

Engagement Strategy

2026-2031 Regulatory Reset Process
July 2023





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Acknowledgement of Country

United Energy recognises Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Peoples and Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and acknowledge their ancient and continuing connection to Country.

Leading change: a message from the CEO



The 2026-2031 regulatory period will be an immensely exciting time for us and our customers and stakeholders. It coincides with a rapid transition to renewable energy as a greater percentage of the electricity we distribute. Customer preferences are also evolving, with a desire for new ways to generate, store, use and share power in homes, businesses, industry and communities. The changes we make to our networks and businesses now will be essential for the long-term path to achieving our collective objective of net zero carbon emissions.

As an essential service, we are committed to delivering on these goals while also maintaining a safe, reliable and affordable electricity supply for our customers. Our 2026-2031 regulatory proposals will outline how we intend to operate and maintain United Energy's distribution network, and our intended changes over this period.

Effective engagement with our customers and stakeholders is key pillar to how we operate day to day. Given our goals, it is even more critical that we capture the views of our customers and other stakeholders to develop regulatory proposals that fully consider our customers' needs and expectations.

I am pleased to share our Engagement Strategy with you. This document articulates the purpose of our customer and stakeholder engagement to inform our regulatory proposals, the principles guiding our regulatory proposals and our current and proposed high level engagement activities.

I would like to thank our Customer Advisory Panel and its Stakeholder Engagement Sub-Committee for their important contribution to this Engagement Strategy.

The strategy will be vital to ensuring that our regulatory proposal considers customer and stakeholder inputs and will help to support the continual evolution of our business into the future.

Tim Rourke
Chief Executive Officer

About United Energy

United Energy supplies electricity to Victorians in Melbourne's east and southeast suburbs and the Mornington Peninsula.

We operate the network of poles, wires and infrastructure that distribute the power transported from hydro, wind, solar, coal and gas-fired electricity generators to our customers' meters. We also manage the smart meters and provide the meter data to the electricity retailers who are responsible for issuing electricity bills.

United Energy is recognised for high levels of reliability, efficiency and affordability. Our network of poles, wires and infrastructure provides electricity to over 710,296 customers, including 11,687 commercial and industrial businesses and 52,915 small businesses. This includes the Peninsula's tourism industry and over 25% of the state's manufacturing industry.

Our customers receive some of the lowest electricity network charges in Australia.

Since 2006, we have consistently ranked as a top performer in the Australian Energy Regulator (AER)'s annual benchmarking reports. That translates into genuine value for money for our customers, who receive more services for every dollar we invest than those in many other networks.

1 Engagement purpose

About our Engagement Strategy

The role of our Engagement Strategy in the regulatory reset process

United Energy is regulated by the Australian Energy Regulator (AER). Every five years, energy networks are required to lodge a detailed and fully costed regulatory proposal, (business plan) with the AER. A regulatory proposal outlines the services the network will offer and the prices customers will be charged for those services, including the network investments to deliver those services.

The AER reviews all aspects of our regulatory proposals to ensure they are prudent, efficient and in the long-term interests of consumers. The AER ultimately approves the revenue we can earn to operate our business and invest in our network.

Under the National Electricity Objective (NEO) regulatory proposals must be in the long-term interests of consumers. It is therefore important that we involve our customers and stakeholders in the development of our regulatory proposals to ensure they align with our customers' and stakeholders' interests. The AER expects energy networks to demonstrate genuine engagement with customers and stakeholders. They also expect network business decisions regarding network investment to take customer and stakeholder interests into account. These expectations are articulated in the AER's Better Resets Handbook.

We are committed to ensuring that our proposals are capable of acceptance by customers and the AER, consistent with the Better Resets Handbook.

About this document

This Engagement Strategy details our plans to engage with our customers and stakeholders as we develop our regulatory proposal. It also details our goals and guiding principles for our engagement.

The strategy has been developed at the end of the first year of our work on the regulatory reset. It is therefore informed by both a formal review of our preliminary engagement to plan for the current regulatory period, as well as insights from ongoing business as usual research and consumer consultation.

Specifically, this strategy will guide our engagement for the regulatory proposals for the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2031, noting that business as usual engagement activities will continue alongside and beyond our preparation for the next regulatory period.

We have prepared this strategy for all customers and stakeholders with an interest in our networks and welcome feedback, comments or enquiries to be sent to community@ue.com.au.

Our customers are at the heart of our decisions

United Energy's core vision is to deliver an affordable, reliable and safe electricity supply, empowering customer choices and delivering services that are important for our communities and the environment.

