

Annual Report

2023-24



About this report

ENERGY AND WATER OMBUDSMAN QUEENSLAND 2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT

ISSN 1839-308X

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Communication objective

Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ) provides a free, fair and independent dispute resolution service for residential customers and small businesses throughout Queensland who have an unresolved issue with their electricity or gas provider. We also provide this service for residential and small business water customers in South East Queensland.

This annual report presents information about the performance of the Ombudsman scheme for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. It includes our activities and achievements for the financial year against our strategic plan and summarises our future priorities and challenges.

This report is produced under the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*. It has been written for the benefit of our stakeholders, including energy and water consumers, retailers and distributors and members of Queensland Parliament.

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Attribution

Content from this annual report should be attributed to the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland Annual Report 2023-24.

Accessibility

We are committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. If you have difficulty understanding the annual report, please call us on 1800 662 837 and we will arrange an interpreter to effectively communicate it to you, free of charge.



This publication is available online from ewoq.com.au and then search for 'annual report'.

For a printed copy, please contact the Marketing and Communications team by emailing info@ewoq.com.au or phoning us on 1800 662 837.

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands, seas and waters of Queensland and pay our respects to First Nations Elders past and present, and their future leaders, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country. We recognise and respect their valuable contributions to Australia and the global society.

Using this report



Navigation

Our annual report is organised into sections with headings to make it easy to read and find the information you're looking for.

Look for the following headings to easily find the content you want to read.



At a glance

Dip in and gain a top level overview of the section.



In detail

Provides a full and detailed account as required by legislation.



Key data

We collect, report and analyse a lot of data about our cases. You'll find key data within each section (where relevant) and the rest of the case data in Appendix 2 and 3.



Learn more

View meaningful related content in other sections and on our website, including case studies, further reading and additional data.

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Letter of compliance

1 August 2024

The Honourable Michael de Brenni MP
Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs
GPO Box 2457
Brisbane Qld 4001

The Honourable Glenn Butcher MP
Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing
and Minister for Water
PO Box 15009
City East Qld 4002

Dear Ministers

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament the Annual Report 2023-24 and financial statements for the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*
- broadly follows the requirements set out in the Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements is provided on page 88 of this annual report.

Yours sincerely



Jane Pires
Energy and Water Ombudsman

About us

We are committed to providing a high-quality, effective and confidential service for residential and small business customers who are unable to resolve issues with their electricity, gas or water distributors or providers.

With offices in Brisbane, Cairns and Rockhampton, we work directly with Queensland customers and scheme participants to investigate and resolve disputes.

VISION

To make a positive difference to Queenslanders in a changing energy and water environment.

VALUES



Respect

We act and interact with honesty and integrity—manners, respect and courtesy are a given.



Integrity

Our actions are consistent with our words and we demonstrate our values through our actions.



Competency

We encourage each other and seek opportunities to learn, and share our knowledge and ideas to continuously improve ourselves and our service.



Accountability

Each of us is accountable and responsible for our work, attitude and behaviours.



Excellence

We strive to be the best we can be and deliver excellent service and quality results.

PURPOSE

We have 3 primary functions.

- We receive, investigate and facilitate the resolution of disputes between residential and small business customers and their energy and water retailers and distributors. We do this for energy customers across Queensland and for water customers in South East Queensland.
- We promote our services throughout Queensland to those who may need our assistance.
- We identify systemic issues arising from complaints received from our customers.

STRUCTURE

The Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ) was established under the *Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006* to investigate and resolve particular disputes involving energy and water providers.

The Energy and Water Ombudsman is not subject to direction from anyone, but considers the advice of the Advisory Council to the Ombudsman in performing certain functions under the Act.

The executive management group assists the Ombudsman to deliver the strategic plan and with the day-to-day operations of the business.

HISTORY

EWOQ was established 17 years ago on 1 July 2007 as the Energy Ombudsman Queensland (EOQ).

Our mission, then, as now, was to provide free, fair and independent dispute resolution service for small electricity and reticulated gas customers in Queensland. We have closed more than 170,000 cases since opening our doors in 2007.

On 1 January 2011, EOQ became EWOQ as our jurisdiction expanded to investigate disputes about water suppliers in South East Queensland.

On 28 February 2022, our jurisdiction was further expanded to include embedded networks and provide residential electricity customers who get their power through a privately owned electricity network the same access to our free, fair independent dispute resolution service as those who buy directly from their provider.

Our future direction

OUR STRATEGIC VISION

We develop a 4 year strategic plan each year that guides our work and confirms our vision for the business.

During 2023-24, our priorities included:

- procuring and developing a contemporary customer relationship management solution
- enhancing data collection and reporting
- commencing the development of frameworks for scheme participant engagement and strategic outreach
- implementing a new performance appraisal system
- reviewing our awareness raising strategy
- endorsing our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan
- contributing to public policy through insights and submissions.

A review of our performance against the strategic plan is on page 11.

LOOKING FORWARD

In 2024-25 our key strategic initiatives include:

- building future capabilities
- contributing to reconciliation with First Nations people
- implementing a contemporary customer relationship management solution
- driving efficiencies and effectiveness
- embedding our better normal picture
- enhancing scheme participant management
- enriching customer experience
- raising awareness of our service.

We remain committed to responding to an increasing demand for our service.

We will continually review our business processes and customer service to ensure we make a positive difference to Queenslanders in a changing energy and water environment.

Energy and Water Ombudsman Schemes across Australia and New Zealand are continuing to work together for appropriate reforms that support the evolution of the industry. We will continue to call on industry to raise standards and improve processes while ensuring we remain independent.

Our highlights 2023-24

11,169

cases closed  54%



323

cases related to the cost of living rebate

71

potential systemic issues identified

582

embedded network complaints closed



 **15%**

FOLLOWERS



42



community outreach events

Top 4 complaint issues

billing
70%

customer service
16%

provision
5%

credit
4%

69%
cases closed
in **<28 days**
(target 80%)

ewoq.com.au

 **21%**

website views

Why were we contacted?

 **89%**
electricity

 **5%**
gas

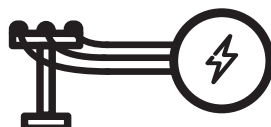
 **4%**
water

Negotiated
\$816,632

worth of outcomes for customers

118

embedded network sellers welcomed



Message from the Ombudsman

As Energy and Water Ombudsman for Queensland, I am pleased to present the 2023-24 annual report.

It has been another busy year for our team as the rising cost of living and energy prices continued to put pressure on Queenslanders.

We resolved 11,169 customer cases – a 54% increase on the previous year. Electricity continues to make up the bulk of our caseload, accounting for 89% of cases closed in 2023-24. Gas accounted for 5% of cases closed with the remaining 4% attributed to water. Our commitment to understanding and addressing the underlying issues in these complaints helps us advocate for better practices and policies within the energy and water sectors.

Demand for our service was higher than usual, driven in part by the impacts felt by Queenslanders as some providers replaced and embedded new billing systems and experienced high wait times for customer channels. We experienced a 60% increase in customer complaints across all sectors, primarily driven by billing issues (70%) and customer service concerns (16%), with complaints also raised about provision, credit and supply.

We didn't meet our service standard target of closing 80% of cases in 28 days. However, we exceeded our targets for closing 90% within 60 days and 95% within 90 days. We closed 69% (7,684 cases) in less than 28 days, 96% in less than 60 days (10,732 cases), and 99% in less than 90 days (11,048 cases). I'm proud of our team for achieving these results and supporting Queenslanders with their enquiries and concerns in the face of unprecedented demand.

A focus this year has been the strategic frameworks and policies that help us to operate efficiently and effectively. From our awareness raising and outreach to our human resources (HR) policies and procedures, we have worked to ensure we are ready to adapt and respond to the changing needs of our community and our industry.

ENHANCING OUR SERVICES

This year, we made significant strides in enhancing our services with the development of a new customer relationship management (CRM) system through the Connect Project. Our new CRM system will centralise all customer interactions, provide comprehensive case views and enable better data analytics. This will help us identify trends and address systemic issues proactively, ensuring more responsive and efficient support for Queenslanders.

The Assessment, Investigation and Resolution team implemented a range of initiatives to streamline service

delivery and enhance the customer experience including reviewing the process for complaints that are referred to a higher level within a customer's energy or water provider, resulting in quicker resolution times and added automatic replies for incoming online complaints to provide clarity on service standards.

SUPPORTING OUR PEOPLE

We continued to benefit from flexible work arrangements, embedding a hybrid model with 3 days in the office and 2 days working from home. This approach ensured specific needs were met while fostering collaboration across our organisation.

We prioritised strategic workforce planning, conducting workshops with the executive management group to establish guiding principles for organisational design, recruitment and transparent communication. This ensured consistency in decision-making and alignment with our goals.

Culture, values and wellbeing were key focuses. A dedicated working group promoted activities to enhance health and wellbeing, including mental and physical health initiatives. Our Workplace Health and Safety Committee collaborated to ensure ongoing improvements.

We offered various learning and development opportunities, including participation in the Queensland Government Digital Graduate Program, and implemented an online performance development and appraisal platform to support individual development needs.

We demonstrated our commitment to diversity and inclusion by recruiting 2 First Nations team members to enhance our customer and community outreach experience and provide first contact resolution services with a focus on First Nations consumers. We also provided training for our new CRM system across our office locations.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

We delivered various awareness-raising initiatives and community outreach activities to promote our services to people in Queensland who may need our help. We redeveloped our Awareness Raising Strategy 2023-27 to ensure we continue to create effective and meaningful engagement with our stakeholders.

We reframed our stakeholder and community engagement, allowing us to maintain productive working relationships and leverage our networks to raise awareness and encourage future engagement. Our connections with key peer networks offered us opportunities to collaborate and drive continual improvement of our services.

Through targeted social media campaigns, we increased our reach and number of followers, reaching over 200,000 Queensland energy and water consumers and achieving an engagement rate of 12%. Timely and informative content was also published on our website, optimised for search to maximise opportunities for our consumers to find our services. This effort contributed to a 15% increase in our followers, enhancing our online presence and community connection.

TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

We continued to work closely with Reconciliation Australia to reinforce our approach and finalise our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), published in January 2024. Through delivery of our RAP, we will strengthen our relationships with key stakeholders and explore new opportunities to promote a culture of respect for First Nations people within our organisation and the communities we help across Queensland.

I am proud of the work we have done to advance our reconciliation efforts as an organisation. I am confident that our RAP will support us in achieving our vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to become confident and informed consumers, be aware of the energy needs in their communities, and ensure they are aware of their right to assistance.

LOOKING AHEAD

With the rising cost of living leaving a growing number of Queenslanders unable to afford their electricity, gas and water bills, the role of an Ombudsman service is more important than ever. We are closely monitoring our services and making improvements to ensure we are ready to respond to changing levels of demand and support customers access appropriate services.

As we implement our new CRM, we anticipate significant enhancements in how we serve our customers. The first phase, launching in August, will provide a foundation for greater flexibility and efficiency. The upcoming phases will further streamline our case management processes and improve integration between our systems. These advancements will enable us to offer more efficient and user-friendly ways for consumers to connect with us and resolve their issues.

