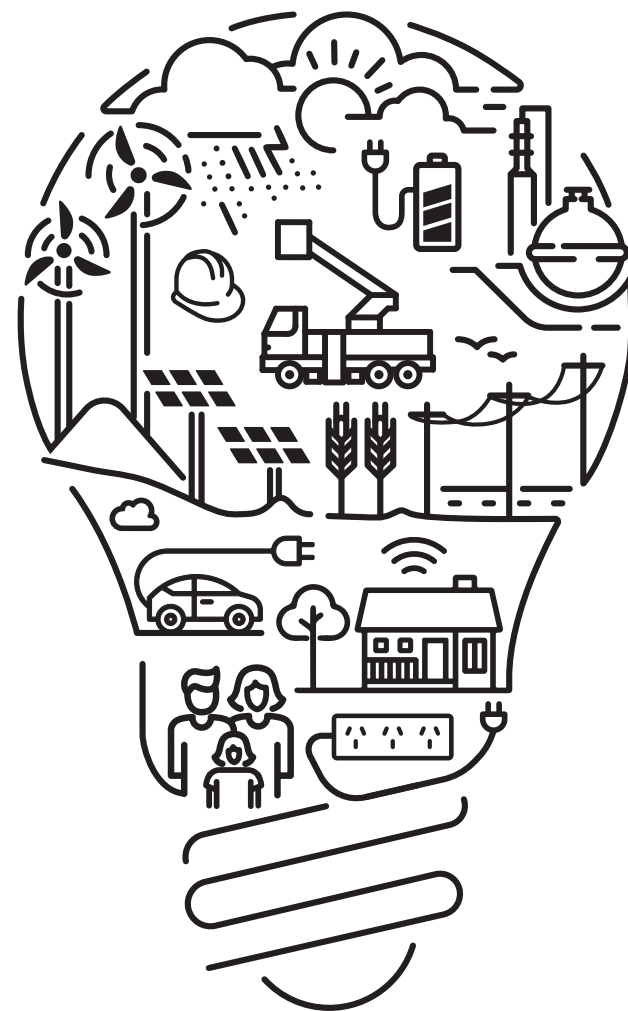


ENERGY QUEENSLAND ENERGY CHARTER DISCLOSURE

2021-22

**CUSTOMER AND STAKEHOLDER
FEEDBACK REPORT**



Background

Energy Queensland (EQL) has been a signatory to The Energy Charter since inception. Signatories are focused on accountability by publishing annual disclosure reports to demonstrate how they are progressing against the Energy Charter principles. The accountability mechanism process was decentralised in 2022 with signatories now leveraging existing business' stakeholder consultation structures, such as the Energy Queensland Customer and Community Council members, rather than through the previous Energy Charter Independent Accountability Panel (IAP) process.

This report seeks to outline Energy Queensland Customer and Community Council (the Council) members' feedback to the 2021-22 Energy Queensland Disclosure Report, and, how, as a business, we have acknowledged and responded. The table below provides a summary of all feedback received to date, adopting the 'You Said'; 'We Heard' and 'We Did/Will Do' format as required for Energy Charter feedback reporting.

Energy Queensland tabled the draft 2021-22 Energy Queensland Disclosure Report for feedback at the 19 September 2022 EQL Customer and Community Council meeting. Additionally, following publication of the Disclosure Report, in October EQL invited written Customer and Community Council member feedback via a specially designed feedback form and subsequently held a further feedback session with Customer and Community Council members and the EQL EGM Customer and EGM Retail on 11 November 2022 to obtain further feedback as part of the decentralised accountability process.

The proceeding table below provides a summary of the feedback received through the decentralised accountability engagements with EQL Customer and Community Council members.

Please note that at the time of writing this report Energy Queensland, through our Talking Energy website, has invited additional feedback from a broader group of customers and stakeholders via survey. This report will be updated with any additional feedback received in due course.

