



Your say on our strategic direction

The Commission is an independent economic regulator and advisory body, which has the objective of protecting South Australian consumers' long-term interests with respect to the price, quality and reliability of essential services.

We are currently developing our Strategy 2020-2023 (**Strategy**), which will shape and guide the approach to our work and allow us to be responsive to consumers' needs in the broader regulatory, economic, social, legal and policy environment.

Critical inputs to our Strategy are the views and advice of our stakeholders on matters relevant to the services we regulate and the advice that we provide.

Current and emerging themes

Through our engagement with stakeholders over the past eighteen months, we have identified four areas which may influence our regulatory frameworks and the advice we provide over the coming three years. Those are:

- ▶ changing market and industry structures, including the impacts of new and emerging technologies
- ▶ changing community expectations on fit-for-purpose standards of service and access to essential services
- ▶ Internationally and nationally, regulatory and public interest on ethical business practice - and how this translates to ethical business regulation locally, and
- ▶ overall South Australian, Australian and global economic climate and trends.

We welcome any views and comments on those themes, as well as any additional issues or themes that we should be considering in developing our Strategy. We also welcome advice as how we might better engage stakeholders on issues relevant to the Commission and its work.

The Commission's roles

Our economic regulatory role encompasses licensing, consumer protection, service standard, pricing, monitoring, compliance and public reporting functions across the water and energy sectors. We also regulate access to essential infrastructure: ports and rail (both intrastate and interstate).

Our advisory functions have two aspects: we provide advice to the Treasurer of South Australia on request and we can conduct public inquiries at the request of the Treasurer or an industry Minister, or in the case of the industries that we regulate, if we believe the conduct of an inquiry is necessary to assist the proper performance of our regulatory functions.

The Commission operates in an environment of multiple regulatory agencies and broad policy considerations. We are a regulatory and advisory body within that context, with defined roles and functions.

We continue to work closely with other agencies to ensure a consistent regulatory approach, focussed on the long-term interest of consumers.

Our commitments

We understand the impacts of regulation on the community, consumers and service providers. Where regulation is effective and well implemented, it provides benefit; if it is poorly targeted or ineffective it can add costs.

The Commission therefore commits to:

- ▶ designing and implementing regulatory regimes and systems which are focussed on our objective of protecting consumers' interests
- ▶ engaging openly, transparently and genuinely with all of our stakeholders at all times, including consumers, service providers, government, advisory groups and the media, so that we understand our operating context, key issues, market outcomes and potential future pressures
- ▶ given rapid changes in the industries we regulate, ensuring that our regulatory frameworks are responsive and fit-for-purpose over time
- ▶ a better regulation approach, which identifies problems and, through transparent processes, identifies appropriate solutions - including non-regulatory responses
- ▶ monitoring and analysing regulatory and market outcomes, and making those outcomes publicly known, to help us and our stakeholders understand whether or not regulatory regimes and the service providers operating under them are delivering for customers (and, if not, whether changes are required), and
- ▶ holding to account those we regulate - the need for verified trust and accountability - ensuring strong compliance, and facilitating accountability and engagement from regulated services providers to their customers.

An overview of our strategic planning approach

The Commission prepares a Strategy document, with a three-year timeframe, with planning now commenced on the Strategy 2020-2023.

In undertaking strategic planning, the Commission captures the issues and themes that are important to stakeholders. This ensures that the Commission's strategic direction and priorities are responsive to consumers' needs in the broader regulatory, economic, social, legal and policy environment.

The Commission's current Strategy 2018-2021 can be found at www.escosa.sa.gov.au/about-us/strategic-plans.

How can you provide feedback?

If you would like to provide feedback, you can:

- ▶ contact us directly on (08) 8463 4444 to meet, discuss and provide your views and ideas, or
- ▶ provide a written submission, by 27 November 2019, which you can send to us at escosa@escosa.sa.gov.au.