reform and demand management Smart meter rollout Electrification of new loads Distribution System Operator 	Energex Ergon	High	Involve
▶ Reliable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network resilience – information to come and inclusion of Cost Pass Through Varying dependency on levels of reliability SAPS Demand management 	Energex Ergon	High	Involve
▶ Clean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The path to net zero (including cost versus trade-offs) Supporting uptake of distributed energy resources Equitable allocation of costs – tariffs Intergenerational equity 	Energex Ergon	High	Involve
▶ Customer Service Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer expectations Customer experience Cost/service trade-offs Digitisation of services Customers as partners – increasing understanding of our services to enable more informed choice and control Customer communications Customer Service Incentive Scheme (CSIS) consultation 	Energex Ergon	High	Involve
Capital Expenditure (capex)				
Replacement (Repex):				
▶ Ex-post review	<p>Ergon Energy Network is projected to overspend its capex allowances for the 2018-19 to 2022-23 period. As a result, the expenditure will be subject to detailed prudency and efficiency assessment by the AER</p> <p><i>*Although this is only Inform, we will expect that this would form a larger part of talking to customers than the other inform only elements.</i></p>	Ergon	High	Inform*
Augmentation (Augex)				
▶ DER Integration	DNISPs now have an obligation to facilitate distributed energy resources	Energex Ergon	Medium	Involve
▶ Olympics	Augmentation capex to support the 2032 Brisbane Olympics (consulting on improving reliability to Olympic precincts above the connections expenditure funded by the venues)	Energex	Medium	Consult
Information and Communications Technology (ICT)				
▶ Non-recurrent	<p>ICT expenditures related to maintaining existing services, functionalities, capability and/or market benefits that does not recur every five years.</p> <p>The acquisition of new or expanded ICT functionality or capability.</p> <p>ICT costs incurred due to changes in regulatory obligations</p>	Energex Ergon	Medium	Involve

TOPIC	OVERVIEW	DNBP	IMPACT ON CUSTOMERS	IAP2 LEVEL
Operating expenditure (opex)				
Step Changes	These are component of opex that are not compensated in the base opex, including capex/opex trade-offs	Energex Ergon	Low	Involve
Building Blocks				
Revenue smoothing	Sets the price path over the regulatory period	Energex Ergon	Low	Involve
Incentive Schemes				
Customer Service Incentive Scheme (CSIS)	An incentive scheme that incentivises distributors to provide customer services according to customer preferences	Energex Ergon	Low	Collaborate
Incentive Schemes				
Connection Policy	A connection policy sets out the nature of connection services offered by a DNBP, when connection charges may be payable by retail customers and how those charges are calculated	Energex Ergon	Low	Involve
Alternative Control Services				
▶ Public lighting	Energex and Ergon Energy Network provide public lighting services to local government authorities (Councils) and the Department of Transport and Main Roads	Energex Ergon	High	Involve
▶ Watchman lights	Security lighting attached to network infrastructure with Council and Department of Transport and Main Roads and other customers	Energex Ergon	Low	Consult
Network Pricing				
▶ Tariff Structure Statement	The tariff structure statement sets out the proposed tariff structures applying for the regulatory period.	Energex Ergon	High	Involve

Appendix 1.2 Issues upon which we will Inform

TOPIC	OVERVIEW	DNBP	IMPACT ON CUSTOMERS	IAP2 LEVEL
Context				
Themes				
▶ Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term asset strategy • Safety compliance • Cost versus risk 	Energex Ergon	High	Inform
Capital Expenditure (capex)				
Key assumptions:				
▶ Demand, energy, customer	Demand, energy, and customer number forecasts are key inputs used in forecasting capex and opex	Energex Ergon	High	Inform
▶ Risk appetite/tolerance	Risk appetite is a key input used in forecasting capex and opex	Energex Ergon	High	Inform
▶ Unit rates	Unit rates are key inputs used in forecasting capex and opex	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
▶ Cost escalations	Cost escalations are key inputs used in forecasting capex and opex	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
▶ Legislative and regulatory obligations and Government Policy (QEJP)	Legislative and regulation obligation are key inputs used in forecasting capex and opex	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
Governance	Governance and management framework used to plan, forecast, and approve capex projects and programs	Energex Ergon	High	Inform
Capex forecasting methodology	The approach used to forecast capital expenditure	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform

