

From: energymarkets@mbie.govt.nz
To: [Energy Markets](#)
Subject: Electricity Price Review submission
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Region

Auckland

Category

Individuals, Researchers and Academics

Do you accept these terms & conditions?

Yes

A1. Establish a new consumer advisory council

A2. Ensure regulators listen to consumers

B1. Establish a cross-sector energy hardship group

B2. Define energy hardship

That would be a good idea!

B3. Establish a network of community-level support services to help consumers in energy hardship

B4. Set up a fund to help households in energy hardship become more energy efficient

B5. Offer extra financial support for households in energy hardship

B6. Set mandatory minimum standards to protect vulnerable and medically dependent consumers

Yes. This is important

B7. Prohibit prompt payment discounts but allow reasonable late payment fees

The prompt payment discount is irrelevant to me as I always pay early enough to ensure I get the discount. I would oppose the prohibition of prompt payment discounts if it meant that the price I paid was higher than it would have been with the prompt payment discount.

B8. Seek bulk deals for social housing and/or Work and Income clients

This is a good idea, and should be offered to any consumer group. However, I would oppose it if it meant that energy retailers sought to recover margins from other consumers

C1. Make it easier for consumers to shop around

This is a key issue. I do not believe I'm getting the best possible price for power, and I have looked at switching on a few occasions. I have not done so for the following reasons:

- 1) basic lack of trust in those making the offers - what are they not telling me? For instance, are they a spot price retailer but not being clear about that? Are they painting a "best case" scenario?

- 2) further to 1) - are organisations like Powerswitch really independent, or are they in cahoots with a particular organisation, and somehow interfering with the numbers to make one company look better than the others?

- 3) insistence that payments are by direct debit. I'm opposed to businesses reaching into my bank account for payment without my control. I have had bad experiences from some companies that have made it very difficult to stop direct debits

- 4) pricing mechanisms are obtuse - difficult for an ordinary consumer to make independent comparisons and know that the mechanisms are identical between those being compared

C2. Include information on power bills to help consumers switch retailer or resolve billing disputes

This sounds like marking your own homework. Consumers should be assisted by an organisation or organisations completely independent of the company providing the power

C3. Make it easier to access electricity usage data

Agree, by electronic means, and in a way that can directly link to price comparisons

C4. Make distributors offer retailers standard terms for network access

Agree, again, by having different terms it makes price comparisons more difficult and feeds mistrust

C5. Prohibit win-backs

C6. Help non-switching consumers find better deals

See c1, c3, c4

C7. Introduce retail price caps

D1. Toughen rules on disclosing wholesale market information

D2. Introduce mandatory market-making obligations

D3. Make generator-retailers release information about the profitability of their retailing activities

D4. Monitor contract prices and generation costs more closely

Yes, an independent watchdog would be helpful here - maybe an organisation like Consumer?

D5. Prohibit vertically integrated companies

Yes if it undermines fair competition, otherwise I don't have a problem with vertical integration

E1. Issue a government policy statement on transmission pricing

If by that you mean regulate transmission pricing, then I agree

E2. Issue a government policy statement on distribution pricing

If by that you mean regulate distribution pricing, then I agree. Neo liberalist ideologies have done New Zealand's citizens a great disservice, and nowhere is this clearer than in

the “privatisation” of public assets such as those involved in the generation, transmission and distribution of energy.

E3. Limit price shocks from distribution price increases

E4. Phase out low fixed charge tariff regulations

E5. Ensure access to smart meter data on reasonable terms

Yes. See section C

E6. Strengthen the Commerce Commission’s powers to regulate distributors’ performance

My reservation about using the Commerce Commission in this way is that it can be ponderous. I wonder if there are not quicker sharper ways of regulating distributor performance.

E7. Make more information available to beneficiaries of energy trusts

E8. Require smaller distributors to amalgamate

E9. Lower Transpower and distributors’ asset values and rates of return

F1. Give the Electricity Authority clearer, more flexible powers to regulate network access for distributed energy services

F2. Transfer the Electricity Authority’s transmission and distribution-related regulatory functions to the Commerce Commission

F3. Give regulators environmental and fairness goals

F4. Allow Electricity Authority decisions to be appealed on their merits

F5. Update the Electricity Authority’s compliance framework and strengthen its information-gathering powers

F6. Establish an electricity and gas regulator

G1. Set up a fund to encourage more innovation

Yes, around energy efficiency and green technologies particularly

G2. Examine security and resilience of electricity supply

Hasn’t this already been done? If not then it represents incompetence and a dereliction of responsibility to all New Zealanders

G3. Encourage more co-ordination among agencies

G4. Improve the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings