

QUEENSLAND COMPETITION AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 26 AUGUST 2009 – 10:00AM

LEVEL 19, 12 CREEK STREET, BRISBANE

PRESENT: Members

Mr Gary Henry (Queensland Competition Authority, Presiding Officer)
Ms Penny Carr (Tenants Union of Queensland)
Mr Eric Danzi (Queensland Farmers Federation/Queensland Cane Growers Organisation)
Mr Ian Jarratt (Queensland Consumers Association)
Ms Sarah Kearney (The Retailers Association, in place of Mr Nick Behrens)
Mr David Lawson (Financial Counselors Association of Queensland)
Ms Kathryn Mellick (Centre for Credit, Commercial and Consumer Law)
Ms Linda Parmenter (Queensland Council of Social Service)

Observers

Mr John Jones (Energy Ombudsman Queensland, in place of Mr Barry Adams CEO)
Ms Julie Williams (Mines and Energy)
Mr Adam Liddy, Ms Yewy Tan (Queensland Competition Authority)

APOLOGIES: Mr Barry Adams (Energy Ombudsman Queensland)
Mr Nick Behrens (Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland)
Mr Ken Murphy (The Retailers Association)
Mr Darren Schneider (Mines and Energy)

MINUTES

1. The Committee resolved that, subject to any comments from Members following the meeting, the minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2009 be accepted as a true record of proceedings.

GENERAL BUSINESS

2. Status of Outstanding Issues *Reporting Code Review*, Members were advised that an examination of distributor reporting of disconnection data due to retailer error could be considered in the context of the Reporting Code Review.

Code Enforcement Issues of the previous CAC Meeting, Members were advised that the Authority would seek legal advice on whether the start date for the 12 months for recovery of outstanding charges was the date consumers were notified in writing of any billing issue or the date a bill

was issued.

The Queensland Consumers Association informed Members that they were still unable to obtain disaggregated data on consumers' switching behaviour related to the Choice article 'Power Play'.

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

3. Role of Consumer Advisory Committee – via email from Eric

The Queensland Farmers Federation opened a discussion on the role of the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC). Specifically if it was most effectively addressing issues of interest to consumer groups.

Members noted that the role of CAC is evolving as members gain an increased knowledge of issues through consultation and sharing of information at CAC meetings. Members also noted that participation in CAC had allowed consumer groups the opportunity to propose changes to the Code and to have input into decisions made by the Authority.

Members agreed that capacity building is an issue and that a meeting dedicated to this would be beneficial.

Members agreed to extend the length of CAC meetings to 4 hours, commencing with the next meeting in November, to allow additional time for discussion of key issues.

4. Review of Electricity Pricing and Tariff Structures

Members were provided with an update on the Review of Electricity Pricing and Tariff Structures.

Members discussed issues including market contract prices for small business, the role of regulated prices, cost reflectivity of notified prices, the likely impact on prices of a move to cost reflectivity and the proposed treatment of network costs.

5. Review of Retailer Billing Format and Content

Members were provided with an update on the Review of the Format and Content of Electricity Bills..

6. Proposed Code Change – Retrospective Pricing

Agenda paper was noted.

7. Proposed Code Change – GSL Claim Process

Agenda paper was noted.

8. Proposed Code Change – Reporting Code Review

Agenda paper was noted.

9. Code

Agenda paper was noted.

- Enforcement Issues Members were provided with an update on the various Code enforcement issues being dealt with by the Authority.
- Members were advised that many of these issues were progressing to a satisfactory conclusion..
10. QCA Decisions since last meeting Agenda paper was noted.
11. Future QCA decisions and consultations Agenda paper was noted.
12. EOQ update The Energy Ombudsman Queensland (EOQ) advised that the EOQ had compiled full financial year caseload data. EOQ completed 13,500 cases in the last financial year and nearly 6,000 of these required investigation. The EOQ noted that 70% of complaints related to billing/accounts, followed by customer service complaints. The EOQ suggested that the increase in complaints would, at least in part, indicate a growing awareness of EOQ and its role in assisting consumers.
13. DEEDI update As the meeting had run over time, no update was provided.

Meeting concluded 12:35 pm

NEXT MEETING The next ordinary meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 25 November 2009 from 10:00am to 2:00pm.