TOPIC	OVERVIEW	DNBP	IMPACT ON CUSTOMERS	IAP2 LEVEL
Replacement (Repex):				
▶ Reactive	Replacement capex driven by asset failures	Energex Ergon	Medium	Inform
▶ Condition and risk	Replacement capex driven by condition assessment of the assets	Energex Ergon	High	Inform
▶ Operational Technology	The replacement capex for device and applications used in the operation and control of the distribution network	Energex Ergon	Medium	Inform
Augmentation (Augex)				
▶ Growth	Augmentation capex driven by growth in demand (population). It includes electrification of transport.	Energex	Medium	Inform
▶ Operational Technology	The replacement capex for device and applications used in the operation and control of the distribution network	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
▶ Reliability (worst performing feeders)	Connections capex is expenditure incurred to connect new customers to the network and, where necessary, augment the shared network to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet new customer demand	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
Connections (Connex)	Connections capex is expenditure incurred to connect new customers to the network and, where necessary, augment the shared network to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet new customer demand	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
Information and Communications Technology (ICT)				
▶ Recurrent	Recurrent ICT is expenditure that is related to maintaining existing ICT services, functionalities, capability and/or market benefits, and occurs at least once every five years.	Energex Ergon	Medium	Inform
Property	Expenditure on land and buildings used to support the provision of standard control services	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
Tools and Equipment	Expenditure on tools and equipment used to support the provision of standard control services	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
Capitalised overheads	Overhead costs include business support costs not directly incurred in producing output, and shared costs that the business cannot directly allocate to a particular business activity or cost centre	Energex Ergon	High	Inform
Fleet	Expenditure on the fleet used to support the provision of standard control services	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
Operating expenditure (opex)				
Opex forecasting methodology	The AER prefers the base-step-trend method for forecasting operating expenditure (opex) i.e., forecast of operating, maintenance and other non-capital costs incurred in the provision of standard control services	Energex Ergon	N/A	Inform
Base year	The base year is the most recent year for which actual opex is available. Base year opex is tested (using benchmarking techniques) to determine that it is not materially inefficient	Energex Ergon	High	Inform
Rate of change	Expected growth in input prices, outputs, and productivity	Energex Ergon	Medium	Inform
Building Blocks				
Regulatory asset base	The value of assets used by the DNBP to provide standard control services	Energex Ergon	High	Inform
Rate of return	The AER's estimate of benchmark financing costs	Energex Ergon	High	Inform
Depreciation	Payback of the Regulated Asset Base (RAB)	Energex Ergon	Medium	inform
Tax	Notional tax allowance	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform

TOPIC	OVERVIEW	DNSP	IMPACT ON CUSTOMERS	IAP2 LEVEL
Incentive Schemes				
Efficiency Sharing Benefit Scheme (EBSS)	An incentive scheme that incentivises efficient opex	Energex Ergon	Medium	Inform
Service Target Performance Incentive Scheme (STPIS)	An incentive scheme that incentivises service performance	Energex Ergon	Medium	Inform
Capital Expenditure Sharing Scheme (CESS)	An incentive scheme that incentivises efficient capex (CESS rules are fixed, nothing negotiable)	Energex Ergon	Medium	Inform
Demand Management (DMIS and DMIA)	Schemes that incentivise distributors to consider non-network options The Demand Management Incentive Scheme (DMIS) and Demand Management Innovation Allowance (DMIA) just applies to projects as they are identified through the regulatory period, no consultation options for a regulatory proposal.	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
Other				
Cost pass through	The cost pass through mechanism allows DNSPs to recover costs of defined yet unpredictable, high-cost events that are outside the control of the business (Note: Involve in the context of resilience funding)	Energex Ergon	Medium	Inform
Shared assets	The shared assets mechanisms allow customers to benefit from assets that are included in the RAB but used to also provide unregulated services (shared assets currently don't apply to batteries)	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
Alternative Control Services				
Metering	Type 6 metering services	Energex Ergon	Low	Inform
Network Ancillary Services (Fee-based)	Customer requested works	Energex Ergon		Inform

APPENDIX II - Delivering on Engagement Expectations

As referenced in **Section 5.4 Delivering on engagement expectations** the following table outlines how we plan to deliver on our customer, stakeholder and the AER’s engagement expectations throughout the regulatory proposals process. We believe that the AER’s Better Resets Handbook: Towards Customer Centric Network Proposals (December 2021) provides a valuable framework for us to outline how we will deliver on the engagement expectations of our customers, stakeholders and the AER. The table below outlines how we will maximise value from and deliver on these key engagement expectations.