Feedback Received and Actions

You said	We heard	We did (will do)
<p>Encouraged by Energy Queensland's ongoing involvement and Principle 1 moving from 'emerging' to 'evolved'.</p>	<p>Council members welcomed the internal progress being made in creating a customer-focused culture.</p> <p>Council members find the external review process useful and the Energy Charter collaboration across the energy sector is invaluable in creating a positive customer culture within signatory organisations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We continue our commitment to the Energy Charter and participation in relevant #BetterTogether Initiatives to ensure collaboration and improvement across the energy sector. • We will also implement an internal action plan with relevant Energy Queensland staff to ensure improvements across the maturity assessment can be reached for the 2022-23 period and beyond.
<p>Linkages between last year's Focus Areas and this year's report were not obvious.</p>	<p>Council members were not easily able to follow improvements and progress against the Focus Areas, activities and outcomes achieved in the Disclosure Report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference codes to IAP recommendations and Focus Areas were used at the end of each relevant section of the report. Appendix 1 and 2 of the report details each specific code/referencing. We commit to ensure these linkages are highlighted with further clarity and ease of reference in future reports. • We will discuss with members at a future Customer and Community Council meeting to further clarify 2022-23 Focus Areas and involvement of Council members in shaping future Focus Areas where possible.
<p>Signatories to the Energy Charter are asked to go above and beyond – for example, regulatory requirements. The report does not seem to indicate or clearly articulate initiatives where Energy Queensland has gone above and beyond its regulatory obligations.</p>	<p>Improvements can be made to reporting on Energy Queensland's activities that show progress against the Energy Charter principles with a key focus being on those that go beyond regulatory requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work to better articulate those initiatives and activities that go beyond regulatory requirements in our reporting and seek Council member advice to improve our performance and reporting in this area.
<p>To empower customers, Energy Queensland needs to ensure customers are provided with relevant knowledge and information on a range of energy related matters.</p>	<p>Energy Queensland has a role to play in assisting customers to better understand the energy industry and issues and processes affecting them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work with Council members to improve our performance in this area and seek their active involvement and guidance on customer education and awareness programs in the future. • We will partner with Council members and their organisations to maximise channels to customers through their membership bases and organisations' networks.
<p>In relation to the Electric Vehicle (EV) Superhighway, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has released a tender for EV charging infrastructure.</p> <p>It would be good to better understand Yurika's involvement in this program going forward.</p>	<p>Council members want to be kept informed on a regular basis of on Yurika's involvement in the Queensland Electric Vehicle Superhighway.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A briefing was previously provided to the Customer and Community Council in 2021/22 by the then EGM Yurika on electric vehicle growth in Queensland and Yurika's involvement in delivering the Queensland Electric Vehicle Superhighway. • Yurika undertook Stages 1,2 & 3. The Government is looking for other organisations to bid into funding for supply in other areas. EQL has let the Government know the importance of appropriate connection points that are cost effective and efficient.
<p>The Energy Charter Disclosure Report 2022 and the Focus Areas outlined for 2022-23 were written and identified before publication of the Qld Government's Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP). How will that Plan impact EQL's areas of focus going forward?</p>	<p>Council members would like information on Energy Queensland's role in the QEJP and how the QEJP will affect EQL's strategy and operations going forward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are working closely with the Queensland Government to obtain more information on which initiatives within the QEJP EQL will be involved in and importantly, be accountable for having a lead role. The outcome of these discussions and related initiatives will be shared with Council members in due course. • We need to work with Council members to understand the customer and community needs around the energy transition, particularly for those customers at risk of vulnerability or with limited ability to participate due to their living circumstances, such as low-income families/individuals, renters and those living in apartments.

You said

We heard

We did (will do)

Energy Queensland has not reached a point where its reported Greenhouse gases are reducing so how does Energy Queensland justify an 'evolved' maturity level against Principle 3 that covers progress against 'sustainability'.

Council members would like further clarity on EQL's self-assessment against Principle 3 and in particular 'sustainability'/emissions levels and/or reduction plans.

- At the 19 September 2022 Customer and Community Council meeting it was explained that line losses are a major component of EQL's emissions and that this issue would be managed in part by initiatives such as LED street lighting, electric vehicle growth and uptake of renewable energy sources and increase in 'green electrons' being transmitted.
- EQL's Manager, Environment and Cultural Heritage provided a briefing presentation to the May 2022 EQL Customer and Community Council on how EQL was 'Working Towards Net-Zero for EQL and our Communities', providing an overview of the business strategy and approach to helping create a low carbon future. This presentation will be re-circulated to Council members.
- We will continue to report to our Council members on sustainability related initiatives and better articulate their role in for example, emissions management.

Ergon Energy apparently seems to be managing high customer debt levels.

Council members are interested in more information on how customers are managing their electricity accounts and would like more information on customer debt levels being managed by Ergon Retail and associated information such as customers on for example, payment plans.

- We are committed to doing our best to support customers experiencing hardship and struggling to pay their electricity bills.
- In September 2022, Ergon Retail applied the Queensland Government's 'Cost of Living' rebate of \$175 to residential customer accounts.
- EQL has also invested in concession awareness campaigns seeking to increase the number of customers who are eligible for concessions rebates to apply. We will work with Council members and other stakeholders on seeking their involvement as channels to market for such campaigns going forward to maximise partnership opportunities and campaign impact/success.