Over the next 12 months we will work with some of the recipients of the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan grant to provide training and resources to reach a wide range of consumers across Queensland. We are also looking forward to embedding our second Innovate RAP and implementing our Awareness Raising Strategy, developing our existing relationships and establishing

new connections to raise awareness and empower community leaders, community organisations and financial counsellors to provide informed assistance on energy-related issues.

We will continue to invest in the professional development of our team, ensuring they have the skills and knowledge necessary to handle the evolving challenges in the energy and water sectors. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, we aim to provide a fair, independent and accessible dispute resolution service for customers across Queensland.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This last year has shown us all how fast-paced and adaptable we need to be in both professional and personal capacities. We have worked with our colleagues, consumer support services, advocates and regulators to ensure our data and learnings are shared to enhance energy and water policies in Queensland and Australia.

I want to thank the Advisory Council Chair, Rowena McNally, for her support and leadership, and the council members for their input, discussion and guidance that have enabled us to proceed with relevant focus and application on current and future issues.

My sincere thanks to my colleagues and their teams for sharing, learning and working together to ensure all our schemes benefit from our shared knowledge, practices and strong mateship. To my EWOQ team – thank you. Thank you for always giving your best and taking every opportunity to get the best outcome every time. We continue to grow and learn about ourselves and each other, and I am looking forward to the next 12 months when we continue to deliver our much-needed services to all customers and providers in Queensland.



Jane Pires
Ombudsman

Message from the Advisory Council Chair

The Council has observed over the past year that consumers are continuing to struggle with sustained high costs of living and increases to energy prices across Queensland. At the same time, scheme participants have had to contend with the rising costs of supplying energy and for some, the challenges in replacing and embedding new billing systems.

EWOQ responded to significantly higher complaints than forecast, with a 54% increase in cases closed in 2023-24. EWOQ continued to deliver a high-quality service to consumers during this time noting that there were some minor delays experienced, Additional recruitment and process changes enabled the team to achieve good results and continue to monitor the industry for systemic issues.

We saw billing remain a pain point for consumers, accounting for 70% of complaints. Complaints about customer service rose by 166% as some consumers experienced longer waiting times with their providers and we note that these wait times reduced to normal rates in the second half of the year. We saw the implementation of the Better Bills initiative, which requires EWOQ's phone number to be on all energy bills. This initiative has seen an increase in awareness of EWOQ with 21% of customers surveyed by EWOQ learned about our service from their electricity, gas or water provider, with 73% of those finding our contact details on their bill.

The Advisory Council met 5 times throughout the year to discuss emerging trends and issues, and EWOQ's progress against its strategic plan and delivery of key initiatives including the Reconciliation Action Plan and development toward their new customer relationship management system (CRM).

We heard from our Advisory Council members that their organisations had an increase in first time hardship applications due to rising interest rates and cost of living. While the Advisory Council members acknowledge the benefit of the rebates introduced by the Queensland government, the energy price rises mean bills are still higher than many expect. We believe further improvements are possible, including targeted assistance for the most vulnerable consumers. EWOQ and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission are watching for any reactive increased costs occurring with the introduction of the \$1,000 Queensland Cost of Living Rebate.

Many consumers may be unaware of what help is available, where to find information, or reluctant to ask for help, and significant financial pressure on consumers means increased awareness and empathy during customer conversations is important. We heard of EWOQ's awareness raising programs aimed at supporting consumers, including community energy literacy and

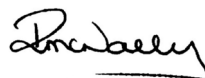
numeracy awareness programs, a focus group for older energy consumers, Care EXPO, Disability EXPO and multi-cultural festival booths.

The Advisory Council noted concerns about the Australian Energy Market Commission Metering Review which proposes that digital smart meters are fully rolled out by 2030, with the aim of improving bill accuracy. Similar past rollouts resulted in nearly double the number of complaints to EWOQ. We agree that priority must also be given to disadvantaged or vulnerable customers, who may be most impacted by the discrepancy between estimated and meter read bills.

Our Advisory Council membership had a few changes this year. Rob Howes joined us in February 2024, and 2 members concluded their terms – with both Chris Owen and Maree Adshead concluding in the same month. We thank them, and all the Advisory Council members, for their membership and contributions.

I would like to thank the Ombudsman, Jane Pires, for her leadership to the EWOQ team over the past year. The Advisory Council appreciate the knowledge and support of the Ombudsman and her team, and we are grateful to the secretariat and all EWOQ employees for their commitment and hard work for customers and scheme participants across Queensland.

Looking ahead to the coming year, we are looking forward to the implementation of EWOQ's second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, which showcases EWOQ's commitment to engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This is an important step in building new and stronger relationships with key stakeholders to work towards truth and reconciliation. We are also looking forward to the progression of the CRM project, which is a significant undertaking that will deliver tangible results for EWOQ customers and scheme participants. We are confident both initiatives will assist EWOQ in building new and stronger relationships with key stakeholders and improve service outcomes across Queensland.



Rowena McNally
Chair



Customer story

HOLDER OF A QLD GOVERNMENT PENSION CONCESSION DID NOT RECEIVE THE FULL COST OF LIVING REBATE AMOUNT

Norma* met all the eligibility criteria for the full \$700 Cost of Living rebate, but her service provider only credited \$550 to the account. Norma was confused as she knew this was the amount for customers without an eligible concession, and after first speaking to her energy provider, asked us for assistance.

Here's how we helped:

Since Norma lived within an embedded network, we started an investigation with the relevant service provider. Initially they advised that Norma had only provided her concession details to them in October 2023 – a few months after the rebate start date of 1 July. However, Norma had held an eligible concession for several years and assumed it had been added to the account when she joined. When she moved into her rental property, it was handled by a real estate agent, who did not request any concession details.


As a result of our investigation, the service provider recognised they had not asked for the concession details or provided Norma with details on how to do this and offered Norma the remaining credit of \$150 onto her account. Norma accepted this offer as she had only wanted to receive what she was entitled to. She was very grateful for EWOQ's assistance.

*Name changed to protect privacy.

Our strategic plan

The strategic plan informs our business plan, which details the activities we need to undertake to achieve our strategic objectives. Each year we allocate resources and make decisions to support the outcomes outlined in the strategy.

Our Strategic Plan 2023-27 outlines our vision over 4 years:

 VISION To make a positive difference to Queenslanders in a changing energy and water environment.		
PILLARS	OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
Customer	• We deliver fair and reasonable outcomes for consumers and members.	• Achieve agreed targets in customer and member surveys.
	• We listen to understand and respect our customers to build and maintain their trust.	• Achieve agreed dispute resolution targets.
	• Our teams have the skills to resolve wide-ranging problems for our internal and external customers.	• Continuously improve quality and customer experience.
People	• We attract, develop and retain committed professionals who are motivated by our values.	• Increase engagement result of <i>Working for Queensland</i> survey.
	• We have an empowered, high-performing and resourceful team.	• Retain <i>My workgroup</i> factor result in the top quartile of <i>Working for Queensland</i> comparison data.
	• We build the capabilities of our people now and for the future.	• Required capabilities are identified and professional development completed.
Service	• We evolve with our changing environment.	• Being prepared for legislative changes and an expanded jurisdiction.
	• We embrace change and adapt to emerging technologies.	• Invest in our systems and processes to ensure we remain fit for purpose.
	• Our business is accountable, efficient and effective.	• Deliver our services effectively within agreed targets.
Connections	• Everyone who needs our help knows who we are and how to contact us.	• Share our insights and experiences to collaboratively improve the sector for all.
	• We inform providers and consumers on how we can help with energy and water issues.	• Provide information to help our stakeholders understand and help resolve the issues their customers are experiencing.
	• We collaborate with organisations who support energy and water consumers.	• Meet with communities across the state via in-person and digital methods.
	• We connect with and influence our stakeholders to improve outcomes for the sector.	• Increase awareness of our service through a variety of channels.



We will deliver our objectives through 8 strategic initiatives:

- building future capabilities
- contributing to reconciliation with First Nations people
- developing a contemporary customer relationship management solution
- driving efficiencies and effectiveness
- embedding our better normal picture
- enhancing scheme participant management
- enriching customer experience
- raising awareness of our service.



We will embrace opportunities by:

- adapting to the needs of our ever-changing world, including issues impacting our community
- expanding our jurisdiction to include renewable energy
- future focus on alternative energy options.

Our achievements

We have made significant progress toward achieving our strategic initiatives during 2023-24.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	ACHIEVEMENTS
Enriching customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of and focus on customer data to inform the customer journey and a better understanding of their needs. • Implementation of new Quality Assurance Framework. • Developed outreach guidelines and training for Dispute Resolution team members to enhance skills and ensure consistency in approach. • Developed a Digital Services Accessibility Plan to ensure all people can access EWOQ digital services, regardless of physical or cognitive ability.
Building future capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed our ICT Strategy to include Artificial Intelligence. • Implemented a new performance appraisal system. • Engaged in an ICT graduate program. • Enhanced our onboarding induction program and engaged in new recruitment strategies to ensure strong applicant pools.
Contributing to reconciliation with First Nations people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to strengthen and advance our reconciliation journey. • Recruitment of a First Nations Early Resolution Officer within Dispute Resolution and a Community Outreach Officer (First Nations).
Driving efficiencies and effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented Teams calling for our corporate team members. • Reviewed procurement processes. • Reviewed compliance framework. • Enhanced and streamlined reporting and analysis to drive continuous improvement. • Further secured ICT environment through ongoing enhancements such as multi factor authentication, cybersecurity training and policy review.
Enhancing member management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further enhancement and automation of scheme participant reporting. • Commenced work on a scheme participant engagement framework.
Embedding our Better Normal Picture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a health and wellbeing action plan. • Established common office days across all sites to maximise interaction while maintaining flexibility.
Raising awareness of our service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered awareness raising strategy including social media campaigns and providing editorial content for targeted publications. • Connected with community organisations through visits and information sessions. • Attended interagency meetings to ensure EWOQ had a seat at the decision-making table. • Reviewed our awareness raising strategy and commenced development of a strategic outreach plan.
Developing our customer relationship management (CRM) solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed a comprehensive environmental scan and feasibility assessment. • Established CRM Steering Committee to oversee project implementation. • Partnered with Barhead Solutions Australia to develop and test our new CRM ahead of our go live in August 2024. • Implemented advanced data analytics capabilities. • Rolled out a comprehensive training program for impacted team members.

Measures of success

We have had a strong year in 2023-24, achieving most of our measures of success.

OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	TARGET	RESULT
Our Customer	Calls answered within 20 seconds	> 80%	71%
	Customer web/email contacts responded to within 3 business days	> 80%	45%
	Customer complaints against EWOQ	< 10	9
	Customer satisfaction with EWOQ service	> 85%	69%
	Scheme participant satisfaction – annual measure	> 85%	N/A ¹
Our People	Training and development program (hours/FTE)	20	33
	<i>My workgroup</i> factor (WfQ)	> 75%	84%
	Annual WfQ employee engagement	> 65%	54%
Our Service	Media enquiries responded to within timeframes	100%	100%
	Invoices issued on time	100%	100%
	Policy submissions submitted on time	100%	100%
	Reports produced on time	100%	100%
	Potential Systemic Issues not reviewed in 7 days	< 5	1
	Cases closed in less than 28 days	> 80%	69%
	Cases closed in less than 60 days	> 90%	96%
	Cases closed over 90 days	< 1%	1%
Our Connections	Publish quarterly newsletter	4	4
	Increase website page views	> 10%	21%
	Increase social media followers	> 10%	15%
	Policy submissions made	> 6	15
	ANZOA interest group meetings attended ²	> 20	20
	Number of community outreach activities	> 20	42

¹Survey not conducted this financial year

²ANZOA Australian and New Zealand Ombudsman Association



Customer story

CHANGES TO THE BILLING ARRANGEMENT FOR AN EMBEDDED NETWORK CAUSED CONFUSION AROUND THE COST OF LIVING REBATE

Colin* lived within an Embedded Network, and in October 2023 his building managers engaged a new billing agent. They decided to administer the rebate as quarterly payments, and as a result, Colin missed out on the full value of the rebate.

Here's how we helped:

We investigated and spoke to the billing agent to understand what had happened. Under normal circumstances, Embedded Network customers receive Cost of Living rebates as a lump sum, rather than 4 x quarterly payments like other dwelling types such as houses and metered townhouses. In this situation, when the new billing agent took over in October, they decided to distribute the Cost of Living rebate quarterly. This meant the first quarter (July – September) was missed.

We also discovered that the previous billing agent had lodged a Cost of Living form in mid-July, but there had been some issues regarding the application and the funds were not received by residents. When the new billing agent took over and realised residents had not been paid, a claim should have been submitted for the full value of the rebate for all eligible account holders. The rebate credits should not have been administered quarterly for this site.

The impact of quarterly rebate credits within an Embedded Network is that if any residents move out during the year, they will miss out on the full value. Also, if any residents move in after 1 July (the required residency start date), and are therefore not eligible for the rebate, they will incorrectly receive a portion.

As a result of our investigation, the new billing agent followed up with the retailer and was able to apply the remainder of the claim to the account so that all eligible residents, including Colin, received their rebate.

Colin and the other residents were all pleased with this outcome.

*Name changed to protect privacy.

Our customers



At a glance

Most of our customers are based in South East Queensland, with 70% of complaints originating in the 11 local government areas within this region. This is a reduction compared to last year (86%), indicating that EWOC's profile is increasing throughout the rest of the state as we seek to support more Queenslanders through our services.

Residential customers account for 97% of our cases with most preferring to submit their complaint by phone (60%).



In detail

TOP 10 CUSTOMER LOCATIONS BY COMPLAINTS¹

Brisbane City Council

24% (1,398)

Cairns Regional Council

4% (255)

City of Gold Coast

15% (857)

Fraser Coast Regional Council

4% (238)

Moreton Bay Regional Council

8% (489)

Ipswich City Council

4% (225)

Sunshine Coast Regional Council

7% (385)

Redland City Council

3% (191)

Logan City Council

5% (320)

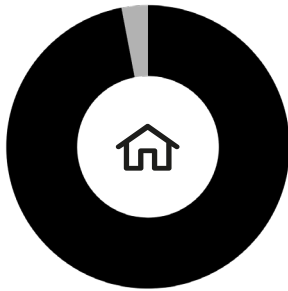
Townsville City Council

3% (170)

Location figures are based on the incident address and exclude non-residential complaints, and residential complaints where the customer did not disclose a Queensland suburb or postcode or was from interstate or overseas.

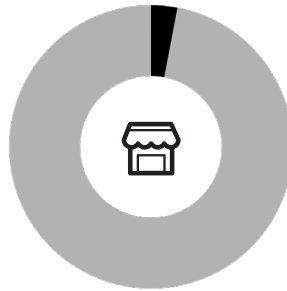
¹For complaints where an incident address was provided, 70% were from South East Queensland, which includes the local government areas of Brisbane, Gold Coast, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley, Logan, Moreton Bay, Noosa, Redlands, Scenic Rim, Somerset and Sunshine Coast.

WHO CONTACTED US?



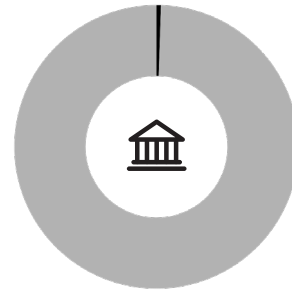
97%

residential



3%

small business



<1%

government

How many First Nations customers contacted us?

We have asked our customers whether they identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander since July 2019, which has given us more accurate insight into the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who use our service. We use this information to monitor trends affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers and engage with industry regarding the challenges they face.

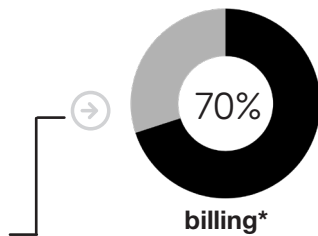
We closed **368 cases** in the 2023-24 period for customers identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. This represents 4.4% of cases where the customer responded to the First Nations question.

Cases closed

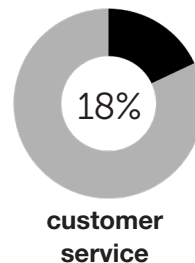
368

Complaints

335



70%
billing*



18%
customer
service



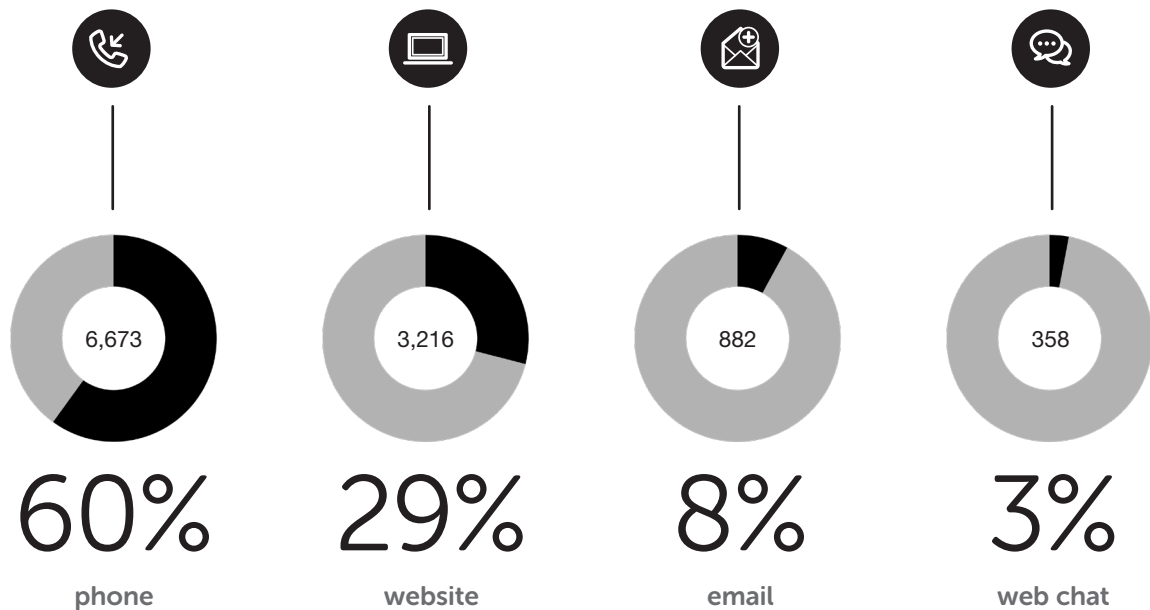
7%
credit^

By comparison, for complaints where the customer did not identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, 72% were about billing, 15% about customer service and 4% about credit in 2023-24.

* Billing = high or disputed bills, metering faults, billing errors, rebates and concessions.

^ Credit = payment difficulties, hardship and disconnections.

How customers contacted EWOQ in 2023-24



40 people (<1%) contacted us via other methods which may include in person, letter, social media and SMS.

There has been a shift in the way customers contact us over the past 5 years. The percentage of customers calling us by phone has decreased by 9% while complaints submitted via the website and emails increased by 11%. However, within the last 12 months, this trend reversed, with the share of people contacting us by phone increasing by 10%, and the share of people contacting us via the website and emails decreased by 9%.



Learn more

FOR THE DATA

Visit ewoq.com.au and search 'complaint statistics' to view the number of complaints by postcode.

See Appendix 2

- Who contacted us – customer profile
- 5-year contact method.

RELATED READING

Case types – see page 25.

Customer satisfaction



At a glance

During 2023-24, we surveyed customers to gather feedback about their experience using our service.

The surveys were sent to customers who indicated they would participate in our customer satisfaction survey, and whose complaint fell into one of the following categories:

- referred to a higher level (RHL) with their electricity, gas or water provider
- investigated
- referred back to their electricity, gas or water provider.

The surveys help us improve our service for customers, including the information we give to customers about our complaints process, our helpfulness and skills in discussing the complaint, and our consideration of case information to help provide a resolution.

The surveys are grounded in the Australian Government's benchmarks for industry-based customer dispute resolution, which focuses on the 6 key attributes of effective dispute resolution services: accessibility, independence, fairness, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

A 95% increase in survey participation has provided insights on process and improvements to customer experience.



Key data

TOP WAYS CUSTOMERS LEARNED ABOUT US

35%

online search or social media

21%

electricity, gas or water provider

(73% of these found our contact details on their bill)

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

76%

of surveyed customers said they would recommend EWOQ to others.

88% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with how courteous, friendly and helpful our team members were.

89% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with the ease of finding an ombudsman to complain about an electricity, gas or water retailer.

72% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with the time we took to investigate and resolve their complaint.

69% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with their overall experience.

"Thank you so much. I don't think you realise how much we appreciate the help. Our energy provider couldn't or wouldn't resolve the issue during the 6 months of our enquiries to them. Once in contact with your staff members, the energy provider had the issue sorted out within 2 weeks."



In detail

TRENDS AND KEY FINDINGS

Based on survey results, customer satisfaction levels vary between complaint categories, with the following key measures standing out.

Key measure (very satisfied)	Refer back	RHL	Investigation
The effort made by EWOQ team member to listen and fully understand your side of the complaint	72%	90%	80%
The knowledge, skills and expertise of EWOQ team member involved in your complaint	71%	89%	76%
The final outcome of your complaint	78%	70%	64%

RHL customers who responded to the survey indicated they were more satisfied compared to investigation customers who responded.

Customers who complete the survey can share any additional comments with us about the service they have received. Through this we received 237 compliments about our service, 66 of which mentioned individual officers. This feedback is also reviewed as part of our quality assurance framework to understand improvements we can make to our processes and customer experience.

Customer experience improvements

Over the past 12 months we have undertaken several initiatives to enhance customer experience.