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles
THEME - NATURE OF ENGAGEMENT	
PRINCIPLE - SINCERITY OF ENGAGEMENT: understand consumers and reflect their preferences in regulatory proposals to give consumers confidence they have been heard	
Genuine commitment from network businesses extending down from their Boards and Executives to giving effect to consumer preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Board and Executive will provide due diligence in governance arrangements relating to the development of our proposals. • A specific Regulatory Determination Executive Management Committee will be established for the Executive to guide the project and consider insights and preferences provided by external parties. • Our Board and Executive will actively participate in our engagements directly to hear firsthand what our customers and stakeholders tell us. • Our draft and revised regulatory proposals, that will be endorsed by the Board and Executive, will clearly outline what our customers and stakeholders have told us through the engagement process and clearly outline how those insights and preferences have been considered and reflected.
Openness to new ideas and willingness to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will listen to what our customers and stakeholders tell us through the engagement process and will duly consider their ideas and suggestions raised and explain where their feedback has been able to be incorporated into our proposals. • Where ideas and suggestions have not been incorporated, we will clearly explain why and look at other ways of which they may be addressed. • We will actively encourage our customers and stakeholders, particularly through mechanisms such as our Customer and Community Council, standing forums and the Reset Reference Group established, to challenge us on our thinking and proposals throughout the process - with engagement activities designed and carried out in a manner to allow open and transparent discussion.
Ongoing engagement with consumers about outcomes that matter to them, which allows consumers to ‘set the agenda’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our overall Engagement Strategy and Engagement Plan approach will be developed in partnership with customers and stakeholders to ensure they reflect their needs and expectations. • We will adopt phases of engagement that clearly outline and articulate the purpose of each engagement phase, the activities to be undertaken with each ‘target audience’ and the themes and topics to be explored so that customers and stakeholders have visibility of the overall engagement plan process and can therefore highlight any gaps that we can consider in revising the engagement agenda where required. • We will work in partnership with our customers and stakeholders to shape the agenda, topics and timeline for discussion - specifically through some of our more formal engagement structures such as the Reset Reference Group, Customer and Community Council, Network Pricing Working Group and other structures. • Our engagement process will be ongoing and iterative throughout the life of the project. • Effective evaluation will be undertaken at each step of the engagement process as activities are undertaken with feedback from participants shaping future activities and the overall approach undertaken. • Flexibility will be at the core of our engagement process so we can respond to customer and stakeholder feedback on ensuring we provide engagement structures and discuss issues that matter to them in the context of the regulatory proposal process. • Any issues and matters that arise outside of the scope of the project will still be captured and addressed with participants in our engagement outside of our specific regulatory proposal engagements.
Ensure consumer confidence in the engagement process and alleviating concerns consumers may have	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure information is provided in a timely manner, clear in format and in language customers and stakeholders understand. • We will address issues and concerns raised without delay through open contact and dialogue and ‘closing the loop’. • Issues and concerns raised will be recorded in a Customer and Stakeholder Issues Register so they can be appropriately assigned, status tracked, outcomes recorded and shared.

