

## AusNet Services EDPR Customer Forum

### Week 12 Minutes: 21, 25, 26 March 2019

#### Attendees

Customer Forum (CF)	AusNet Services (AST)
Tony Robinson Helen Bartley John Mumford (phone, 21 March, afternoon session) Greg Camm Dianne Rule	Tom Hallam Greg Hannan Deirdre Rose Michael Larkin Catherine Gip Stephanie Judd Chris Cantanese Darren Walker Jose Mampallil Justin Harding Robert Ball Tom Langstaff Jason Pollock

#### Thursday, 21 March 2019

##### Agenda and objectives

Key objective is to agree on the Customer Satisfaction Incentive Scheme.

The Customer Forum highlighted upcoming stakeholders meetings, the need for engagement with AusNet Services' Board (being organised), and to follow up feedback on the Draft Proposal from key advocates.

The Customer Forum had met with the United Dairyfarmers of Victoria and suggested that AusNet Services and Powercor share information and knowledge with each other on addressing dairy farmer's power issues.

##### Confidential Briefing: comparison of recent regulatory proposals (VIC/SA/QLD)

##### **Actions arising:**

AusNet Services to provide:

- Customer bills- a comparison of Victorian DB bills:
  - Comparison of bills and proposed bill reduction (consistent dollars) – for business and residential customers
- Comparison of innovation spending across DBs
- Powercor – number of REFCLs.

## **Customer satisfaction incentive scheme (CSIS)**

### **Actions arising:**

The following final changes will be made to the CSIS and it can then be sent to the AER:

- Amend the complaints target and deadband, acknowledge the limitation of using the average of the CSAT data and include a process for continuous improvement (review within regulatory period).

In parallel with the CSIS, the Customer Forum has suggested the following direct initiatives:

- New connections: pilot project to address the break down in processes between distributors and retailers
- Planned outage management and communication: initiatives to improve planned outage management and communication.

On REFCL-related planned outages - the Customer Forum would like information on upcoming REFCL works locations (a timetable), what typical REFCL works involve, and experience from the first tranche. The recent experience at Dalyston in terms of REFCL related outages may be written up as a case study for the Customer Forum's final Engagement Report.

The Customer Forum is seeking more information on:

- Who in the business has responsibility for planned outage management
- More detail on improving planned outages
- Benalla/Warburton planned outage experience.

## **Customer experience update**

### **Solar/battery pre-approval tool**

The Customer Forum received a briefing on AusNet Services' solar and battery pre-approval tool which went live on 6 March 2019. New functionality that connects the tool to information about the network's capacity to accept exports means that more customers are partially or fully constrained from exporting.

The Customer Forum noted that this will be useful information for the network planners and for developing the expenditure case for DER integration.

The Customer Forum raised an example from Benalla and Hoddles Creek where customers that had installed solar were unaware that they were not exporting for a period of 3 months. Improved processes among distributors and retailers are needed to deal with this problem.

### **Actions arising:**

- Provide the number of applications for batteries, solar/batteries since 6 March
- The Customer Forum is interested in ensuring that we verify that customer's solar system is exporting once their system is up and running. Our new process/tool doesn't address this problem.

## **Bundoora HVI event**

The Customer Forum intend to document this event in detail and to follow up with impacted customers to understand their experience. This will be compared to the Healesville HVI event and written up in the Customer Forum's final Engagement Report.

Actions arising:

- Customer Forum to meet with Brent Price on the detailed management of the event and a repairer that attended the event.
- Provide the Customer Forum with the post implementation report.
- De-identified list of calls/notes/communications.
- Survey of Bundoora and Healesville customers – Jason O'Driscoll and Helen Bartley will source quotes. [Note: This research will be conducted by the Customer Forum]
- Claims: Is it clear to customers whether to go to AusNet or to their insurer. Is further AusNet documentation or website information needed?
- Next HVI – the Customer Forum would like to attend to see this in action (if practical).

## **Life support customers**

Customer Forum Chair and Helen Bartley spoke to the Dialysis and Transplant Association and a dialysis customer. The Customer Forum may do a case study on the needs of these customers and their vulnerability to supply interruptions.

Actions arising:

- Provide the number of calls from life support customers.
- Provide a briefing on our life support customer management briefing.

## **Call centre empathy training**

The Customer Forum received a briefing on call centre empathy training. AusNet Services launched a new quality program in 2018 that includes greater empathy and soft skills training, daily quality discussions among staff, SMS surveys of customers to get honest feedback and benchmarking.

Actions arising:

- Going forward, AusNet Services should collect data on the number of highest customer ratings, not just average ratings and understand more about the distribution of customer ratings
- Provide the Customer Forum with more information about the empowerment of call centre staff.

## **Monday, 25 March 2019**

### **Customer relationship managers**

The Customer Forum met with three new customer relationship managers to hear about their roles and their interactions with customers:

- Darren Walker: Commercial & Industrial Customers
- Chris Cantanese: Community Liaison
- Jose Mampalli: Embedded Generators.