- Installed an English editing tool called Hemingway to enhance writing in plain English to ensure that our communication is accessible for all customers.
- Deep dive reporting on customer feedback from April to June 2024 to obtain information that we used to incorporate a human-centred design approach, to address customer pain points in previous surveying.
- New process developed and implemented to improve our follow up resolution progression of RHL complaints to enhance the customer experience.
- Authority to Act processes updated to strengthen customer privacy.
- Auto-reply email added to dispute resolution inboxes to update customers on service standard times.
- Welcome letters developed for refer back and RHL customers for the new customer relationship management (CRM) system.
- Reviewed vulnerability using the National standard and identified approaches to enhance process and reporting in this area. For instance, vulnerability reporting in the Voice of Customer commenced.
- Introduced mandatory self-reflection process where dispute resolution officers listen to calls as part of our ongoing capability uplift program.
- Increased the frequency of dispute resolution team workshops to discuss customer experience trends and highlights. Topics aligned to quality assurance and customer feedback indicators:
 - » Customer’s perception of bias and fairness.
 - » The importance of presence and efficiency during peak times.
 - » Adding value to our Refer back process.
 - » Aligning ‘what we do’ with the dispute resolution industry benchmarks.



Learn more

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit ewoq.com.au and search ‘customer survey’ or ‘engagement charter’.

RELATED READING

Our service – see page 24.

Our connections – see page 38.



Customer story

A CUSTOMER ACCUMULATED DEBT OF AROUND \$3,500 AFTER A CHANGE IN ELECTRICITY RETAILER

Alex* had solar installed and changed from his original retailer to a subsidiary retailer. Bills were paid as usual. After a couple of years, Alex was advised that the subsidiary retailer was closing and the account would be transferred back to the primary retailer. Alex thought nothing more of it, as all customer details would be moved in the transition and no action needed to be taken on his part.

When Alex noticed he hadn't had a bill in a while, he contacted the retailer and discovered that incorrect contact information had been received for him when the account was moved across from the subsidiary retailer. This was why no bills or notices were received. The power had also not been disconnected at all during this time, which would have alerted Alex of an issue.

A large debt had accumulated of approximately \$3,500 – putting Alex's family into a difficult financial position.

When Alex called the retailer back a short time later, he noted that they still had the incorrect details in their system.

Here's how we helped:

Our investigation confirmed that incorrect contact information had been carried over, and the retailer confirmed that it was their error.

As a result, the retailer initially adjusted the bill down to \$1,200, and then as a commercial decision, further waived the balance, leaving nil owing.

Alex had not expected the whole amount to be waived and was very grateful. He acknowledged that the financial assistance provided by the retailer in waiving the bill had significantly assisted his family and was very pleased with the outcome.

*Name changed to protect privacy.

Our people



At a glance

On 30 June 2024, 42 officers were employed on a full or part-time basis. Our hybrid work model has been successfully embedded, fostering flexibility and collaboration across teams. We focused on strategic recruitment and onboarding to attract skilled applicants aligned with our values, ensuring they contribute effectively from the start.

We conducted a series of people workshops with the executive management group, establishing guiding principles for consistent decision making related to organisational design, structure and recruitment. Our commitment to culture, values, and health and wellbeing was reflected in activities led by our dedicated working group, enhancing mental and physical health and fundraising for causes important to our team.

Team collaboration was further evident with our Workplace Health and Safety (WH&S) Committee and Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) working group contributing their knowledge and skills to assist in this regard.

Learning and development remained a priority, with various opportunities offered to team members, including participation in the Queensland Government Digital Graduate Program. We developed and implemented an online performance development and appraisal platform, recruited 2 First Nations roles to enhance our outreach, and delivered customer relationship management system (CRM) training across our 3 office locations.



Key data

42 Total Full Time Employees

Occupation type	Percentage of total workforce (Calculated on FTE)
Corporate	46.2%
Frontline and frontline support	53.8%
Appointment type	Percentage of total workforce (Calculated on FTE)
Permanent	86.22%
Temporary	11.48%
Casual	0.00%
Contract	2.30%
Employment status	Percentage of total workforce (Calculated on FTE)
Full-time	88.37%
Part-time	11.62%
Casual	0.00%

No redundancy, early retirement or retrenchment packages were paid during the period.

Diversity groups	Number (Head count)	Percentage of total workforce (Calculated on headcount)
Women	32	74.42%
Aboriginal People and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples	<5	Not disclosed
People with disability	<5	Not disclosed
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse – speak a language at home other than English including ATSI/ASSI languages	<5	Not disclosed
Women in leadership roles – Senior Officers ¹	1	2.32%
Senior Executive Service and Chief Executives ²	1	2.32%

Gender	Number (Head count)	Percentage of total workforce (Calculated on headcount)
Man	11	25.58%
Woman	32	74.42%
Non-binary	0	0%

¹Positions that are Classified, s122 and s155 combined.

²Positions that are Classified and s122 and s155 combined.



In detail

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

We embraced and adopted a flexible work arrangement as standard practice, with 3 days in the office and 2 days working from home. This approach has proven successful. Specific needs are met through individual flexible work arrangements, and we have adapted our working week to maximise these arrangements with team meetings occurring face-to-face where possible.

A one-EWOQ approach has ensured a focus on consistency and ongoing collaboration and interaction across our organisation. Our team members continued to access a range of flexible work arrangements, including:

- telecommuting
- compressed hours
- flexible start and finish times
- purchased leave
- part-time arrangements.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to developing our people to ensure our services are delivered efficiently and effectively.

All team members are encouraged to develop their skills and knowledge through on-the-job training, self-directed and instructor-led learning.

While there has been a heavy focus across the second part of the year on the development and delivery of CRM training, including user acceptance testing for those who

will be initially using the system in their dispute resolution role, ongoing technical, compliance, role-specific and professional development activities on a range of topics have continued. These have included:

- leadership development
- contemporary dispute resolution
- customer experience
- procurement
- desktop publishing
- mental health first aid
- Acknowledgement of Country
- compliance training for each team member included building evacuation, code of conduct, fraud control, privacy, risk management and workplace bullying.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

EWOQ maintains a Consultative Committee, co-chaired with Together Union, to facilitate meaningful consultation on matters that may impact the EWOQ workforce. In the 2023-24 period the EWOQ Consultative Committee consulted on:

- workload management
- organisational change and restructuring
- training
- work-life balance
- improving gender equity
- fair career paths.

STRATEGIC HR AND POLICY REVISIONS

The commencement of the new Public Sector Act in early 2023, the Core Agreement (enterprise bargaining) certification and the release of the *Even better public service for Queensland strategy 2024-2028* has driven a focus on the creation or review of core human resource policies, procedures and resources within EWOQ. Additionally, with our organisational design work, HR delegations have required an extensive review to ensure parity and consistency across roles.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Our Performance Management Framework is reflective of positive performance management practices and provides our team members with the opportunity to understand expectations, focus on continuous improvement, receive feedback and identify current and future development needs.

During the year, our online performance development and appraisal system was implemented, with monthly 1-on-1 and 6 monthly performance reviews included. Enhanced reporting capabilities have meant ease of access to learning and development requirements, ensuring priority can be placed on individual development needs, along with tracking of completion of the phases.

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

We are committed to diversity of thought, experience, perspective and gender.

In 2023-24, we improved our diversity and inclusion capability by:

- utilising a tailored recruitment strategy to recruit 2 frontline First Nations team members, which offers an opportunity for customers who identify as First Nations to speak to a dedicated Early Resolution Officer - First Nations
- providing team members with access to an Employee Assistance Program with specialist support for minority groups
- endorsement of our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan
- strengthening and growing our networks and partnerships within the communities we served
- continuing to support writing of individual Acknowledgement of Country statements
- reviewing our human rights, discrimination and inclusion and diversity support material on our intranet.

We are also proud of the development of our Cultural Learning Strategy which provides a basis to develop and maintain cultural awareness when interacting and providing services for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait

Islander customers and assisting to ensure the cultural safety of our team members who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Discrimination results in *Working for Queensland* – our employee opinion survey – continued to indicate a strong culture of non-discriminatory behaviour.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

The mental and physical wellbeing of our team members continued to be of the utmost importance for us. Our WH&S Committee met every 3 months and focused on:

- our wellness program and the themes of mental health, health and wellbeing, family and financial fitness. We ensured team members had access to flu vaccinations, nutritional information, mental health and wellbeing seminars, domestic and family violence programs, and corporate memberships for health insurance and fitness centres
- promoting the various programs encouraging movement across the working day given that we know a sedentary lifestyle can increase health risks
- implemented a program of work to ensure psychosocial hazards are mitigated, including ongoing review of workload at the leadership and executive management group level, refresher training for our volunteer network of Mental Health First Aiders and delivery of contemporary dispute resolution training including looking after wellbeing in dispute resolution.

Relevant workplace health and safety policies and procedures were reviewed and endorsed to support legislative compliance and ensure the health and wellbeing of our team members.

EMPLOYEE ACHIEVEMENT AND RECOGNITION PROGRAM

During 2023-24, our EWOQ All Stars Employee Achievement and Recognition Program continued, celebrating the successes of our team members with awards granted throughout the year across 3 categories:

- **All Star Award** – a bi-annual award recognising a team member for their overall contribution, ongoing commitment and demonstration of our values.
- **Bright Star Award** – a quarterly award for innovation, leadership, enthusiasm and problem solving.
- **Constellation Award** – a quarterly award recognising a high performing team.

There are also 2 informal awards that can be issued at any time by any team member:

- **Shining Star Award** – for going above and beyond.
- **Rock Star Award** – which celebrates team members making a difference, paying it forward or simply making the team laugh.



Customer story

A CUSTOMER FACING FINANCIAL AND PERSONAL HARDSHIP HAS DEBT SENT TO COLLECTION AGENCY

Rachel* was experiencing financial and personal hardship after leaving a domestic violence situation. In addition to this, she lost her job and her home was impacted by flooding.

Rachel contacted her energy provider to let them know about her financial hardship and requested a payment plan for her accumulated debt of over \$1,800. The provider did not respond to her request in a timely manner and Rachel made the decision to disconnect the power. This resulted in the account being closed, and following their normal process, the provider sent the debt to a collection agency.

After discovering what had happened, Rachel contacted the provider again. As a result, the debt was recalled from collection and a payment plan set up. Rachel was then informed she was not eligible to apply for the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme (HEEAS) to help with her debt amount.

Here's how we helped:

When we investigated, we confirmed that there was an initial delay in the energy provider responding to Rachel's payment plan and hardship request. When the time was added on for referral to the collection agency and then withdrawal again, the account had been closed for over 60 days. This meant that the customer was no longer eligible to apply for HEEAS \$720 grant, as applications need to be initiated by the energy provider within 60 days of account closure.

As a resolution of the matter, the energy provider applied a \$1,000 credit to Rachel's account. This credit was to cover the missed HEEAS grant of \$720 plus an extra \$280 as a customer service goodwill gesture. For the remaining balance, the energy provider offered to review Rachel's current payment plan to ensure it was manageable. Rachel was satisfied with the outcome, including the payment plan.

*Name changed to protect privacy.

Our service



At a glance

In 2023-24 our service effectively supported customers with a wide range of complaints and issues including billing errors, service quality, connection problems and supply reliability. We handled **11,169 cases** this year and our efforts amounted to **\$816,632** in customer benefits.

Despite the sharp 54% increase in the total number of cases closed compared to last year, we resolved 96% of cases within 60 days and 99% within 90 days, showcasing our commitment to timely dispute resolution.