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles
THEME - NATURE OF ENGAGEMENT	
PRINCIPLE - CONSUMERS AS PARTNERS: collaborate with, and where appropriate, empower consumers in developing regulatory proposals	
Collaborate with and empower consumers on an ongoing business-as-usual approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a well-established business-as-usual engagement approach and engagement structures in place that were developed in part from our learnings from our previous 2020-25 regulatory proposals engagement process and our continual review and feedback from customers and stakeholders on how they best like to be engaged and their needs in ensuring their capacity to engage with us. • We will work through our business-as-usual engagement structures such as our Customer and Community Council and other customer and stakeholder forums to build on the insights received to date. • We will establish bespoke engagement structures specific to our regulatory proposals so we can maximise participation from a broader range of customers and stakeholders for ensure wider collaboration in a way the empowers them to participate through the engagement process (e.g. Reset Reference Group, Voice of the Customer and Community Panels, Network Pricing Working Group; bespoke customer segmented focus groups) • We will work in active partnership with our customers and stakeholders to design and outwork our engagement process now and into the future. • We will be open and transparent in sharing insights received to inform our discussions, with insights from any one particular engagement technique adopted, being shared wider to inform future engagements.
PRINCIPLE - EQUIPPING CONSUMERS: ensure consumers can effectively engage with and provide informed feedback to network business in a manner that maintains independence and integrity of consumer engagement processes	
Equipping, informing and supporting consumers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ask our customers and stakeholders what support they require to effectively engage and respond appropriately (including the manner in which they prefer to be engaged, the materials they required and any associated logistical requirements to attend/participate). • We will adhere to customer and stakeholder requests for their insights and feedback to remain confidential where this is requested. • We will manage engagements and utilise various techniques in a manner that maximise participation from all and avoids 'the loudest' from dominating conversations.
Maintaining consumer independence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer representative declaration of interests/ conflicts of interest and management thereof • Networks and consumer representatives to set out governance arrangements covering interactions • Networks should publicly declare all remuneration arrangements, benefits and financial support provided to customer representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure public disclosure of the membership of any bespoke engagement groups put in place and ask stakeholders to clarify if they are contributing in a personal capacity or representing a particular customer or stakeholder segment or organisation (a record of responses will be kept in our customer and stakeholder management databases). • At the commencement of all engagements customers and stakeholders will be asked to declare any conflicts of interest so that any conflicts can be managed appropriately. • The Terms of Reference for our Customer and Community Council, the Reset Reference Group and any other bespoke groups formed for the purposes of the regulatory proposals engagements, such as the Voice of the Customer Panels, will be made publicly available (such Terms of Reference will also outline any remuneration arrangements that apply).
PRINCIPLE - ACCOUNTABILITY: ongoing engagement should cover delivery of commitments to consumers, particularly in relation to outcomes.	
Transparent reporting and consultation on delivery of commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From a project management perspective, we will establish robust reporting mechanisms to ensure that an accurate record of all engagement activities is captured, including commitments made so that their status can be tracked. • From a proposals' outcome perspective, we will clearly define in our proposals the outcomes of our engagements and commitments made through the process and track the status of these whilst reporting on their status/progress though our ongoing business-as-usual activities into the future, beyond the 2025-30 regulatory proposal engagement timeframe itself.

Engagement themes and principles **How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles**

THEME - BREADTH AND DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT

PRINCIPLE - ACCESSIBLE, CLEAR AND TRANSPARENT ENGAGEMENT

<p>Transparently set out engagement plans (outlining objectives, engagement issues/topics and level of participation and influence consumers can expect)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our 2025-30 Regulatory Proposals Engagement Strategy and our associated Engagement Plan, developed in partnership with our customers and stakeholders, sets out our engagement approach, objectives, issues/topics to be explored and the level of influence our customers and stakeholders can expect. • We have adopted the IAP Spectrum of Public Participation as the framework through which we will clearly map out the level of influence our customers and stakeholders can expect on the key topics/issues to be engaged on
<p>Set consultation timeframes with regard to the complexity of the issues and provide consumers with adequate time to understand and assess</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through our Engagement Plan and associated engagement planning matrix we have outlined our Phases of Engagement and when we expect particular engagements with particular ‘target audiences’ to be realised to enable early identification of proposed activity. • Engagement Action Plans will be developed for our key engagements to provide clarity to customers and stakeholders on the purpose, objective and timeframes associated with the engagement activity to be undertaken.
<p>Adopt different engagement methods on different aspects of issues where required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will adopt a range of engagement techniques to best engage with our diverse customer and stakeholder segments and tailor those engagements to their specific needs where appropriate as well as the issues to be discussed.

PRINCIPLE - CONSULTATION ON DESIRED OUTCOMES AND THEN INPUTS: consumers should guide the development of proposals through consultation with them on the outcomes they want from the proposal and how they would like to be engaged with in the development of the proposal.

