

28 October 2019

Dr Wendy Craik AM  
Chair  
The Energy Charter Independent Accountability Panel

Via email: [submissions@theenergycharterpanel.com.au](mailto:submissions@theenergycharterpanel.com.au)

Dear Chair

RE: EUAA Submission to Accountability Panel

The Energy Users Association of Australia (EUAA) is the peak body representing Australian energy users. Our membership covers a broad cross section of the Australian economy including significant retail, manufacturing and materials processing industries. Combined they employ over 1 million Australians, pay billions in energy bills every year and are desperate to see all parts of the energy supply chain making their contribution to the National Electricity Objective. Our members are highly exposed to movements in both gas and electricity prices and have been under increasing stress due to escalating energy costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Energy Charter Accountability Panel. The EUAA is supportive of the Energy Charter and has been actively involved in its development. We feel the Energy Charter represents a positive step towards creating a better relationship between energy consumers and the entire energy value chain, hopefully leading to more positive outcomes for all energy users.

We have been pleased to see the progress of the Energy Charter. The number of energy businesses who have signed onto the principles, taken responsibility for improving customer outcomes and made disclosures in what is a relatively short time period should be viewed as an initial success.

The EUAA is under no illusion about the challenges for energy businesses to change their structures and approach to create a customer centric organisation. We have been very pleased to see the strong statements made by CEOs and the responsibility they have taken to change their businesses by leading from the top. This is essential and encouraging. The disclosures have also demonstrated attempts to take meaningful actions and assess their businesses to determine what needs to change. Overall this is a positive step forward.

We will however be watching the progress of signatories over the coming year and expect to see further, deeper actions detailed in disclosures next year to effect real, long term change.

The EUAA is a member of the Energy User Consultation Group that has also made a submission to the Accountability Panel. However, critical issues that the EUAA would like to stress as important for energy users include:

**Incentives and KPIs**

Focus is required to make real changes within a business. In order to deliver that focus, incentives or KPIs related to customers must be present for at least all senior managers, and ideally all staff. This enables time and resources to be directed to this area of a business and creates opportunities to find new ways to deliver better customer outcomes.

## **Greater understanding of customers**

The disclosures provided some attempt to identify customers, issues and solutions. However we feel there is a lot more to do in this area. Without having a thorough understanding of who your customers are and what really matters to them, it is difficult to find meaningful solutions. C&I customers have specific needs and we encourage signatories to continue their consultation to really understand their customers and work collaboratively to find better ways to work with them and deliver services that meet their needs.

## **Additionality**

The value of the Energy Charter is that it provides a way for business to focus on customers rather than running a business based on what is required by law. While changing the way a business has been run is an enormous undertaking and requires monumental structural change, the Energy Charter is not about reporting what is required by law, it is about doing more. Over the coming year we encourage businesses to be courageous and do more. When they create their disclosures next year we hope to see additionality reported, rather than undertakings that are the bare minimum.

We would be happy to discuss this further if required.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Emily Wood', followed by a comma.

Emily Wood  
Communications Manager