

# Customer Forum Week 11: Draft Proposal customer experience initiatives and Customer Forum case studies

Update on progress



18 February 2019

# Draft proposal customer experience initiatives



# Draft Proposal initiatives



Action	Description	Effective	Progress
Establishing a clearer accountability for customer	<p>Implement a major restructure that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Bring together our field services staff responsible for customer-facing interactions (e.g. new connections, planned outages) with our customer contact centre.</li> <li>b) Create a centralised, senior point of accountability within the company for customer experience outcomes, supported by considerable resources.</li> <li>c) Involve regular meetings between senior management and regional customers.</li> <li>d) Include three dedicated staff to manage relationships with our largest business customers, community renewable groups, and large generators seeking to connect to our network.</li> </ul>	Feb '19	<p>Responsibility/accountability has been formally allocated to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Executive General Manager, Regulated Energy Services (Alistair Parker)</li> <li>b) General Manager Distribution (Commencing 25 Feb '19)</li> <li>c) General Manager Customer Experience (commencement March 19)</li> <li>d) RES senior management</li> <li>e) The 3 positions to manage relationships have been appointed. They are:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Commercial &amp; Industrial Customers (Darren Walker)</li> <li>• Community Liaison (Chris Cantanese)</li> <li>• Embedded generators (Jose Mampallil)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Aligning our incentives with customer outcomes	Subject to Board approval and development of appropriate metrics, link employee performance and bonus outcomes with customer satisfaction outcomes.	May '19	<p>Corporate Strategy team to develop. Initial thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan will have a 5% improvement for Electricity and Gas on current CSAT.</li> <li>• Discussion underway on whether this will be a part of the remuneration structure.</li> </ul> <p>Subject to Board approval.</p>

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Building our understanding of our customers' needs and expectations	Commence an ongoing research program, including annual surveys and targeted research, to ensure we have continuous insight into our customers' needs and expectations, and ensure the insights derived in the research are used by the business to deliver ongoing customer experience improvements. In designing the research program, ensure balanced research focus that will improve our understanding of the differing needs of urban and rural customers, and residential and business customers.	2019	Responsibility/accountability has been formally allocated to Executive General Manager, Regulated Energy Services (Alistair Parker) Ongoing research will involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSAT Survey</li> <li>• Other research (being developed)</li> <li>• Capturing information from customer interactions e.g. call centre.</li> </ul>
Fixing customer pain points and improving the customer experience	Work with customers to identify and implement operational and communication changes that address customer 'pain points' associated with solar connections, new connections and outages and result in tangible improvements to customer experience. Ensure these improvements are communicated clearly to our customers.	Delivered from 2018-2020	Responsibility/accountability has been formally allocated to Executive General Manager, Regulated Energy Services (Alistair Parker) A customer experience improvement program has commenced.
Collaborating with the community	Work closely with customer representatives to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and prioritise ways we can improve customer experience, including through better use of smart meter data;</li> <li>Improve our understanding of vulnerable customer needs; and</li> <li>Help equip community service organisations to assist vulnerable customers.</li> </ol>	2019	Responsibility/accountability has been formally allocated to Customer Engagement Manager (Catherine Gip).  This is commencing with the Consumer Policy Research Centre partnership to improve understanding of and engagement with vulnerable customers.

