

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

CUSTOMER ENABLEMENT



Table of contents

1. Overview	3
2. Background	4
2.1 Compliance	5
3. Identified need	6
4. Options analysis	7
4.1 Risk monetisation framework	7
4.2 Option one: do not maintain currency	8
4.4 Option two: maintain currency	10
4.5 Option three: enhanced currency	12
5. Recommendation	15
A Customer enablement gateway services	16
B Systems supporting customer enablement	18
C Distribution code compliance	20

1. Overview

We provide customers with a variety of online gateway services built on the Salesforce platform. These online services act as a virtual front counter and are utilised extensively by our customers. Access is provided from our corporate website.

The principal customer gateway, referred to as myEnergy, provides one stop shop for customers to access common services via a single view. The customer can submit and track a request through to completion. Benefits to customers include ease of use, improved visibility and reduced processing time. Automated workflow, exception management and reporting ensure timely completion of requests. To prevent failure or degradation of current services, continued investment will be required during the next reset period.

We considered three options for addressing the three identified needs,

1. **Do not maintain currency** – under this option we would not maintain the currency of our online gateways and associated systems
2. **Maintain currency** – under this option we would perform prudent technical updates of the gateway services to maintain currency
3. **Enhance currency** - this option includes the technical updates covered by option two and introduces new CRM analytics capability

Option two is recommended as it ensures the continuity of our customer gateway services through prudent technical upgrades.

The following table provides a summary of our options analysis for the 2026-2031 regulatory period.

TABLE 1 OPTIONS ANALYSIS SUMMARY (\$M, 2026)

#	OPTION	CAPEX	OPEX
1	Do not maintain currency	-	-
2	Maintain currency	3.6	-
3	Enhance currency	4.4	-

2. Background

We provide customers with a variety of online gateway services built on the Salesforce platform. These online services act as a virtual front counter and are utilised extensively by our customers. Access is provided from our corporate website.

The principal customer gateway, referred to as myEnergy, provides one stop shop for customers to access common services via a single view.

The following online customer services are accessible through our customer gateways¹:

- view and understand energy usage or download usage reports
- submit and track requests to connect with the electrical network, including solar and batter connections, or alter existing metering
- submit, update and track requests to upgrade/extend the existing electrical network or move an electrical asset
- lodge and track a claim for compensation.
- provide feedback
- lodge a general enquiry
- set outage notification preferences
- view current electrical outages
- view details of scheduled electrical outages
- report an electrical supply fault
- report a faulty streetlight

To assist our customers, videos covering how to use gateway services are provided to customers via the corporate website. In addition, frequently asked questions address most user queries.

We currently have over 55,000 registered users² of gateway services, with these services only commencing at the beginning of the 2021–26 regulatory period. The increasing trend reflects customer acceptance and a continued enthusiasm to utilise services.

Further information on our gateway services and systems can be found in the appendices A and B.

¹ The property is linked to a customer's account.

² Volumes effective October 2024. In 2021 due to a change to the technical environment a count of registered users recommenced.

2.1 Compliance

2.1.1 Distribution code

Obligations outlined in the Distribution Code³ relating to the planned and unplanned outage notifications and connection services is met through functionality provided via customer gateway services. Further information on the related obligations is provided in Appendix C.

2.1.2 National Electricity Rules

Compliance connection timeframes are outlined in chapter 5A of the National Electricity Rules. The automated processes enabled by online connection services enable compliance with these timeframes.

2.1.3 Meter data provision procedure

The provision of usage data to customers or their authorised representative is a requirement of the AEMO Meter Data Provision Procedure⁴ and is enabled through an online gateway service.

³ The ESV Electricity Distribution Code of Practice is commonly referred to as the Distribution Code. [Electricity Distribution Code of Practice | Essential Services Commission](#)

⁴ [AEMO | Metering procedures, guidelines and processes](#)

3. Identified need

We have a need to invest in customer gateway services so we can deliver the online services expected by our customers.

Initial investment in customer gateway services commenced over five years ago. These services provide valuable information to our customers, giving them control around outage notifications and enabling online requests to be logged. A customer can also view the progress of their request online. They are extensively utilised by our customers, reflecting the importance of ensuring stability of services.

