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[ergon.com.au](http://ergon.com.au)

2 May 2023

Ms Clare Savage  
Chair  
Australian Energy Regulator  
By email: [REDACTED]

Dear Ms Savage

**RE: Better Bills Guideline - Bill relief rebate message**

Ergon Energy Retail (EEQ) refers to the Australian Energy Regulator's (AER's) letter dated 18 April 2023 outlining a request by the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy and Water (the Department) to include *Energy Price Relief Plan* messaging as Tier 1 information on a customer bill. We note the AER will decide the Department's request in accordance with its decision-making power under Section 37 of the Better Bills Guideline Version 2 (the Guideline).

EEQ is supportive of the Department's application under Section 37 of the Guideline as we consider Government messaging should be standing Tier 1 information, regardless of whether the message is legislated or a policy decision. Since 2018 the Queensland Government has provided several bill relief payments to customers via energy bills, communicating the details of the relief payments via simple bill messages such as *\$175 Cost of Living Rebate applied to your account thanks to the Queensland Government*.

Noting the simplicity of the Queensland Government bill message, we are concerned with the complexity of the wording proposed by the Department which does not, in our view, satisfy the overarching design principles of the Guideline, that is, to use basic grammar and avoid jargon or uncommon terminology. Instead, EEQ proposes that retailers be allowed to use their own scripting when communicating the *Energy Price Relief Plan* rebate on the condition that the message is aligned to the Guideline's design principles.

However, should the AER decide to approve wording for the message, then EEQ suggests the message remove any mention of eligibility as only customer's receiving the rebate payment will have the message included on their bill. We also suggest that the message be simple but direct, for example, *"This bill includes a \$x rebate funded by the Commonwealth and State government under the Energy Price Relief Plan"*.

Finally, we note retailers are required to outline *any amount deducted, credited, or received under a government funded energy charge rebate, concession or relief scheme or under a payment plan* as Tier 2 information on a bill, in accordance with section 41(c)(ix) of the Guideline. Consequently, customers receiving the rebate will have a line item on their bill (in addition to the bill message) to assist them in understanding how their bill was calculated.

Should the AER require additional information regarding the contents of this letter, they should contact Andrea Wold, Manager Retail Policy, Compliance and Assurance on [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED].

Kind regards



Ayesha Razzaq  
**Executive General Manager Retail**