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Mr Lew Owens
Chairperson
Essential Services Commission of South Australia
Level 8, 50 Pirie Street
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Dear Mr Owens

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Discussion Paper on "Monitoring the Development of Energy Retail Competition in South Australia". As the Minister for Energy, the Treasurer has requested I also respond on his behalf.

I have been pleased with the approach that the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) has taken to date in monitoring electricity retail competition and am confident a consistent approach, expanded to allow for dual fuel contracts, will continue to be useful in an environment of energy retail competition.

I am advised that with respect to the expansion of the regime to include gas, your office has had discussions with officers of the Department of Treasury and Finance and those comments are consistent with the approach proposed in the Discussion Paper.

Of particular note is your proposal to publish monthly customer transfer statistics with more detailed analysis to be released twice a year. I strongly support this suggestion, given it will provide the market place with more up to date information than is available under the current, more detailed reporting regime.

I look forward to receiving your Position Paper in due course.

Yours sincerely

HON PATRICK CONLON MP
MINISTER FOR ENERGY

2 September 2004