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FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH WORKSHOP

Outcomes report

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REPORT

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Prepared by:

RPS

Kate Eskdale
National Lead Communications and Engagement

Level 16, 222 Exhibition Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

T +61 3 9417 9700
E kate.eskdale@rpsgroup.com.au

Prepared for:

Victorian Electricity Distributor Businesses

AusNet, CitiPower, Jemena, Powercor, United Energy

Contents

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To support the development of Victorian electricity distributors' 2026-31 price reset regulatory proposals, a two-part stakeholder workshop series was delivered. The workshops focused on the development of the Framework & Approach (F&A) paper, which is the first stage in the determination process. The workshops were designed to support the Victorian electricity distributors in considering what changes to distribution services should be included in their F&A proposals to the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) in October 2023.

The five Victorian electricity distributors decided to come together and engage collectively on their F&A submissions, as the F&A paper is typically state-based and consistent across the distributors in each jurisdiction.

The first workshop held on Thursday 18 May 2023 aimed to gather insights on potential changes to distribution services. The feedback shared in the first workshop was considered by the Victorian electricity distributors and used to shape their emerging proposals for the F&A paper. A copy of the full feedback report from the first workshop is available here.

This report provides an overview of the feedback provided to the Victorian electricity distributors from participants at the second F&A Workshop, held on Wednesday 9 August 2023. In this second workshop the Victorian electricity distributors shared how they addressed feedback from the first workshop and their updated draft proposals for consultation.

Based on feedback from the first session, Victorian distributors provided participants with an overview of:

- distribution services they plan to propose in the F&A paper in October 2023, but in relation to which they were not seeking further participant input as feedback had already been captured and addressed.
- distribution services they are seeking to propose in the F&A paper in October 2023 but seeking further feedback from participants and discussion. These included services in relation to:
    - Data provision
    - Essential system services (ESS)

The key outputs of those discussions are summarised below.

Data provision

There was recognition of the role of Victorian electricity distributors in providing data to customers and other stakeholders. However, participants had questions about deployment, and some felt that further information was needed to be able to feedback directly on the proposed changes. Key topics included:

- ensuring the cost of providing data services is covered in a fair way and that relevant costs are allocated to those who benefit from the provision of these services. Participants discussed the benefits of data availability to households and individuals compared to larger commercial entities/communities which may request these services, and the need to better understand and articulate those benefits.
- the need to consider how the nature and volume of requests may change over time to ensure Victorian electricity distributors are able to respond adequately.
- the need to ensure data privacy and security are properly managed. Participants also queried how costs of managing data privacy and security would be recovered.

Participants identified the following benefits would result from Victorian electricity distributors providing the proposed data services:

- Data services could better inform commercial decision-making and promote business innovation, which in turn may support investment in new energy technologies and provide broad benefits to electricity consumers (e.g., lower network costs, lower wholesale electricity costs).

  A participant mentioned: *"unlocking more innovative business models and better products that can share benefits of local solar and batteries with all people in the community."*

- Data services could support households to make better informed investment decisions about their energy, including investment in solar and new energy technologies. However, participants considered this should go hand in hand with enabling more opportunities to introduce smarter network management, such as the introduction of flexible exports.

Participants identified the following considerations and challenges:

- Participants highlighted that consideration of whether the proposed services offer value for customers would need to be framed in the context of what will already be provided before 2026 as outcomes of the AER's Network Visibility Project.
- Participants noted that one key consideration and challenge from the earlier conversation is ensuring costs of data services are allocated in a fair way.

While the above challenges were identified, participants noted that it is difficult to identify the potential challenges without having a clearer picture of what services will end up being offered, and whether as Standard Control Services (SCS) or as Alternative Control Services (ACS).

Essential system services

Participants recognised that Victorian electricity distributors may have a role in providing ESS, with many participants acknowledging potential benefits. However, participants considered further information is needed about who benefits and who pays for these services, given networks would most likely be utilising assets paid for by Victorian electricity customers.