The impacts to gateway services, if reliable and stable customer gateways were not available, are provided in Table 2. The current automated workflows, exception management processes, reporting and online tracking would be absent. Reversion to manual processes would require the emailing of forms to and from customers, tracking of requests via spreadsheets and the use of email to forward requests between departments. The current ability for customers to track the progress of requests online would also be lost.

Customers would need to seek information through our Contact Centre which is likely to be slower and more costly than using the online gateway services.

The overall Impacts would include a frustrating customer experience, regulatory non-compliance, delays to service provision timeframes and the need for additional resources to support manual processes.

TABLE 2 GATEWAY SERVICES

GATEWAY SERVICE	IF NOT AVAILABLE, CUSTOMERS WOULD BE UNABLE TO
myEnergy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• View and understand their energy usage or download usage reports• Lodge an online claim for compensation or track progress• Provide feedback• Lodge a general enquiry• Set notification preferences• Receive updates during a supply outage• View current electrical outages• Report an electrical supply fault• Report a faulty streetlight• Submit and track requests to connect with the electrical network or alter existing metering, including solar and battery connections.• Submit, update and track requests to upgrade/extend the existing electrical network or move an electrical asset

4. Options analysis

We have considered three options to meet the identified need:

1. **Do not maintain currency** – under this option we would not maintain the currency of our online gateways and associated systems
2. **Maintain currency** – under this option we would perform prudent technical updates to maintain currency.
3. **Enhance currency** – under this option we would perform the technical updates covered by option two and introduce new analytics capability.

The costs of each of the options is presented in Table 3, and set out in further detail in our attached cost model.⁵

TABLE 3 OPTIONS ANALYTIS (\$M, 2026)

#	OPTION	CAPEX	OPEX
1	Do not maintain currency	0.0	-
2	Maintain currency	3.6	-
3	Enhance currency	4.4	-

4.1 Risk monetisation framework

To assess our investment options, we worked with EY to develop an ICT risk framework.⁶

Table 4 provides a summary of each risk category included in our framework.

TABLE 4 RISK FRAMEWORK SUMMARY

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Reliability	Risks related to events or failures that cause unforeseen impacts to electricity supply or export capability. For example, customer supply or solar export
Compliance	Risks of regulatory, legal, or financial penalties due to failure in meeting compliance obligations, such as delays in publishing key market data or unauthorised access to sensitive data

⁵ UE MOD 7.17 - Customer enablement cost - Jan2025 - Public

⁶ UE ATT 7.02 - EY - IT risk monetisation framework - Jan2025 - Public

Bushfire	Risks that outages of critical operational systems may increase bushfire likelihood by impairing visibility of the network and timely decision-making
Safety	Risks affecting public and staff safety, such as loss of supply impacting life-support customers or disruptions to protective systems
Customer experience	Risks where customer interactions are impacted, such as outages of customer-facing IT systems
IT outage	Risks of systems becoming unavailable due to poor infrastructure maintenance or resource constraints, resulting in prolonged downtimes or outages
IT suitability and sustainability	Risks arising from legacy systems that are prone to failures, inefficiencies, and incompatibilities. These systems may lead to increased maintenance costs, failures, and cyber vulnerabilities if not updated

4.2 Option one: do not maintain currency

If investment in our gateway services was not executed during the 2026-2031 regulatory period, the customer gateway services would become unstable and unreliable. Customers would lose the ability to submit and track a request online. They would need to seek information through our Contact Centre which is likely to be slower, inconvenient and more costly than using the online gateway services. From an internal business perspective, the current automated workflows, exception management processes, reporting and online tracking would be absent. Reversion to manual processes would be required with an additional expense associated with increased resources.

Impacts would include a reduced customer experience, regulatory non-compliance with the Distribution Code and Meter Data Provision Procedure, delays to service provision timeframes and the need for additional resources to support manual processes.

Table 2 provided a listing of the online customer services which would be impacted.

The table below summaries an assessment of option one against our key risk criteria.

TABLE 5 OPTION ONE RISK SUMMARY

#	RISK	DESCRIPTION
1	Reliability	<p>Where instability results in the failure of services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers could not view details of current known electrical supply faults. • Customers would lose the ability to easily report an electrical supply or street light fault online requiring them to call and report an outage. • Customers would not receive updates on the progress of a supply outage.