Achieving this vision requires the identification of the needs and expectations of a broad range of consumers and stakeholders to ensure we deliver the right energy solutions.

Engagement is important to us as a business

One of the strategic pillars of our business is customer and stakeholder engagement. As an essential service provider, we know it's important to listen to customers and stakeholders so we can provide services that support our communities, their wellbeing and economic growth.

Our Sustainability Framework also highlights our goal of meeting the expectations of our customers and stakeholders when it comes to safety, environmental, social and governance matters.

As an electricity distributor, we also want to ensure we act in the long-term interests of electricity consumers with respect to price, quality, safety and reliability and security of their electricity as well as the reliability, safety and security of the national electricity system, consistent with the National Electricity Objective.

We are committed to engaging with customers and stakeholders across our networks to understand their needs, priorities and changing expectations. What we learn from our customers will underpin how we plan and manage our networks today and into the future, ensuring we deliver services that are in their long-term interests.

We think that a good regulatory process is one that is customer-centric

Our 2026-2031 regulatory proposal will outline the services we will offer and the prices we will charge our customers for those services based on our expected costs, including the network investments we will need to make to deliver those services.

Ultimately, our regulatory proposals will establish the services that we provide to our customers (and how we will provide them) as well as our broader role supporting our communities over the 2026-2031 period. It is therefore essential that our regulatory proposals truly reflect the needs of our customers and stakeholders.

We are building on our ongoing engagement with customers and stakeholders to ensure the proposals we develop truly reflect their interests. We have developed this Engagement Strategy to ensure our engagement is targeted and effective. Through this, we believe we can achieve regulatory outcomes that better reflect the long-term interests of our customers and stakeholders.

To help us deliver on this, we intend to engage further with our customers and stakeholders to genuinely understand their evolving needs, preferences and expectations which will help us to develop and execute a sustainable plan for future network evolution in line with those evolving interests.

We have already heard from our customers that our regulatory proposals should:

- ensure reliability remains the most critical function of our networks
- establish a pathway to emissions reduction and greater renewable energy integration
- deliver on these objectives at a cost and level of network dependability, quality and responsiveness that is acceptable to our customers.