During the workshop, one participant said*: "We know we are moving into renewable generation, that's happening, and playing devil's advocate here, if nothing is done, we're going to see blackouts, because of less inertia and system strength that aren't provided by thermal generation. As a consumer it comes down to reliability versus cost. We can't have a grid that's always blacking out, as a consumer you want electricity, we're used to being able to plug in the laptop to have it. So, for me, something has to be done. …There is still quite a lot of work on who pays for what but the general crux of it, is it a good idea? yes, I do believe it is but there is still quite a bit of work to do there."*

Key topics included:

- the need for further information to be shared on how revenue sharing and cost allocation is managed.

  A participant said: *"I understand why you're doing it; I understand there is potential benefit to consumers in doing it, I think we need more information the cost allocation."*

- that not all ESS are the same, and that they should not be treated the same in the F&A paper - a staged approach should be taken for the implementation of the different ESS.
- the need to ensure and demonstrate through evidence that the provision of ESS would not negatively impact electricity supply for customers such as by impacting voltage management.
- the need for further evidence that the current ring-fencing arrangements are not sufficient and that changes to the F&A are required.
- the need to ensure changes to how ESS is delivered do not provide Victorian electricity distributors with a commercial advantage over other ESS providers that runs against objectives.
- the need to give customers confidence that the AER has full visibility and oversight of how costs and revenue are allocated.

  A participant said: "*We are wondering how the distributors will do it, but it is also about how the AER is set up to manage it. …It's as much of a reflection on the AER as it is the distributors to do the right thing."*

2 WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

2.1 Overview

The Victorian electricity distributors are about to embark on the 2026-31 price reset regulatory proposals process. The first step of this process is to consider whether there should be any changes to the services that they provide as distributors (among other factors captured in the F&A paper). Once the distributors submit their F&A proposal to the AER, the AER will assess these proposals and make a final determination on the key elements of the F&A paper, including distribution service classification.

To help inform the development of their proposals, the Victorian electricity distributors delivered a two-part workshop series to better understand stakeholder and customer perspectives about the issues they are seeking to address through the provision of new services.

The first workshop was held on Thursday 18 May 2023. The objectives of that session were to:

- share the service gaps they had identified and put forward that Victorian distributors should play a role in addressing them
- better understand the implications for customers and other stakeholders if Victorian distributors changed existing or provided the potential new services
- capture insights that could be used to shape each distributor's F&A submission, in response to which the AER will set the parameters for the services that Victorian distributors provide over the 2026-31 period.

The feedback shared in the first workshop has been considered by the Victorian electricity distributors and used to shape their F&A submissions. A copy of the full feedback report from the first workshop is available here.

The second workshop was held on Wednesday 9 August 2023. In this session, the Victorian electricity distributors shared their developing proposals and asked for stakeholder assistance to test their thinking.

The objectives of the second workshop were to:

- share the outcomes of the first F&A workshop and explain how it has shaped the Victorian electricity distributors' emerging F&A submissions
- clearly define the problems that the Victorian electricity distributors are looking to address through outstanding changes to be proposed as part of the F&A process (those not addressed in the feedback from bullet point one)
- explain emerging thinking and seek feedback on outstanding proposals to classify some new services through the F&A process (those not addressed in the feedback from bullet point one).

During the workshop, the Victorian electricity distributors provided an update on their F&A submission and topics covered in the first workshop. Based on feedback shared in the first workshop, the Victorian electricity distributors put forward the following topic areas to discuss in further detail during the session:

- Data provision
- ESS

This report details the outputs of this session. The feedback from the workshop will be used by the Victorian electricity distributors to further refine their F&A submissions.

2.2 Participants

The Victorian electricity distributors identified participants in the first workshop through a state-wide advertisement of an Expression of Interest (EOI) to participate to ensure visibility and transparency of the session, additionally they circulated the EOI within stakeholder networks and invited known key stakeholders. Finally, The Department of Environment, Energy, and Climate Change (DEECA) and AER representatives were invited directly.