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Making our organisation easier to deal with	Ensure our customer contact centre staff are selected, trained and monitored to ensure they provide empathetic customer service to all customers, and proactively identify and assist hardship customers.	Complete	Responsibility allocated to Call Centre Manager (Jason O'Driscoll)  Training has been undertaken
Taking care of our most vulnerable customers	Implement changes to: a) Improve restoration times for life support customers, using smart meter data; and b) Provide better communications to life support customers in advance of planned outages (e.g. SMS, social media, and community messaging channels).  Proactively engage with customer representatives regarding the best approach to advocating for the needs of life support customers, including the potential establishment of a peak advocacy body.	Complete          Ongoing	Responsibility has been allocated to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery and Engagement Manager (Stephen Thompson)</li> <li>• Customer Engagement Manager (Catherine Gip) – for peak body advocacy</li> </ul>
Making our claims process easier for all customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significantly reduce claim assessment timeframes and customer discomfort by partnering with contractors that can assist customers on-site with emergency repairs and provide a report to support their compensation claim.</li> <li>• Provide a voucher for financially vulnerable customers to allow them to purchase a temporary replacement appliance (e.g. a small heater).</li> <li>• Be available for 24/7 phone assistance to help customers complete their claim form.</li> <li>• Provide more flexible and timely compensation amounts by paying the higher of market value or second-hand item, rounding up to the nearest \$100 and transferring funds via EFT instead of cheque.</li> </ul>	Complete	Call Centre Manager (Jason O'Driscoll) This has been implemented.

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Holding ourselves to account	Publish an annual Customer Interactions Report. This report will track the progress of the initiatives identified above, present results under the Customer Satisfaction Incentive Scheme, and include other measures that are important to our customers.	Dec '19	Responsibility/accountability has been formally allocated to the General Manager Distribution (Commencing 25 Feb '19)

# Customer Forum case studies



# Customer Forum case studies



Case study	Description	Progress
<p>New home connections</p>	<p>Marathon Electrical in Sale was established over 30 years ago and has grown into one of Gippsland's largest commercial electrical contractors. Employing over 20 licensed tradesmen, new connections are a frequent and vital component of the company's day to day work.</p> <p>A consequence of delays in getting new connections completed efficiently are payment delays, which can have a devastating impact on small businesses.</p> <p>The Customer Forum identified the procedure for new connections has become more complicated in the past two years due to the decision to introduce metering contestability interstate. Victoria has not adopted a contestable environment, but its procedures are now formatted on a contestability model driven by national retailers, adding additional steps and delays to the process. It is not uncommon for Marathon Electrical to confront delays of two to four months.</p> <p>The Customer Forum's meetings with customers revealed that new home builders confront the same problem of long connection delays.</p> <p>AusNet Services has announced a web based live connections application tracking service which should help identify why applications have stalled. The Customer Forum has also proposed that customer satisfaction with new home connections will be part of the enhanced customer satisfaction incentive scheme.</p>	<p>Follow up meeting between AusNet Services (Nino Ficca, Managing Director and Alistair Parker, EGM RES) and Marathon Electrical on 19 December 2018.</p> <p>Track your Application tool is available on our website.</p> <p>An update to the tracker is expected at the end of March. It will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include more formal dates</li> <li>• show when AusNet Services receive a service order from a Retailer and whether it was accepted or rejected (e.g. due to insufficient information)</li> <li>• Retailer contacts.</li> </ul> <p>The updated tool is designed for use on mobile and tablet.</p> <p>CSAT is now measuring satisfaction of the home owners, builders &amp; electricians - so that we can start to understand the impact on different segments.</p>



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Outages mean different things to different customers	<p>In the Customer Forum's travels in Gippsland, we heard that a community of dairy farmers was unhappy about supply reliability. Enquiries made of AusNet Services confirmed that the community had only one major outage over the past year, but 17 'momentary' outages.</p> <p>Momentary outages impact dairy farmers differently from residential customers. During their twice-daily automated milking routine, a momentary outage causes the milking cups to immediately drop from the cows. This startles the animals, which can cause farm staff to be injured. Further, the cups need to be re-sterilised and refitted to the cows. Perhaps most significantly, the sudden interruption to milking can reduce the cow's productivity for the rest of the milking season.</p> <p>The Customer Forum will work with AusNet Services in coming months to address the impact of momentary outages on customers, such as dairy farmers.</p>	[Awaiting advice]

