

AUSNET EDPB 2026-2031 COORDINATION GROUP MEETING #6 MINUTES

Location: Microsoft Teams

Date: 13 February, 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)
Mark Grenning (Benchmarking and Opex Lead)
Dean Lombard (Future Networks Panel Lead)
Emily Peel (Customer Experience Panel Lead)
AusNet:
Rob Ball
Charlotte Eddy
Lucy Holder
Sonja Lekovic
Liz Ryan
David Smales

Apologies: Gavin Dufty after 9:30 am (Tariffs and Pricing Panel Lead)
David Prins (CCP observer)

I. WELCOME AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Minutes from the last meeting were accepted.

No conflicts of interest declared.

All action items from the 25 January 2024 meeting were completed.

II. PANEL LEAD UPDATE

- Availability (Kieran) – Nothing to report
- R&E (Helen)
 1. **Customer Workshop Reflections** – AusNet has drafted a report on the reflections session which I have subsequently reviewed. We are keen to publish it on the Engagement Hub, but are seeking final feedback from workshop participants that they are happy with the report and for deidentified quotes to be published. Feedback is due by 14 February and it is hoped the report will be published shortly after that date
 2. **Customer Workshops Round 3** – the panel has been working closely with AusNet over the last two weeks to finalise the discussion guide for the Round 3 workshops. While AusNet liaises direct with the consultant, AusNet has provided the panel with various opportunities to input into the workshop format and has either accepted our suggestions or provided a fair explanation as to why it did not accept our suggestions.

The Morwell workshop was held last night – initial feedback to be provided by AusNet
 3. **Customer interview proposal** – revised proposal (including edits from our Chair to be circulated for approval)
- Benchmarking and opex (Mark) – Nothing to report
- Future Networks (Dean) – it was noted that the Future Networks Panel Lead presented an overview of the key work of the Panel to the AusNet Innovation Advisory Committee. A copy of the presentation was provided to the CG members, no comments or questions were raised.
- Tariffs And pricing (Gavin) – Nothing to report
- Customer experience (Emily) – Nothing to report

III. AUSNET ITEMS (SLIDE PROVIDED FOR B)

- A. CEO report (David Smales)
 - i. CEO points
 1. Noted new to industry after 4 years absence, previous role 4 years ago with Energy Queensland
 2. Emphasised importance of engagement with communities, get feedback and respond to feedback
 3. Wants to put the best proposal yet up to the regulator based on customer outcomes
 4. Ultimately desire to be open, honest and transparent and set up for coming years
 - ii. Feedback from Panel to CEO report
 1. Supportive of CEO message, importance to be transparent, granular in terms of issues and decisions

- iii. How the Panel can support the CEO
 - 1. Blind spots or opportunities – now is the time to act to ensure this is the best engagement possible
- B. Timelines for draft proposal (Charlotte Eddy)
 - i. Refer to AusNet's revised timeline presentation slide (Draft Proposal Timeline)
 - ii. Two milestones – early draft 2 May 2024 and firmer draft on 24 May 2024, noted it is a working timeline and draft proposal and timeline may shift into August
 - iii. AusNet developing a more detailed outline of proposal
 - iv. No formal update on early signals not likely to significantly impact timeline, more about engagement with AER
 - v. No issues or concerns from the Panel on AusNet's timeline

IV. OTHER BUSINESS (SLIDE PROVIDED FOR B AND C)

- A. AER and Early engagement (Rob Ball)
 - i. Rob provided an update on early engagement with the AER. This is unlikely to start in detail until after NSW decisions and other decisions have been published
 - vi. Rob presented the latest version of the engagement plan – moving toward more engagement with CG, less with panels.
- B. Panel's timelines for its Engagement Report (Peter Eben)
 - i. Internal document only
 - ii. Timeline is fluid to the extent that AusNet's timelines may change
 - iii. We will engage with AusNet re our report in particular correctness of dates, dollars etc.
 - iv. General support for the timeline by the CG
 - v. Details as to the processes and ways of working will be the subject of an in camera meeting among CG members
- C. Customer interview proposal (Peter Eben for Helen Bartley)
 - i. Panel supported the proposal with a minor amendment to amend the wording in the approach section that refers to 'support for AusNet's proposals' to align with the wording in dot point 2 of the purpose.
- D. CCP Report – no report
- E. Open discussion
 - i. Round 3 Workshops summary (Lucy Holder)
 - 1. 85-100% reattending
 - 2. Focus on changing needs customer needs and experience and desire to engage with AusNet
 - 3. Morwell workshop ran last night – two themes
 - a) Customer experience and information
 - i) Accessibility of info – AusNet needs to have a broad range of channels, AI and automaton seen to be real enablers (e.g. preferences for LOTE or sign language and adjusting services to suit)

- ii) Accuracy of information - accurate estimation of planned outage times is important to avoid inconveniences
- iii) Want to continue to talk to real people far into the future for specific advice, despite expected AI improvements
- b) Flexibility and shifting demand load
 - i) Really hard to have conversation about load shift without people panicking about insufficient electricity
 - ii) Lots of people have no interest in load shift and see it as a massive shift backwards in standard of living
 - iii) Interest in different types of incentives to shift load, ultimately customers need to see benefit
 - iv) Suggestion from Gavin to shift the focus to change in peak/off peak times
 - Lucy to take suggestion to the facilitators
- ii. In person meeting
 - 1. Emily an apology after 11am on Wednesday 5th March
 - 2. Panel meeting to be a working lunch

V. ACTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Action items

- i. Mark to circulate invitation from AER to engage on VCR
- ii. Helen to proceed with customer engagement project
- iii. Peter to arrange date for in-camera session for CG re report structure and ways of working

Next meeting – 28 February 9am eastern time