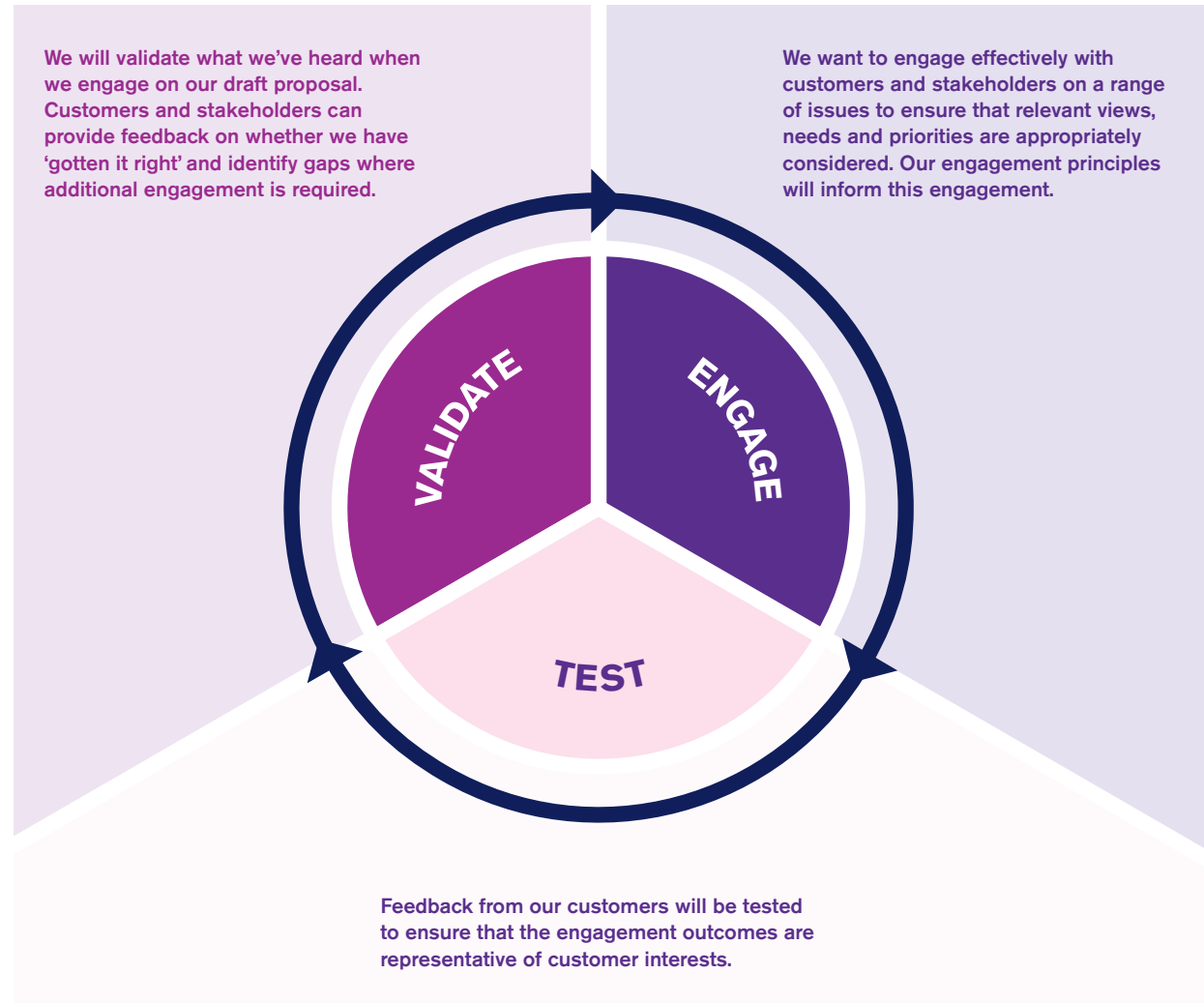
2 Our engagement goals

Our engagement is outcome focused

Our key engagement goals are:

- to allow our customers and stakeholders to meaningfully influence the direction of our engagement program
- to develop customer-centric evidence to inform our decision-making
- to design products and services that meet the needs of our customers
- to build trust and confidence amongst our customers and stakeholders.

Our iterative approach to our engagement is aimed at ensuring that the customer-centred evidence is robust and comprehensive. This will ensure we will deliver the energy solutions that best meet the needs of our customers and stakeholders.





3 Our engagement principles

Customer oriented principles will underpin our engagement

Our customer and stakeholder engagement throughout the regulatory reset process will be open, evidence-based, inclusive and agile.

Open and transparent

We want customers to have trust and confidence that we will do the right thing by them. This includes ensuring customers and stakeholders understand the elements of a regulatory proposal that they can and cannot influence and they have the appropriate information to inform their preferences.

To engage as openly and transparently as possible, we need to:

- be clear with our customers and stakeholders as to how their inputs can influence our regulatory proposals, and provide a clear 'line of sight' from customer and stakeholder inputs to the trade-offs and our regulatory proposals
- close the loop by reflecting what we heard from customers and stakeholders back to them to ensure we have correctly interpreted what we heard and explained how we considered their input

- have Executive Management present at most engagement activities to ensure direct access to decision makers within the business
- enhance transparency through clear governance processes up to, and including the Board
- appoint an independent CAP, and an independent Chair and ensure the Chair and CAP have appropriate access to Executives and/or Board members
- publicly report all engagement activities, follow up actions and outcomes.

Provides reliable evidence

We want to ensure that our engagement is valid and robust and produces reliable, relevant insights and data to support our decision making.

To do so, we will:

- engage regularly and openly with our CAP who have a clear remit to challenge, test and accept business perspectives
- engage with customers and stakeholders on issues where we lack data and insights, to make fully informed, evidence-based decisions
- test outcomes from our engagement activities in draft proposals to be published and open to scrutiny mid-2024
- triangulate engagement outcomes from each phase of our engagement journey with other sources of evidence, as well as with our executives, workstream leaders and CAP.

Inclusive and collaborative

We want to hear from the diversity of our customers and will deploy a variety of methods to promote accessibility, and encourage customers to engage with us.

As part of this endeavour, we have taken steps to promote inclusivity and collaboration in our engagement process that include:

- extending the CAP membership to include representatives with a wider range of interests and skills
- identifying all customer and stakeholder segments and added communities that may be marginalised by traditional engagement including First Peoples, youth, and cultural and linguistically diverse communities (CALD)
- establishing a dedicated engagement platform (website) to support on-going engagement with the wider community and interested stakeholders. This is part of our 'always on' strategy that is designed to ensure we capture the views of as many of our customers and stakeholders as possible.

Agile and iterative

Our engagement approach should be flexible enough to support the changing needs and priorities of our customers and stakeholders.

