

Minutes



SA Power Networks' Customer Consultative Panel

To represent the specialist views of reference groups and other customer advocates in a broader forum to inform and advise SAPN to assist with planning and service delivery.

Meeting Details

Organiser	Alex Lewis
Date	27 November 2019
Time	9.00am – 12.00pm
Location	SACOSS, 47 King William Road, Unley

Attendance

Sue Filby	Chair
Heather Smith	Changing Weather
Iain Maitland	Ethnic Communities Council of NSW
Kelvin Trimper	Arborist Reference Group Rep
Mark Henley	Uniting Communities
Wendy Shirley	SAFCA (Community Reference Group Rep)
Mark Grenning	CCP14
Mike Swanston	CCP14
Chris Marsden	State Government SA
Jo De Silva	EWoSA
Georgina Morris	SACOSS

SA Power Networks	(SAPN)
Sue-Ann Charlton	General Manager Customer & Community
Alex Lewis	Customer Consultation Lead
Doug Schmidt	General Manager Regulation (<i>Reset meeting only</i>)
Richard Sibly	Head of Regulation (<i>Reset meeting only</i>)
Jess Vonthethoff	Manager Stakeholder Engagement
Frank Crisci	Manager Emergency Management (<i>Item 5 only</i>)
Fiona Hewlett	Minute Secretary

Apologies	Pat Gerace	UDIA (Business Reference Group)
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CUSTOMER CONSULTATIVE PANEL (CCP) GENERAL RESET MEETING

1. Regulatory Proposal - update and discussion

An update on the regulatory proposal was provided by Doug Schmidt, Richard Sibly and Jess Vonthethoff. Members were given the opportunity for questions and discussions throughout the presentation.

Business Arising

1. WELCOME

- The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, noting that it was the last meeting for the current Panel.
- The Chair welcomed Andrew Nance and other observers to the meeting.
- Apologies were noted.
- The Minutes of Meeting of 22 August 2019 were accepted as a true and correct record.
- The Actions List was reviewed and, with no actions outstanding, the list was closed.

2. CCP AND REFERENCE GROUP REVIEW UPDATE (*Alex Lewis*)

2.1 Chair

A Lewis introduced Andrew Nance who has been appointed Chair of the CCP for a 2 year term from January 2020.

2.1 Draft Terms of Reference

The proposed Terms of Reference for the 2020 – 2022 CCP, endorsed by the CCP members at the August meeting, were presented to the SAPN Executive Management Group (EMG) and have now been adopted.

The CCP Commitment Statement was confirmed:

SA Power Networks is committed to engaging and collaborating with our customers to drive better outcomes for customers, the business and our community.

SA Power Networks engages with customers in a number of ways and our engagement with our CCP, Reference Groups and Working Groups is one way we seek customer input into our decision-making.

2.3 Expression of Interest Process

SAPN received a large number of expressions of interest in the CCP. Applicants have been short-listed and the new panel will be appointed by 29/11/19. An announcement and communication regarding outgoing members and the new Panel will follow. The first meeting of the new CCP will be in January 2020. During the 2 year term, a program of regional engagement will be developed.

A Lewis summarised the structure of the CCP, reference groups and working groups. Discussion followed:

- Members spoke about the value of the various groups and the importance of having a connection back to the CCP.
- M Henley commented that building relationships is a key goal and that, while the level of trust between stakeholders and SAPN has improved, it is important that the new CCP is able to build on these relationships and engage with the CEO and senior management at SAPN.
- I Maitland asked if there was going to be broad cultural community representation on the new Panel. A Lewis spoke about the focus on engaging with communities and the development of a vulnerable customer strategy. I Maitland also commented that it's important that the sense of



engagement continues because often customers don't complain – it no-one complains it's not on the agenda.

ACTION: A Lewis to talk with I Maitland before year end regarding how SAPN plans to further engage with communities.

- K Trimper remarked that the new CCP Terms of Reference provide SAPN with the opportunity to fill the gap in relevant engagement through the establishment of working groups.

3.0 ENERGY CHARTER (Mark Henley, Alex Lewis)

The objectives of the Energy Charter:

- Deliver a more affordable, sustainable and reliable energy system
- Embed a customer-centric culture into energy businesses
- Improve affordability and service delivery

Background

Released in Sept 2018 following public consultation

The Charter is based on 5 principles

Took effect from 1 Jan 2019

Energy supply chain (gas and electricity) – “We’re better together”

17 CEO partners (networks/ retailers/ generators)

- disclose how delivering against principles
- annual evaluation report

S Charlton advised that SAPN has not joined the Energy Charter at this stage, however it will be considered in the future. Whilst not currently a partner, SAPN is committed to all of the principles and is undertaking a number of initiatives against the principles.

