

Industry Forum Notes

Meeting	Power of Choice Industry Forum
Location	Canberra Business Chamber, Braddon ACT
Date	Tuesday 28 March 2017 5:00pm – 7:00pm

About the forum

Members of the electrical and related industries were invited to attend an industry forum initiated by ActewAGL Distribution (AAD) with co-presenters from ACT Government Licensing and Accreditation. There were 23 attendees.

Attendees were provided with an AAD discussion paper of Power of Choice (PoC) changes that will affect industry from 1 December 2017. Copies of the AAD and ACT Government presentations and the discussion paper can be found at www.actewagl.com.au/powerofchoice.

Presentations

ActewAGL Distribution

Michael Monck, Program Manager of the Power of Choice project gave a presentation covering the following topics.

- Processes—connection and energisation of installations, faults and emergencies.
- Electrical Service and Installation Rules (S&I Rules)—neutral links, meter boards, isolation points and networks boundary clarity.
- Training—electrical safety rules.
- Licensing—ACT Government responsibility.

ACT Government

Vanessa Morris from the Licensing and Accreditation section of the ACT Government gave a presentation covering the following topics.

- Accredited Service Provider (ASP) accreditation in NSW. How will it be recognised in the ACT?
- Changes in the legislation will be able to be applied in mid-July 2017.
- Feedback on changes is welcome; initial industry thinking is wanted by the ACT Government. Email feedback to: constructionpolicy@act.gov.au.

General discussion

The following comments, questions and answers were raised in response to the presentations or as part of the general discussion.

- Will communications be part of the standard requirements for new meters?
A: Yes, it will be the default, unless the account holder opts out.
- Will smart meters enable remote reading?
A: Yes, but a customer can opt out.
- If there is a fault at 10pm at night, an AAD truck will not be rolled out as a first requirement. What can the customer do if the retailer does not have a 24 hour call centre to help with faults?
A: This will be a matter for the customer and retailer to understand; if the retailer isn't available or doesn't provide the service the customer needs then the customer can opt to change retailers. More information on this can be obtained from the ACT Government.
- Would switching to a new retailer mean changing the meter?
A: It may; this is dependent on the technology used by various retailers and whether it is compatible with other retailers in the market.
- How are communications organised?
A: The distributor has no control over the meter communications; the communications are installed during manufacture and the type of meter is the retailer's choice.
- Customers will choose a retailer but they will not know to ask about aspects such as response times. Is legislation needed?
A: There will be an incentive for retailers to keep customers happy. Communications to customers on changes will be important so that customers are aware of the changes and the impact. More information on this can be obtained from the ACT Government.
- How will transitional arrangements be handled with existing analogue meters and is there a subsidy? What are AAD's plans to change over?
A: The existing meters will remain the responsibility of AAD. If a meter fails or reaches the end of its life then the retailer will be notified and will automatically take responsibility for installing the new meter. There will be no subsidy offered by the Government to change the meters over.
- For customers to be able to go out to retailers and negotiate the best deal for their usage they will first have to have a smart meter to understand their usage.
A: This is correct. There are currently 25 – 30 retailers and customers will not be worse off even if they don't have detailed information on their energy consumption.
- Does the ACT Government have any regulations around landlords selling energy to tenants?
A: Yes, there are models out there that are doing this, for instance, large retail centres. Furthermore, there are national regulations in place that govern the sale of electricity to energy users and these must be adhered to.
- In Queensland, the landlord has one meter and the tenants have child meters to enable on selling to tenants. Will this be permitted in the ACT?
A: This is not currently allowed in the ACT but will be under the new rules. How this takes place will be determined by retailers and embedded network operators.

- If AAD doesn't have control over the meters, where will the information be found about meter layout etc.?
A: AAD will detail the requirements on certain aspects of an installation such as the location of service protection devices, meter protection devices and isolation points; however, we will no longer be responsible for the layout of meter panels. The ACT Government will take on this responsibility and determine where it is located and how it is communicated to industry and consumers.
- How do you de-energise a meter if it is inside a residential unit and not in the basement?
A: Smart meters can be de-energised remotely.
- If a meter is de-energised remotely, how is the fuse removed?
A: There is no need to remove the fuse when a meter is remotely de-energised. If a full disconnection, that is, removal of a service protection device, is required, an electrical contractor or AAD must be contacted.
- Does the distribution neutral link become an MEN point? Can you have a cable to a neutral link?
A: The AS3000 words for neutral link need to be reviewed to ensure we have them correct in the S&I Rules.
- If it is a single service protection device, is it down to 80amps?
A: Generally, the service protection device will be 80amps today and this will not change.
- Will the S&I Rules deal with the problems occurring with some solar PV installations? In the ACT, there is approval but no regulations to guide how the network handles this generation.
A: These issues are known. AAD is working on resolving issues with large installations in West Belconnen and Denman Prospect.
- Is there any government policy on asbestos in panels so the costs are not passed on to the customer?
A: AAD is not aware of any policy. More information on this can be obtained from the ACT Government.