This unprecedented demand was primarily caused by increases in complaints about billing (61% increase) and customer service (166% increase), with increases seen across almost every type of case handled.

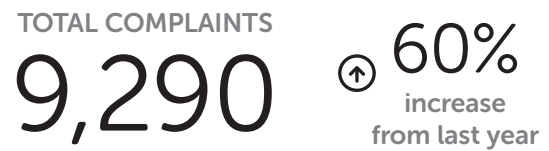
For customers in **embedded networks** – where electricity is supplied through privately owned networks in settings

like retirement villages and apartment blocks – we closed 582 complaints, effectively integrating these cases into our standard processes. This included 307 complaints about authorised retailers and 275 about exempt sellers, addressing top issues such as billing and customer service.

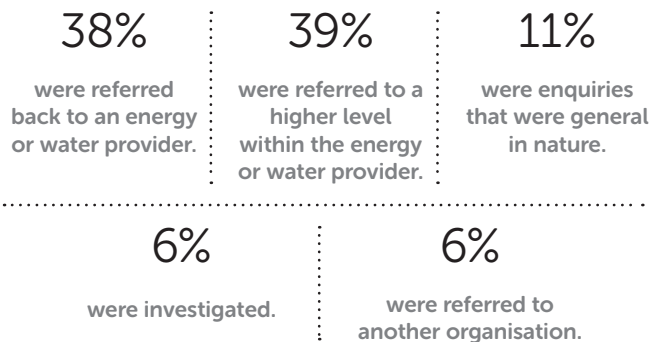
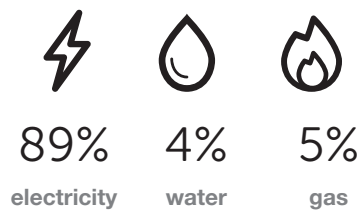
Systemic issues, which affect multiple customers, are identified through monitoring and collaboration with regulators and industry bodies, or our investigations into complaints. We identified **71 potential systemic issues**, which is a decrease of 11% compared to last year, which resulted in **44 systemic issue notices being sent**, an increase of 10%. Addressing systemic issues reduces widespread problems and improves service delivery for all customers.



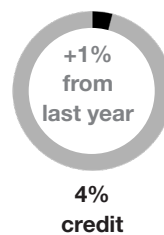
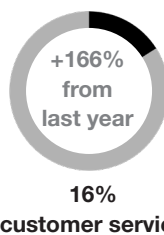
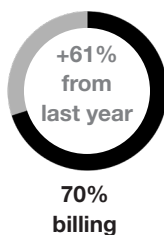
Key data



Of the 11,169 cases closed in 2023-24:



Top 5 issues



Based on complaints (refer backs, refer to higher levels and investigations).



In detail

Our service was established to assist customers who use less than 160 megawatt hours of electricity a year or one terajoule of gas a year. In South East Queensland, we can also help residential and small business water customers with complaints when their water consumption is less than 100 kilolitres a year.

We investigate unresolved disputes about:

- account errors and disputes
- connection of supply
- customer service issues
- damages and loss
- disconnections and restrictions
- equipment issues
- extensions to supply
- guaranteed service levels
- marketing and contract issues
- problems with payment
- supply quality and reliability
- vegetation management
- (for water) burst pipes, leaks, blockages and spills.

As a free, fair and independent dispute resolution service, our approach is based on the principles of external dispute resolution. We seek to establish the facts and issues to help our customers and their provider better understand the problem at hand, and each other's point of view.

The outcome of a complaint may be achieved by agreement between the customer and the provider, or through conciliation based on what we deem as a fair and reasonable outcome.

CASE TYPES

When a customer contacts us there are several options.

- We listen to their issue and classify it as an enquiry
- We refer them to another organisation if their complaint is outside our jurisdiction
- We refer them back to their energy or water provider
- We refer the case to a higher level (RHL) with their provider
- We investigate the matter.

A case is any contact a customer has with us, while complaints are those cases that are billed to a scheme participant and include refer backs, RHL and investigations.

› Enquiry

1,193 = 11% of cases closed

Sometimes customers contact us with a general enquiry about their energy or water supply. We can provide them with advice and if we are unable to help, we refer them to an organisation who can.

Enquiries increased by 34% this year.

› Refer back

4,295 = 38% of cases closed

Before we can help, customers need to give their provider a chance to fix the problem. If a customer contacts us and they haven't contacted their provider to discuss the issue, we note the case as a refer back.

Refer backs to energy and water providers increased by 66% this year.

› Refer to higher level

4,352 = 39% of cases closed

This process escalates a complaint to a higher level within the energy or water provider. Based on the complaint, a dispute resolution team member determines whether the matter can be resolved through an RHL.

We prepare a RHL notice for the provider with a summary of the customer’s issue. The provider is required to contact the customer within 5 business days after receiving the notice. If contact is not made, or the issue remains unresolved, customers can request an investigation.

› Referral to other organisations

686 = 6% of cases closed

This year, referrals to other organisations increased by 20%. Most of these cases (77%) were referred to the Office of Fair Trading, including complaints about bulk hot water, bottled gas and solar installation. Referrals to the Australian Energy Regulator accounted for 11% of referrals.

For disputes outside our jurisdiction, we have Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the following organisations to ensure timely exchange of information and referral of cases, where relevant:

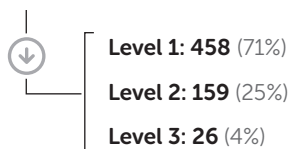
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
- Australian Energy Regulator
- Department of Energy and Climate
- Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water
- Office of Fair Trading
- Queensland Competition Authority
- Queensland Ombudsman.

Issues we refer to these organisations include:

- the fixing of prices or tariffs
- a customer contribution to the cost of capital works
- products such as air conditioners, hot water systems, solar panels and home electrician services offered by electricity retailers
- on-selling of water and gas to tenants in caravan parks, retirement villages and other multi-tenanted dwellings (embedded networks)
- bottled LPG (liquefied petroleum gas)
- electricity consumption of more than 160 megawatt hours a year
- gas consumption of more than one terajoule a year
- water consumption of more than 100 kilolitres a year for small business
- metered standpipes, raw water supplies, trade waste, stormwater harvesting or stand-alone recycled water.

› Investigations

643 = 6% of cases closed



At the start of an investigation, we prepare a notice of investigation detailing the customer’s complaint, which is sent to the customer’s provider. The provider is then required to respond within 10 business days. The investigation officer liaises with the customer and provider to achieve a fair and reasonable resolution.

If the investigation determines the provider’s actions are appropriate, the complaint is closed and both parties advised of the decision and our reasons.

If an error is found, we will try to negotiate a suitable outcome.

Examples include:

- a payment plan for an overdue account
- reconnection of energy supply, or compensation for damage to equipment.

This year, we closed 643 investigations (down from 758 in 2022-23). Investigation levels are based on the time spent on the complaint.

Level 3 investigations are the most complex type of complaint we manage and can take several weeks to resolve. In 2023-24, each Level 3 investigation took an average of 9.2 hours to resolve, with the longest being 19.7 hours.

› Final order

If we cannot achieve informal resolution of the complaint, the matter may be finalised in several ways.

Firstly, a decision can be made under section 22 of the Act to not investigate or to discontinue the investigation. There were 16 cases finalised this way in 2023-24.

Secondly, if a matter cannot be resolved by negotiation or conciliation, the Ombudsman may decide to make a final order requiring an energy or water provider to take certain action.

No final orders were issued this year.

OUR SERVICE

Among other things, the Ombudsman can order energy and water providers to:

- pay compensation
- provide a non-monetary solution to remedy the dispute
- amend a stated charge under the Act
- cancel a negotiated contract
- perform corrective work.

› Notice of withdrawal

A customer can withdraw a case during its investigation.

There were 4 notice of withdrawals during 2023-24.

EMBEDDED NETWORKS

Most people buy their electricity directly from an authorised energy retailer. However, some buy their electricity from a privately owned energy network. These networks are called embedded networks.

Embedded networks are common in retirement villages, apartment blocks and caravan parks. The site owner or operator buys electricity from the grid and on-sells it to the residents.

Most owners or operators of embedded networks are exempt sellers, meaning the Australian Energy Regulator doesn't require them to hold a retailer authorisation to on sell electricity. However, there are also some authorised retailers who 'on-supply' electricity to embedded network customers.

We have continued to adapt our service to embedded network customers and exempt sellers this year.

- Complaints about exempt sellers have now been integrated into our business-as-usual processes.
- We further streamlined our onboarding process to ensure complaints are dealt with in a timely manner.
- We actively worked with the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) to improve our referral process for potential failure to register an exemption or, to engage with EWOQ.

In the 2023-24 period we closed **582** embedded network complaints:

- **307** authorised retailer complaints
- **275** exempt seller complaints.

Top issues for embedded networks:

- Billing 80%
- Credit 10%
- Customer service 7%
- Provision 3%.

Case types:

- Refer back 64%
- Refer to higher level 19%
- Investigation 17%.

SYSTEMIC ISSUES

A systemic issue is a problem that a customer has with an energy or water provider that affects, or can affect, more than one customer. Under the *Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006*, we identify any systemic issues arising from complaints to us.

Systemic issues can arise through a range of factors including human error, failed systems and a lack of policies or procedures.

We identify potential systemic issues in several ways.

- Our investigation team monitors complaints and identifies potential systemic issues through our case management system.
- We stay informed about current and emerging systemic issues through advice from the Advisory Council, our relationships with regulators, government organisations and our peer networks with other ombudsmen offices.
- Scheme participants may make us aware of a systemic issue.

In 2023-24, there were:

- **71** potential systemic issues identified, a decrease of 11%
- **44** systemic issue notices were sent, an increase of 10%.

A systemic issue notice is issued when an issue has been identified with one or more scheme participant asking for more information to find out if the issue is actually systemic in nature.

Billing continues to be the most common type of systemic issue registered, accounting for 62% of potential systemic issues.

Top potential systemic issues:

- Billing 62%
- Customer service 24%
- Transfer 4%
- Metering 3%
- Marketing 3%
- Other 4%.

Resolving systemic issues

When a potential systemic issue is identified we:

- advise the scheme participant
- request information on how they would address it
- ask scheme participants to determine how many customers could be impacted
- update the relevant regulator when there was a risk a systemic issue could breach or violate a legislative code or license.

Depending on the concern, our identification of systemic issues may lead a scheme participant to redesign products and services, change organisational practices and procedures, retrain staff on product and service delivery, reassess consumer information (e.g. labelling), reassess the performance of after-sales service or receive an early warning about potential product and service defects.

Systemic issues outcomes

Of the 69 potential systemic issues closed in 2023-24, 25 were monitored and did not result in a systemic issue notice being issued.

Scheme participants identified the following outcomes to address the remaining issues:

- 4 issues led to remedial action undertaken by the scheme participant
- 1 issue was addressed by staff training
- 1 resulted in additional staff resourcing
- 38 resulted in no action taken.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

We conduct regular quality assurance (QA) to ensure our data accuracy and case management practices are effective, efficient and compliant.

More than 200 calls and cases were reviewed across multiple complaint types and investigation levels throughout 2023-24.