2	Compliance	<p>If the automated processes which enable us to meet regulatory compliance timeframes were not available, this would put regulatory compliance at risk.</p> <p>The dispatch of automated email and SMS notifications to customers to advise of unplanned outages would not be possible if reversion to manual methods was needed due to system instability.</p> <p>Should new regulatory requirements be announced, we may not be positioned to engage the necessary development on outdated platforms.</p>
3	Bushfire	Not applicable.
4	Safety	<p>If currency of the customer notifications portal was not maintained, there is a risk that we would not provide outage information and estimated restoration times to customers, including life support customers, creating a related safety risk. Or if they could be provided the customer contact details may be out-of-date.</p>
5	Customer experience risk	<p>In the event of system instability, the provision of gateway services could be compromised. This would impact customers including registered electrical contractors, licenced electrical workers, developers and solar installers.</p> <p>The inability to make changes to meet new regulatory requirements would mean the associated customer benefits would also be lost.</p> <p>Defect fixes associated with known bugs would not applied; with potential impacts to functionality and customer experience.</p>
6	IT system outage	<p>There is an increased risk of system instability and outages leading to services being unavailable when we do not invest in maintaining product currency.</p> <p>As new security threats are identified, vendors incorporate suitable barriers to cyber-attack within the latest software version. By not ensuring technical currency, new security threats cannot be addressed.</p>
7	IT system suitability and system sustainability	<p>Externally driven changes to the gateway services could not be catered for due to the underlying aged platforms.</p> <p>Our customer enablement platforms have integration with other systems to enable delivery of services. Due to current legacy design and frameworks in our gateway platforms, the integration may be constrained if these other systems needed update.</p> <p>As this option does not introduce CRM data analytics, data about customers and the services utilised cannot be evaluated and used to facilitate future business decisions.</p>

There is no expenditure associated with this option.

4.4 Option two: maintain currency

Under option two we will maintain currency of our customer enablement systems and gateways.

Maintaining currency will ensure stability of connection services, energy usage data and customer notifications. Should new regulatory requirements be announced in relation to these services, we will be positioned to engage the necessary development on a contemporary platform.

During the 2026-2031 regulatory period we must maintain currency of the customer gateway front end technology to allow ongoing use of the associated services. Under Option two, a technical update to the front-end technology and scripting framework for the UEConnect and myEnergy gateways will be executed with an aim to maintain currency. This option also includes an update to the customer notifications portal with a currency upgrade to the underlying infrastructure and application frameworks. The notifications portal is vital service which enables compliance with customer notification obligations outlined in the Distribution Code of practice. Outage view APIs which are utilised to provide customers with information on currency outages would also receive a technical update.

The table below summarises an assessment of option two against our key risk criteria. While the risk of a system issue arising is not eliminated, when compared to option one, there is a reduced risk of system issues arising.

TABLE 6 OPTION TWO RISK SUMMARY

#	SYSTEM	DESCRIPTION
1	Reliability	Maintaining currency reduces the risk of system instability. As a result, customers could continue to view details of current outages, report a supply or street light fault and receive updates on the progress of an outage.
2	Compliance	Should new regulatory requirements be announced relating to most gateway services, technical currency will be maintained and therefore we will be in a position to make the required changes.
3	Bushfire	Not applicable.
4	Safety	Safety risks relating to the provision of outage information and estimated restoration times are removed The risk of providing outage information to out-of-date customer contact details is removed.
5	Customer experience risk	The risk of a negative customer experience due to system instability is reduced. Ensuring currency reduces the risk of product defects impacting customer services or business efficiency as defect fixes are received and applied.
6	IT system outage	The risk of system instability for gateway services is minimised through updates to the front-end technology. The risk of a cyber-attack is reduced by maintaining currency. As new security threats are identified, vendors will incorporate suitable barriers to cyber-attack within the latest software version.
7	IT system suitability and system sustainability	Externally driven changes can be catered for under this option. Updates to a system integrated with our customer enablement platforms change may be supported. As this option does not introduce CRM data analytics, data about customers and the services utilised cannot be evaluated and used to facilitate future business decisions.

The table below sets out the expenditure associated with option two.

