

Minutes



SA Power Networks' Community Reference Group

To received feedback and advice from specialist customer representatives to assist SA Power Networks with planning and service delivery.

Meeting Details

Organiser	Alex Lewis
Date	30 July 2019
Time	1.30pm to 4.00pm
Location	Glenunga Hub, Glenunga

Attendance

Heather Merran	Uniting Care Wesley Bowden
Georgina Morris	SACOSS
Kym Mercer	Anti-poverty Network
Sarah Warren	Uniting Communities
Susanne Koen	Adelaide Hills Community Representative
Vivienne Smith	Council on the Ageing (COTA) SA
Wendy Shirley	SA Financial Counsellors Association

SA Power Networks (SAPN)

Sue-Ann Charlton	General Manager, Customer and Community (Chair)
Alex Lewis	Customer Consultation Lead
Amelia Davey	Engagement Strategy Lead (<i>Item 4 only</i>)
Fiona Hewlett	Minute Secretary

Apologies

Dusko Cuckovich	Australian Refugee Association
Nadia Moffatt	Disability sector
Gavin Dufty	St Vincent de Paul Society
Silvio Iadarola	Multicultural Communities Council of SA
Sharon Maslen	Salvation Army Australia SA

Business Arising

1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and introduced new member Georgina Morris from SACOSS. Apologies were noted.

2. Minutes and Action items

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 November 2018 were confirmed and accepted.

Actions from the previous meeting were reviewed and updated:

Previous Meeting Actions				
No.	Action Description	Status	Due Date	Responsible person
18-50	R McPhail to investigate householder messaging options for Meter Readers	Consider as part of the Vulnerable Customers Strategy	Ongoing	Alex Lewis
18-67	Paul Erwin, Manager Customer Service SAPN, will follow up with Susanne Koen to discuss communication methods for Adelaide Hills vulnerable customers and the metrics used when deciding when to turn off the supply.	Sue Charlton to follow up with Paul Erwin and provide an update at the next meeting.	10/19	Sue Charlton
18-69	With regard to prioritising life-support customers, Paul Erwin to consider options and raise with State Government as part of their solar/battery program.	To be considered as part of the Vulnerable Customers Strategy	Ongoing	Alex Lewis
18-71	Harry Pavlou to put together information packs (brochures/information from other sources e.g. Govt.) for each CRG member on energy advisory services.	Packs given to CRG members at 30/7 meeting	Closed	

3. Reference Group Review (A Lewis)

A Lewis joined the Customer and Community department in March 2019 to undertake the role of Customer Consultation Lead. As part of this role, Alex would lead the Customer Consultative Panel (CCP) and Reference Groups. A thorough review of the existing CCP and Reference Groups has been carried out and Alex provided an overview of the outcomes:

- Seeking expressions of interest for the CCP, 2 year term commencing January 2020.
- Community Reference Group to continue, 2 year term from July 2019 to June 2021.
- Arborist Reference Group to continue on an ongoing basis. The role of the Group is reviewed on an annual basis.
- Connections Working Group (CWG) (18 month term) has been established and the first meeting will be held on 8 August 2019.
- Public Lighting Working Group (short term) was established in December 2018 and will be reviewed in June 2020.
- Tariffs Working Group (TWG) to be established.
- Other Working Groups established on an 'as needs' basis.
- Groups not continuing in current structure:
 - Business Reference Group (previous members may migrate to new working groups)
 - Renewables Reference Group (previous members may migrate to new working groups)

The draft Terms of Reference were reviewed and accepted by members subject to the following changes:

2. Membership shall be for a term of two years (July 2019 – June 2021)

5. Funding. To include reimbursement of costs for travel from interstate and intrastate (to assist those members travelling from regional South Australia as well as interstate).

A Lewis asked members to consider the composition of membership on the CRG and whether they felt there were gaps in representation. Discussion followed:



- A Lewis proposed Brian Attwood, Consumers SA, be invited to join the CRG. *Members agreed.*
- A Lewis proposed Jenny Marwood (previously CCP) be invited to join the CRG as an individual community member. *Members agreed.*
- G Morris suggested a representative from CALD be invited to join the CRG. *Members agreed.*
- S Koen suggested a representative for rural and remote communities, in particular the Eyre Peninsula. Rob Kerin, former Premier of SA, to be approached to represent the farming community. Also approach Peter Scott, Economic Development Manager, Regional Development Australia WEP, based in Port Lincoln, to represent the regional community. He was previously part of the Renewables Reference Group.
- Expressions of Interest to be sought at the next Field Day. Amelia Davey, Alex Lewis to manage this.

A Lewis asked for input on potential venues for CRG meetings, wanting to rotate around community venues. Suggestions from members included meeting rooms at SACOSS (Unley), UCWB (Bowden), Uniting Communities (43 Franklin Street).

4. Vulnerable Customers Strategy (A Davey and A Lewis)

Sue introduced Amelia (Milly) Davey. Milly's role is Engagement Strategy Lead and is involved in the development of the Vulnerable Customer Strategy. An overview of the purpose and approach for the strategy was provided.

A Davey advised that an external agency, ThinkPlace, will be assisting with the Vulnerable Customers Strategy and will work with stakeholders internally and externally. They will utilise the reference groups and also the groups/categories of customers whom they represent.