- **115** calls were reviewed to monitor the quality of our case classification and customer service
- **11** cases were randomly selected for end-to-end case management review to ensure that best practice processes had been observed
- **89** customer journeys were reviewed for cases where we have received positive or negative feedback through our customer satisfaction survey. As part of this process, we contacted customers for further information and 15 customers provided further insights to improve our services.

Analysis and findings from the reviews were used to drive process enhancements and ongoing coaching and development. Case management trends and process gaps were addressed in regular team training sessions.

The dispute resolution leadership group conducted monthly calibration of select calls, outgoing correspondence and cases to minimise inconsistencies in leadership advice and communications within the team.

Broader customer experience recommendations will form part of the 2024-25 dispute resolution capability uplift.

This year we also delivered several initiatives through our Quality Management Framework 2023-25 under the following key deliverables:

- Improved individual performance reporting
 - » released individual officer dashboards and provided refresher training of known data discrepancies, resulting in a 79% decrease in errors by June 2024
 - » developed QA results dashboard for individual visibility of case reviews and feedback, to be released in line with 2024-25 performance measures.
- Coaching approach uplift
 - » developed new coaching conversation form and process
 - » developed coaching conversation record within our learning management platform
 - » designed and delivered 'Call Reflection' process, forming part of the overall coaching framework.
- Increase QA reporting capabilities
 - » updated QA data capture to assist with future reporting enhancements
 - » developed a leader's dashboard to provide oversight of all QA reviews and errors.

TIME TAKEN TO RESOLVE COMPLAINTS

Demand for our service was higher than usual, driven in part by the impacts felt by Queenslanders as some providers replaced and embedded new billing systems and experienced high wait times for customer channels.

We did not meet our service standard target of closing 80% of cases in 28 days this year. However, we exceeded our targets of closing 90% within 60 days and 95% within 90 days.

Time taken to close cases

	Target	2023-24	
Less than 28 days	80%	7,684	69%
Less than 60 days	90%	10,732	96%
Less than 90 days	95%	11,048	99%
More than 90 days	< 5%	121	1%

MONETARY OUTCOMES

We negotiated a total of \$816,632 worth of outcomes for customers.

Top 5 monetary outcomes

		Number	Amount
1	Billing adjustment	301	\$264,544
2	Goodwill gesture	716	\$230,017
3	Refund processed	231	\$202,113
4	Debt waiver	52	\$40,332
5	Rebate applied	63	\$32,542



Learn more

FOR THE DATA

See Appendix 2

- Closed case types
- Cases referred to other organisations
- Performance targets – time taken to close cases.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit ewoq.com.au and search 'complaints'.

Visit ewoq.com.au and search 'systemic issues'.

RELATED READING

Our customers – see page 14.

Our governance – see page 42.

Electricity complaints ⚡



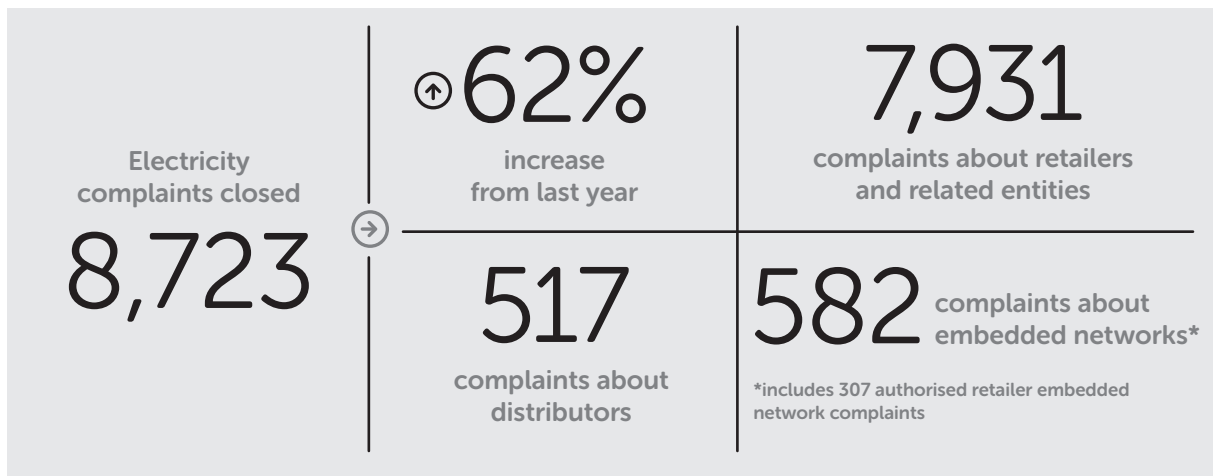
At a glance

We closed 8,723 complaints about electricity during 2023-24 – 3,342 more than the previous year. Refer to higher level and refer backs were the most common types of electricity complaints (48% and 45% of complaints respectively), followed by investigations (7%).

Billing was the most common primary issue with 70% of complaints closed. Customer service complaints (16% of complaints) was the second highest primary issue.

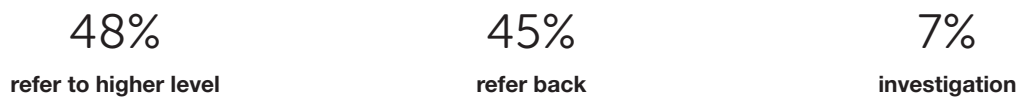
Complaints about provision was the third highest primary issue in 2023-24 (5%), followed by credit (4%).

For investigations, credit remained the second most common primary issue, with 10% of investigations being about credit, in line with previous year. Billing investigations remained stable at 75% of investigations in 2023-24 compared to 74% last year.

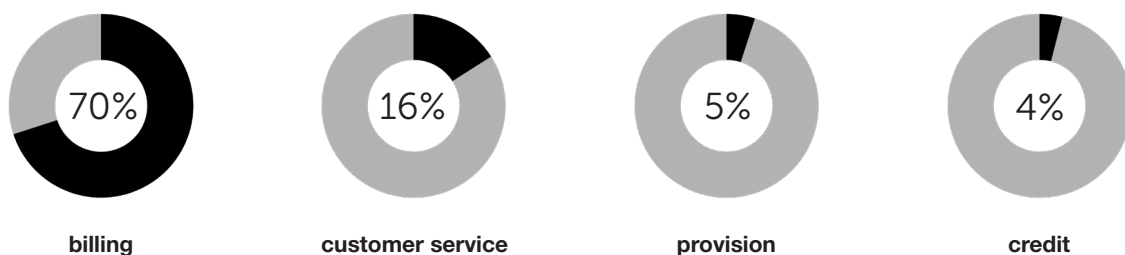


Key data

Closed electricity complaints by case type



Electricity complaints by primary issue



CLOSED ELECTRICITY COMPLAINTS

Table 1: Closed electricity complaints by primary issue and case type

Primary issue	Refer back	Refer to higher level	Investigation	Total
Billing	2,740	2,963	440	6,143
Customer service	530	838	20	1,388
Provision	200	169	30	399
Credit	199	101	57	357
Supply	129	27	23	179
Transfer	35	38	8	81
Land	18	27	7	52
Marketing	14	27	2	43
Other	81	0	0	81
Total	3,946	4,190	587	8,723

INVESTIGATIONS

An **investigation** is a complaint we examine to facilitate an outcome we believe is fair and reasonable for both the customer and provider. Investigations can be Level 1, 2 or 3 depending on the time it takes to resolve the issue.

Table 2: Electricity investigations by primary and secondary issues

Primary issue	Secondary issue	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Billing	High	331	223	143	173	179
	Estimation	153	91	70	76	57
	Delay	27	20	31	68	16
	Error	139	78	64	42	31
	Tariff	64	46	30	37	18
	Meter	29	43	33	29	36
	Rebate/concession	38	30	11	24	49
	Opening/closing account	41	31	27	18	11
	Backbill	42	21	22	16	20
	Fees and charges	23	14	6	11	5
	Incorrect account details	4	4	8	7	3
	Refund	14	30	11	6	5
	Format	0	2	1	1	3
	Period	5	7	0	1	2
	Re-bill	5	2	0	1	3
Other	40	25	4	5	2	
Total		955	667	461	515	440

Continued on next page.

Primary issue	Secondary issue	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Credit	Collection	162	98	51	34	34
	Disconnection/restriction	143	9	28	20	12
	Payment difficulties	64	21	14	7	4
	Hardship	10	6	8	3	6
	Privacy	3	4	4	2	1
Total		382	138	105	66	57
Provision	Existing connection	112	84	61	27	22
	Disconnection/restriction	25	5	11	6	5
	New connection	34	15	13	5	3
Total		171	104	85	38	30
Supply	Off supply (unplanned)	28	21	24	11	15
	Variation	7	6	8	4	3
	Quality	2	6	0	4	2
	Off supply (planned)	5	7	7	3	3
Total		42	40	39	22	23
Customer service	Failure to consult or inform	11	10	6	12	7
	Poor service	39	29	12	9	6
	Incorrect advice or information	28	30	14	7	2
	Failure to respond	5	10	6	5	4
	Privacy	2	2	1	2	N/A [†]
	Poor/unprofessional attitude	2	1	1	0	1
	Refund	6	3	0	0	N/A [†]
Total		93	85	40	35	20
Transfer	Without consent	17	8	5	2	2
	Delay	18	5	2	1	1
	Billing	2	0	2	1	N/A [†]
	In error	6	4	1	0	2
	Objection/rejected by retailer	2	3	1	0	0
	Site ownership	4	2	1	0	1
	Error	1	4	0	0	2
	Contract terms*	2	1	0	1	0
Total		52	27	12	5	8
Land	Property damage/restoration	6	4	5	4	3
	Vegetation management	2	2	1	3	0
	Network assets	7	6	9	2	4
	Easement	0	0	1	0	0
	Street lighting	0	0	1	0	0
	Other	0	1	0	0	0
Total		15	13	17	9	7

Continued on next page.

OUR SERVICE

Primary issue	Secondary issue	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Marketing	Contract	1	2	2	2	1
	Misleading	7	1	2	1	0
	Pressure	0	0	2	0	0
	Information	1	0	1	0	1
	Non account holder	0	0	0	0	N/A†
	Door to door	0	0	0	0	0
Total		9	3	7	3	2
Grand total		1,719	1,077	766	693	587

†Note that in 2023-24 EWOQ restructured its issue tree and these issues were either already classified elsewhere or were redundant.

*Renamed from cooling off rights in the 23-24 issue tree review.