TABLE 7 OPTION TWO EXPENDITURE FORECAST (\$M, 2026)

OPTION TWO	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	TOTAL
United Energy	0.7	0.7	-	1.1	1.1	3.6

4.5 Option three: enhanced currency

This option includes the updates to maintain currency of the customer gateway front end technology as in option two but also implements new CRM analytics capability.

While gateway services enable a large volume of interactions with customer, we do not currently have analytics capability so that data about customers and the services utilised can be evaluated and used to facilitate future business decisions. Option three would implement Salesforce ‘CRM⁷ Analytics’ capability so that data about customers and the services utilised can be evaluated and used to facilitate future business decisions. Over time we have added new and faster ways for customers to interact. This presents an opportunity to turn the data collected into useful information. The CRM Analytics capability will track various performance metrics and identify information needed to satisfy a customer request. It will also allow us to personalise the user experience.

The table below summaries an assessment of option three against our key risk criteria.

TABLE 8 OPTION THREE RISK SUMMARY

#	SYSTEM	DESCRIPTION
1	Reliability	As per option two
2	Compliance	As per option two
3	Bushfire	Not applicable
4	Safety	As per option two
5	Customer experience risk	As per option two
6	IT system Outage	As per option two

⁷ customer relationship management

7	IT system Suitability and system sustainability	<p>Externally driven changes to gateway services, customer notifications and other gateway services could be catered for as per option two.</p> <p>Updates to a system integrated with our customer enablement platforms change can be supported.</p> <p>As this option introduces CRM data analytics, data about customers and the services utilised can be evaluated and used to facilitate future business decisions.</p>
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The table below sets out the expenditure associated with option three.

TABLE 9 OPTION THREE EXPENDITURE FORECAST (\$M, 2026)

OPTION THREE	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	TOTAL
United Energy	0.7	1.0	0.4	1.1	1.1	4.4

5. Recommendation

Following our option analysis, we recommend option two, maintaining currency, which provides a prudent approach to ensuring currency of our customer enablement systems and addresses risks associated with platform instability. It will also allow ongoing use of the associated customer services.

In line with our IT deliverability plan, our recommendation also considered a number of general factors (e.g. project concurrency, resource availability, etc.) to ensure that the option selected, and timing was pragmatic, actionable, and would have the highest probability of delivering a successful outcome.

Our proposed expenditure profile is provided in Table 10.

TABLE 10 RECOMMENDED OPTION EXPENDITURE FORECAST (\$M, 2026)

OPTION TWO	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	TOTAL
United Energy	0.7	0.7	-	1.1	1.1	3.6

A Customer enablement gateway services

A.1 myEnergy

Access to our gateway services are available via the corporate website. Once registered for myEnergy, customers can:

- View energy usage and get the best retail deal from Victoria Energy Compare.
- Go digital by opting to receive S and email notifications for outages.
- View planned outages affecting their properties.
- Make, view and track claims for compensation.
- Provide feedback through the Customer Resolutions centre.
- Submit and track requests for connection services

A dashboard provides key information and is the starting point to accessing other services.

Registration is easy and it only takes a few minutes for customers to sign up to our online portal. All they need to have on hand is an energy bill which provides their National Meter Identifier, which you'll find at the top of your bill. Best of all, once registered, customers have easy 24/7 access to these services via laptop, PC, or smart device.

Energy Usage

Tracking energy usage couldn't be easier using the online energy portal myEnergy. Our customers can use the myEnergy portal to track and manage their energy usage. Other benefits include being able to download energy data to help obtain competitive energy deals via the Victorian Energy Compare website. The portal also enables customers to request access to outage notifications in the event of local planned works.

Outage Notifications

A customer can choose to receive SMS and/or email notifications for planned or unplanned outages. For SMS notifications they can also define the hours during which they want notifications to be sent.

Connections

Our online connection application service is available within myEnergy. This includes applications for new supply connections, modifications to existing supply connections, new embedded generation, solar or battery connections and registration of electric vehicle charging units connected to our network.