The Customer Forum was concerned to ensure that the profiles of the positions are raised so that customers are aware of these contact points. The Customer Forum questioned whether these positions provide sufficient resourcing to deal with customer issues. AusNet Services advised that the staff in these roles can leverage the significant staff and capabilities within the business, including our regional staff. The importance of our proposed investment in a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system in the 2021-25 period was also emphasised as a key supporting tool to improve customer outcomes.

On embedded generators, there has been a significant increase in applications including from universities, water authorities and Councils. These customers pay for their connections and any necessary network augmentation. The scope for embedded generators to provide network support was also discussed.

Actions arising:

- Darren Walker: make contact with VFF United Dairyfarmers of Victoria given their knowledge of pain points for this community
- Raise the profile of Chris' Community Liaison position, including with local MPs and on AusNet Services' communications material
- Use customer perception/research data to identify customer problems and how to approach them – for example, rather than targeting the largest customers we could target a common issue facing business customers
- Provide information on our large customer surveys
- Embedded generation – provide information to the Customer Forum on whether any of these projects seeking to connect are located where we are proposing large repex projects.

### **Engagement on the Draft Proposal**

AusNet Services provided a briefing on the different forms of engagement undertaken on the Draft Proposal including Focus Groups (in March 2019), social media campaigns and website traffic.

There was also a discussion of what happens when a customer posts on Facebook using swear words – whether this is automatically blocked or whether we view these posts. Advice was provided that the posts are viewed by AusNet Services. AusNet Services will communicate directly with the customer to seek to resolve the issue.

Actions arising:

- Data on number of customers put on improved network tariff (large customers)
- Send a copy of the Draft Proposal flyer to the Customer Forum members
- Leverage other networks to encourage engagement with the Draft Proposal including the VFF, Local Councils and MPs offices.
- Ensure that the Customer Forum has access to all of our customer research

- Address the gap in our engagement, which is vulnerable customer engagement, particularly with non-English speaking customers
- Provide a copy of the Focus Group report to the Customer Forum
- Find out if complaints made via social media are added to our complaints data.

### **Repex major projects updates**

The update covered the key feedback from the 12 March repex deep dive, customer research and an update/next steps.

### **Feedback on repex deep dive**

The workshop attendees were unable to endorse a particular portfolio without further detailed information on the economic justification for the projects. However, the discussion on the day provide useful insights into stakeholders' key questions.

### **Repex major projects customer research**

Key insights and the limits to the interpretation of the research were discussed. However, it is clear that the research shows the customers are not interested in lower reliability.

### **Repex update and next steps**

The Customer Forum discussed the further information they would like presented to support the final negotiation on each major repex project including more customer focused narratives for each project.

Actions arising:

- Provide a one paragraph narrative for each repex major project
- Provide a more detailed customer breakdown for customers connected to each zone substation, including: vulnerable, life support, solar connections, etc. Health profiles could provide insights into vulnerability. Amount of SWER lines connected. Growth trajectory for solar by zone substation.
- Find out whether AusNet Services still install new SWER lines
- Overlay repex major projects and REFCL works
- No further research is recommended.

## **Tuesday, 26 March 2019**

### **Innovation**

The discussion with the Customer Forum considered two more customer focused narratives provided for two of the proposed innovation projects, consideration of governance and funding arrangements and next steps.

The Customer Forum considers that the testing of Stand Alone Power System does not meet the test of being a truly new and innovative technology or application and hence considers that it should be removed from the portfolio of innovation projects.

Actions arising:

- Develop an amended list of innovation projects, including potential innovation projects to address customer/customer group issues e.g. dairy farmer momentary outages. These should be capable of meeting the CF innovation project principles
- Produce customer focused narratives for each project
- Explain how each project meets the Customer Forum's criteria for innovation projects set out in the Interim Engagement Report:
  - Innovation projects/outcomes should directly benefit and result in improved service to customers
  - Innovation needs to be driven by customer needs and expectations which should be identified through customer research. Customers will support innovation if they see the benefits
  - The language surrounding innovation must be easy for customers to understand and offer a compelling potential benefit
  - Innovation needs to be strategic and should include an evaluation
  - All initiatives to be published on AusNet Services website and shared with industry
  - Projects must show evidence of collaboration with retailers and other distribution businesses and/or retailers.
- Estimate potential benefits where possible
- Consider whether more customer research to support willingness to pay should be undertaken e.g. on preparing for electric vehicles.

### **Opex update**

The update explained more detail on the possible transmission network support opex project at Cranbourne and the outcome of the AER's productivity review.

Actions arising:

- Continue to identify and update opex step changes

### **Augex major projects**

An update was provided on the current, independent review of the augex major projects.

Actions arising:

- Independent consultant review: Ensure that the report is structure around the AER guidance. Finalise by mid-April.
- Demand model – advise on the impact of installation of the efficient LED lighting installation in Casey, Whittlesea.