ELECTRICITY COMPLAINTS CLOSED PER 10,000 CUSTOMERS

Table 3: Electricity complaints closed per 10,000 customers

Provider ¹	Electricity customer numbers ²	Complaints closed per 10,000 customers	Complaints closed 2023-24	Complaints closed 2022-23	% Variance
First tier retailer³					
Ergon Energy Queensland Pty Ltd	500,001 - 1,000,000	29	2,116	491	331%
Origin Energy Electricity Limited	500,001 - 1,000,000	27	1,738	1,009	72%
AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Ltd	100,001 - 500,000	30	1,266	591	114%
Second tier retailer					
Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	100,001 - 500,000	45	918	1,014	-9%
EnergyAustralia Pty Ltd	100,001 - 500,000	44	482	346	39%
Sumo Power Pty Ltd	10,001 - 100,000	139	171	99	73%
OVO Energy Pty Ltd	10,001 - 100,000	122	189	26	627%
Simply Energy (ENGIE)	10,001 - 100,000	104	100	96	4%
Dodo Power & Gas Pty Ltd	10,001 - 100,000	62	88	116	-24%
Hanwha Energy Retail Australia Pty Ltd (T/A Nectr Energy)	10,001 - 100,000	44	96	69	39%
Red Energy Pty Ltd	10,001 - 100,000	32	208	123	69%
Powershop Australia Pty Ltd	10,001 - 100,000	22	25	20	25%
Globird Energy Pty Ltd	3,001 - 10,000	52	50	16	213%
Energy Locals Pty Ltd	3,001 - 10,000	29	27	8	238%
Amber Electric Pty Ltd	< 3,001	130	42	3	1,300%

Continued on next page.

Provider ¹	Electricity customer numbers ²	Complaints closed per 10,000 customers	Complaints closed 2023-24	Complaints closed 2022-23	% Variance
Distributor					
Energex Limited	>1,000,000	2	255	260	-2%
Ergon Energy Corporation Limited	500,001 - 1,000,000	3	260	200	30%

¹Only providers with 20 or more complaints in 2023-24 have been included in this table. Embedded network complaints for retailers who on-sell electricity were also excluded. To view electricity retailer and distributor complaints by primary issue, turn to Appendix 3.

²Customer numbers sourced from AER retail energy market performance update for Quarter 3, 2023-24 (retailers) and AER Regulatory Information Notice (RIN) responses 2022-23 (distributors).

³First tier retailers are defined by the AER as those who hold more than a 10% market share in Queensland.



Learn more

FOR THE DATA

Turn to Appendix 3 for:

- closed electricity retailer complaints by primary issue
- closed electricity distributor complaints by primary issue.

RELATED READING

Appendix 5: Current scheme participants

Gas complaints 🔥



At a glance

We closed 271 gas complaints in 2023-24, an increase of 46%. Refer backs were the most common gas complaint type (63% of complaints), while billing was the most common primary issue (68% of complaints closed).



Key data

Gas complaints by primary issue

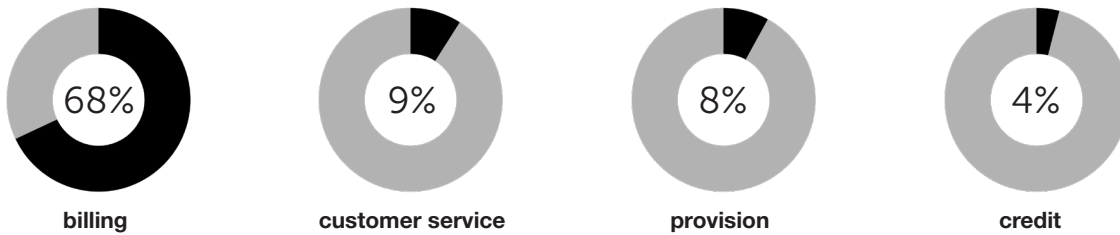


Table 4: Closed gas complaints by primary issue and case type

Primary issue	Refer back	Refer to higher level	Investigation	Total
Billing	113	64	7	184
Customer service	16	8	0	24
Provision	13	7	1	21
Credit	6	3	3	12
Transfer	3	5	1	9
Supply	8	0	0	8
Land	3	2	0	5
Marketing	2	0	0	2
Other	6	0	0	6
Total	170	89	12	271



Learn more

FOR THE DATA

Turn to Appendix 3 for:

- closed gas retailer complaints by primary issue
- closed gas distributor complaints by primary issue.

RELATED READING

Appendix 5: Current scheme participants

Water complaints



At a glance

There was a 22% increase in water complaints overall in 2023-24, consisting of a 38% increase in refer backs and a 26% increase in refer to higher level. Investigations decreased by 20%. Billing issues comprised 59% of complaints.



Key data

Water complaints by primary issue

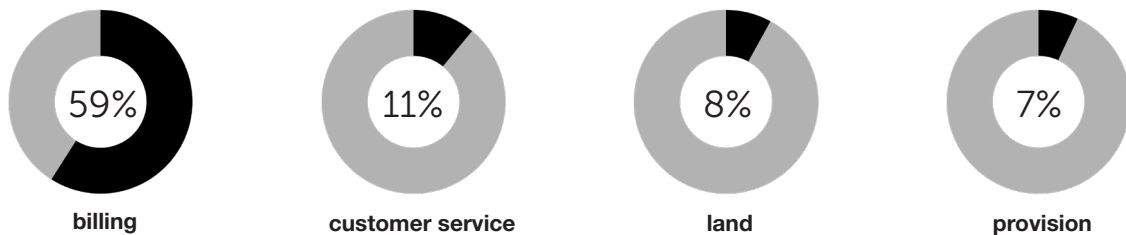


Table 5: Closed water complaints by primary issue and case type

Primary issue	Refer back	Refer to higher level	Investigation	Total
Billing	112	37	27	176
Customer service	19	11	2	32
Land	9	6	8	23
Provision	13	5	4	22
Credit	8	11	2	21
Supply	11	3	1	15
Other	7	0	0	7
Total	179	73	44	296



Learn more

FOR THE DATA

Turn to Appendix 3 for:

- closed water retailer complaints by primary issue
- closed water distributor complaints by primary issue.

RELATED READING

Appendix 5: Current scheme participants



Customer story

A CUSTOMER WAS FACING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY AND COULD NOT PAY THEIR \$220 ENERGY BILL BY THE DUE DATE

James* contacted his energy provider to discuss his options and was offered a payment plan under the provider's Hardship Program. James had heard about the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme (HEEAS) provided by the Australian Government and was confused why this was not offered to him.

The HEEAS is for Queensland households who are having trouble paying their electricity or gas bills due to an unforeseen emergency or a short-term financial crisis. The scheme offers a one-off payment of up to \$720 every 2 years.

When this was not offered, James contacted us to provide advice and support.

Here's how we helped:

We investigated the issue and the energy provider advised that the option they gave James was the best one in his situation because:

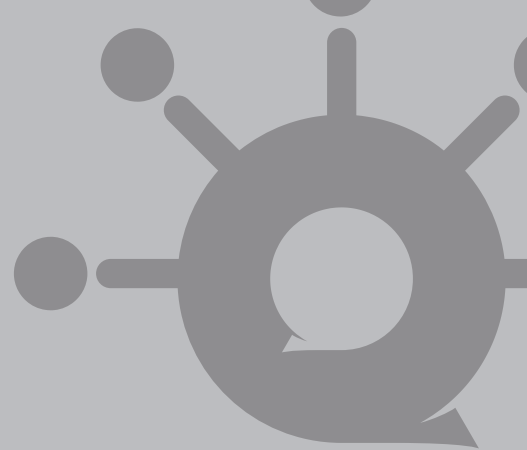
- The HEEAS is a one-off support payment of up to \$720, but with a bill of only \$220, James would not receive the full entitlement.
- If James' situation worsened, he could not apply again for 2 years.
- The energy provider was also concerned that the HEEAS support payment application may be rejected due to the amount being quite a bit lower than the full entitlement of \$720.

After speaking to the energy provider, we identified that this is a systemic issue, which means that the provider's normal process would be to offer the same advice to other customers who had similar overdue amounts. However, when managing customers in financial difficulty, energy providers are required to provide every opportunity for financial assistance – meaning that multiple options should be considered and/or offered. This could include assessing a customer's eligibility for the HEEAS support payment, the energy provider's own hardship program, or a short-term payment plan.

The energy provider advised their front-line team of this updated information so that they could offer a wider variety of options to other customers in the future, regardless of the bill amount.

*Name changed to protect privacy.

Our connections



At a glance

In 2023-24, we delivered a variety of awareness-raising initiatives and community outreach activities to promote our services to people in Queensland who may need our help.

With new challenges and opportunities for both consumers and providers as the cost of living and operating a business continued to change, we took time to redevelop our Awareness Raising Strategy 2023-27 to ensure we continue to create effective and meaningful engagement with our stakeholders.

We reframed our stakeholder and community engagement, allowing us to be tailored in our approach to maintaining productive working relationships, leveraging our networks to raise awareness and encourage future engagement. Our connections with key peer networks offered us opportunities to collaborate and drive continual improvement of our services.

Our reconciliation journey continued as we worked closely with Reconciliation Australia to reinforce our approach and finalise our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). We aimed to build new and stronger relationships with key stakeholders, and to strengthen and advance our reconciliation journey by continuing to promote a culture of respect for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples both within our organisation and the communities we help across Queensland.

We grew our online connections through targeted social media campaigns that saw us increase our reach and number of followers. Timely and informative content was also published on our website, optimised for search to maximise opportunity for our consumers to find our services.



In detail

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Over the past 12 months we referred to complaint data and past outreach insights to facilitate 19 awareness raising initiatives aimed at:

- reaching communities and groups who needed our help and were not currently accessing our services
- building our knowledge, awareness and understanding of community issues to inform our future outreach plan
- creating opportunities for connection, collaboration and contact between community stakeholders, consumers and scheme participants.

We also connected with organisations to:

- host information sessions for community workers
- visit community and neighbourhood centres
- network at interagency meetings.

Consumers were able to engage with us during financial literacy sessions, community expos and Seniors Week events at targeted locations.

We continued to engage with community through our program of outreach and engagement, visiting both regional Queensland and locations outside of city centres. Our team members travelled to Cairns, Rockhampton, Pine Rivers, Jindalee, Varsity Lakes and Atherton this year. The aim of the visits were to provide information to customers about how we could help them, and what their rights and responsibilities were when making a complaint.

We continued to forge relationships with key stakeholders in the embedded network space by attending information sessions with the Altogether Academy and the Property Owners Association.

Continuous pathways

Our case closure data was regularly analysed. This helped determine new and continuing pathways to communities in need of our service. The data has also informed our new Community Outreach and Engagement Plan.

Customer and community insights were reported for EWOQ outreach. The information is shared with frontline officers to provide understanding of energy and water issues in the community, and to foster stronger connections.

To further improve our approach to outreach we have been developing a new Outreach and Engagement Strategy. This developing strategy will be in line with the Awareness Raising Strategy to effectively identify, map and manage our stakeholders and community partnerships. This is essential to provide guidance on selecting the right methods of engagement for use in the right environment, and ensuring that engagement is meaningful, effective, inclusive, transparent and cost-effective.

Looking ahead our focus is on establishing purposeful connections to drive outreach activities and participation.

RAISING AWARENESS ONLINE

Growing online awareness and engagement via our website and social media channels remained a focus this year as we work towards making our service accessible to all.

We aligned our social media content with articles published to our website to maximise the impact of our paid activity, driving our audience to our website to learn more. Our campaigns targeted users across Queensland, concentrating on topics that aligned with our complaint data including billing issues, rebates and concessions, hardship and energy saving tips.