All of the participants identified through this process were invited to the second workshop – even if they did not attend the first session. Not all invited participants attended.
The following participants attended the workshop:

Table 1: Victorian electricity distributor representatives

Victorian electricity distributors representatives	
Name	**Organisation**
Justin Betlehem	AusNet
Sonja Lekovic	AusNet
Charlotte Eddy	AusNet
Brent Cleeve	CitiPower, Powercor and United Energy
Chris Gilbert	CitiPower, Powercor and United Energy
Lyle De Sousa	Jemena
Ana Dijanosic	Jemena
Matthew Serpell	Jemena
Louise Baring	Jemena
Jake Roberts	Jemena
Deb Capicchiano	Jemena
Spencer Little	Jemena

Table 2: Stakeholder participants

Stakeholder participants			
Name	**Organisation**	**Name**	**Organisation**
Bradie Cetin	Schneider Electric (Jemena EOI)	Gary Davies	Origin Energy
Ben Macey	Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)	Mark Grenning	AusNet stakeholder representative
David Markham	Australian Energy Council		
Tim Sheridan	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)	Declan Kelly	Flow Power
James Alexander	DEECA	Kieran Donoghue	AusNet stakeholder representative
Claire Maries	DEECA	Helen Bartley	Consumer Advisory Panel (CAP) Member Powercor/ AER
Seb Rattansen	DEECA	Lawrence Irlam	Energy Australia
Lynda Osborne	Consumer Advisory Panel (CAP) Member Powercor	Peter Warren	CGI
Constantine Noutso	Red Energy	Natalie Collard	Independent advisor
Paul Englund	CGI (Jemena EOI)	Matthew Mullins	CGI
Trish Campbell	Origin Energy	Simon Martin	CGI

2.3 Process

Timing: 10:00am to 12:30pm

Location: Online via Microsoft Teams

Facilitator: Kate Eskdale, National Lead – Communications and Engagement, RPS

Support facilitators:
Rikki Butler, Director - Communications and Engagement, RPS
Isabelle Chan, Consultant – Communications and Engagement, RPS

All participants were given a pre-read pack to provide context and information about the topics being discussed. The workshop provided participants with an update on feedback from the first workshop, followed by a detailed presentation on the two key topics identified to be brought forward and tested with participants – data provision and ESS.

In these presentations, the Victorian electricity distributors articulated the problems they were looking solve, shared their proposals and explained how feedback from the first session had been used to shape their thinking. This was then followed by a facilitated discussion with the group to provide participants with the opportunity to ask questions to clarify their understanding and to draw out feedback on the F&A proposals that distributors were developing. The outcomes of these discussions follow.

3 DATA PROVISION

Chris Gilbert, Regulatory Lead, CitiPower, Powercor & United Energy, shared feedback from the first workshop, provided a definition of the problem that the Victorian electricity distributors were aiming to address and explained the proposed new service classification. Following this, Kate Eskdale, RPS, facilitated a group discussion to provide the opportunity for clarification and feedback on the F&A proposals that distributors were developing.

3.1 Problem definition and Victorian electricity distributors role in addressing it

Participants recognised the role of Victorian electricity distributors in providing data to customers and stakeholders, and highlighted the benefits of doing so. However, participants had questions about deployment, and some expressed that further information was needed to be able to provide feedback directly on the proposed changes. This feedback is summarised below.

3.1.1 What data is provided, who benefits and who pays

A key topic during the discussion was ensuring the cost of providing data services is covered in a fair way and that relevant costs are allocated to those who benefit from the provision of these services.

Participants identified the following points:

- **Some participants expressed that further information was needed about the type and volume of data requests to be able to make an informed decision on whether services provided under the SCS framework would represent value for customers.**

  Participants sought a better understanding of how individual customers such as households and small businesses (as opposed to larger businesses and organisations) would benefit from the data services provided under SCS in circumstances where these customers were not directly requesting data themselves.

  During the workshop, one participant said: *"So does this mean if it's an SCS, the pensioner at Sunshine is cross subsidising a battery developer looking to build a business case for a battery?".*

  - Another participant expressed that while cross subsidisation may be a cause for concern, they could see potential broader network benefits for all customers via better network visibility and improved access to that visibility. The participant considered further information about relevant costs was required to determine the net benefits.

    Another participant said: "*Are we putting 1 cent a year on that pensioner's bill or are we putting 50 bucks? I think the quantum involved is important to understand as well as the principle, because I think there's a trade-off there".*

- **Another participant considered that the average consumer may have a lower awareness of what data is available. As a result, the average consumer may need more support to access the information they need. If they were charged per hour for this service, it might put them at a disadvantage to better resourced or more educated/sophisticated stakeholders.** They expressed this needed to be considered to ensure the system does not unfairly advantage those who are well educated. Later in the discussion, another participant expressed that there could be a bias toward larger organisations if it were raw data that was provided. However, the participant expressed that if the data is being shared as information (for example, on a map that is easily accessible, freely available and consistent across providers), those issues may be resolved to some extent.

