

MEDIA RELEASE

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INNOVATION AND ENGAGEMENT KEY TO ENERGY FUTURE

Energy network businesses leading the way in improving customer outcomes were recognised last night at the Energy Networks Australia 2018 Annual Awards.

Energy Networks Australia CEO Andrew Dillon said Australian networks were focused on modernising while keeping prices down and so it was imperative to continually seek new and innovative ways to manage networks and keep the customer at the centre of decision making.

Consumer Engagement

The winner of the Energy Networks Australia and Energy Consumers Australia 2018 Consumer Engagement Award, **Essential Energy (NSW)**, was the unanimous choice of the judging panel for its 2019-24 Regulatory Proposal customer engagement program.

Energy Consumers Australia CEO Rosemary Sinclair presented the award, saying that embracing consumers as partners in change to drive down electricity prices was a critical part of building a new culture in the energy sector.

“Rebuilding trust with consumers in the energy sector will take time and must come from the top – the leading businesses are entering into a new dialogue with consumers and taking responsibility for the issues they’re raising to deliver more affordable outcomes.

“The winner showed they had proactively engaged with their consumers to better reflect their views and priorities and allow that to shape services,” Ms Sinclair said.

“This award is a great way for networks to showcase the work they are doing to change the culture in the industry and better incorporate the value of the customer’s voice in all aspects of their business.”

Western Power (WA) received a highly commended from the judges for its Kalbarri Microgrid project.

Other finalists were SA Power Networks (SA), TransGrid (NSW) and the joint Victorian distribution businesses.

Industry Innovation

Federal Energy Minister, the Hon. Angus Taylor MP, presented the Energy Networks Industry Innovation Award to **TasNetworks** for its CONSORT Bruny Island battery trial.

Energy Networks Australia CEO Andrew Dillon congratulated Essential Energy and TasNetworks for the different ways they had shown leadership and helped solve some of the industry’s most complex challenges.

“TasNetworks has shown how to carry out smart coordination of solar and batteries, which has large economic and environmental benefits by allowing more renewable energy to connect, increasing grid stability and opening new markets,” Mr Dillon said.

Funded by ARENA, the TasNetworks project had a number of partners including the Australian National University, University of Sydney, University of Tasmania and Reposit Power.

Runner-up for the Industry Innovation Award was Jemena, for its demand response trial: power chargers.

Other finalists were Essential Energy (NSW) and Evoenergy (ACT).

Industry contribution

Mr Dillon also congratulated Powerlink's General Manager Network Regulation, **Jennifer Harris**, winner of the 2018 Industry Contribution Award for her substantial contribution to the industry over several years.

"This award recognises Jenny's significant contribution to our industry and her clear focus on the customer driven transformation of our networks," he said.

Details of the judging panels for the Consumer Engagement Award and Industry Innovation Award can be found [here](#).

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Energy Networks Australia represents Australia's electricity transmission and distribution networks and gas distribution networks. Our members provide energy to virtually every household and business in Australia.

Energy Consumers Australia is the national voice for residential and small business energy consumers. Established by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2015, our objective is to promote the long-term interests of consumers with respect to price, quality, reliability, safety and security of supply.