



# Stakeholder Reference Group

## Meeting #3 | Summary Notes

Details	Members	AusNet Staff	External Observers
<p><b>1.00pm-4.00pm Thursday 27 April 2023</b></p> <p><b>Online (MS Teams)</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Tony Robinson</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b> AusNet</p>	<p>Tony Robinson (<i>Chair</i>)</p> <p>Helen Bartley</p> <p>Emma Chessell</p> <p>Lynne Chester</p> <p>Kieran Donoghue</p> <p>Gavin Duffy</p> <p>Mark Grenning</p> <p>Tricia Hiley</p> <p>Darren McCubbin</p>	<p>Charlotte Eddy</p> <p>Rob Ball</p> <p>Lucy Holder</p> <p>Michaela Jackson</p> <p><b>Observing:</b></p> <p>James Bleed</p>	<p>David Prins (CCP, AER)</p> <p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Nil</p>

<b>Purpose of Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide updates on standing items, for information, and to involve/collaborate on forward agendas.</li> <li>To finalise the Network 'Aspiration' and determine next steps for customer workshops</li> <li>To inform the group on current customer experience in Mallacoota</li> <li>To discuss:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What a value-for-money proposal looks like</li> <li>What criteria might we use to assess that our proposal represents value-for-money for customers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>To provide an update and seek group feedback on administrative matters.</li> </ul>
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Item	Time	Topic	Lead/s
	1-1:05pm (5 mins)	Welcome	Tony Robinson (Chair)
<b>1</b>	1:05 – 1:15pm (10 mins)	<b>Standing Items</b> Action items Workstream Updates   Reporting in on sub-panel and joint DB work	Tony Robinson
<b>2</b>	1:15 – 1:20pm (5 mins)	<b>Other Updates</b> Network Vision   <i>Update</i>	Charlotte Eddy & Tony Robinson
<b>3</b>	1:20 – 2:25pm (1hr 5 mins)	<b>Broader Engagement Stream</b> a) Updated engagement framework & near-term priorities b) New insights   Major customer interviews c) New insights   Energy Sentiments Survey & customers' aspirations d) Vision/Aspiration to finalise e) Designing customer workshops	Lucy Holder & Charlotte Eddy

Break			
4	2:30 – 2:45pm (15 mins)	<b>Mallacoota's Story</b>   Member Item Community Experience AusNet's Next Steps & Discussion	Tricia Hiley Tim Lloyd (AusNet)
5	2:45 – 3:45pm (20 mins)	<b>Activity</b>   Unpacking "value-for-money"	Michaela Jackson
6	3:45 – 3:48 pm (20 mins)	<b>Administrative Matters</b> a) Community Hub Updates b) Prep time c) Streamlining communications d) In-person meeting	Charlotte Eddy & Tony Robinson
	3:58 – 4pm (2 mins)	Meeting Close & Next Steps	Tony Robinson

## Summary

### Welcome

- Tony Robinson (Chair) opened the meeting and acknowledged traditional owners of the lands on which the SRG met. In opening the meeting Tony introduced David Prins as observer from the Australian Energy Regulator's Community Challenge Panel (CCP). Stakeholder Reference Group member Helen Bartley declared, for matters of transparency, that she and David work together on the CCP.

### 1. Standing items

#### Action items:

- Tony briefly addressed the status of action items as outlined on slides 6 -8 (1:05 – 1:10pm). He thanked both Tricia and AusNet for including discussion of Mallacoota's experience with outages on today's agenda.

#### Workstream Updates

- SRG member Emma Chessell provided an update from the Tariffs and Pricing sub-panel meeting. The meeting introduced the framework on tariffs, general introduction on the engagement plan and the sub-panel role. The meeting also covered tariff basics, the amount of discretion AusNet has on tariffs, AusNet's objectives and priorities, critical peak demand days and trends shaping tariff reforms, and tariff design including 'back casting'. In resulting discussion, Emma also referred to a presentation by the South Australian Council of Social Services (SACOSS) on sudden introduction of a new tariff and offered to share the report with SRG members.

#### Upcoming meetings

- AusNet noted that the Benchmarking Sub-Panel meeting is being held next week. Kieran Donoghue will provide update at the next SRG, after this meeting. Lucy Holder advised that in future, we will ask members in advance of sub-panel meetings to report back to the SRG.
- Tony Robinson reminded panel members that AusNet has two researchers available to assist with customer research. AusNet reiterated they are keen for panel members to ask for help with research. In response a panel member suggested AusNet look back at cost allocations for tariffs and how those allocations have been reshaped as solar has been adopted. They noted that people think solar is fair and equitable but they don't see cross-subsidies that have shifted over time. This suggestion was supported by another SRG member via the chat.

