

NATIONAL ELECTRICITY CONSUMERS ADVOCACY PANEL

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Request for comments

A structured approach to the allocation of the Panel's funding budget for 2007/2008

On 16 October 2006 following consultation with interested parties, the Advocacy Panel (the Panel) published a report on the merit of it adopting a structured approach to the allocation of its funding budget.¹ The report proposed that the Panel adopt a forward-looking approach to how it allocates its funding budget by agreeing with end-user advocates on an advocacy agenda for the coming year (the 'structured' approach). It should be noted that the agreed advocacy agenda will identify the issues that affect end-users but will not determine how end-user advocates will deal with those issues.

The Panel resolved to adopt the structured approach for the purposes of its funding budget for 2007/2008. In doing so, the Panel noted that the advocacy agenda to be developed in consultation with end-user advocates will act as a guide on projects it should fund and will not be applied rigidly so as to exclude projects not listed on the agenda from having an equal chance of being funded based on their merit.

In view of the dynamic nature of the electricity reform agenda, the Panel also noted the need to maintain flexibility in relation to what issues are funded and to reserve some funding for unforeseen issues.

The Panel's advocacy agenda for 2007/2008 relates to electricity advocacy projects that are eligible for funding under the Panel's current funding criteria and application guidelines. The agenda does not include gas advocacy as the Panel is yet to be given power to fund gas issues.

Set out below is an outline of the work programs of regulatory organisations and policy making bodies for the coming year. Projects arising from COAG's recent communiqué have been included.

A priority has been suggested for each task. Tasks with an 'A' priority are tasks for which funding must be provided because of their importance to end-users; "B" tasks are those that should be funded, if funds are available; "C" tasks are those that will only be undertaken if all A and B tasks have been funded.

Please review the outline and provide your comments on the following:

- Are there any issues or topics that should be added to the outline or deleted from it?
- Do you agree with the level of priority assigned to each task?

Please forward your response by email to djlb@axtonjones.com.au by 11 May 2007.

The Panel will respond to your comments by publishing an agreed advocacy agenda thus enabling end-user advocates to plan their activities in terms of the tasks they wish to be involved in.

David J L Bremner
Executive Officer
20 April 2007

¹ See Latest News & Updates at www.advocacypanel.com.au

Australian Energy Regulator		
	Transmission reset for SP AusNet and VENCORP	A
	Transmission reset for Powerlink	A
	Transmission reset for ElectraNet	A
	Develop guidelines for electricity transmission network regulation	A
	Develop guidelines for electricity distribution network regulation	A
	Preparations for transmission price resets in 2008/9	B
	Preparations for distribution price resets in 2008/9	B
Australian Energy Market Commission		
	Review of the effectiveness of competition in the gas and electricity retail markets	A
	Congestion management review and associated Rule changes	A
	Rule change – region boundaries	B
	Rule changes – as they occur	B
	Review transmission network reliability standards to develop a consistent national framework (COAG request)	B
	Review the competitiveness of energy retail markets	A
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW		
Essential Services Commission of Victoria		
Essential Services Commission of South Australia		
Office of the Tasmanian Energy Regulator		
Ministerial Council on Energy		
	2006 legislative package	A
	2007 legislative package	A
	Establishment of National Energy Market Operator with a national transmission planning function	A
	National review of energy Community Service Obligations in order to develop a consistent national framework	A
	Develop options for the integration of spot and forward contract markets	B
	National mandated roll out of smart meters	A
	National Electricity Rules – changes to establish a national regulatory framework for the economic regulation of electricity distribution	A
	Review of network incentives for distributed generation and demand-side response	A
	Retail Policy Working Group – development of national arrangements for energy distribution (non-economic) and retailing (non-price) regulation	A