A lot of people have no idea about concessions and rebates with some customers not identifying as 'vulnerable' but are still struggling and restricting their energy use. How could these customers be better identified, and early intervention applied where possible?

Council members are concerned that not all customers struggling to pay their electricity bills are identified as vulnerable, as they do pay the bill despite still being in financial stress.

- Ergon Retail will conduct some analysis and potential initiatives to be explored further with Council members.
- Energy Queensland will continue to work with the Queensland Government on any future initiatives aimed at easing cost of living pressures for customers into the future.

Are customers on Pre-paid Card Operated meters receiving the relevant concessions and rebates?

Council members would like more information on how pre-paid card operated meters are managing their electricity accounts and want to know if relevant concessions and rebates are received by those customers.

- All relevant concessions and rebates are applied on a quarterly basis via the customer's Orange Linked Power Card. Ergon Retail is working with the Queensland Government around the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme and broadening the criteria as those in card operated communities pre-pay their cards this does not show an account in debt – an eligibility criteria.
- EQL will keep Council members informed of progress of those discussions with the Queensland Government.

What value does Energy Queensland see from being involved in the Energy Charter and what, if anything, does EQL think can be improved?

Council members want to learn what Energy Queensland as a business has gained as a signatory to the Energy Charter and what value we place on participation.

- As a business we believe the Energy Charter has an important role in challenging the business to think about how we can improve in our efforts to be a customer-centric business and better articulate our activities within the customer benefit context.
- We do not see the Energy Charter as being separate to our daily business strategic planning and operational activities but assisting in providing a framework around how we can be held accountable, articulate and report activities with the customer at the centre or putting our customer mindset first.
- We continue our commitment to the Energy Charter and participation in relevant #BetterTogether Initiatives to ensure collaboration and improvement across the energy sector. We continue to have Energy Queensland representatives to attend, collaborate and also improve our businesses processes aligning to the Energy Charter principles.
- Energy Queensland is striving where possible to go above and beyond.
- In terms of improvements, within the context of Energy Charter activities and reporting, Energy Queensland believes there are future opportunities to streamline reporting across the business to gain efficiencies in reporting activities and will discuss this with the Energy Charter secretariat and Council members in due course.

You said	We heard	We did (will do)
<p>There are a number of other important issues outside of those reported in the Energy Charter Disclosure Report or related to Energy Charter activities that will affect all of EQL's stakeholders (including customers) due to the cost-of-living pressures that are outside the scope of EQL as a business, but they still need to be addressed.</p>	<p>Council members have an issue they would like to raise outside of the Energy Charter commitments and EQL's business activities in relation to cost of living and other matters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Queensland reiterates and encourages Council members to put forward agenda items so issues can be captured and addressed at future Council meetings. • Energy Queensland will continue to work with the Queensland Government in providing feedback on any matters raised by Council members and other stakeholders regardless of its direct business impact/activities.
<p>It's difficult to measure Net Trust as many customers and stakeholders don't understand electricity distribution as a discrete service. I'd agree with your assessment score as 'evolved' in relation to Principle 1 but question the Customer Enablement KPI in relation to enabled employees as the right metric to gauge this.</p>	<p>Customers and stakeholders can be confused as to where electricity distribution fits in the wider energy sector system. Additionally, having the correct metrics in place is important to measuring both customer and employee sentiment around key performance indicators such as Net Trust and Customer Satisfaction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Queensland agrees the community can struggle to make the connection as to our role in the energy sector and will continue to work with others across the industry, including Council members and other stakeholders in exploring opportunities on providing greater clarity and ease of understanding for customers and stakeholders as to the logistics of the energy sector and supply chain. • We will provide an overview of our external and internal customer-related KPIs to Council members in early 2023 and look to provide quarterly reporting on how we are tracking against Customer Satisfaction, Net Trust and Customer Enablement targets set by the business each year.
<p>Principle 2 Affordability is a challenging principle for Energy Queensland as so little of the final delivered price of electricity is under your control. All you can do is be transparent about your efforts to be as efficient as possible.</p>	<p>Whilst we have a role to play in affordability and operating as an efficient cost-effective business, as only one part of the energy supply chain we are only one of many factors that contribute to the overall costs customers pay for the electricity usage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to operate prudently and efficiently in order to provide cost-effective value for our customers throughout Queensland and provide regular financial performance updates to Council members. • Our forthcoming Regulatory Determination engagements will provide an important mechanism for discussions around affordability and related matters with our customers and stakeholders as part of our investment requirements and plans for the 2025-30 regulatory period relating to our Energex and Ergon Energy Network distribution network service provider businesses. • We will continue to promote concessions and rebates awareness across our Retail and Network business' marketing channels and seek Council member support in maximising awareness where practical. • We will continue to work with Council members and other stakeholders on our tariff reform agenda to build on the co-design work undertaken as part of the Tariff Reform Working Group – Residential (TRWG-R) to provide improved network tariff options for customers, while working with retailers throughout Queensland to influence final pricing plans where possible.
<p>I would agree with the assessment for Principle 3 as 'evolved' and suggest that EQL's safety performance is excellent (which is no reason to rest on your oars).</p>	<p>Our role in providing a safe workplace and safety around our assets in the community is recognised with our safety efforts recognised and appreciated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to focus on staff and community safety and implement any improvements identified so we can continue to strive to keep everyone safe. • We have raised with the Energy Charter secretariat and other signatories the 2019 decision around maturity assessment for safety being 'capped' at 'evolved'. We wish to review the safety maturity levels with a view to increasing the level of maturity in order to continue to challenge signatories for 'excellence' in this important area.
<p>The Council's role is to hold Energy Queensland accountable to the Energy Charter commitments and principles.</p>	<p>Council members wish to provide input that will improve Energy Queensland's accountabilities for the Energy Charter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to have the Energy Charter as a standing agenda item for Council meetings and take a more partnership approach to involving Council members in focus areas and other related activities, with a view to better identifying short, medium and longer-term approach to progress with a clearly identified roadmap of activity where possible.

