

QUEENSLAND COMPETITION AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 28 MAY 2008 – 10:00AM
LEVEL 19, 12 CREEK STREET, BRISBANE

PRESENT: Members
Mr Gary Henry (Presiding Officer - QCA) (attended up to item 1), Mr Eric Danzi (Canegrowers – representing QFF), Mr Nick Behrens (Commerce Queensland) (attended up to item 4), Mr David Lawson (FCAQ), Dr Tenzin Bathgate (CCCL), Mr Ian Jarratt (Queensland Consumers Association).

Observers
Mr Barry Adams (EOQ), Mr Paul Connolly (DME), Ms Judith Allen (DME), Mr Moston Neck (QCA), Mr Sean Greenup (QCA).

APOLOGIES: Ms Jill Lang (QCOSS), Ms Penny Carr (TU), Mr Scott Driscoll (QRTSA)

MINUTES: The Committee resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2008 be accepted as a true record of proceedings.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Departing member. Dr Tenzin Bathgate advised that this would be her last meeting. CCCL would nominate a new representative before the next meeting. The Presiding Officer expressed Members thanks for the contribution made by Dr Bathgate.

2. Outstanding Issues. The Energy Ombudsman provided a legal interpretation of the Code provisions regarding the do not contact again provisions.

MEETING PROCEDURES

2. Schedule of ordinary meetings. It was agreed that meetings continue to be held on a quarterly basis from 10.00am to 12.00pm at the Authority's offices. A schedule of meetings was agreed by Members as follows:

1. Wednesday 27 August 2008;
2. Wednesday 10 December 2008;
3. Wednesday 25 February 2009; and
4. Wednesday 27 May 2009.

3. Continuation of nominations. Members present at the meeting accepted a continuation of nominations subject to confirmation from the Authority.

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

4. Benchmark Retail Cost Index (BRCI) Members were provided with an update on the Authority's 2008-09 BRCI process.

Members also discussed options for future BRCI processes aimed at improving the opportunities for all stakeholders to be involved in the process.

4. Do not contact again provisions. Members considered the Code provisions and the legal interpretation provided by the Energy Ombudsman.

Some Members considered the Code was not operating effectively and that their organisations would examine the option of making a formal submission to the Authority requesting a Code change.

While not wishing to discourage that assessment, the Authority noted that a Code change would require evidence that the existing provisions were deficient.

5. Review of small customer gas pricing Members were provided with an overview of the request recently received from the Minister for Mines and Energy for the Authority to review small customer gas pricing and competition in the Queensland retail gas market.

It was agreed that a paper would be presented on this topic at the next meeting of the Committee.

6. DME update DME provided and update of relevant activities confronting the Department.

7. Recent QCA decisions Members were provided with a general overview of recent QCA decisions.

8. Retailer reporting requirements Members were provided with an overview of reporting requirements placed on retailers and distributors to provide information to the QCA under the Code and Electricity Act.

9. Future QCA Decisions. Members were advised of relevant QCA decisions likely to be released prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

10. Update from the Ombudsman. The Energy Ombudsman provided Members with an update of the activities of his Office.

11. General Business It was noted that some retail offers on the QCA's price comparator appeared to be unavailable to consumers and it was suggested that these should be deleted. There was also a suggestion that some retailers might not be complying with the Code's requirements to provide certain information on their own websites.

NEXT MEETING The next ordinary meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 27 August 2008 from 10:00am to 12:00pm.