

AUSNET EDPD 2026-2031 COORDINATION GROUP MEETING #9 MINUTES

Location: Microsoft Teams

Date: 26 March, 2024

Time: 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Coordination Group (CG):

- Peter Eben (Chair of CG, meeting Chair)
- Helen Bartley (Research and Engagement Panel Lead) (meeting Secretary)
- Kieran Donoghue (Availability Panel Lead) (Apologies until 10 am)
- Gavin Duffy (Tariffs and Pricing Panel Lead)
- Mark Grenning (Benchmarking and Opex Lead)
- Dean Lombard (Future Networks Panel Lead)
- Emily Peel (Customer Experience Panel Lead)

Attendees:

AusNet:

- Rob Ball
- Charlotte Eddy
- Lucy Holder

CCP:

- David Prins

AER:

- Gus Mandigora (Left meeting approximately 10am)
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Apologies: Sonja Lekovic (AusNet)

I. INTRODUCTION

- Welcome and conflicts of interest
- Minutes from the last meeting were accepted.

No conflicts of interest declared.

Actions from last meeting:

- Items i and iii – completed
- Item ii – carry over and for panel leads to confirm.
- Item iv and v are longer term items

II. PANEL LEAD UPDATE

- None to report

III. AUSNET ITEMS

A. Storms update / discussion(CE)

- i. Organisational changes including some staff changes were communicated
- ii. Three areas the storm impacts the revenue proposal
 1. AusNet putting through storms cost past through impacting revenues from July 2025
 2. Implications for network resilience proposal, AusNet working through thinking
 3. Update on resilience fund - \$7m to small business and councils to put in behind the meter technology – AusNet to provide a more detailed update next meeting
 4. Expert resilience review led by Rosemary Sinclair
 - a) AusNet supporting the review panel
 - b) Facebook surveys to hear the voice of the customer
 5. Opex and Benchmarking approach, storm results in significant increase in opex and GSLs which impact benchmarking despite storm does not affect productivity. Will engage further with the Benchmarking and Opex panel.
- iii. Discussion
 1. Gav – talk about how people might build their own resilience, eg vehicle to grid as well as network hardening, resilience review

B. Customer workshops round 3 overview (Lucy)

- i. Following 13 Feb major event and Euroa reliability added in a section on reliability to collect customers' stories input into post storm review and Availability Panel
- ii. Reliability
 1. Lively discussions on reliability following introduction around the 13 Feb storms and for the Wangaratta Group Euroa reliability
 2. Variable impacts, most common was emotional impacts from the outages – exacerbating existing physical and mental health stresses, loss of food and costs
 3. Attitudes to reliability varied from "power should never go out" to have to expect power to go out sometimes, people need to take some responsibility, people forgiving re communications
 4. Discussion about separating out different types of events and consider them in the context of the regulatory framework; AusNet canvassing different types of

capex and opex solutions; key is considering communication esp around resilience

iii. Customer Experience

1. Must have broadly consistent with what AusNet is doing/planning
2. Nice to have include more detailed info and compensation for planned and unplanned outages, proactive support, SMS updates
3. Nervous about AI and customer self-service with no back-up options, want local customer service (not offshore)
4. Opportunity for new tech to help make comms more accessible (CALD, vision impaired), support for older people when outages occur
5. Discussion: role of insurers, confusion by customers as to when and how they can claim – do they have to apply or is it automatic?

iv. Flexibility – shortened

1. Businesses most receptive to shift load, and have load they can shift even though they work regular hours -more likely to be economically rational
2. To change behaviour customers need to see a direct benefit to themselves, and if benefit others need a very clear value proposition
3. Nervousness about automating appliances when people are not there

v. Debrief session in planning - HB and MJ to provide more info

C. Feedback from poster sessions (Rob)

1. Rob talked to the AusNet slide pack summarising feedback covering captured at the March 2023, in-person meeting
2. Tariff comments: GD noted disparity in narrative between the 5 Victorian networks and queried how any differences in positions will be reconciled as part of joint Vic DB engagement; AusNet to review
3. Next steps with feedback from posters and other feedback during the March meeting, AusNet will consider feedback on a case-by-case basis, and it will also be fed into the deep dives

D. Draft proposal outline (Rob)

- i. Document circulated
- ii. Chapters 5-9 structured around engagement and research themes
- iii. Early signal pathway, AER criteria includes expenditure in line with historical expenditure. AusNet outlined its intent to engage with AER via the structured engagement pathway
- iv. Draft proposal still anticipated for July 2024
- v. MG more rather than less detail in the draft plan, esp given seeking more expenditure, such as preliminary business cases, need sufficient information in the draft proposal for Deep Dives.
- vi. GD draft proposal playing to the regulatory theatre, need to structure the engagement around the uncertainty in the reg proposal
- vii. Need early engagement on resilience and innovation to build better business case for AER

viii. DL – sections 5 to 8 strong, easy for people to engage on specific issues; PE – logical layout, follows panel structure, assume sections 5 to 8 smatterings of, detail needs to consider trade-offs and value stacking and reasons – needs to be really clear. Rob Section 4 to detail trade-offs and customer engagement findings then smatterings in subsequent sections

ix. RB will share a draft of the Draft Proposal to inform the RCG's report

E. Costed options workshop (Rob)

i. Scheduled for week commencing 8 April 2024, limited to the RCG

ii. Focus areas will be non-network expenditure, depreciation, innovation, expenditure incentive schemes

iii. Prereading to be circulated ahead of the session, and will include some options

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Consumer engagement status update (HB)

i. HB talked to her email to the CG on the update. Progress tracking well, a number of interviews completed, budget on track and more interviews scheduled for early April.

B. CG report outline (PE)

i. PE, HB and KD put first draft outline of our report together after reviewing other reports and considering our purpose and appropriate structure – copy has been shared with the CG and AusNet.

ii. Outline was discussed and noted that it will be updated and discussed by the CG as the AusNet draft proposal evolves.

C. AER representative update

i. No update this meeting.

D. CCP representative update

i. David noted an all-CCP meeting will be held in March and until then he has no new info about CCP resourcing or the CCP's involvement in an ESP process. He has been attending CG and some Panel meetings as far as his budget allows. AusNet will brief him about the offsite which he is unable to attend.

E. Open discussion

No other business

V. ACTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Action items

- i. Panel leads to clarify with Panel that they agree that the summary document prepared by AusNet reflects their input.

Next meeting – 9 April 9am – 10:30am