- **A participant also highlighted that the consideration of cost needs to be broader than just the cost to consumers, making the point that how the network benefits must also be assessed.** They considered that as networks increase their capability to get more out of their data, networks should reduce the cost to consumers. The participant wanted to see this reflected in the feedback.
- **One participant suggested potentially making commercial customers pay for higher-quality data that is beyond the consumer level.** They identified they had seen requests for data from commercial entities who were using that information to make operational decisions about when to use power and as a result were profiting commercially from this information. Participants then discussed how different customers are classified and whether or not a community group would be classified as a commercial customer. One participant expressed that it may be necessary to look beyond the 'commercial versus noncommercial entity' to consider the intent of how data will be used.

3.1.2 Understanding how proposals would change data provided and how this would be future proofed

Participants were of the view that Victorian electricity distributors will need to consider how the nature and volume of requests may change over time.

Key points raised included:

- **One participant expressed that it was important to ensure that Victorian electricity distributors are able to respond as customers become more educated and proactive.** The participant highlighted dimensions surrounding accessibility and being able to get the full value of data.
- **This was echoed by another participant from a Victorian Government Department who wanted to understand if Victorian electricity distributors expect the requests to change over time, highlighting the Victorian Government's desire for data services to be provided.** The participant referred specifically to proponents who may be considering providing network services apart from those provided by Victorian electricity distributors. The participant provided an example of neighborhood battery providers, who they said were key to Victorian Government and Commonwealth Government commitments. The participant considered that these projects could provide benefits to people living in the community regardless of whether they have solar or their own battery. In terms of the emerging need for data provision, the participant identified electric vehicle charging as being a key issue. The participant said it would be important to understand impacts from or to network constraints.

3.1.3 Data privacy and security

Participants highlighted the need to ensure data privacy and security are properly managed and raised questions about how these costs would be recovered.

Key points raised included:

- **One participant highlighted that in the future they expect data requests will increase and data availability will become more important – with this brings questions around data classification and security, particularly being a critical infrastructure service**. They raised questions about the controls that would be provided around the provision and requests of data including whether data access will be limited or open and what security controls would be put in place around this service. The participant that considered this also raised a related question of the cost and cost recovery of providing this security.
- **Participants acknowledged that Victorian electricity distributors will have to provide de-identified data (similar to as for National Metering Identifiers).** However, participants considered more information would be needed to understand barriers and costs to de-identify data.

3.1.4 Understanding how costs are dealt with

- One participant queried the incremental costs associated with providing new kinds of data requests and the pathway to various service classifications in the long term.

3.2 Benefits, considerations and challenges

3.2.1 Benefits

Summary of key benefits shared by participants in the group discussion:

- **A participant from a Victorian Government Department highlighted the key role that data services could play in unlocking innovative business models which allow all consumers to benefit from Commonwealth Government and Victorian Government investment in solar, batteries and electric vehicles** – rather than just benefiting the stakeholders directly accessing and using data provision services. The participant noted that some stakeholders face barriers to directly accessing these new energy products including due to costs involved. The participant explained that it is the Victorian Government's objective to ensure everyone benefits from the energy transition, such as through lower wholesale prices and sharing benefits via a local neighborhood battery. The participant emphasised the important role that easily accessible, timely, consistent, and informative data can play in unlocking innovative business models and better products that can share the benefits with all people in the community.
    - The participant mentioned: *"unlocking more innovative business models and better products that can share benefits of local solar and batteries with all people in the community."*
- **The same participant highlighted the benefits for supporting individuals to understand impacts** – sharing that their organisation receives lots of letters from people who want to put solar on their roof but have a very low export limit and do not understand why. The participant considered that networks providing data may support people to better understand the network in their area and its capabilities, which could in turn support them to make more informed investment decisions. However, the participant emphasised that more flexible export options must also be provided.
- **It was emphasised that better information about the local area of the network will give consumers agency in decision-making.** It was noted that networks are well placed to advise on the key knowledge gaps and resolution options to assist other stakeholders in the development of tools or programs to support customers trying to understand how to manage their energy.

