

2023

Feedback Report: Customer Council and stakeholder independent review



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Accountability and transparency for our customers

Horizon Power is pleased to present a comprehensive overview of the valuable feedback on our 2023 Energy Charter Disclosure Report. This year marked an important milestone for our business with our first Customer Council established. Our Customer Council members represent the diverse customer segments across our vast geography. The significance of this reflects our commitment to welcoming open dialogue and to remain open to hear and respond to community challenges.

We engaged our Customer Council and key external stakeholders for their critical review of our 2023 Disclosure Report. This independent review process sheds light on crucial aspects of our operations and customer-centric initiatives and importantly promotes transparency, accountability and continuous improvement for our business and customer outcomes.

“Applauded for clear and transparent – honest and frank self assessment rating as ‘delayed’ ”

The rich insights gathered from our Customer Council members, representing diverse perspectives, have provided us with a robust understanding of their expectations and concerns. We incorporated their feedback to further refine our final 2023 Disclosure Report. At the October Customer Council meeting, the members conducted an accountability interview with our CEO.

This Feedback Report consolidates and synthesises their review, allowing us to delve into key themes which support a deeper comprehension of our performance against the Energy Charter’s principles. The independent review also gave valuable feedback on our self-assessment ratings and supportive appreciation of our transparency with lowering our ratings this year across four of the five principles. This is an important point of reflection for our business and the energy sector, that advancing the energy transition isn’t without its challenges. What remains constant however is our commitment to delivering a sustainable, customer-centric future for regional Western Australia achieved through a spirit of collaboration with customer and community.

Our Customer Council reviewers have raised insightful questions and made constructive suggestions, reinforcing the significance of open communication. We express our gratitude to our Customer Council members and stakeholders for your valued feedback.

Brent Savage	Western Australian Advocacy for Consumers of Energy (Energy Policy WA)
Christ Mitchell	Broome customer
Connor Davies	Esperance customer
Graham Hansen	Western Australian Council of Social Services
Justin Less	Menzies customer
Kendall Galbraith	Rural Regional Remote Womens’ Association
Kitty Prodonovich	Regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry WA

Approach to consultation and feedback

Review and feedback was requested of our Customer Council members at the inaugural Customer Council meeting in June 2023. The draft 2023 Disclosure Report was provided for their independent review, with supporting information explaining the Energy Charter maturity rating matrix and our self-assessment outcomes. We appreciate the valuable feedback this independent review process has provided in our second year under a decentralised accountability model, and our first with our Customer Council. We also acknowledge that there remains an opportunity to further mature representation on our Council and we continue to seek First Nations voices.

“Horizon Power has clearly shown ‘Involvement of customers and key stakeholders in providing feedback and solutions that affect them in relation to connection, service, and reliability’”



Reviewer’s feedback was consolidated and incorporated into the draft 2023 Disclosure Report where possible. Reflection on our Disclosure Report resulted in our decision to reduce our self-rating across four of the five maturity principles. The final report and Council feedback was shared with our Executive and Board prior to submission to the Energy Charter. The accountability interview during the October Customer Council meeting also provided an opportunity for Council members to discuss their specific feedback with our CEO and also to hear feedback from other members which further enriched the Council’s knowledge.

Despite our decision to not progress the self-rating status, we are proud of the comprehensive and impactful customer outcomes we have achieved through our many initiatives this year.

Consolidated feedback and responses are provided below.

Theme	You said	We will
Accountability	Does Horizon Power have/ intend to introduce performance targets of Executives and Senior Managers linked to accountability for embedding the culture.	Continue to have an Executive mentor per region; The ‘Voice of Customer’ customer essentials will be mandatory training for all employees, Executive and Board. We will explore other performance targets related to customer culture.
	Add accountability to Customer Essentials program with a timeline to be delivered to.	Noted. Whilst this program was delayed awaiting a technology platform for learning modules to be developed, a program timeline has been applied. A prototype proof of concept is to be developed and launched before 30 June 2024.
	The introduction of the Customer Council, the Customer Service on the Move program and the Executive mentors are all tangible initiatives that are in place that demonstrate that this classification is accurate. Well done on all that Horizon Power has done in this space – fantastic.	Continue to embed the ‘Voice of Customer’ in all parts of decision making as this is key to maintaining and maturing our rating on this principle.

Theme	You said	We will
Engagement	Is HP ensuring inclusivity and accessibility in service design? How is Horizon supporting the digitally excluded in accessing their services?	We develop all customer services to meet AA accessibility requirements. We do and will continue to provide other accessibility services including interpreters. For non-digital engagement, we provide translation and 'talking' services to support culturally and linguistically diverse customers. We will continue to provide Customer Service on the Move to remote locations seeking face to face customer services.
	Great to see the low ombudsman cases, the high NPS score (even though not as high as previous years, still really impressive) and the myaccount App.	We will take every opportunity to capture all feedback from customers and use this to improve the customer experience and solutions.
	Commendation for embedding Human Centred Design training. Would be great to track the impact of this.	Noted. We will identify how to track benefits realisation and customer outcomes from this.
	Suggest using more lay-person language on IRP content.	Noted. Report updated accordingly
	The report mentions the app is being redesigned.	We will include a screenshot of the app in the Report.
	Include outcomes achieved as a result of customer-facing staff training for advisory services for vulnerable customers.	This will be incorporated into our retail operations review and reporting.