<p>How consumers would like to be engaged in and guide the development of the proposal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our 2025-30 Regulatory Proposals Engagement Strategy, and subsequently the Engagement Plan, has been developed based on early engagement with customers and stakeholders through a co-design approach in the form of our ‘Recollective’ online engagement forum and discussions in August 2022 and subsequent Customer and Community Council and Reset Reference Group engagement planning discussions. • We will listen and act on customer and stakeholder feedback provided throughout the engagement process to continually respond and address their evolving needs and expectations where required.
<p>Focus consultation on long-term outcomes and not confined to the period covered by the regulatory proposal and to take account of changing circumstances into the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our regulatory proposal engagements and issues to be explored, build on our existing business-as-usual engagement approach and conversations. They will inform our future engagement strategy and discussions into the 2025-30 and beyond particularly in recognition of the long-term nature of many of the key topics and issues likely to be raised in conversations, such as the evolving energy transition and the role our businesses play in that transition.
<p>Consult consumers on their desired outcomes and craft the inputs of the proposal to deliver the desired outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will consult our customers and stakeholders on a range of topics/issues relating to our regulatory proposals and ensure that the insights and feedback provided shape the development of those proposals and clearly articulate where those insights and feedback have influenced decision making to deliver the outcomes they desire and expect where possible. • Where desired outcomes have not been achieved, we will clearly explain why this is the case to provide understanding and due respect.
<p>Consult consumers on their desired outcomes and craft the inputs of the proposal to deliver the desired outcomes Engagement may go beyond individual components of the proposal (e.g. reliability, affordability, sustainability), to explore a consumer’s lived experience within the energy system – including customer services and interactions with the network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage and consult our customers and stakeholders on a wide range of issues relating to the regulatory proposals, with the customer experience and service interactions forming part of those discussions. • One of our key engagement themes developed is ‘Service Excellence’ that will ensure the ‘lived experience’ of our customers and stakeholders is captured through our discussions – we also recognise the importance of that lived experience in not only informing potential options around our investment plans but also in improving and tailoring our engagement and communications more generally with our customers and stakeholders.

Engagement themes and principles	How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles
THEME - BREADTH AND DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT	
PRINCIPLE - MULTIPLE CHANNELS OF ENGAGEMENT: to gain a comprehensive understanding of consumer preferences	
Direct engagement with consumers (taking account of consumers underrepresented and preferences of consumers in how they like to be engaged)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have identified a list of 'target audiences' and preferred engagement techniques in consultation with our customers and stakeholders as part of our early engagement on developing our 202-25 Regulatory Proposals Engagement Strategy and subsequent Engagement Plan - this consultation highlighted the need to engage with particular customer segments who are often underrepresented with these accounted for in our Engagement Plan. • We will develop an extensive engagement program of activity and tailor our techniques to engage directly with all of our customers and stakeholders to ensure they can participate and their voice is heard. • We will establish two distinct 'Voice of the Customer Panels' (VCPs) to consist of a range of customers in each DNSP service area to directly engage with customers.
Direct engagement with consumer representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to build on our existing business-as-usual engagement structures in place by working with our Customer and Community Council, Network Pricing Working Group and various standing customer and stakeholder forums to obtain their input into our engagement design, discussions and proposals development. • We have established a Reset Reference Group of customer representatives and regulatory experts to explore topics/issues in depth, in particular on the more technical aspects of our proposals with their insights and feedback helping shape our engagement approach and discussions to be held with our wider customers and stakeholders.
Understand, represent and balance the interests of all consumer cohorts, identify competing interests and seek to develop agreed positions with consumers and set out competing interests in relation to the elements of the proposal where agreement is not possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will actively listen to understand all of our customers' and stakeholders' needs and expectations and identify their priorities through collaborative exploration of what matters most. • Engagement techniques adopted, such as our Voice of the Customer Panels, Customer and Community Council, Reset Reference Group and Network Pricing Working Group will play an important role in working in partnership with us to assess competing customer and stakeholder preferences and forming agreed positions where possible. • In our draft and revised proposals we will clearly identify and articulate where agreed positions from our customers and stakeholders have been achieved and how they have influenced our proposals. • In our draft and revised proposals we will clearly identify and articulate where competing interests have led to agreement not being achieved and explain where the business position on our proposals has taken this into account.
PRINCIPLE - CONSUMERS' INFLUENCE ON THE PROPOSAL: consider the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation and its different levels of participation and range of influence on the proposal.	
Consider the IAP2 spectrum in consumer engagement on the proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with our business-as-usual engagement approach, we have adopted and embedded the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation in our engagement approach to the regulatory proposals.
Networks and consumers to consult each other on the range of issues consumers can have influence over	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will consult our key customers and stakeholders such as the Reset Reference Group, Customer and Community Council amongst others, on the key themes, topics and subtopics (issues) pertaining to the regulatory proposals and in doing so identify and agree the range of issues that customers and stakeholders will be able to influence, with these forming the core elements of our engagement discussions so we remain focused on maximising customer and stakeholder input to what they can actually influence. • We will map key themes, topics and subtopics developed to the level of influence customers and stakeholders may be able to exert on any particular topic of issue to provide clarity on the 'negotiables' and 'non-negotiables' while explaining these categorisations so that customers and stakeholders are informed.
Encourage consumers to test assumptions and processes that underpin the proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of our engagement approach and the techniques developed, we will ensure that they are structured in such a manner that provides opportunities for our customers and stakeholders to 'deep-dive' into topics/issues where relevant to explore different options and test assumptions.
Provide additional resources and commission independent analysis to support consumers in testing assumptions and process where they are not equipped to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to due governance and benefits analysis, we will make budget available to our Customer and Community Council, Reset Reference Group, Network Pricing Working Group and Voice of the Customer Panels to commission research or other support required in the operation of their activities where that is required to test assumptions. • We will also build on our business-as-usual approach to working in partnership with our customer representatives and stakeholders to identify and consider application of resources and funding of specific engagements, research or other support that may be deemed valuable by both parties in collecting customer and stakeholder insights to inform dialogue around the regulatory proposals process.

