The Commission is required to undertake a review of the National Energy Customer Framework (NECF). NECF establishes a national regulatory regime governing how energy companies sell and supply energy to customers. It provides customer protections for residential and small business customers.

**The Review is seeking views on:**

1. customers’ experience with the operation of NECF (that is, dealings with your energy company since 1 February 2013)
2. whether recent experience was different to that under the previous state-based scheme (that is, dealings with your energy company prior to 1 February 2013).

Further details on the consumer protections provided under NECF are set out in the blue information box below. The Commission would appreciate your time in completing the General Customer Questions on the back of this sheet. Please return by **15 May 2015**

**What is NECF?**

Under NECF, residential and small business energy customers are supported by a range of customer protections, which include:

* guaranteed access to an offer of supply for electricity and gas by energy companies under a direct contractual relationship
* an obligation on network (poles and wires) companies to provide customer services such as new connections, connection alterations and ongoing supply services under a direct contractual relationship
* requirements relating to information about and marketing of energy contracts, including the operation of an independent price comparator service by the AER to enable customers to compare market offers across all energy companies
* requirements relating to customer consent, including that customers must give explicit informed consent to enter into a market retail contract (as opposed to a standard contract or deemed contract)
* requirements on energy companies and network companies to have, and inform customers of, complaints procedures
* information requirements for planned and unplanned interruptions
* requirements relating to customers with life support equipment
* a customer hardship regime, requiring energy companies to develop customer hardship policies that must be approved by the AER, with certain prescribed elements such as flexible payment options, to assist residential customers experiencing longer-term payment difficulties
* limitations on disconnection, including processes that must be followed, restrictions on when disconnections can occur, additional protections for customers experiencing hardship or financial difficulties, and a prohibition on disconnecting premises where life support equipment is required
* retailer of last resort arrangements, so that a customer can receive an electricity supply from another energy company should the current energy company be unable to continue providing the service (for example if it goes out of business).

NECF is administered by the Australian Energy Regulator (AER).

As the legislation establishing NECF does not deal with the level of prices charged by energy companies the Review is not considering pricing matters.

[**For more information please refer to the Issues Paper**](http://www.escosa.sa.gov.au/library/20150217-Energy-NERLReview2015-IssuesPaper.pdf)**:** [www.escosa.sa.gov.au](http://www.escosa.sa.gov.au)

NECF Review - seeking your feedback

**General Customer Questions**

Please indicate which type of energy customer you are

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [ ]  residential customer | [ ]  small business customer |

As a general statement, do you find it easy to understand what protections you have as an energy customer and to understand energy contracts being offered to you?

[ ]  Yes [ ]  No

Have you had to contact an electricity and/or gas energy company in the past 12 months in relation to any of the following matters *(tick as appropriate)*:

[ ]  understanding your energy bill

[ ]  having trouble paying your energy bill

[ ]  disconnections or possible disconnections

[ ]  a market offer you had received for a new energy contract

[ ]  complaint about the energy company’s service

Any other matter? If so please state:

[ ]  Other ……………………………………………………

In relation to these matters, what was the response or action taken by the energy company?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

In relation to these matters, were you satisfied with the assistance you received from the energy company?

[ ]  Yes [ ]  No

If no, why not?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Do you recall experiencing a similar matter in the past (preferably the matter occurred prior to February 2013)? If yes, were you *(tick as appropriate)*:

[ ]  more satisfied with the outcome of the most recent experience?
[ ]  less satisfied with the outcome of the most recent experience?

**The Commission would also welcome receiving responses to one or more of specific questions 1 to 14 in the** [**Issues Paper**](http://www.escosa.sa.gov.au/library/20150217-Energy-NERLReview2015-IssuesPaper.pdf)

Please return any completed questionnaires to:

Essential Services Commission of South Australia, GPO Box 2605, Adelaide SA 5001

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