

REVIEW OF OUR CHARTER OF CONSULTATION AND REGULATORY PRACTICE



May 2014

The Essential Services Commission of SA (**Commission**) is the independent economic regulator of a number of industries which provide essential services to South Australians. We are a statutory authority, established under the *Essential Services Commission Act 2002*.

Our primary objective is the:

“...protection of the long-term interests of South Australian consumers with respect to the price, quality and reliability of essential services”.

We must ensure that our decisions are – and are seen to be – consistent with our primary objective and not unduly influenced by any party. As such, we conduct our work in as open and transparent a manner as possible.

The purpose of our Charter

Our Charter of Consultation and Regulatory Practice (**Charter**) provides guidance on our consultation and engagement processes and fulfils a legislative requirement under the *Essential Services Commission Act*.

Our decision-making is sound, rigorous and undertaken in accordance with the legal obligations placed on us by the South Australian Parliament, as well as complying with general principles of administrative law.

Stakeholder engagement and consultation are central to ensure we maintain and improve our decision-making. We employ open, transparent and inclusive review processes.

While our Charter describes our general approach to undertaking our work, in certain circumstances we may need to adapt the processes described in our Charter.

Why are we reviewing our Charter now?

We consider it good practice to regularly review our processes and seek feedback on the effectiveness of our consultation methods.

What have we changed?

Our revised Draft Charter:

- includes our revised Commission Values;
- provides guidance on the methods of engagement we will use;
- clarifies our position on:
 - pre-release of documents and/or information to external parties prior to public release;
 - providing briefings to Members of Parliament; and
- reflects changes in our functions in the electricity and gas industry, following the introduction of the National Energy Customer Framework and deregulation of energy retail prices in February 2013.

Comments and submissions

We are seeking comments, suggestions and submissions on our Draft Charter to enable us to best protect the long term interests of consumers.

In addition to commenting on the contents of our Draft Charter, we invite comments and suggestions on new and innovative ways we can involve the South Australian community in our work in the future.

We ask that submissions be provided by **close of business Friday, 18 July 2014.**

FURTHER INFORMATION

Any queries relating to the Draft Charter should be directed to:

Contact person: Amber Miller, Senior Policy Officer

Essential Services Commission of South Australia

Postal address: GPO Box 2605, Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: (08) 8463 4444

E-mail: escosa@escosa.sa.gov.au

Web: www.escosa.sa.gov.au