A Nance asked if there is a sense from the community advocates around the country about how the Energy Charter is being received? M Henley responded that he doesn't believe there is a general view as it's very early days.

4. EDUCATION STRATEGY (Alex Lewis)

A Lewis tabled a copy of the SAPN Education Strategy on a page. S Charlton highlighted the improved education through the social media space, improving the quality of information and how we communicate with our customers. As part of a trial, Call Centre hours had been extended to 8pm every night. The trial continued and the bulk of enquiries from 5pm were through social media channels.

5. DISCONNECTION PROCESS (Frank Crisci)

F Crisci provided an overview of SAPN's disconnection process, what we do and why we do it that way.

F Crisci used an example from California in 2018 (where dynamics are similar to Australia). California utility Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) cut off power to customers at short notice. Customers complained. The following month, PG&E decided not to cut off power during another weather event when customers pushed back, a powerline snapped and the result was the deadliest fire ever in California.

Locally, Port Lincoln has had 3 turn-offs this year. Frank explained the reasons for the turn offs and why it impacted so many customers.



In 1988 the SA Electricity Act included authority to switch off power, where it is necessary to do so to avert danger to person or property. Where practicably possible, there needs to be consultation with the Chief Officer of SA CFS.

The Legislation doesn't impose requirements on informing customers however this is a critical part of SAPN's bushfire risk management procedures. Communications to external customers are governed by the SAPN Bushfire and Extreme Weather Communication protocol. SAPN aims to inform customers pre-event, during event and post event.

The opinion and decision to turn off power are based on data from the Bureau of Meteorology weather data, CFS Grass and Forest Fire Danger indices and CSIRO studies.

In the event of a power shutdown, the restoration process commences once conditions abate, taking into consideration dropping wind speeds and continuing trend information collated from emergency services (CFS, SAPOL, SES) and local observers. The aim is to restore supply as quickly and safely as possible.

Priority for restoration is negotiated with the State Emergency Service, and generally in the following order: Communications – Water – Hospitals etc.

SAPN continually learns from experience and from other businesses around the world.

I Maitland raised a concern about some communications which have been translated. In some cases, the language doesn't translate literally and may not make sense, in particular some technical terms. - *ACTION: S Charlton to follow up to see how we can improve this.*

SAPN has been proactively working towards bushfire mitigation through strategies such as extending vegetation easements from powerlines. M Swanston said that Powercor were spending \$500m on bushfire mitigation. F Crisci responded that Victoria has about 4 – 5 times the fire risk as South Australia, due to landscape and also density of population.

6. AROUND THE TABLE

- K Trimper: The Arborist Reference Group lodged its submission with the Technical Regulator seeking a number of amendments. There was good consultation with all stakeholders, reaching common ground on all amendments with the exception of the removal of mature trees and the payment of an offset.
Started a working group with local government on an approach for suitable planting under powerlines.
A Lewis added that the new risk-based approach had been approved by Cabinet in the 10 towns over 10,000 which allows trees to grow through the low voltage power lines, if there are no high voltage lines above, based on a number of risk factors.
- W Shirley: The Community Reference Group has focused on the development of the Vulnerable Customer Strategy (VCS) over the past few months. The proposed Strategy will be presented to the new CCP for consideration in early 2020.
ACTION: Members asked to be provided with a copy of the VCS – A Lewis to send to them once it has been finalised.
- M Swanston: The CCP 14 will submit a brief report for the SAPN revised proposal by 10 December. He was complimentary about how SAPN conducted consultation throughout the reset process.



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- M Swanston spoke about a customer service incentive scheme conducted in Victoria. This includes a full set of service standards developed in collaboration with ESCoSA.
 - Sue Charlton thanked Sue Filby for chairing the CCP for the past few years and for her participation in the Panel, workshops and reset engagement process.
 - Sue Filby thanked SAPN and the CCP members, A Lewis as organiser and F Hewlett for her secretariat work with the panel. She spoke about the inception of the Panel and how it has matured over the years. This has led to closer engagement with SAPN and a stronger relationship. Sue wished the new panel well and Andrew Nance well in the role of Chairperson. Sue also referred to the IAP2 spectrum and where engagement sits and the desire for SAPN to move future engagement more towards the collaborative end of the spectrum.

Meeting closed at 12.25pm.