

Consumer Advisory Committee meeting

Monday 27 April 2026 at 10:00 am

Level 27, 145 Ann Street, Brisbane and via Zoom

Presiding officer: Charles Millsted (QCA CEO)

Committee attendees:

- Dale Holliss (Bundaberg Regional Irrigators Group; representing the Queensland Farmers' Federation)
- Geoff Buchanan (Queensland Council of Social Services)
- Ian Jarratt (Queensland Consumers Association)
- Jon O'Mally (Financial Counselling Queensland)
- Luke Reade (Energetic Communities Association)
- Myles Lawrence (Business Chamber Queensland)
- Robyn Robinson (Council on the Ageing Queensland)

Observers:

- Simon Fuller (Queensland Treasury)
- Gavin Watts (Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland)

Apologies:

- Kaneya Poudal (First Nations Clean Energy Network)
- Mark Grenning (Energy Users Association of Australia)

Agenda item 1 – Regional Queensland regulated retail electricity prices

- QCA staff presented the key insights of the draft determination of notified prices for 2026–27, including the methodology and expected bill impacts. QCA staff noted that prices for small customers are expected to decrease, as the draft default market offer (DMO) for south-east Queensland (SEQ), which caps notified prices, is lower this year. By contrast, notified prices for large customers are expected to increase, largely due to higher network costs, which are only partially offset by lower energy costs.
- The Committee asked about the introduction of a solar sharer offer (SSO). QCA staff advised that the QCA could introduce it if directed by the Minister. Stakeholders would be advised and invited to engage through a consultative process.

- The Committee noted the increasing complexity of electricity pricing and tariffs and pointed to the need for consumers to have a simple, independent way of determining the best option for their individual circumstances. The Committee suggested that the QCA provide the DMO adjustment as a separate item in future price determinations, as distinct delineation might improve clarity.
- The Committee noted that the standing offer adjustment (SOA) is done from the perspective of the retailer and that there is limited incentive for innovation to attract customers. QCA staff advised that the SOA has been in place for many years, and while the SOA was set at 5% in the past, the QCA now uses market data to provide a more objective, cost-based SOA.
- The Committee questioned the high supply charge for large customers' controlled load tariffs, which discourages customers from using them. QCA staff advised this concern had been raised by other stakeholders too, but noted that it is a product of the N + R cost build-up approach we apply, unless directed to do otherwise by the Minister.

Agenda item 2 – Solar feed-in tariffs in regional and south-east Queensland

- QCA staff noted that the QCA had been directed to set a flat-rate solar feed-in tariff to apply in regional Queensland in 2026–27, using the same 'avoided cost' methodology as in previous years. QCA staff advised that a draft determination had been published, with submissions due by 1 May 2026. The final determination will be released by 5 June 2026.
- QCA staff noted that advanced meter data had allowed solar exports to be measured more accurately. The solar feed-in tariff has decreased, not just due to reduced energy costs, but also because the modelling is based on a larger dataset and advanced meter data.
- The Committee queried the discrepancies in feed-in tariffs between regional and south-east Queensland and noted that the higher feed-in tariff in regional Queensland does not look consistent with the Queensland Government's uniform tariff policy (UTP) that the QCA applies when setting notified prices for regional Queensland. QCA staff explained that the discrepancy is influenced by the methodology and the data used, and that the ongoing rollout of smart meters will progressively reduce the difference.

Agenda item 3 – South-east Queensland retail electricity market monitoring

- QCA staff presented key insights of the 2024–25 SEQ retail electricity market monitoring report.
- The Committee commented on retailers offering incentives at varying times in the year, which makes it difficult for consumers to confidently choose a new plan that will remain competitive. QCA staff explained that retailers are allowed to change market offers and their prices during the financial year. Customers are therefore advised to regularly check if better plans are available.
- The Committee asked if the QCA monitored the innovative offers made by retailers and their impact. QCA staff advised that it monitors and reports on new and innovative offers, but that the direct impact of these offers is difficult to measure, because the QCA has no visibility on their uptake and their adoption is often low.
- The Committee emphasised the importance of energy literacy programs for customers, noting that such programs improve customers' understanding of the market and enable them to engage with retailers confidently, which leads to better outcomes for customers. However, the Committee observed that the key energy literacy programs for consumers had ended and encouraged the QCA to communicate the importance of such programs to the Minister.
- The Committee noted the usefulness of the QCA's market monitoring reports and asked if these reports would continue. Queensland Treasury advised that it intends for the QCA to continue with its market monitoring reports.

Agenda item 4 – Compliance and enforcement matters

- QCA staff outlined its regular monitoring activities of plans published on Energy Made Easy to ensure that retailers comply with the Queensland-specific rules for fees that may be attached to standing offers and that standing offer prices in regional Queensland correspond to the notified prices set by the QCA.
- QCA staff discussed 2 breaches that retailers reported to the QCA and noted that both breaches were resolved administratively.

Agenda item 5 – Guaranteed Service Levels scheme

- QCA staff provided an overview of the GSL performance of Energex and Ergon Energy in 2024-25.
- The Committee queried the change in GSL payments in the Energex distribution area compared to those in the Ergon Energy distribution area. The QCA advised that the number of GSL payments fluctuates from year to year and can be influenced by factors such as weather events.
- The Committee commented on the number of customers who reached the annual GSL cap. QCA staff advised that this can be due to a geographical concentration of GSL events and a combination of different GSLs. The Committee also commented on the different thresholds that apply in regional and south-east Queensland and noted that thresholds vary by feeder type.
- QCA staff discussed a proposal received from Energy Queensland late last year, asking the QCA to consider 2 changes to the GSL scheme to:
 - replace cheque-based GSL payments with retailer-facilitated bill credits ahead of the national phase-out of cheques
 - exempt distributors from paying connection and reconnection GSLs during declared disaster events.
- QCA staff noted that the QCA intends to publish a draft decision on these proposed changes by the end of May 2026, which presents stakeholders with another opportunity to provide submissions.

Agenda item 6 – QCA forward work program

- QCA staff presented the forward work program.
- The Committee noted the information provided.

Agenda item 7 – Updates and membership

- The Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ) advised that:
 - there has been an increase in complaints since the start of this calendar year
 - the majority of disputes (~73%) relate to billing issues
 - some consumers are querying if they can opt out of the installation of a smart meter
 - it has put a focus on embedded networks, given the upcoming changes to the regulatory framework for embedded networks, with preparations under-way to ensure the team is trained and ready to converse with customers on embedded networks
 - it anticipates an increase in engagement, as the EWOQ contact number will feature on bills for customers in embedded networks soon.

- Queensland Treasury advised that:
 - a draft direction notice is currently being prepared for future SEQ retail electricity market monitoring reports
 - there would be a follow-up on items the QCA was directed to consider but not implement in the context of notified prices – namely the SSO and transitional tariff considerations
 - there were some concerns regarding customers’ expectations around the SSO
 - the SSO could be implemented at any time during the year rather than specifically on 1 July.
- The Committee:
 - considered options for monitoring outcomes for customers in embedded networks in the future. Queensland Treasury noted that it would be difficult to gather data as it is not readily apparent where embedded networks are implemented.
 - noted their concerns about managing risks to residential gas customers who face barriers to electrification and that work may be necessary in relation to the future of gas distribution networks.
- QCA staff reminded CAC members that their membership was renewed for a 3-year term in June 2025 and that no further action is required.