You said	We heard	We did (will do)
<p>Energy Queensland needs to ensure the full range of customers are considered in its decision-making processes.</p>	<p>Council members wish to be inclusive to all customers and ensure that our business has taken all customer and community needs into account when making decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to seek the active involvement of our Council members and other stakeholders, who represent our varied customers and communities across Queensland to have input to business strategy and operational activities/improvements, particularly where there are customer benefits to be identified. • We will continue to outwork our business as usual and ad-hoc customer research and insights program of activity to capture customer and community sentiment and other insights to inform our decision-making processes, and proactively explore partnership opportunities in the research and insights arena with stakeholder organisations where practical and prudent. • We will strive to improve how we evidence the customer sentiment and how the insights captured have influenced decisions in the business through a 'cross-referencing' and 'close the loop' approach.
<p>It would be good to work collaboratively with Energy Queensland's Board and Senior Executives on identifying appropriate performance measures, reviewing performance against those measures, maturity levels and targets from the previous year, and agreeing on areas of focus and targets for the next period.</p>	<p>Council members wish to have greater insights of our performance measures and would like the opportunity to be included in performance review and measurement development where possible in both the context of business operations and the Energy Charter maturity assessment process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will provide regular updates to Council members on our corporate performance and related KPIs/Business Scorecard measures perspective. • In October 2022, three members of the Customer and Community Council were invited to attend a corporate strategy workshop with the EQL Board to provide customer perspectives on the challenges facing the industry and to outline what they expect from the business. • Energy Queensland will need to incorporate the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan into business activities and Energy Charter Focus Areas going forward and will work with the Council members regarding this work and the setting of any new related performance measures • We will ensure that Council members have significant input into our Regulatory Determination 2025-30 engagement strategy and plan for our Network businesses.
<p>Energy Charter principles could be reported against in the EQL Annual Report with a summary of how the business is addressing affordability as its complex and your role of what you are doing/ can be doing could be clearer.</p>	<p>Some Council members would like our corporate reporting to be streamlined and potentially include reporting against the Energy Charter principles in other corporate reports rather than through a separate disclosure. This could provide an opportunity for ease of cross referencing and reporting on key issues such as affordability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Energy Charter Secretariat and Industry Working Group consisting of representatives of signatory organisations will be conducting a review of the disclosure reporting process with the aim of providing flexibility in reporting for signatories. EQL will consult Council members on reporting requirements and any proposed changes going forward. • In relation to affordability, we track affordability sentiment in our annual Queensland Household Energy Survey to monitor customer insights on this topic and to help the business obtain a measure of both affordability and customer value. • We will continue to discuss issues regarding affordability with Council members, particularly in the coming months as we enter engagements on our Energy and Ergon Energy Network regulatory determinations and Tariff Structure Statements covering the period 2025-30.
<p>Customers want distributed energy enablement and resilience in their electricity network but they also want affordable power, how will you provide affordability or value for money to customers.</p>	<p>Energy Queensland needs to consider and balance numerous issues such as distributed energy resources, network resilience and affordability in meeting customer and community needs and expectations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We acknowledge a sustainable and value for money electricity network will require a considered implementation and will continue to discuss with and seek advice on these issues from Council members and other stakeholders, particularly in the coming months as we enter engagements on our Energy and Ergon Energy Network regulatory determinations and Tariff Structure Statements covering the period 2025-30 and within the context of the Queensland Government's Energy and Jobs Plan (QEJP). • We are also committed to continuing customer trials and other research on such issues where relevant, to obtain further customer insights to inform our decision making.
<p>How will you address the barriers experienced by some customers as part of the energy transition, particularly those affecting at risk and vulnerable customers and for example small business?</p>	<p>Our customers expect Energy Queensland to have a key role, not only the energy transition itself, but also in working for a fair and equitable energy transition so that no-one is left behind.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to work with the Queensland Government, others in the energy supply chain, our industry partners, customers, customer representatives and other stakeholders to ensure that fairness and equity are at the centre of the energy transition policy and planning process. • We will continue to evolve our product and service offerings provided by our Network, Retail and Energy Services businesses as part of the energy transition to meet customer needs and expectations. Council members will be updated on any new service offerings and products being explored by the businesses as they are developed providing an opportunity for feedback and input where relevant.