We are committed to:

- adopting an agile and adaptive approach to engagement to include a wider range of activities and ensure we have the flexibility to amend or change these activities as the circumstances demand. This will ensure that we are able to engage as needed with our customers and stakeholders on issues or topics that may not have been foreseen when developing the original engagement plan
- engaging iteratively by testing and validating engagement outcomes. This will ensure that the customer-centred evidence we collate is robust and comprehensive.



Engage on the topics that matter

To ensure that our engagement with our customers and stakeholders is impactful we will engage on:

Topics that are relevant to the regulatory reset process

Customers and stakeholders' views will be sought on those topics that impact the proposals we provide the AER. This will ensure that our proposals are in the long-term interests of our customers and stakeholders. Other important topics not relevant to the regulatory reset will be discussed in other forums as part of our 'business-as-usual' engagement process with our customers and stakeholders. This will ensure the engagement is focussed and achieves the appropriate outcomes.

Topics that are material to our customers and stakeholders

We want to hear from our customers and stakeholders on topics that materially impact them. These might be topics that have a direct impact on affordability or topics that have a material impact on their service experience. This will ensure that engagement is relevant to customers and is impactful in terms of the services they receive over the next regulatory period.

Topics where our customers and stakeholders can have significant influence on the outcome

It is important that our customers and stakeholders' voices are heard on all topics; but especially on those matters where they have a significant ability to influence the overall outcome. This will ensure that we are capturing information about our customers and stakeholders' needs and priorities and considering them in the situations where they matter most and where they can have the most impact on our decision-making processes.

Topics where our customers and stakeholders can meaningfully engage on the issue

Our customers and stakeholders will have different priorities, views and needs in respect of different topics. It is important for us to ensure that the right people are being engaged on the right topics. We want to identify those customers and stakeholders that may be disproportionately affected by certain topics and engage meaningfully with them. This will help us to properly understand the impacts on affected customers and stakeholders and allow more informed decisions on future outcomes. It is also important that we engage with representative samples of customers and stakeholders and can understand and balance the feedback received, especially in the context of divergent views across our customer cohorts.

Topics where the knowledge or information does not already exist

Feedback from our customers and stakeholders is always valuable, but especially so where we lack sufficient data and insights. It is critical that in those instances, customer and stakeholder input is provided in order to ensure that fully informed, evidence-based decisions are made.

4 Who we will engage with

We will consult with a broad range of customers and stakeholders

Broad engagement

With more than 710,000 customers, our customer base is diverse – not just between customer types but also between customers, regions and communities. We also have a range of stakeholders with interests in, or the ability to influence, our engagement outcomes. Our engagement approach needs to allow us to interact with this diversity of customers and stakeholders to capture their equally diverse and unique perspectives.

However we appreciate not everyone has the capacity, interest or skills to engage deeply on all issues.

Engagement to date, through surveys, discussions and other approaches has focused on exploring and gathering feedback on broad themes related to customer and stakeholder interests and preferences from a wide range of customers and other stakeholders. We view this broad engagement predominantly as informing and consulting with customers and stakeholders.

We will continue this broad engagement continuing to include different communities, groups, stakeholders and customer segments to ensure we get 'the full picture' in terms of all customer and stakeholder views, such as those listed below:

- Commercial and industrial customers
- Residential customers
- Culturally and linguistically diverse customers
- Youth (customers aged up to 25)
- Urban communities
- Rural communities
- Industry and consumer advocates
- Environmental advocates
- Government and regulators
- Generators
- Retailers
- Special interest groups.

Deep engagement

To engage more deeply with customers and stakeholders we have established specialised panels and committees with a range of interests, skills and expertise to assist in the development of our regulatory proposals.

Our aim is to extend our engagement to involve and collaborate with these panels to develop truly customer focused regulatory proposals.

We meet regularly through face to face and online meetings and encourage panel members to suggest topics of interest and contribute to the meeting agenda.

Our specialised panels and committees are listed below.

Customer Advisory Panel

The CAP is an important forum to enable us to obtain advice and test direction across a cross section of industry, government, not-for-profit, renewable energy and independent engagement specialists. The CAP's primary role is to hold us to account to ensure customers' views are embedded in our decision-making processes and customers are at the heart of our regulatory proposals.

Their focus is on advising on consumer research, engagement and trials, and participating in specialised stakeholder-led working groups (e.g. tariffs, and network resilience) to consider evidence of consumer interests and preferences and help shape our regulatory proposals.

