

Draft National Energy Customer Framework

The Ministerial Council on Energy Standing Committee of Officials has released its policy paper for the National Energy Customer Framework, which is proposed to form a single national framework for regulating the supply of electricity and gas to retail customers. The policy framework has been developed by SCO as the basis for the drafting of Laws and Rules required for a new national energy customer framework, as provided for in the Australian Energy Market Agreement. MCE aims to inform stakeholders of the key policy decisions to be incorporated in the drafting of the new common regulatory arrangements. The main policy areas addressed in the SCO Policy Paper include: the governance model, including a contractual model that forms the basis of the national customer framework; supply of energy to retail customers including a regulatory obligation to offer supply to small customers and a hardship policy regime; provision of customer distribution services to customers; managing the arrangements between distributors and retailers in the supply of energy to customers; authorising retailers to sell energy in the national customer framework; and enhancements to the enforcement and compliance regime. Submissions on the policy framework are due by 28 July 2008. Following consultation processes on the draft Law and Rules in 2008-09, it is expected that the legislative package will be introduced into the South Australian Parliament by September 2009. The policy response paper states that jurisdictional transition to the national framework will require further careful management. Advice on the timing of the jurisdictional transition after September 2009 is not expected until 2009.

[Source essa news]