## 2. Update on Network Vision

- AusNet's Charlotte Eddy provided an update on the network vision, explaining that the term has different meanings for different people. She clarified the difference between network aspiration and narrative, as per slide 27, and indicated a desire to obtain endorsement on the network aspiration. Chair Tony Robinson agreed on the potential for confusion and expressed support for starting with a more succinct statement. Two panel members indicated support or comfort with what AusNet proposed while a third indicated they still have reservations about visioning statements more broadly, but like the way the proposed aspiration comes from a customer base and commended AusNet on this approach.

## 3. Broad Engagement Stream

### A) Updated engagement framework and near-term priorities

- AusNet presented a map of various customer and stakeholder research and engagement initiatives categorised according to whether they are existing, upcoming or planned, and which focus are or sub-panel these initiatives relate to, noting the value stacking opportunities (whereby one initiative aligns to multiple focus areas or sub-panels). A panel member responded that the diagram is very 'busy' and that it is important to allow flexibility within the design of research and engagement initiatives. They cautioned against siloed approach and the need for more blending and value stacking, or for this to be more clearly captured and portrayed. A second panel member expressed support for this point, but also expressed that once we start implementing customer engagement that the silos will start to break down.
- Chair, Tony Robinson highlighted that the diagram is prospective and that depth might not be captured in the diagram. Lucy Holder also flagged that the diagram is depicted 'at capacity' and that developing problem or opportunity statements will enable more accurate mapping of data sources and decisions. She advised that the diagram is a reminder of what resources is available, to help the sub-panels and SRG use resources and find value staking opportunities, and that much of what is on there is conducted as part of 'business as usual' research and engagement activities. The chair expressed that he hopes the SRG will apply constructive curiosity – and will look 'sideways' to help overcome silos. Lucy Holder agreed and highlighted that the SRG and sub-panel structure will facilitate deeper discussion between panel members.
- AusNet highlighted near-term priorities (slide 18) beginning with developing problem/opportunity statements. In response Tony Robinson thanked AusNet for listening to the SRG's feedback and indicated he is confident that the process will all come together, that the aim is to ensure the sub-panels are working on problems aligned to our main aim. Subsequent discussion included why the two joint forums are joint and how did they get there. Ausnet responded that it has received feedback that consistency between businesses when it comes to support programs is important. AusNet also noted joint engagement doesn't mean we all businesses then include the same recommendations in their proposals. The suggestion of a joint distribution business-SRG meeting was made, to which AusNet's Charlotte Eddy responded that we are open to this suggestion if it makes sense to do so, and that similarly we will think about ensuring transparency of the joint forums. Chair Tony Robinson also noted that there are members of the SRG who will likely be involved in the joint engagement opportunities and who can provide a conduit to the SRG.

### B & C) New insights | Major customer interviews, Energy Sentiments Survey & customers' aspirations

- AusNet provided a brief update on major customer interviews and sentiments and invited comments or questions off-line. In presenting sentiments data, AusNet noted a question as suggested by SRG member Gavin Duffy has been included, to which about two-thirds provided a response. Slides 24 and 25 present a random selection of comments that highlight the diversity of customer aspirations. Chair Tony Robinson requested AusNet prepare a one-page summary of the 'Good Grid'. AusNet flagged that this information might be available via the Tariffs and Pricing slide pack but if not that they would prepare and share this information. An SRG member commented that large industrial customers are very focussed on decarbonisation objectives but the flexibility with which they can change their operations varies. The member flagged upcoming study from the Grattan Institute and commended AusNet on conducting early stage interviews with major customers.

### D) Aspiration and vision

SRG members provided the following feedback on the network aspiration:

- A member suggested that meeting customer needs should precede value for money, and that they would like to see more reference to diversity and affordability. Other members added that value for money and affordability are not synonymous, and asked if there should be a clearer reference to customer service. There was also some discussion about the wording, including of 'distributed energy resources', and that there should be more acknowledgement of customer and community agency. AusNet thanked members for their comments, noted that they will make revisions and resend to the group, and that they are opened to making this a living statement (i.e., adjustable) throughout the process.
- Related to this conversation, a member noted as part of the Gas Access Arrangement Reset, there was more uncertainty and a greater role for renewable gas. This was associated with implications for accelerated depreciation. They asked if AusNet now sees electrification as outcome they are planning for, rather than renewable gas? Another member also asked if it is possible to ask the research team to provide data on how many people disconnecting from gas. AusNet's Charlotte Eddy responded that we expect there will be more electrification of gas, at least for residential but overall the situation is still unclear. AusNet advised there is not a lot of data to date but this is something we are continuing to monitor.

#### E) Designing customer workshops

- AusNet's Lucy Holder introduced the session and commented that we need a real mix in terms of workshops e.g., smaller groups enable more detailed discussion. Lucy acknowledged member Helen Bartley's work when sharing the diagram that connects these elements and to vision statements.
- Members were asked to indicate their views using Miro and the diagram on slide 36. A member asked if we are looking for validity or reliability. A member supported this question and expressed discomfort with this exercise as they did not feel they understood its purpose. Three members abstained from the exercise, with one member indicating a preference for Padlet rather than Miro. Another member highlighted that geographic spread and how that impacts customer perspectives was important to capture.
- Lucy Holder thanked members for their feedback, and also noted that as most members completed the activity we would consider the results (including noting that some people don't see value in the exercise) and would report back. Members were invited to provide responses to activity or feedback on design of workshops, noting we are keen to progress with this. AusNet also agreed with the Chair's suggestion that SRG members would like to play the role of observers.

