

Distribution Pricing Masterclass for Consumers, August 2011

Energy prices are rising, and for several years consumer organisations have held an interest in the role of distribution network charges, which typically account for around 40 per cent of a small consumer's electricity bill.

In August this year Consumer Action, together with the Consumer Utilities Advocacy Centre, with funding from the Consumer Advocacy Panel, convened a Distribution Pricing Masterclass for Consumers.

The masterclass sought to build on the existing knowledge of consumer advocates and further enable them to proactively engage in the ongoing debate around the regulatory framework for distribution pricing, specifically, where the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) approves distribution prices but also in the broader legislative approach to appealing the AER's decision.

The key focus of the Masterclass included:

Keynote

Dr John Tamblyn (ex AEMC) – [presentation](#) who provided an overview of how we arrived at the existing regulatory framework,

Session 1

Looked at key areas of the distribution price reviews including capex and opex, the cost of capital and demand forecasting, presentations included:

Matthew Rennie, Ernst & Young*

Joanna Ifield, Ernst & Young*

Marianne Lourey, ACIL Tasman*

Session 2

Assessed what occurs after the AER's final decision such as how distribution prices flow through to consumers and the distribution business' approach to merits review, with presentations from:

Bev Hughson (ex Origin) - [presentation](#)

Jo Benvenuti, CUAC and Catriona Lowe, Consumer Action - [presentation](#)

Session 3

What are the advocacy opportunities to achieve a best practice regulatory framework with a panel style discussion by:

Denis Nelthorpe, Footscray Community Legal Centre*

Matthew Rennie*

We thank all speakers for their very generous contribution of time and knowledge, and to all speakers and participants for what proved to be a very informative day with valuable discussion.

*Not all presentations are currently available - please refer back to this site as future additions are made.

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