



Inquiry into the Financial Hardship Arrangements of Energy Retailers

ENA roundtable

14 July 2015

TRIM REF: C/15/10572

Introduction

- The Essential Services Commission regulates the sale and supply of energy in Victoria.
- Victoria's licensed energy retailers have regulatory obligations to support customers experiencing difficulty paying their energy bills.
- On 18 February 2015, the Victorian Government announced an inquiry into the hardship arrangements of energy retailers.

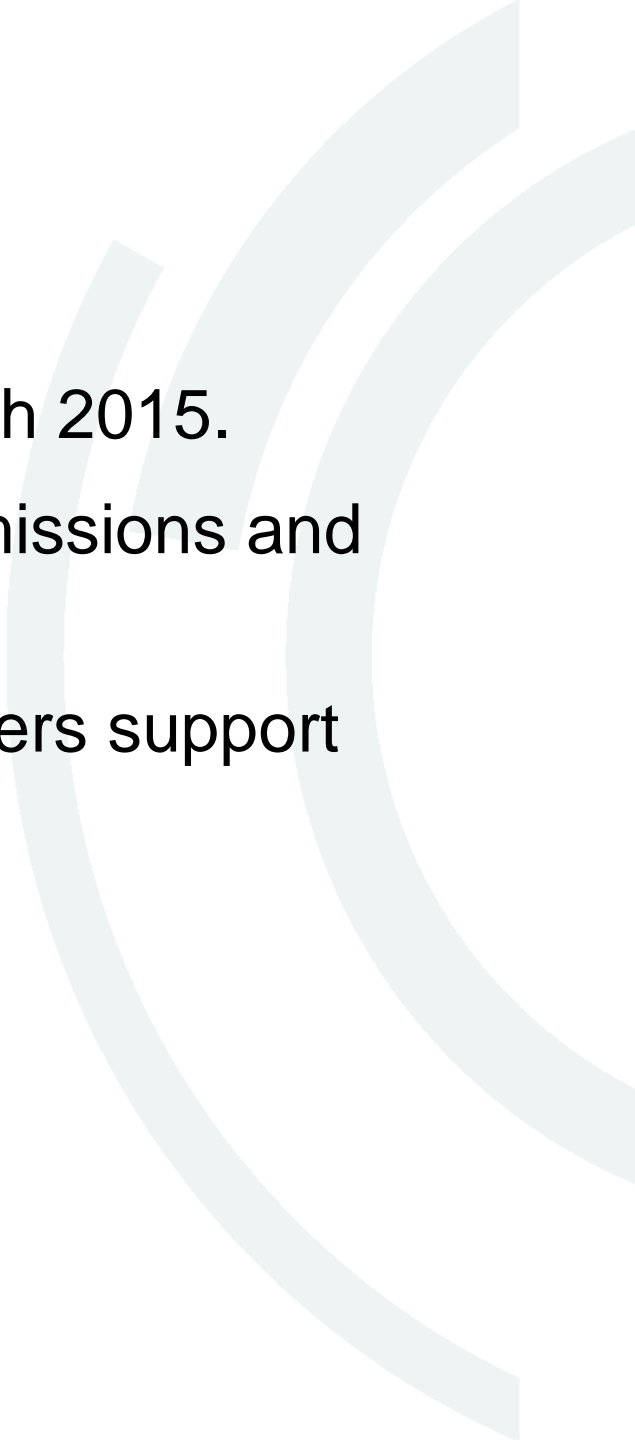
In scope

- the different methods used by energy retailers to support customers
- the design and efficacy of regulatory obligations regarding the assistance provided by retailers
- See the terms of reference for the full scope, available from <http://www.esc.vic.gov.au/Energy/Energy-Hardship-Review/publications>

Out of scope

- broader issue of affordability and the cost of energy
- prohibiting disconnections outright
- general provisions of energy licences

What's happened so far?

- Issues paper was released in March 2015.
 - The Commission received 22 submissions and met with 25 organisations.
 - Collected information on how retailers support their customers.
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Emerging issues

- Early identification
- Prevention of debt accumulation
- Differences in retailer approach
- How sustainable payment plans are achieved

To read all of the submissions we received, please refer to our website
<http://www.esc.vic.gov.au/Energy/Energy-Hardship-Review>

Next steps

- Draft report will be published by late August.
- Draft report will contain preliminary findings and draft recommendations.
- Further consultation will follow and include public meetings.
- Final report will be completed by the end of the year.