Engagement themes and principles **How we will deliver against the engagement themes and principles**

THEME - CLEARLY EVIDENCED IMPACT OF THIS ENGAGEMENT

PRINCIPLE - PROPOSALS LINKED TO CONSUMER PREFERENCES: establish a clear link between consumer research and engagement, a network business's representation of the outcomes desired by consumers and how the proposal gives effect to those outcomes.

<p>Outline clear link between consumer research and engagement, the network business's representation of consumers preferences and how the proposal gives effect to those outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our draft and revised regulatory proposals, that will be endorsed by the Board and Executive, will clearly outline what our customers and stakeholders have told us through the engagement process and clearly outline how those insights and preferences have been considered and reflected. • For ease of reference we will adopt the 'You said', 'We heard', 'We propose' framework to clearly identifying and articulating how our customer and stakeholder preferences have given effect to the outcomes in our regulatory proposals. • This framework will be applied throughout the engagement process in our engagement activities and discussions where relevant, not just in the draft and revised regulatory proposals documents themselves so customers and stakeholder have confidence and trust that we are actively listening and responding at every step.
<p>Seek to find mutually acceptable solutions where divergent consumer views exist and where they exist show how they have been balanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout the engagement process we will enable customers and stakeholders to provide their insights and feedback in a 'safe environment' and explore with them in depth topics/issues where divergent views exist where relevant by facilitating opportunities for those views to be further explored and balanced where possible • In our draft and revised proposals we will clearly identify and articulate where agreed positions from our customers and stakeholders have been achieved and how they have influenced our proposals. • In our draft and revised proposals we will clearly identify and articulate where competing interests have led to agreement not being achieved and explain where the business position on our proposals has taken this into account.
<p>Release a comprehensive draft regulatory proposal for stakeholder comment and engage with consumers beyond those consulted with in preparing the draft proposal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will publish our Draft Regulatory Proposals in September 2023. • We will invite both formal and informal submissions and feedback on those proposals not just from those customers and stakeholders involved in our engagement activities but also cast the net wider to invite submissions and feedback from across our wider customer and stakeholder base. • We will provide clear information on the submission process and timeframes to manage different customer and stakeholder needs and expectations. • We will adopt different engagement methods to invite submissions through a range of techniques to maximise customer and stakeholder feedback and strive to make it easy for them to do so.
<p>On submission of regulatory proposal to the AER set out how the network has responded to feedback on the draft proposal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will clearly articulate how we have responded to customer and stakeholder feedback on our formal Draft Proposals on submission of our revised regulatory proposals to the AER, identifying and linking the feedback received to what may change and the reasons for any change in what is then proposed.

PRINCIPLE - INDEPENDENT CONSUMER SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSAL: encourage consumers to express support for the proposal developed.

<p>Invite submissions on draft proposal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will publish our Draft Regulatory Proposals in September 2023. • We will invite submissions on our draft regulatory proposals from all of our customers and stakeholders (See further information on our draft submission approach above).
<p>Consider independent report setting out consumer perspectives on the proposal (providing consumer view on the effectiveness of the pre-engagement lodgement process in identifying consumer preferences and outcomes and how they have been incorporated into the proposal)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ask our Reset Reference Group to provide an independent report on the effectiveness of our engagement approach and our incorporation of customer and stakeholder insights in our regulatory proposal development and how they believe we have reflected feedback received in our proposals.
<p>Where support for a proposal is not obtained by consumers, provide a feedback loop to consumers to explain why alignment of consumer preferences was unable to be achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In our revised proposals we will acknowledge and explain where any alignment of customer and stakeholder preferences was not achieved. • We will continue to engage with our customers and stakeholders beyond the regulatory proposals submission to the AER to further explore their preferences into the future.