3.2.2 Challenges and considerations

Summary of the considerations and challenges shared by participants in the group discussion:

- **A number of participants wanted to better understand what is already being provided compared to what would be provided under the proposed new arrangements.** One participant suggested that providing pros and cons for what is already being provided and what would be provided under the new arrangements may support a better understanding and review of the proposals.
- **The participants noted that challenges will be informed by what data provision services are classified as SCS and what are classified as ACS services.** One participant made the point that there is a need to ensure optimisation of costs between the Victorian electricity distributors and controlling the cost of those services.
- **When considering if the proposals offer value for the customer, one participant recognised that this would need to be considered in the context of what will already be provided in 2026 following the outcomes of the AER's Network Visibility Project.** This Victorian Government Department participant stated that the Victorian Government was appreciative of the work being

done by Victorian electricity distributors to provide data voluntarily in various mapping tools. However, the participant considered that if much of this data is regulated and the Distribution Annual Planning Report (DAPR) has been updated by 2026 so that those data sets are already being provided, then this would change the conversation and there would be a need for further consideration of what is classified as SCS.

- **When considering value, another participant identified the need to balance consistency across the network with the ability to respond to different market drivers.** Participants queried the AER process and whether the different market drivers were being considered or if a “cookie cutter approach” was being adopted.
- Participants also noted that points summarised under 3.1.1 What data is provided, who benefits and who pays above are key considerations and challenges.

4 ESSENTIAL SYSTEM SERVICES

Justin Betlehem, Senior Regulatory Adviser, AusNet, presented the feedback from the first workshop, explained the problem that the Victorian electricity distributors were aiming to address and explained the proposed new service classification. Following this, Kate Eskdale, RPS, facilitated a group discussion to provide the opportunity for clarification and feedback on the emerging proposal. Outputs from this discussion are summarised below.

4.1 Clarification and feedback on emerging proposals

4.1.1 Recognition of the role Victorian electricity distributors play in providing this service but further information on how this is delivered required

Participants recognised that the Victorian electricity distributors have a role in providing ESS, with many participants acknowledging potential benefits, however further discussion and information was requested about their role and how it should be delivered.

A workshop participant noted: *"We know we are moving into renewable generation, that's happening, and playing devil's advocate here, if nothing is done, we're going to see blackouts, because of less inertia and system strength that aren't provided by thermal generation. As a consumer it comes down to reliability versus cost. We can't have a grid that's always blacking out, as a consumer you want electricity, we're used to being able to plug in the laptop to have it. So, for me, something has to be done. …today it's being done on solar farms and it's very expensive, so through being able to use the network that is already there …makes sense. There is still quite a lot of work on who pays for what but the general crux of it, is it a good idea, yes, I do believe it is but there is still quite a bit of work to do there."*

"I haven't heard anyone saying that that distributors shouldn't be allowed to provide these services, the discussion is about the terms by which they provide these services."

Key areas of discussion are summarised below:

- **Participants requested further information on how revenue sharing and cost allocation is managed.**
    - The need for further information on the revenue and cost allocation model was highlighted by a number of participants.

      One participant said: *"I understand why you're doing it; I understand there is potential benefit to consumers in doing it, I think we need more information the cost allocation."*

      Another participant said: "I'm all for more providers being able to provide services, because I think it is a good outcome for all consumers, it's just a matter of who pays… and who has the risk"
    - One participant queried whether all revenue would come back to customers to reduce the price of the SCS. This participant expressed that this should be the case, as it would be customers who would bear the loss of voltage, even if this were to remain within the regulated range. The participant highlighted the need to understand the costs to the Victorian electricity distributors if the full share of revenue was not going to be returned to customers.
    - Further to this, a participant queried whether it was fair that customers would bear the stranded asset risk where investment is being made by the Victorian electricity distributors as there was no guarantee that services would be procured given the competitive nature of tenders.
- **Some participants considered there should be a staged approach to implementation.** One participant referenced a past industry trial as providing a model for implementing an intermediary step between involuntary load shedding and an option that has a lower impact on customers. The participant considered that if Victorian electricity distributors provided ESS, this intermediary step

could be implemented. Another participant highlighted that there is a trust issue which could be addressed through a trial waiver to test that the cost allocation process is robust enough for what the Victorian electricity distributors are proposing. The participant considered this could then be scaled up, with services being reallocated.

