AUSNET EDPR 2026-2031 COORDINATION GROUP MEETING #18 MINUTES

Location:	Microsoft Teams
Date:	8 August, 2024
Time:	9:00 AM – 10:30 AM
Attendees:	**Coordination Group (CG):** Peter Eben (Chair of CG, meeting Chair) Helen Bartley (Research and Engagement Panel Lead) (meeting secretary) Kieran Donoghue (Availability Panel Lead) Gavin Dufty (Tariffs and Pricing Panel Lead) Mark Grenning (Benchmarking and Opex Lead) (until 10 am) Dean Lombard (Future Networks Panel Lead) Emily Peel (Customer Experience Lead) **AusNet:** Charlotte Eddy (until 10 am) Lucy Holder
Apologies:	Rob Ball

I. WELCOME AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Acknowledgement of Country (HB)

Minutes from the last meeting were accepted.

No conflicts of interest declared.

All action items from last meeting have been finalised

II. PANEL LEAD UPDATES

A. Availability Panel update (Kieran)

1. Wrapped up last resilience discussion – key points

- Panel supported continuation of community fund but questioned potential cost recovery from customers – AusNet agreed to consider most appropriate funding source
- Panel discussed increased hazard trees program to increase reliability- and supports AusNet quantifying benefits of doing so.

2. Bulk of meeting was on worst served customers
   - AusNet has identified 10 worst served feeders using methodology agreed with the Panel.
   - Kieran noted Network Review identified different set of feeders – we excluded major event days whereas they included them)
   - AusNet has provided suggestions to improve feeder reliability (one passes cost benefit test – Moe, others don't come close, so justification would be on equity grounds to improve reliability for those customers
   - AusNet presented optimal approach to maximise net cost benefit position ($25m across 10 feeders – 90c per year) and feasible approach ($125m for more benefits - $4.20 a year). Kieran noted both well below QCV and amounts are consistent with willingness to pay
   - Kiera noted there may be lower opex offset if improvements proceeded (GSLs being lower)
   - Gav enquired as to whether over-served customers are considered in the context of the risk of continually moving the distribution up. Kieran noted not looked at in detail by Availability Group. Charlotte noted that relatively AusNet does not invest much to improve urban reliability.

III. AUSNET ITEMS

A. Early draft proposal discussion (Charlotte)
   i. AusNet is expecting to have a complete draft to its executive team on 23 August and will also provide a copy to the Panel to provide comment
   ii. AusNet expects to have a fully designed version to go to the Board on the following week and to be published soon after
   iii. General comments suggestions on the Plan from the CG
      1. The CG applauds AusNet for preparing an early version of its Draft Proposal, and the work gone into preparing the Draft Proposal, and agreed the general structure looks good
      2. Support for graphs showing 3 reset periods to show trends, but graphs need numbers
      3. Clarity of consistency of language between our report and the proposal (noting the term "customer panel" needs to be clarified as not all panel members are customers)
      4. Clarity needed around customer expectations on reliability

5. Assumptions around flat price and caveat on dependence on forecast customer numbers (implications if customer numbers increase/decrease)– and is there consistency around approach to gas forecasts
6. Tariffs – demand management tariff heading could include equity and utilisation, and more on what AusNet is doing give no mandates from Vic government on time of use (ToU) tariffs. Charlotte also indicated modelling around customers on ToU tariffs.
7. Forthcoming bill impacts – will there be a section that breaks down the bill impacts into subgroups? Charlotte indicated they can include some high level impacts
8. Trade off big decisions that are contentious need to be well explained
9. Short-cut table where the key bits on key themes are located (e.g. all aspects on energy futures, or all the repex or opex is located)
10. Suggestion to produce fact sheets to meet different customer group needs (e.g. for journalists). Lucy noted AusNet is looking at producing some infographics that could include page numbers.
11. Suggestion to include references to topics (such as resilience) that are still being finalised. Lucy advised the Draft Proposal is aimed at being stress-tested with customers, and all elements are open for review

B. AER discussions (Charlotte)
   i. Charlotte updated the panel on discussions with the AER on the opex base year given extreme weather event impacts, impacting 2023-24; so looking at the following year as base year; also looking at vegetation management approach. AusNet to progress through the reset
   i. Charlotte advised following the R&E Panel discussion on resilience and intent to discuss approach with the AER, given sensitivities about reengaging traumatized communities as well as asking for more dollars of these people

IV. OFFSITE APPROACH FOR PANELS (PETER)

   ii. Peter shared slides in relation to first afternoon day 1 offsite aimed at reaching decisions on proposal
      1. Break out groups proposed with aim for individual panels to reach conclusions regarding support; with small numbers aim to understand the mood of the group
      2. Agreed a proposal that does not get panel support get room support
      3. CG agreed to the broad two-level approach for panels and the overall group to reach agreement
   iii. Workshop Narrative Day 2
      1. Aimed at giving AusNet food for thought on the narrative and ask the CG's narrative – 10 key words that capture narrative essence; top 3 customer benefits and what does a visual look like? (focusing on the positive side)
   iv. Overall engagement (Lucy)

1. Group reflection session proposed to evaluate AusNet's engagement process for coordination group's independent report, ½ hour discussion and follow up survey

V. OTHER BUSINESS

A. CCP update (David)
i. CCP met with the businesses on 25 June, with thanks to AusNet
ii. CCP will divide work between each network; David will lead on AusNet and supported by Robyn Robinson
iii. CCP now has a budget, top down budget which needs to be allocated to different tasks but not shared with the AER
iv. David and Robyn will be at the of-site
v. Lynley Jorgensen will be the AER lead working with Gus and the CCP

B. AER update (Gus)
i. Confirming Gus working closely with Lynley
ii. Gus will be coming to the off-site
iii. AER discussed with AusNet: capex; AER VNR and VCR work; modelling tea, AER interested in trends emerging in AusNet's proposal re likely spend increases to allow AER teams to focus their attention and have resources available
iv. AER's final Framework and Approach conducted 2 weeks ago
v. Jarred Ball (AER Board) will be attending Day 1 of the offsite along with 2 AER staff members

C. Open discussion
i. Report writing (Peter)
1. Leads need to start writing and has developed a template
2. Time allowed on day 2 and 19th August 2024 to proceed the report and discuss how to populate the report, sharing with AusNet for fact checking and no-surprises etc.
3. CG also need to consider as a group the effectiveness of its engagement with AusNet

VI. ACTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

No Action items

Next meeting – Offsite meeting 16 & 17 August 2024; CG meeting 19 August 2024