Theme	You said	We will
Affordability	<p>It is good to understand what HP is doing for those experiencing energy hardship. Those who are not in hardship are often unaware of how HP is looking after vulnerable customers.</p> <p>I really like the Prepaid Power initiative. Can Horizon Power see what strategies can increase this to be prepared for more customers facing vulnerable circumstances.</p>	<p>With the increased cost of living pressures, we believe there is an unidentified segment of customers that may be experiencing hardship for the first time and may be unaware of supports available. We will develop proactive outreach communications to improve awareness.</p> <p>We are exploring how we may scale the Prepaid Power product to more towns. This requires a technical review of our underlying retail systems to support increased utilisation.</p>
	<p>Query raised on the clarity of content for the Denham hydrogen project, that it may be misconstrued as hydrogen powered appliances.</p>	<p>Noted. Copy updated in the final report.</p>
	<p>Applauded for great outcomes of 400 Esperance customers transitioned in Esperance Energy Transition Plan.</p>	<p>Noted. With customer collaboration, we continue to monitor and develop case studies to determine customer's overall energy cost savings over time, with these learnings being shared across the energy sector. Early results show that customers who transitioned to fully electric alternatives have a total energy bill savings of 38% on average.</p>
	<p>Energy affordability as the world transitions to renewable energy continues to be an issue. Can you continue the drive to install battery storage to increase renewables, reduce price and increase reliability.</p>	<p>We will continue our ambitions to lead the way in renewables and find ways to improve energy affordability. Smart Connect Solar launching in Feb 2024 will remove all previous technical constraints limiting rooftop solar and Sunshine Saver currently live in Esperance, is planned to be scaled to more regional towns to benefit those eligible customers unable to reduce energy costs through rooftop solar.</p>
	<p>Really pleased to see the concession campaigns, rooftop solar being rolled out and the community batteries being delivered in three locations.</p>	<p>We will investigate what additional State and Federal funding may be accessed to pass on for further concessions and rebates for customers.</p> <p>We will continue to promote concessions awareness at every customer interaction to close the concessions gap.</p>

Theme	You said	We will
Transparency	<p>It is not clear what the graph is showing “Customer Focus Employee Engagement”</p> <p>The drop in corporate reputation metric is concerning;</p> <p>It is not clear if the survey captures the reasons for such a decline (e.g. are survey respondents asked why they provided such a rating), and if respondents are offered the ability for further engagement.</p>	<p>Caption has been updated in the report;</p> <p>We revised the detail in the draft report to improve details to explain the cause of the corporate reputation result.</p> <p>The survey doesn't offer an open answer field as such but is an aggregate score across multiple dimensions. We analyse this result in the broader context of the annual research and customer verbatim responses where provided.</p>
	<p>Emissions intensity is not shown; this isn't clear enough.</p>	<p>Include a graph showing emissions intensity for easy reference. This was discussed at the CEO accountability interview and acknowledged that this is an important area to improve clarity in reporting. It was also discussed how assuming responsibility for additional remote communities, with diesel generation will have a negative impact on our emissions reporting for a period of time. This was understood by the Council members.</p>
	<p>The details regarding system reliability is useful and the explanations around what is being done is helpful</p>	<p>Continue clear reporting on reliability performance</p>
	<p>Congratulations on establishing the Customer Council. This isn't an outcome for customers though. Ensure the Council allows customer involvement in decision making. Encourage tracking and reporting to impact of involvement for future reporting.</p>	<p>Noted. The Customer Council is an important mechanism to bring the customer and community voice into our business decision making. Council members are encouraged to contribute to agenda items and discussions. Where practicable, we will encourage tracking and reporting in future reporting.</p>
	<p>For the #BetterTogether initiatives, can we link to webpages or documents for the reader to learn more?</p>	<p>We will develop content and webpages required to support this. It was not viable at the time of receiving this feedback due to resource constraints, and will be developed in the year ahead.</p>

Theme	You said	We will
Reliability & Sustainability	The Kimberley Floods and other unprecedented weather activities did impact this area, however all of the initiatives taken has been very strong.	Operational preparedness for crisis and emergency events is a major priority for our business. Horizon Power is known for rapid response and effective outcomes during crises. We will continue to improve our planning and deployment capability.
	It would be good to get a clearer picture as to the benefits of the Prepaid Power (PPM) product for those customers who use it, including their satisfaction with that product.	We will prepare an information pack and present this to the Customer Council at a future meeting. We will investigate further the cause of disconnections for PPM customers and a commitment to improve this trend.
	The Retail Systems Transformation project sounds promising	We will keep Council members updated on the progress and include progress of this multi year project in next year's Disclosure Report.

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