APPENDIX III - Engagement Schedule and Activity Matrix

STAKEHOLDER	HOW – ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	GATHER & PLAN 2022	LISTEN Feb-May 2023	SHARE & EXPLORE Jun-Jul 2023	TEST & REVISE Oct-Nov 2023	FINALISE Apr-Sep 2024	FUTURE Apr 2025
CUSTOMER ADVOCATES	Residential and Business Advocates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Residential and Business Advocates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Residential and Business Advocates	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Agriculture Sector	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Developer Representatives	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
	Representatives from Local Government and Department of Main Roads and Transport	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Community Stakeholders	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Community Stakeholders	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Local Councils	-	✓	✓	-	-	✓
	Local Councils/Community	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS	Edge of Grid Community	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Battery Neighbours	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Residential customers – reliable representation of customer base	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Residential customers	✓	-	-	-	-	-
	Residential customers	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
	Residential customers who have had a recent interaction with Ergon/Energex	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Community Members	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
	Residential customers – reliable representation of customer base	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
	Future Voices – Energy Innovators	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Future Voices – Youth	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
BUSINESS CUSTOMERS	Future Voices – Community Campaign	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-
	Online campaign – Talking Energy	-	✓	-	✓	-	-
	Youth Engagement Program	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Solar, Battery and EV owners	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Queensland Household Energy Survey (QHES) 2023 (Note: circa. 4,000 – 4,500 responses expected in lieu with previous annual surveys)	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) and Net Trust Score (NTS) Survey (Note: 2,500 customers via independent panel annually)	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓
	Customer Experience Measurement Survey (Note: Customer Satisfaction [CSAT] based surveys sent to customers post-interactions with Ergon Energy Network and Energex)	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Residential Network Capacity Tariff Trial (Partner: Ergon Energy Retail)	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
	Residential Customer Tariff Interviews	✓	-	-	-	-	-
	Voice of the Customer Panels (Note: 1 x Ergon Energy Network and 1 x Energex Panel – number of meetings highlighted to be duplicated)	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

STAKEHOLDER	HOW – ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	GATHER & PLAN 2022	LISTEN Feb-May 2023	SHARE & EXPLORE Jun-Jul 2023	TEST & REVISE Oct-Nov 2023	FINALISE Apr-Sep 2024	FUTURE Apr 2025
BUSINESS CUSTOMERS	Quiet Voices – Renters	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Quiet Voices – Seniors (Definition – Self Funded Retirees/Pensioners)	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Quiet Voices – Disability	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Quiet Voices – Life Support Customers	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Quiet Voices – Multi-Cultural	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Quiet Voices – Indigenous communities	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA) indigenous CEOs	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
	See Customer and Community Panel/Network Pricing Working Group/Agriculture Forum/UDIA Regional Committee Meetings	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Webinars/online survey	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Developers Forum	✓	-	-	✓	-	-
BUSINESS CUSTOMERS	SME Focus Group/Survey	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	C&/Large Customer interviews	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Agriculture Sector Survey	-	✓	-	✓	-	-
	Sugar Mill Forum (Townsville)	-	✓	-	-	-	-
	Solar Soak Tariff Desktop Analysis/Trial (Partner: Bundaberg Regional Irrigators Group)	✓	-	-	-	-	-
	Business customers – 2032 Olympics	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Energy Retailers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Energy Retailer Meetings (Note: Main 6 x energy retailers in Queensland – bi-monthly meetings)	-	-	-	✓	-	-
	Energy Retailer Forum (Note: All energy retailers)	-	-	-	✓	-	-
	Annual Energy Retailer Satisfaction Survey	-	✓	-	-	-	-
INDUSTRY PARTNERS	Electric Vehicle	-	-	✓	-	-	-
	Elec Contractor	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	Electrical Contractor Peak Body Meetings (Note: meetings individually with Master Electricians Australia/ National Electrical and Communications Association)	-	-	-	✓	-	-
	Energy Academy Forum (Note: Electrical contractors forums)	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-
EMPLOYEES	Ergon Energy Network/Energex Employees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ergon Energy Network/Energex Trade Union Meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



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