- **Participants raised that it needs to be demonstrated that there will not be negative impacts to customers from distributors providing ESS**. Participants highlighted the need to ensure the provision of ESS would not negatively impact voltage control and electricity supply for customers. One participant queried whether the services could be provided by other providers or if the proposed ESS could only be provided by the Victorian electricity distributors.
- **Participants raised the need to ensure changes do not provide Victorian electricity distributors with an unfair commercial advantage over other providers of ESS**. The participant proposed the use of the existing ring-fencing procedure to ensure that Victorian electricity distributors compete in the market on a competitive basis in a fair and reasonable way.
- **Participants requested further evidence to support claims of the impact of not providing services**. One participant requested further data to support the claim that not providing ESS via a regular distributed service could lead to blackouts and brown outs, compared to facing slightly higher costs for ESS provided by other market providers.
- **Participants sought clarification of whether each of the ESS services would be considered separately**. One participant highlighted that the services are all quite different and expressed that the classification should therefore be considered individually, rather than applying for all ESS to be regulated or unregulated.

4.1.2 Evidence required to demonstrate that ESS should be provided by networks as classified services.

A key theme raised by some retail participants was the need to demonstrate that ESS should be provided as classified services rather than through the current process of applying for ring-fencing waivers.

Key areas of discussion are summarised below:

- One participant expressed that if Victorian electricity distributors want to provide an unregulated service, they should apply for a ring-fencing waiver because of the potential cost allocation issues. They considered that principles applied by the AER in assessing ring-fencing waiver applications would ensure that a competitive market is maintained.
- Another participant raised the need for more evidence of the cost to Victorian electricity distributors of seeking a ring-fencing waiver and providing services. The participant considered this would make it easier to justify the other approaches proposed. Linked to this, the participant also requested further information and clarification on whether there is a significant barrier for Victorian electricity distributors in applying for a ring-fencing waiver.

4.1.3 The importance of monitoring and oversight by the AER

- **Participants identified that customers would need confidence that the AER has full visibility and oversight of the costs incurred and revenues received by networks.**

  During the discussion, a participant said:"*We are wondering how the distributors will do it but is also about how the AER is set up to manage it. …It's as much of a reflection on the AER as it is the distributors to do the right thing."*

5 FEEDBACK ON OTHER DRAFT F&A PROPOSALS

In this section of the workshop, the Victorian electricity distributors shared the proposed positions for key elements compared to the current regulatory period and proposed new services classifications for the 2026-2031 Framework and Approach.

No direct feedback was shared in this section.

Table 3: Proposed positions for the 2026-2031 Victorian F&A

F&A Element	Victorian electricity distributors proposal	Comparison to current regulatory period
Form of control	• Revenue cap for standard control services (SCS) • Price cap for alternative control services (ACS) • Revenue cap for metering ACS	• No change
Incentives	• Efficiency Benefit Sharing Scheme (EBSS) • Capital Expenditure Sharing Scheme (CESS) • Service Target Performance Incentive Scheme (STPIS) • Customer Service Incentive Scheme (CSIS) • Export Service Incentive Scheme (ESIS) • Demand Management Incentive Scheme (DMIS) and Demand Management Innovation Allowance Mechanism (DMIAM or Allowance Mechanism) • Victoria F-factor scheme	• AusNet, CitiPower, Powercor and United Energy to allow the EIS in 2026-2031 • Jemena to introduce CSIS and allow the ESIS in 2026-2031 Note: while the businesses are proposing to allow the ESIS, whether each business introduces an ESIS, and its design, will be subject to stakeholder engagement in the preparation of the Regulatory Proposal
Depreciation	• Forecast depreciation approach	• No change

Table 4: Proposed new service classifications for the 2026-2031 Victorian F&A

Service	Proposed classification	Comments/ response to feedback from previous session
Export service	• Classify export services as both SCS and ACS	• The efficiency of export services – i.e., what level of service customers should be getting as SCS or ACS – will be determined by each business as part of their Regulatory Proposal and Connection Policy. Distributors will engage on this.
Dynamic export and load control	• Classify as SCS and ACS	• With increasing use of dynamic controls, propose to classify as a distinct service that can be offered as SCS or as an enhanced service (ACS).
Regulated Standalone Power System (SAPS)	• Classify as SCS	• Only the network service portion of SAPS will be classified as SCS, while the current Ring-fencing exemptions for generation in SAPS remain in place.
Minimum system load (MSL) services	• Classify MSL services as SCS	• New licence condition in Victoria. Not engaged on in the first session.