Our CAP members are also invited to challenge the business to ensure the needs and priorities of consumers are reflected in our regulatory proposals. For more information visit www.unitedenergy.com.au

First Peoples Advisory Committee (FPAC)

The FPAC was established in mid-2023 to provide expert advice on First Peoples engagement and the development of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). In addition, we will offer for the Chair of our FPAC to become a member of the CAP. Their role would be to ensure recommendations provided by the FPAC are actively considered by the business and the CAP.

We will also directly engage with the FPAC on a range of topics directly relevant to First Peoples, including customer vulnerability, reliability, resilience and affordability.

Generator Steering Committee (GSC)

The GSC is a 'business as usual' group to give voice to our large generation customers. The GSC discusses a variety of issues including network planning, tariff, connection policy and transmission integration topics.

The GSC will test elements of the regulatory proposals relevant to them, including future connection policy, renewable energy zones and network capacity constraints.

Urban Residential Development Committee (URDC)

The URDC is another 'business as usual' committee established to support engagement with greenfield urban developments. The URDC's work has already led to significant process improvements to enable faster, more efficient and compliant new connections.

The URDC's views are especially important for the next regulatory period given changes to residential building standards, public lighting, electrification, electric vehicles, private and public charging, and other new energy technologies.

Distribution Network Service Provider Working Group (DNSPWG)

The DNSPWG is a working group managed by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). It has supported information provision and consultation between the Victorian Government and distributors on a wide range of topics and projects.

From May 2023, the meetings were refocused, recognising that all networks in Victoria are on the same regulatory reset timeframe. This working group has now become an important engagement link with the Victorian Government, who are a critical stakeholder in the regulatory reset process.

Victorian Distribution Networks Coordination Committee (VDNCC)

We recognise, in certain circumstances, collaboration with other Victorian electricity networks is beneficial. To facilitate this, the distribution networks in Victoria (United Energy, CitiPower, Powercor, AusNet and Jemena) have established a co-ordination committee, the VDNCC.

The VDNCC's role is to agree and facilitate engagement on topics of common interest including network tariffs, customer vulnerability, network resilience and framework and approach (such as service classification, form of price control).

5 How we will engage

We will be guided by best practice and our principles

We recognise different issues and different customer and stakeholder groups will lend themselves to different methods of engagement. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to engagement.

The level of participation with customers will be informed by the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum. The IAP2 Spectrum identifies five levels of public participation, where the level of participation depends on the goal or purpose of engagement.

We are cognisant that some issues or topics may be of little interest to customers, or they may be non-negotiable, in which case we will focus on “informing”. For issues or topics of greater interest to customers and over which they can have a greater influence, we will strive to involve or collaborate with customers to ensure their interests are genuinely incorporated into our regulatory proposals.

We anticipate our broad engagement with customers, regardless of the topic, is more likely to focus on informing or consulting with customers, and there may be opportunities to extend this to involving them in developing ideas and solutions.

In contrast, we expect our deep engagement will extend to involving and collaborating with customers and stakeholders.

Importantly, while it may not be possible to empower customers and stakeholders to make key regulatory decisions, we will look to empower customers in other ways, such as designing components of engagement activities or feedback mechanisms.

Providing you with feedback

It is important the customers and stakeholders who participate in our engagement activities understand how their feedback was considered and reflected in our regulatory proposals.

We will distil the key insights received from all engagement activities and the implications of the feedback for our planning and decision-making. Then, we will play back the outcomes of engagement, providing a feedback loop and allowing for any further validation of customer and stakeholder insights.

Methods of engagement

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
What that means	We will keep you informed and provide you with timely and accessible information to promote better understanding of our regulatory process, proposals and opportunities to participate.	We will keep you informed, listen to, and acknowledge concerns and aspirations and provide feedback on how input has influenced our decisions.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how input influenced our decisions.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.
Potential approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media • Presentations • Information sessions • Advertising • Social media • Reports • Discussion papers • Factsheets • Video/animations • Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefings • Drop-in sessions • Focus groups • Polls / surveys • Workshops • Webinars / Q&A • Engagement HQ • Email messages • Customer Contact Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site visits • Workshops • Deliberative panels • Advisory committees • Series of 'summits' • Interviews • Engagement HQ • Ideation sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAP • Workshops • Advisory committees • Industry and government networks • Submissions processes • Participatory decision-making

6 Evaluation



We are committed to continuous improvement

We will continuously evaluate our engagement activities and outcomes against the intended purpose of the engagement, with a view to learning what worked well and aspects where we could improve. This will help ensure we hear from a range of voices and gather robust evidence of customer preferences to shape our regulatory proposals.

