



Communique

WA ACE Forum

27 June 2023 meeting

Meeting 16 of the Western Australian Advocacy for Consumers of Energy (WA ACE) Forum was held on 27 June 2023.

RACE for 2030 Benchmarking Customer Priorities and Trust project

Members were provided an overview of the Consultative Workshops and Survey Outcomes forming part of RACE for 2030's Benchmarking Customer Priorities and Trust project. The workshop found that there is some alignment between the top three customer and industry priorities for the energy sector, with both customers and industry agreeing that 'affordable energy' is the most important priority, while 'green, clean, socially responsible energy' was the second ranked priority for industry and the third for customers, and 'reliable energy' was ranked as the second priority for customers and third rated priority for industry.

Synergy Community Energy tariff product

Synergy advised members of the introduction of a Community Energy tariff product. This tariff allows households without a solar PV system that are experiencing hardship and participating in Synergy's dedicated case management program to share in the benefits of solar PV energy supplies produced during the middle of the day. The tariff is designed to encourage households to shift their electricity use away from the evening peak load times, while also reducing electricity bills.

Households that sign on to the tariff are charged a higher daily supply charge compared to the standard A1 daily supply charge. In exchange for the higher daily supply charge, the household is supplied a limited amount of free electricity to use during 9am to 3pm period.

Horizon Power Smart Connect solar program

Horizon Power outlined that it has been trialling a Smart Connect solar system in Onslow to help reduce the amount of solar exported back to grid during periods of fluctuating demand and supply. By managing how electricity generated by household solar PV flows back into the grid, Horizon Power is able to allow more households to install solar PV systems. Given the success of the Onslow trial the technology solution will be rolled out across Horizon Power's service area over the next 18 months.

Expert Consumer Panel update

Expert Consumer Panel (ECP) members provided an overview of recent activities, including:

- Providing comments to ATCO concerning its Access Arrangement 6 Draft Plan. The ECP noted that it did not support WA households bearing the risks and costs of investing in hydrogen blending and was concerned about hydrogen leakage as a source of carbon emissions.
- As part of its submission to the Reserve Capacity Mechanism Stage 2 consultation paper the ECP advocated for a number of proposed improvements to broaden the number of Reserve Capacity market participants.
- Continued representation on the Pilbara Advisory Committee, Market Advisory Committee, Gas Advisory Board and the Reserve Capacity Mechanism Review Working Group

- Representation on the newly formed Demand Side Response Review Working Group.

Energy Consumers Australia update

Energy Consumers Australia provided an overview of the findings from its June 2023 Energy Consumer Sentiment Survey. The survey found that Western Australia was the only jurisdiction nationally to record an increase in the share of households indicating that they received value for money for their electricity and gas supply over the past 12 months. Energy Consumers Australia also noted the introduction of its new '*Watts Next?*' podcast.

About the WA ACE Forum

The WA ACE Forum brings to together consumer representative bodies from across Western Australia to provide consumer insights to the energy sector, supporting informed, valuable contributions to the energy debate in Western Australia. The WA ACE Forum meets five times a year.

The WA ACE Forum is not a decision-making body, nor is it required to form consensus. Accordingly, this Communique does not reflect the views of Energy Policy WA or any particular member organisation, rather it seeks to share the key areas of discussion by the Forum.