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Case study	Description	Progress
Timber town	<p>Australian Sustainable Hardwood Pty Ltd (ASH) is located in Heyfield, a town with a long association with the timber industry. In the 1990s the timber industry accounted for a quarter of the town’s employment, growing to more than 50% by 2012. While available sawlog volumes have decreased, ASH has invested heavily in manufacturing and is the largest manufacturer of finished timber components in Australia. ASH must remain globally competitive as market competition is from imported products. For example, ASH is the only domestic manufacturer supplying Bunnings with finished manufactured components such as benchtops.</p> <p>The heavy dependence of a town or region on a single business invites a reconsideration of the role of a distributor in providing a reliable electricity supply. It suggests that the standard regulatory tool for valuing that supply, the Value of Customer Reliability (VCR), may fail to recognise the security that business continuity delivers to a large number of households. Equally it demonstrates the business/residential customer division does not always hold true.</p> <p>In Heyfield, residential customers who work at or depend on the mill for their financial security may well empathise more with the mill operator’s concerns about the cost and reliability of supply than their own.</p> <p>Finally, a distributor should be alert to a large business customer in a small town and needs to be proactive in ensuring all supply issues are attended to at the earliest opportunity. The mill owner pointed out this had not happened in recent years.</p> <p>The Customer Forum used this example to encourage AusNet Services to develop a proactive customer service field presence to better recognise the vital regional economic role that large customers like ASH at Heyfield play in their community. The Customer Forum also hopes the AER will consider this example in its current review of the VCR tool.</p>	<p>Follow up meeting between AusNet Services (Nino Ficca, Managing Director and Alistair Parker, EGM RES) and ASH on 19 December 2018.</p> <p>See attached comprehensive update on AusNet Services’ ASH engagement from Darren Walker, Retailer and Large Customer Liaison</p>

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Case study	Description	Progress
<p>Customer compensation process for unplanned outages</p>	<p>After a high voltage injection into the local low voltage network resulting in the failure of the local supply transformer at 9.30 am on 30 June 2018, many residents of Healesville were left without power.</p> <p>Around sixty homes experienced a power surge which resulted in appliances being damaged. Some residents told Customer Forum members AusNet Services did not contact them until 5.00 pm.</p> <p>Healesville residents described AusNet Services' handling of their complaints as "condescending, arrogant, flippant, rude and dismissive."</p> <p>Customers suffering household appliance damage from power surges are entitled to compensation from their distributor but were deeply dissatisfied with the way their claims were managed. In some cases, the claims procedure lasted for months.</p> <p>After the Customer Forum referred these customer complaints, AusNet Services improved its claims process. The Customer Forum will monitor these changes and report more fully on claims compensation in the final report.</p>	<p>Claim process improvement has been implemented.</p> <p>* Details of improved claims handling will be provided when available</p>

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Case study	Description	Progress
<p>Bundoora - High Voltage Injection (Event identified by Alistair Parker)</p>	<p>The high voltage injection occurred on the 2nd February at 9.02pm due to a transformer fault.</p> <p>This incident impacted 75 residential customers. Repairs were completed on the 3rd February at 11.18am.</p> <p>New process to assist customers were implemented including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AusNet Services had electricians on hand to assess properties (rather than the customer expected to source and pay for an electrician, whilst being off supply)</li> <li>• Resolution team members attended the incident communicating directly with impacted customers –                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The claims process was discussed including how to lodge a claim</li> <li>• Initial assistance answering questions as to what the event was &amp; reconnection timeframes</li> <li>• This alleviated the need for customers to source individual repairers</li> <li>• Close communication with the Faults Supervisor enabled vulnerable / elderly customers to be prioritised &amp; customers were proactively sent SMS messages at the end of the event if still off supply and any further actions required</li> <li>• Immediate assistance (vouchers) offered to customers on the day</li> <li>• Customer details if required, were taken &amp; we provided these directly to a 3rd party repairer / assessor, engaged by AusNet Services to attend their properties (These were attended on appointment with the customer)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Final information is being gathered. However, significantly improved outcomes relative to Healesville:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better information for impacted customers</li> <li>• Removal of delays to re-instating customer supply</li> <li>• Assistance with claims and faster processing.</li> </ul> <p>Further information will be provided to the Customer Forum when reports are completed.</p>