This evaluation will include:

- an assessment of the effectiveness of engagement processes through post engagement participant surveys, discussions with engagement observers (such as CAP members, AER observers and the AER's Consumer Challenge Panel observers present at engagement activities)
- consistency of messages from interactions with customers and stakeholders through various other methods, including our dedicated engagement platforms, emails, website forms, phone calls, or requests for information
- validation of the engagement outcomes (learnings and insights) by triangulating them with other sources of evidence such as:
 - 'business as usual' activities and other customer research
 - a review of industry-led data that identifies changes in consumer trends
 - experience of subject matter specialists, members of the executive, internal regulatory reset project team members and CAP.

If we identify that customers and stakeholders are seeking further, or different, engagement we will adapt future phases to better accommodate their engagement needs. This may mean increasing (or decreasing) engagement, changing the engagement methods or communication medium with consumers.

Changes to the engagement program will be communicated back as part of our commitment to transparency.

Overall evaluation

While we have a number of customer commitments that we use to measure our performance as part of our 'business as usual' activities, we are also committed to specifically evaluating our engagement associated with our regulatory reset.

This will include whether we engaged in line with the goals and principles outlined in this strategy.

The criteria we will measure our performance against are outlined below.

Our CAP will also be asked to prepare an independent and stand-alone formal engagement report that will accompany our final regulatory proposal (in-line with AER's Better Resets Handbook).



Criteria



Measure



Key performance indicators

Whether our purpose was achieved in developing proposals that earned the trust of our consumers?	CAP feedback AER Customer Challenge Panel feedback AER's draft and final determinations	Final determinations that are in line with consumer expectations and acceptable to our business
Did we allow consumers to meaningfully influence the direction of our engagement program?	% acceptance score tested through surveys with participating consumers and other stakeholders with respect to the final proposal	>80% acceptance
Did we develop customer-centred evidence to inform our decision-making?	CAP feedback Executive and Board feedback AER's draft and final determinations	Positive endorsement of the customer-centric nature of our proposals
Did we design products and services that meet customer needs and choices?	Engagement satisfaction score based on surveys with engagement participants to test their satisfaction with the experience (rated on a scale of 1-5)	Average of >4.25 across all engagement activity
Did we build trust and confidence amongst our customers, consumers and stakeholders?	% acceptance score tested through surveys with participating consumers and other stakeholders regarding the final proposal	>80% acceptance
Were the engagement principles faithfully upheld?	Engagement satisfaction score (1-5) Inquiries and grievances review Qualitative assessment undertaken by the team	Average of >4.25 across all engagement activity 100% effective close out of inquiries and grievances Positive evaluation of performance

7 Engagement pathway

We have developed a fit for purpose engagement pathway

To execute our Engagement Strategy, we have developed a four-phase engagement pathway.

Our pathway will ensure that customers and stakeholders are well informed and supported so they are equipped to provide meaningful feedback, challenge us and work with us to develop high quality, robust proposals.