K Mercer commented that some vulnerable customers span across several categories, e.g vulnerable and hardship. Also, that it can be difficult to access extra benefits and services if you don't neatly fall into a particular category.

A Lewis said that SA Power Networks would undertake some initiatives for vulnerable customers directly, for others they may lobby local and state government to make changes or improvements, taking direction from the community groups.

A Davey talked through the stages of the Vulnerable Customers Strategy, with the workshop stages requiring as much involvement from the CRG as possible. This would mean more meetings later this year and possibly 1-1 calls and meetings to engage with members. A Davey suggested a timeframe for the consultation, development and delivery of the Vulnerable Customer Strategy of 12 to 16 weeks.

It was noted that the term 'hardship' can be problematic and language in this regard is important.

K Mercer offered to put SAPN in contact with a number of types of vulnerable customers to assist with the consultation. *ACTION: A Davey to discuss further with K Mercer.*

H Merran asked that Climate Change be added to the list of circumstances impacting vulnerable customers. People living on a lower income may live in poorer quality housing. They are more impacted by climate change as their homes are not equipped to deal with extremes of hot and cold.



ACTION: A Davey will send out some questions on the Vulnerable Customers Strategy for the CRG members to respond to (via A Lewis).

5. Priorities/Action Plan for 2019/2020 (A Lewis)

A Lewis tabled a copy of the proposed CRG Priorities for 2019-2020.

Member discussed the approach and initiatives;

- Generator Initiative, e.g. subsidies for purchasing new generators, assistance with maintenance. This is a social inclusion issue, where you have to be able to afford a generator and then the ongoing maintenance.
- Lobbying for an extra concession for people who require a medical cooling allowance, i.e. where a person cannot regulate their own body temperature.
- Preventative initiatives, i.e. where there's an ultimate long term saving for SAPN.
- Lobby the government to come up with initiatives to incentivise customers to upgrade old technology/white goods. E.g. new inverter type air-conditioners are much more efficient to run and offer long-term savings. K Mercer highlighted the NILS (No Interest Loans) available to low income families, up to \$1500 with no credit checks and no interest and up to \$3500 with a credit check and a low interest rate. There are restrictions on how the loans are used and there are not currently enough suppliers who support this service.
ACTION: S Warren to bring some information on NILS scheme and suggested this could be included in the Energy Advisory Pack SAPN gives to customers.
- Safe havens during weather/storm events where customers can access water, generators and partnering with other agencies to provide access to showers and toilets.
- V Smith suggested a dedicated phone line for vulnerable customers and energy advisory information. S Charlton said that this function was also being included in the website.

A Lewis said that the long-term plan was to develop 2 – 4 initiatives per theme/priority.

Several members said they would be happy to be involved in the workshops to brainstorm some ideas and provide input into the development of the Vulnerable Customer Strategy.

ACTION: A Lewis to arrange a workshop to share ideas on initiatives to support the Vulnerable Customers Strategy

Members requested the contact details of other CRG members.

ACTION: F Hewlett to provide members email and phone numbers to the group.

6. Business Initiatives (S Charlton)

S Charlton discussed SMS notifications, highlighting the issues with the automated message sent during the 2016 storms. Since those storms, the automated system has been closely managed and messages and updates are sent manually to affected customers. SAPN is as honest and practical as possible about restoration times – if we don't know, we'll tell you that we don't know.

S Koen asked about *Snap Send Solve*. S Charlton said that this was trialled for graffiti in late 2018. R McPhail provided an update on this service to the CCP meeting earlier this year. As of 1 July, when a customer reports a wire down, we ask the customer to take a photo and send it straight to us from their phone. This enables us to see whether they are Telstra wires, or SAPN infrastructure, or whether it's urgent or poses no immediate safety risk. *Snap Send Solve* provides



a geo-location, however the issue with it is that the geo-locator is from where you send the photo, not where the photo was taken.

ACTION: Update on Snap Send Solve to be provided to the group.

7. Around the table (All)

- G Morris discussed SAPN's role in terms of education for customers. She suggested that the SAPN website is updated to include better useful links.
ACTION: G Morris and A Davey to meet to review the SAPN website and come up with suggested changes to improve the customer experience. Findings to be reported back to the Group.
- S Warren highlighted the importance of the ConnectED program, commenting that the assumption is that people know how to access help and information. Sarah said that there is more scope to use the connections in the CRG to leverage community awareness and sharing of information. S Charlton agreed and said that SAPN is uniquely positioned as a trusted and impartial advisor on matters relating to energy.
- H Merran discussed the Government's Energy Made Easy website and how difficult and inaccurate it was. G Morris said the Energy Made Easy site was being rebuilt with the new site being launched very soon.
- K Mercer said that the focus should not just be on understanding electricity bills, but also how to reduce their bills. This is particularly important for renters who have no control over the property a/c, insulation, cooking facilities, hot water service etc. S Charlton commented that there really should be a minimum standard for landlords and houses should be energy rated (as they are in the ACT). Could SAPN lobby for this in South Australia? SAPN could play an advocacy role in this area.

Next meetings:

Placeholder: Vulnerable Customer Strategy Current State Workshop – Tuesday 17 September 2019

Placeholder: Vulnerable Customer Strategy Future State Workshop – Thursday 17 October 2019

Community Reference Group (regular meeting) November 2019 - TBA