End users of this service are generally registered electrical contractors, licenced electrical workers or solar installers. The service helps guide users through the connections process and allows them to submit and track a range of connections and applications. Pre-approvals for roof top solar connection, small scale battery are also provided. The connections service also allows for payments and truck appointments to be made online. Updates on the progress of an application are received on via SMS and/or email, tracking application progress in real-time, and receiving notifications on actions required to progress the application. Enquiries can be made directly with the team processing the application to ensure a prompt and relevant response.

Network Augmentation

Customers can apply to upgrade or extend the electrical network for new developments, large scale connections, embedded generation, unmetered supplies, public lighting. From new residential builds





or estate developments through to renewable generation, on line services enable an application to be submitted and guides the user through the augmentation process.

A Quick Calculator is available to provide the user with a price estimate for many new supply and relocation requests. For new supplies and equipment moves, the quick calculator provides and indicative cost based on similar work we have undertaken in the past.

Once the decision is made to proceed with an application, the user selects the appropriate option and completes the requested details. The status of the application can then be tracked and contracts accepted.

FIGURE 1 APPLICATION OPTIONS

Ready to apply? Choose an option:

 <p>Get power</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commercial or residential supply• HV supply• Estate development• Public lighting	 <p>Move or remove our equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relocate or remove our assets• Sag and Sway assessment	 <p>Generation and storage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solar• Wind• Engine generation >200kW	 <p>Work safely near our assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No go zone assessments• Permit to work renewal• High load transport• Third party facility access
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A.1.1 Recent change to myEnergy to support distributed energy resources management

In response to Victoria’s emergency backstop mechanism for solar, new requirements arose relating to all new upgrading or replacement solar installations connected to the network after 1/10/24. These solar installations must have the capability for the distributor to remotely turn down or switch off an in emergency⁸. To enable this new requirement, changes were required to connection procedures supported by the eConnect/myEnergy gateway. The gateway is now utilised by solar installers for inverter registration and device testing at the customer’s premise.

⁸ [Victoria’s emergency backstop mechanism for solar \(energy.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/victoria-emergency-backstop-mechanism-for-solar)

B Systems supporting customer enablement

The following systems support customer enablement.

B.1 Salesforce platform

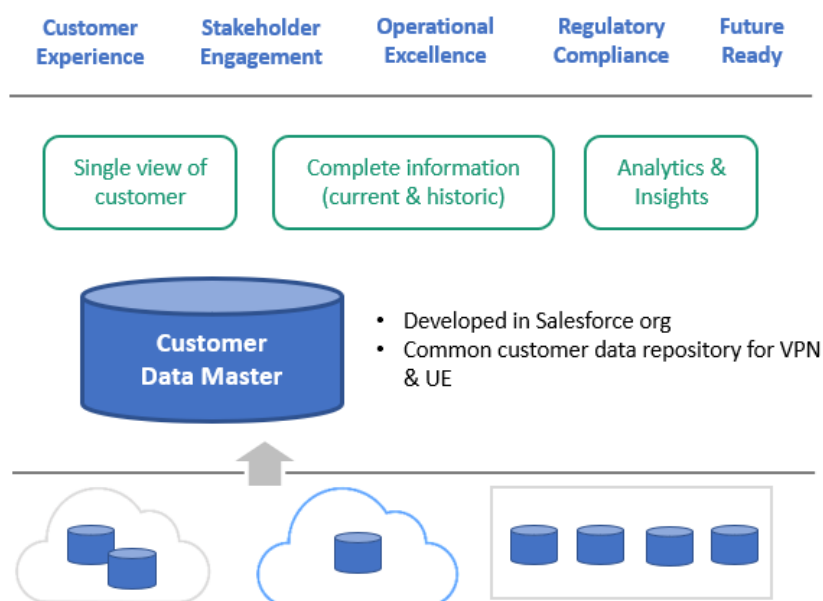
Salesforce provides a platform as a service which allows us to easily deploy, run and manage our gateway services without the complexity of managing and building our own server and infrastructure. Our investment in a customised Salesforce platform has enabled us to track customer information and interaction in one place, automate complex business processes through streamlined workflows and provide up to date customer information through the CDM. Reporting and real time monitoring ensure customer requests are promptly resolved.

We currently have two Salesforce organisations/tenants in the customer domain. An older legacy organisation housing the CitiPower/Powercor customer request processes, and a newer strategic organisation. The newer organisation houses the United Energy customer request processes as well as shared CitiPower/Powercor/United Energy components and processes, which includes the CDM and customer support processes.