## 4. Murrumbidgee Story

- SRG member Tricia Hiley presented background and history of reliability and stability issues in Murrumbidgee, including the frequency and duration of outages, the impacts, and the lack of incentives for DBs to improve reliability. Tricia described the recent issue in Murrumbidgee over Easter, including a lack of information and communication regarding why the battery wasn't working. This resulted in Tricia being asked about the situation by community members, but being unable to address questions. Tricia conveyed that getting the network stable and reliable, then get it sustainable and renewable as priorities and that the Murrumbidgee community needs a partnership with AusNet, so AusNet can understand what it is like to be without power for a considerable time of the Easter weekend. Tricia highlighted the importance of community and interest in energy solutions with a longer term aim of being totally renewable in Murrumbidgee.
- AusNet's Tim Lloyd responded, noting that the battery failed to kick in when there was an outage. He clarified that the battery does not stop all outages but depends on the type of fault. He explained how the battery should work, noted that in theory residents shouldn't see any loss of supply, but that the technology isn't working well at the moment. He referred to an aspiration to improve reliability in Murrumbidgee by 95%, advised that work is taking place to address issues, including ability to remote control to start the generator in Murrumbidgee.

## 5. Value for money

- This part of the meeting involved a series of activities for the purpose of:
  - to identify what criteria SRG members think we might use to assess whether, our proposal represents value-for-money for customers.
  - drawing on SRG contributions and for their validation, to arrive at a working definition of what value for money looks like. This will inform how we develop, engage on and present our Revenue Proposal.
- SRG members participated in the first two parts of the activity, although a member expressed deep discomfort with the exercise and indicated that they would abstain from sharing a written explanation (part 3 and 4 of the activity). This view was supported by a member who felt this was inconsistent with their role of providing advice. Another member asked for clarification on how the statement would be disseminated and if affordability was needed in addition to or in place of value for money. There were some technical issues with the Miro board, and some panel members indicated preference for Padlet along with discussion.
- Chair Tony Robinson voiced support for a conversation around value for money, recalling a similar conversation with the last AusNet reset, that this is an iterative process and ultimately one where the network makes a judgement. He suggested that improved value for money might be a more helpful approach. Another member indicated that they felt it is important to acknowledge different people have different views and preferences, that they liked the activities in this session and found them helpful (supported by another member via the chat).
- AusNet clarified that the intent was to gather diverse feedback, and acknowledged they would consider members' feedback on this session in future activities. AusNet agreed to clearer about the application and intent of activities done during the meeting in future.

## 6. Administrative matters

- In response to the question about preparation time, a member responded that the time taken depends on the pack and what feedback is required. Another member thought that efficiency would increase now that slide packs are streamlined and noted that other networks provide one hour prep time per hour of meeting.
- Other administrative items were taken as read owing to time constraints. Members were advised they were welcome to raise any questions or concerns with AusNet outside of this meeting.

### Close & Next Steps

Tony closed the meeting.

Action items			
Action	Assigned to	Status	Due date
Emma Chessell to share report by South Australian Council of Social Services (SACOSS) on sudden introduction of a new tariff and offered to share the report with interested SRG members.	Emma Chessell	In progress	Open
AusNet to look at and present cost allocations for tariffs and how those allocations have been reshaped as solar has been adopted	AusNet	In progress	SRG #4

AusNet to update aspiration statement in light of feedback from SRG Meeting #3.	AusNet	In progress	SRG #4
AusNet to consider ways to maximise transparency of the joint forums, and monitor the need for SRG joint-DB meeting.	AusNet	In progress	SRG #4
AusNet prepare or share a one-page summary of the 'Good Grid' with EDPR Engagement panel members	AusNet	In progress	With SRG #3 meeting summary
AusNet to note panel members preference for Padlet rather than Miro as an online engagement tool.	AusNet	Ongoing	Ongoing
AusNet agreed to clearer about the application and intent of engagement activities conducted during engagement panel meetings in future.	AusNet	Ongoing	Ongoing
AusNet to ensure SRG and Engagement Panel members have the opportunity observe community engagement workshops.	AusNet	Upcoming	Q3 2023

\*R&E = Research & Engagement \*\*Reg = Regulation

## Other items on radar

- In-person Engagement Panel meeting (SRG and sub-panel members) scheduled for late July. Further updates to be provided.
- Continued development of research and engagement initiatives and workshops.
- AusNet notes SRG members understanding of their role as advisors in the engagement program.
- Benchmarking Sub-Panel Meeting #1 taking place at 10:30am – 12:30pm, Thursday 4th May 2023.