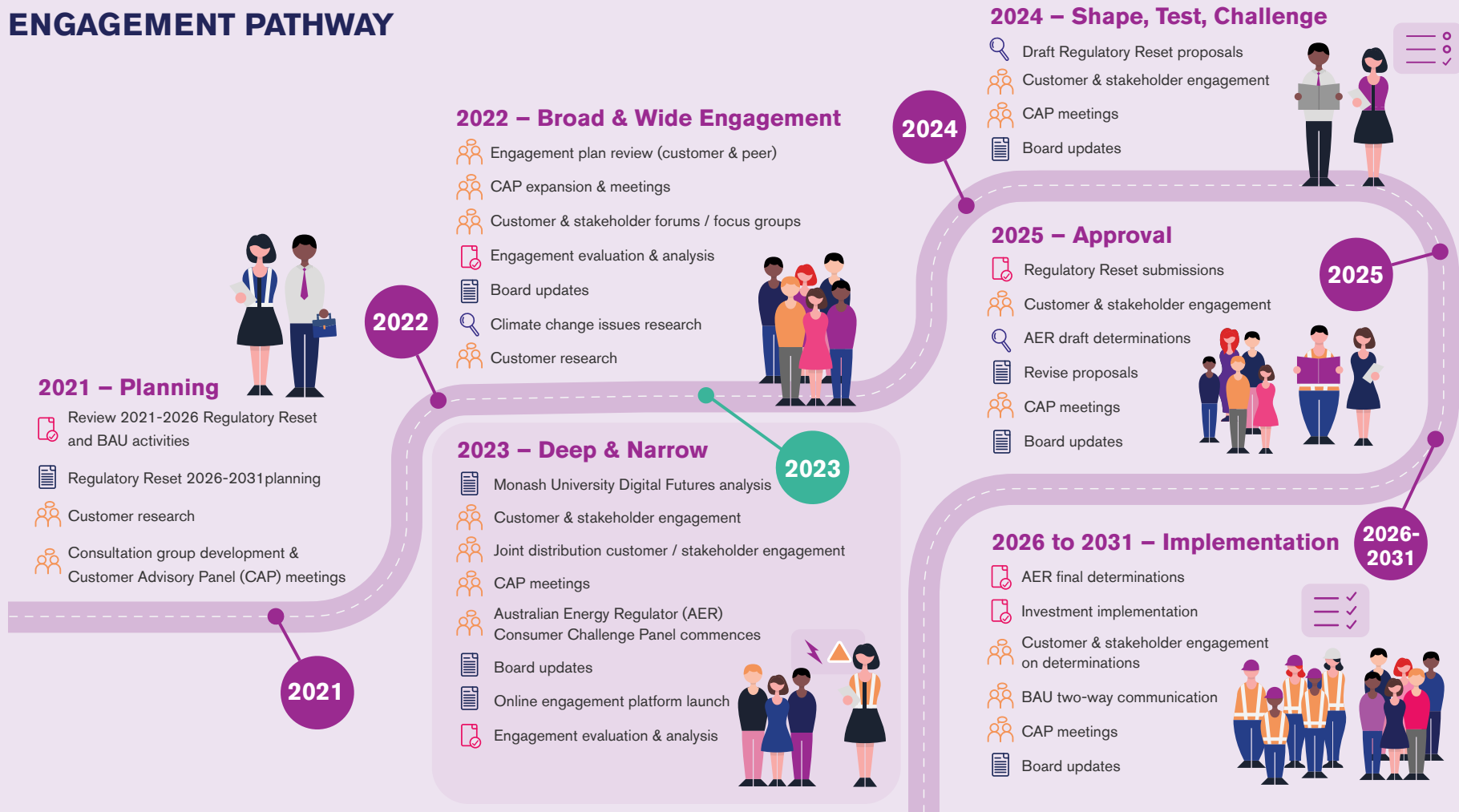
Importantly, our pathway builds learnings from our previous regulatory proposals, and our 'business as usual' research and engagement.

We are committed to:

- engaging with customers and stakeholders as we develop our proposal: acknowledging that they are critical to our operations and are at the centre of our decision making
- undertaking early engagement and obtaining timely feedback from customers and stakeholders to inform our proposals
- utilising local knowledge and expertise to jointly solve problems, identify innovative solutions and build understanding for our role
- strengthening our relationships with consumers and stakeholders by collaborating with them wherever possible.



REGULATORY RESET 2026-2031 ENGAGEMENT PATHWAY



We recognise issues and circumstances may change, for a variety of factors such as changing customer priorities and interests, government policy or environmental factors. Accordingly we have flexibility to refine and redevelop our pathway as required.

We will also act on feedback received from our customers and stakeholders about our processes so we can better engage with them and ensure that our pathway remains fit for purpose.

8 Progress

We have already made significant progress

Phase 1: Preliminary research and engagement

From our preliminary research and engagement we identified key themes for the first phase of the pathway.

As part of the planning process, we reviewed our previous regulatory reset to determine opportunities for improvement. It was clear that there was an increasing opportunity to utilise high quality customer and stakeholder engagement when seeking regulatory approval for future investments and services.

We also identified an opportunity to better ensure a clear 'line of sight' between customer and stakeholder preferences and our regulatory proposals. We also sought to retain what worked well from our previous regulatory reset in terms of engagement.

An examination of our 'business-as-usual' engagement through 2021-2022 also gave us new insights into customer and stakeholder priorities. This was particularly true of topics relating to affordability and equity, resilience and the energy transition.

To supplement this, we undertook a range of quantitative research, aimed at providing customer and stakeholder insights relevant to both 'business-as-usual' plans and regulatory reset planning.

Amongst other things this included a customer values analysis, reviews of customer complaint and inquiry data, focus groups, surveys and interviews.

A preliminary joint workshop with Victorian distribution businesses was also undertaken with key stakeholders.