B.2 Customer Data Master (CDM)

The CDM provides a single shared view of a customer through a common repository of customer related information (current and historic data). The foundation piece of CDM was delivered toward the end of 2021 and has been advanced since. Data is linked from source systems and data repositories to create a single shared view of the customer.

FIGURE 2 CUSTOMER MASTER DATA



B.3 Customer notification APIs

In late 2021 we introduced improved notification services to our customers around outage notifications. This was in response to changed requirements in the Distribution Code of Practice. In

order to meet the changed requirements, new notification gateway application programming interfaces (APIs) were built.

The APIs are a mechanism to enable two software components to communicate with each other using a set of definitions and protocols. We utilise customer notification APIs to facilitate the distribution of SMS and email communications to our customers. These communications are in regard to planned or unplanned power outages. During the 2026-31 regulatory period we will need to invest in these APIs to maintain currency so that this vital customer service is not interrupted, and we continue to maintain compliance with the Distribution Code.

In February 2024 a large-scale weather event resulted in a high volume of power outages across Victoria. More than 350,000 customers were impacted across CitiPower, Powercor and United Energy. Our employees were on the front line working throughout the night to restore power to customers during the challenging conditions. We have resources in place to restore power safely and quickly but providing updates to customers on progress is also vital to the customer experience. In the 24-hour period following the storm event, more than 749,000 text messages were sent to customers to provide updates on the restoration of electricity supply. This would not have been possible with the deployment of our customer notification APIs.

C Distribution code compliance

The services offered to customers via online gateway services enable compliance with the Distribution Code of Practice. The table below outlines the relevant clauses and related obligations.

TABLE 11 COMPLIANCE WITH THE DISTRIBUTION CODE OF PRACTICE

INSTRUMENT	RELATED OBLIGATION	PENALTY	
Distribution Code 11.3	Unplanned interruptions: customer communications	In the event of load shedding event directed by AEMO, the distributor must provide prior information to customers whose electricity supply will be interrupted. <i>These communications are enabled through the myEnergy gateway and utilise the communication preferences established by the customer.</i>	EIPN min \$39,518 ⁹
Distribution Code 11.4	Planned interruptions: customer communications	11.4.1 Enable customers to nominate a preferred method of communication in which to receive notices about supply interruptions. 11.4.2 Record keeping requirements in relation to preferences and any update. 11.4.3 Requirements around planned interruption notices to customers – the methods and style of communication. Also around informing customers how to nominate or update their preferred communication method. <i>myEnergy enables customer to define their SMS or email communication preferences for both planned and unplanned outages. For SMS communications the customer is also able to define the hours in which they wish to be notified.</i>	

⁹ Electricity Industry Penalty Notice (EIPN). Penalty taken from Essential Services Commission Act 2001, part 7, section 5T, notice penalties. [ESSENTIAL SERVICES COMMISSION ACT 2001 - SECT 54T Notice penalties \(austlii.edu.au\)](https://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/essca/act/2001/sect54t.html). The notice penalty for a contravention of a civil penalty [Indexation of fees and penalties | Department of Treasury and Finance Victoria \(dtf.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/indexation-of-fees-and-penalties)

Distribution Code Schedule 5	Timeframe for connection	<p>If the timeframe for carrying out connection work is specified in a connection contract by reference to the Electricity Distribution Code, that provision shall be taken to require that the distributor must connect the supply address within 10 business days after the connection application.</p> <p><i>The automated processes enabled by eConnect facilitate compliance with the connection timeframe defined.</i></p>
Distribution Code 14.4	Failure to connect new supply	<p>If a distributor does not complete the connection work to connect a new customer within the timeframe as required by clause 3.2, the distributor must pay to the customer \$80 for each day that it is late, up to a maximum of \$400.</p> <p>Note, a distributor's obligations are subject to the conditions outlined in section 3.5.1 being met.</p> <p><i>The reporting to identify where a timeframe has not been met, so that a the GSL¹⁰ payment can be made, is aided by eConnect reporting.</i></p>

¹⁰ GSL - Guaranteed Service Level



For further information visit:

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