

19 November 2018

Electricity Price Review – Stakeholder update

Dear All

Since last writing to you on 26 October, the review has decided to publish a preliminary options paper setting out possible solutions to problems discussed in our report.

Our wish is to focus on the next stage of the review – developing improvements to the electricity sector – as soon as practicably possible. The purpose of the paper will be to test solutions suggested by stakeholders, and by our panel of experts, in advance of developing final findings and recommendations on how to improve the electricity sector.

We are currently working through the many detailed submissions we received. Submitters are in broad agreement on aspects of our report relating to consumers and prices – particularly energy hardship and lack of a consumer voice – but they have much more diverse views on parts four and five – industry and regulation. It will take us some time to analyse these competing views. Nonetheless, we are keen – as, I know, many of you are – to keep up the momentum of the review: hence our decision to begin looking at possible improvements even as we complete analysis of submissions.

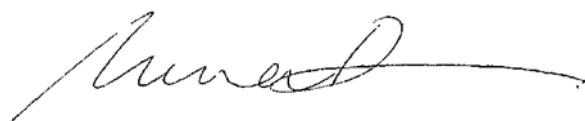
Subject to Cabinet meeting dates early in the New Year (the paper will be submitted to Cabinet before its release), we aim to publish it in February 2019. I will let you know when I have an approximate date for publication.

You will have an opportunity to make written submissions on the paper. Beforehand, we will likely convene a series of workshops on the three broad topics of consumer interests, industry and regulation. This will give us the benefit of joint discussion with a representative sample of industry participants, regulators and consumers. Depending on when the paper is published, we hope to hold these workshops likely in early March 2019. We also plan to meet individual stakeholders to develop and test options for change.

Finally, having had an opportunity to read the submissions in more detail, I would like to reiterate how much work many of you have put into drafting your feedback, and how much we appreciate that effort.

I will continue to keep you informed.

Yours sincerely



Miriam R Dean CNZM QC
Chair