What we heard

The preliminary research and engagement, combined with other data and inputs considered, revealed four themes which were consistently important to customers and stakeholders. These key themes were:

Affordability and equity

Relevant topics raised included but were not limited to:

- the increasing cost of living pressure and electricity's role in it
- concern with increasing prevalence of 'energy poverty' amongst certain customer groups
- the importance of equity in the energy transition, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Reliability and resilience

Relevant topics included but were not limited to:

- the importance of providing a reliable supply of electricity – this was identified as the most impactful driver of trust
- ways in which the risks around supply can be mitigated given increased renewable energy penetration and the speed of the energy transition
- how the network will adapt to climate change whilst maintaining network resilience.

Energy transformation

Relevant topics included but were not limited to:

- the importance of prioritising the networks' role in a lower carbon future
- enabling all customers to participate in existing and emerging energy markets
- the network supporting customers' vision for a greener future by supporting all forms of renewable energy.

Customer experience

Relevant topics included but were not limited to:

- the importance of ensuring effective and efficient communications during outages
- prioritising the customer experience as it relates to solar and embedded generation projects
- ensuring outages are approached in an empathic manner with quality and speed of information.

Phase 2: Broad and Wide to identify customers' future expectations and priorities

The second phase of the pathway, broad and wide, sought to engage with a geographically and demographically diverse range of people to validate the themes identified through the planning phase and to identify their future expectations and priorities.

It sought to test for significant differences in perceptions amongst a range of customer segments, namely:

- communities in United Energy
- commercial and industrial customers
- youth (aged up to 25)
- CALD communities

This engagement involved interviews and focus groups involving our Executive and observed by members of the CAP and the AER. The results have refined and prioritised topics that will be the subject of more detailed engagement developed for phase 3 of the pathway.

During this phase we also expanded the CAP to represent a broader diversity of views and appointed an Independent Chair. These amendments to the CAP were designed to ensure its operation is more open, transparent and inclusive.

We have heard from a diverse range of people throughout our broad and wide engagement and look forward to further engaging on the insights identified through phase three of the engagement pathway (Deep and Narrow).

Phase 3: Deep and Narrow to refine the issues

In 2023, we commenced the Deep and Narrow phase of our engagement. During this phase, we intend to take the refined issues identified in the Broad and Wide phase, and undertake more targeted engagement with defined consumer segments.

As part of this phase, we will consider high level trade-offs that may need to be made, alongside options analysis and solution identification. This phase will also include a step up in collaborative action with other Victorian distribution networks on common topics and with shared stakeholders relevant to regulatory reset objectives.

Digital platform

In April 2023, we launched our digital platform, Engage United Energy. This will enable us to connect with our customers and stakeholders throughout the remainder of the reset process. The platform provides resources to enable our customers and stakeholders to learn more about the regulatory reset, access key documents pertinent to each stage of the engagement pathway, to keep across upcoming opportunities and to have a say and become involved.

This is an exciting step in our engagement journey and is an important way to provide opportunities to improve transparency, increase collaboration and enable iteration and feedback.

Customers and stakeholders can access our engagement platforms at engage.unitedenergy.com.au

Phase 4: Shape, Test and Challenge

This phase will follow the release of our draft proposals in mid-2024. This phase will provide us with the opportunity to pose a critical question to our consumers and stakeholders: Did we get it right?. It will enable customer and stakeholders to evaluate the proposals as a whole and ask the question: Does this represent value for me?

Approval

Following the release of our Regulatory Proposals, we will continue to engage with consumers and stakeholders with two objectives. One is to encourage feedback or submissions as part of the AER public review process. The second is to gather further information that may support our refinement of the proposals if necessary.

Implementation

Following the AER's final determination on our proposals, our engagement with consumers and stakeholders continues. This will form part of our business-as-usual program of works. We will prioritise, following through with information and engagement on major initiatives committed and approved by the AER. We will also report on the commitments we have made to our customers and stakeholders.

The CAP will be a continuous feature of our engagement, recognising that planning for our 2031-2036 regulatory reset period follows shortly after.

9 How you can get involved

The focus of 2023 is our Deep and Narrow phase of engagement. We are developing an implementation plan to support this engagement and identify the specific engagement topics and forums.

In the meantime, to find out more about the engagement process, please visit Engage United Energy at engage.unitedenergy.com.au.

You can also stay up-to-date via the following channels:

Website: engage.unitedenergy.com.au

Email: community@ue.com.au

Phone: 1300 131 689

Facebook: United Energy

LinkedIn: United Energy

Twitter: @UnitedEnergyAU

Youtube: United Energy



For further information visit:

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