6 ADDITIONAL TOPICS RAISED

During the discussion, one participant raised the future needs of electric vehicle technology, and the role distributors will play. This item did not fit under the six areas discussed at the workshop, but an action was taken to note this in the workshop records.

A Victorian Government Department representative raised that it was important to consider how existing network constraints may impact the provision of electric vehicle charging. The participant considered that this raised a broader question about how distributors are considering investments that might be required to support the rapid uptake of electric vehicles that has been predicted via modelling and under Victorian Government policies and targets.

The participant noted that in the six elements shared at the start of the workshop there was no reference to what may be considered in the F&A process to support the anticipated roll out of electric vehicles in the 2026 – 2031 period. The participant queried how distributors will adapt to the rapid uptake of electric vehicles and the investments required.

7 PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK ON EVENT

Participants were provided an option to take a short survey at the end of the session and share their feedback.

Table 3: Participant feedback*

1. Participant feedback
Using the scale below, please evaluate the workshop
The workshop timing was appropriate. – All participants respondents 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree'.
The workshop objectives were clearly stated. – All participants respondents 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree'.
The facilitator presented clearly and logically. – All participants respondents 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree'.
The workshop content was interesting. – All participants respondents 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree'.
The facilitator allowed me and others to have a say. – All participants respondents 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree'.
There were opportunities for me to participate in an engaging and appropriate way. – All participants respondents 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree'.
2. Do you have any suggestions about how the workshop could have been improved?
n/a.
In-person would be better. Although still need option for online!
More information e.g. around costs and also consideration of network benefits may have helped.
The workshop was well structured. Rules of engagement presented at the back set a good, controlled structure for the workshop balanced with enabling participants to provide input.
Providing more guidance so that the discussion does not go into too much unnecessary detail, or down a certain path when it should be kept at a broader higher level, or we are deviating from answering the key questions.
I think in both cases, the presentation of the issues and propose approach would have benefited from clearer articulation of (and discussion with participants on) the principles to apply to these potential services to ensure they are provide in a way that furthers the NEO. I also think that analytically, bundling all the ESS together is unhelpful - there are too many relevant differences for a one size fits all approach.
Try to better anticipate the information requirements that help participants answer the questions you are asking
3. What did you value most about the online workshop?
Hearing all feedback - often 1:1 consultations miss this mutual value.
Easy to put forward views using Teams.
Opportunities to listen, learn and contribute where I could; it was very well facilitated (a great improvement on last time) - the facilitator was agile in her approach when questions couldn't be answered.
Opportunity to participate.
The breadth of experiences and perspectives in the group.
Good to hear the perspectives of the network reps and of the other stakeholders on these important issues.
Improvements on last time: 1. better facilitator than last time (did not hear 'brilliant' once); 2. pace was slower to allow more information presentation and discussion 3. keeping everyone together and the facilitator entering our comments in the software; better then break-out groups and each group trying to grapple with the comments software.
4. Do you have any other comments?
n/a
No.
No
The pre-reading for the second session was very good in setting the context and expectations for the session.
Good job managing a diverse and large group!
Just because the networks were challenged over their proposals doesn't mean that customers and other stakeholders don't want to see these services provided. It's typically more about the terms on which they are going to be provided and to be sure that it's done in a way that we can be confident maximises the benefits to customers.
Still requires more discussion - perhaps this is best done at the individual network level given there are differences in F&A details among networks?

*Feedback in this section is shared as provided, without edits to the copy.

8 NEXT STEPS

Findings of this report will be shared with the Victorian electricity distributors for their further consideration. The feedback shared will be used to inform the services they provide and if there should be any changes proposed via the 2026-31 Price Reset regulatory proposals process.

Contact

Level 16, 222 Exhibition Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
T +61 3 9417 9700