You said

We heard

We did (will do)

The service I represent has been hit by a tsunami of members needing assistance with the cost of living. As part of the energy transition and Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan more smart meters will need to be installed which will require some customers to pay to have their switchboards upgraded which can be a costly exercise for some customers who may not have the financial means available.

The energy transition and roll-out of smart meters to homes and businesses throughout Queensland may lead to additional costs for customers, some of whom may not be able to pay for capital costs associated with for example, switchboard upgrades.

- We acknowledge there are affordability issues associated with the energy transition and other matters such as plans for the smart meter roll-out. We will continue to advise the Queensland Government and regulators of these issues and seek solutions where relevant.

Grid Supplied electricity should provide comfortable homes and viable businesses and, to do that, Energy Queensland needs to optimise, individualise, and provide affordable energy.

Energy Queensland needs to look at the ways it can provide value to our different customer segments in an affordable manner.

- We will continue to operate efficiently and effectively through our Network, Retail and Energy Services businesses to ensure value for money for our customers and that we deliver the services and products in line with their varying needs and expectations.
- Council members will continue to be kept abreast of matters affecting the business and the provision of those services and products into the future.

Energy Charter is like All Bran, if you have it you don't need it but if you don't .. you do.

Council members value the checks and balances the Energy Charter membership provides.

- We continue to work with Energy Charter signatories around Better Together initiatives.
- The Energy Charter is an important collaboration opportunity within our industry and provides governance around what we can do and examples of above and beyond.

The Energy Charter allows Energy Queensland to see what others in the energy industry are doing. For example, South Australia Power Networks (SAPN) with their solar tariffs and TasNetworks who do not always recover the full amount allowed by AER.

The Energy Charter provides a valuable mechanism through which signatories can share ideas and insights on a range of energy-related matters with this collaboration offering opportunities for efficient and effective outworking of solutions to issues affecting the energy industry, businesses within the energy supply chain and customers.

- We agree the collaboration opportunities across Energy Charter signatories is valuable and will continue to play an active role in Energy Charter activities to maximise collaboration and sharing of insights and knowledge across signatories.
- We are committed to ensuring we also work with our Council members and other stakeholders to obtain their insights and knowledge in relation to their experiences as part of the collaborative approach to identifying and addressing issues affecting the energy industry, businesses within the supply chain and our customers.

The Energy Charter should be a standing item on the Energy Queensland Board meeting agenda.

Council members want confidence that Energy Queensland has best practice Governance around the Energy Charter and both ownership and accountability at the Board level for progressing the energy Charter principles within the business.

- We already report on the Energy Charter as a feature in our reporting to the Board level Risk and Compliance Committee which meets throughout the year.
- We also take the opportunity to report on customer and stakeholder issues through other business reporting such as our Monthly Performance Report, monthly CEO report and weekly Board Brief referencing the Energy Charter and related activities as and when relevant.

Commend Energy Queensland for their continuing involvement in the Energy Charter.

Council members recognise value in Energy Queensland being a member of the Energy Charter.

- We continue to be an active member of the Energy Charter. As with other such initiatives we will continue to review our membership annually in line with our annual Business Planning and objective setting processes to determine if the Energy Charter continues to provide value to the business and our customers.

The 2022-23 Focus Areas outlined in the Energy Queensland Disclosure Report 2021-22 are vague and need to have more targeted goals and outcomes.

The Focus Areas we outline in our Disclosure Report need to be more specific and have more tangible outcomes.

- Energy Queensland have asked for feedback on the focus areas since 19 September meeting. We are happy to discuss with Council members.



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