Through our paid activity we reached more than 200,000 Queensland energy and water consumers, achieving an engagement rate of 12%. We reached an additional 30,000 consumers through our organic content, increasing our followers by 15%. We share educational information, giving our audience the tools they need to be informed energy and water consumers as well as growing understanding of what our role is.

We added value to the customer experience for people using our website by completing search optimisation for our articles about common energy and water issues to improve discoverability. We also implemented a range of accessibility improvements to make it easier for those who use accessibility tools to browse our website. This year we raised our compliance to over 95% with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 A and AA standards.

OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

As an independent dispute resolution service, we're passionate about creating equal opportunities for all, and a culture of respect and understanding for First Nations peoples. We believe it is our responsibility to support the national reconciliation movement. Together with First Nations organisations, we aim to make practical contributions towards positive change for First Nations people.

This year we continued our reconciliation journey with the following activities.

Our RAP working group met regularly to discuss and develop strengthened deliverables for our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

- Cultural engagement protocols were developed and implemented to support First Nations engagement.
- We continued to maintain strong productive working relationships with peak and representative First Nations organisations throughout Queensland, including the Indigenous Consumer Assistance Network Ltd (ICAN).
- Our second Innovate RAP was officially endorsed on the 20 February 2024 and outlines our commitment towards reconciliation over the next 2 years.
- To broaden our view and approach, and to assist from a governance perspective, we have engaged an external First Nations member to join our RAP working group. With their support, we have reviewed and developed new terms of reference to support the achievement of deliverables.
- We continued to grow our connections with First Nations support networks, visiting community leaders in Rockhampton to discuss energy issues unique to their communities.
- We implemented a process to invite Traditional Custodians to significant events, starting with National Reconciliation Week 2024.
- We started planning a program of outreach and stakeholder engagement designed to strengthen our relationships with First Nations networks, starting with our new partnership with First Nations Foundation to further our work to educate and raise awareness in First Nations' communities across Queensland who are experiencing challenges with their energy and water.

Our reconciliation journey continues to foster professional and community partnerships using our sphere of influence in the wider community to engage, encourage and promote partnerships with First Nations communities and organisations.

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLIC POLICY

We contribute to relevant policy and legislative reviews undertaken by government, regulators, not-for-profit organisations and other bodies. We draw on our insights and experiences with customers and providers to make submissions on a variety of issues relevant to energy and water consumers.

Significant responses have been provided to the Australian Energy Market Commission on their draft rule to accelerate deployment of advanced meters, and relevant reviews concerning consumer energy resources (e.g. Solar, Battery and EV services) and the appropriateness of consumer protections. Other key responses to the Australian Energy Regulator included regulation of future energy services, and the review of the exemptions framework for embedded networks.

We continue to provide effective support for appropriate reforms to ensure consumer protection frameworks evolve with the transforming energy landscape.

PEER NETWORKS

As a member of the Australian and New Zealand Ombudsman Association (ANZOA) and the Australian and New Zealand Energy and Water Ombudsman Network (ANZEWON) we maintained strong links with the Australian dispute resolution community. We were also actively involved in cross-sector collaboration through the Thriving Communities Partnership.

ANZOA

ANZOA is committed to high standards of independence, impartiality and effectiveness, and its members observe the 6 benchmarks for industry-based customer dispute resolution: accessibility, independence, fairness, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

Our Ombudsman, Jane Pires, is the executive sponsor of 2 ANZOA interest groups:

- Corporate Interest Group
- Indigenous Engagement Interest Group.

The Corporate Interest Group is facilitated by Tanya Fitzgerald, our General Manager – Strategy, Operations and Governance.

ANZEWON

ANZEWON is a network of energy and water ombudsmen and utilities complaints commissioners from across Australia and New Zealand. They work together to explore and address industry and policy developments affecting Australian and New Zealand consumers.

The network supports collaboration and learning to avoid duplication of effort that ensures members can progress projects with greater efficiency and effectiveness.

The Ombudsman attended 4 ANZEWON meetings throughout the year.

Thriving Communities Partnership

We are actively involved in the Thriving Communities Partnership, a cross-sector collaboration with the goal of everybody having fair access to the modern essential services they need to thrive in contemporary Australia, including utilities, financial services, telecommunications and transport.

The Local Government Thriving Communities Reform

We have engaged with Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts to contribute to the interim Local Decision-Making Body for Southern Tablelands (Atherton) and Northern Tablelands (Mareeba) through information-sharing and ongoing consultation. Interim Local Decision-Making Bodies are also being developed in the Jumbun Community, Innisfail and Cairns and the Cape York region.

OUR SCHEME PARTICIPANTS

At 30 June 2024, we had the following scheme participants:

- 62 authorised retailers and distributors
- 345 exempt sellers.

Last year we onboarded 117 exempt sellers and 1 authorised retailer.

Who needs to join our scheme?

Under the *Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006*, all authorised energy suppliers in Queensland, and water distributor-retailers in South East Queensland, must become members of the EWOQ scheme if they supply electricity, gas or water to residential customers or eligible small businesses.

Following amendments to the *Energy and Water Ombudsman Regulation 2007* in February 2022, embedded network owners and operators in Queensland are required to join our scheme. This includes those with a class D2, D6, R2, R3, R4, ND2, ND6, NR2, NR3 or NR4 exemption and individual exemptions as described in the *Australian Energy Regulator's (Retail) Exempt Selling Guideline and Network Service Provider Registration Exemption Guideline*.

Exempt sellers with 2,000 or less customers are automatically deemed a scheme participant and do not pay an annual fee. They are onboarded as scheme participants once a case is registered against them or they send us an application form.

Exempt sellers with more than 2,000 customers are required to complete an application form and pay a \$5,000 annual membership fee.

Authorised retailers who on-supply electricity pay \$5,000 a year for the first authorisation and \$10,000 a year for more than 1 authorisation.

OUR CONNECTIONS

We are funded by scheme participants through participation fees and user-pays fees. Scheme participants pay an annual participation fee in July (or part fee if they become a scheme participant during the financial year).

No case management fees have been charged to embedded network sellers at the writing of this report.

PROMOTING EXTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

This year, we collaborated with the Energy and Water Ombudsman (EWO) schemes for New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia to promote the expectations of scheme participants promoting external dispute resolution (EDR) to their customers.

EDR gives customers a free, fair and independent option for their complaint. Ensuring customers know about and can access EDR is vital, particularly as business activity returns to normal and debt collections and disconnections resume.



Learn more

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit ewoq.com.au and search 'members' or 'submissions'.

RELATED READING

Our customers – see page 14

Appendix 5 – Current scheme participants

Our governance



At a glance

Our governance framework outlines how we manage our business and deliver on our purpose, minimise our risks and meet our legislative and policy obligations. It enables effective decision making and strengthens our stakeholders' confidence in our ability to do our job and make a positive difference to Queenslanders in a changing energy and water environment.

Our systems are based on strong ethical foundations and a commitment to fairness, accountability and transparency. Risk management is a key governance principle and forms an integral part of our everyday activities. By employing and implementing risk management principles, we protect ourselves from threats and challenges to our continual operation whether that be financial losses, reputational damage or harm to our employees.

To ensure we commit to good governance, the following groups have oversight into our activities:

- Advisory Council
- Audit and Risk Management Committee
- Executive Management Group
- Information Steering Committee
- Workplace Health and Safety Committee.

Other committees and working groups are in place to support program or project delivery as required.



In detail

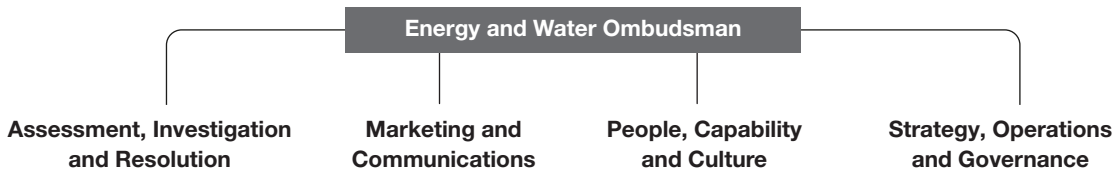
GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Our governance framework acts as our essential supporting structure that underpins the strategies, policies, procedures, processes and resources we are held accountable to, and that provide ongoing confidence in the integrity of our services. These elements have been mapped against 6 governance principles to ensure our practices are rigorous and robust.

	LEADERSHIP	Shared understanding of purpose and priorities through effective planning, collaboration, communication and resource allocation.
	ACCOUNTABILITY	Clear accountabilities, understanding our roles and responsibilities to meet corporate expectations and legislative requirements.
	PERFORMANCE	Monitoring and reporting on our performance to meet expectations.
	RISK MANAGEMENT	Regularly assessing and responding to risks, challenges and opportunities.
	IMPROVEMENT	Actively enhancing and improving our performance across all aspects of our business.
	SERVICE DELIVERY	Customer and scheme participant-focused service delivery, stakeholder engagement and collaboration.

OUR TEAMS

We have 4 core teams under the leadership of the Ombudsman. They work together to meet our responsibilities, ensuring we remain effective and adaptable in the constantly evolving energy landscape.



Assessment, Investigation and Resolution

This team provides dispute resolution services, manages our customer experience and engages with community and industry to raise awareness of our scheme.

People, Capability and Culture

This team manages and implements a range of human resource strategies, organisational culture and capability development initiatives that support our strategic objectives.

Marketing and Communications

This team leads internal and external communications to maximise our awareness raising activities in the community, our industry and within our team.

Strategy, Operations and Governance

This team provides corporate services including finance, risk and compliance, information communication technology, policy and research, and performance reporting, ensuring the effectiveness of operations to meet strategic objectives.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT GROUP

As at end of 2023-24 reporting period, our Executive Management Group members were:

Jane Pires, Energy and Water Ombudsman

As Energy and Water Ombudsman, Jane is committed to providing all Queenslanders with access to a free, fair and independent dispute resolution service, contributing to improved service delivery in the energy and water sectors, and fostering a culture of excellence within the team.

Jane was appointed Energy and Water Ombudsman in December 2016 and has more than 30 years' experience in customer service and complaint management, including extensive senior executive experience in dispute resolution, mediation and conciliation.

Jane chairs the Standards Australia QR-015 Complaints Handling Committee responsible for developing the Australian Standard AS 10002:2022 Guidelines for complaint management in organisations, published in March 2022.

She is also the Australian representative on the committee for international standard ISO 10002:2018 Quality management—Customer satisfaction—Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations.

Gavin Watts, General Manager – Assessment, Investigation and Resolution

Gavin was appointed Acting General Manager – Assessment, Investigation and Resolution in July 2023 and permanently appointed to the role in June 2024.

He has over 25 years' experience leading complaints management, dispute resolution, customer advocacy and customer service functions across various industries in the private sector.

Gavin is a member of the CRM Steering Committee, the Information Steering Committee and the Australia and New Zealand Ombudsman Association (ANZOA) Complaints Management Interest Group.

Leonie Jones, Manager – People, Capability and Culture

Leonie has led the People, Capability and Culture team since joining EWOQ in 2019. She has more than 25 years' experience within the public sector and brings a depth of management and human resource knowledge to EWOQ.

Leonie co-chairs the EWOQ Consultative Committee, is a member of the Information Steering Committee and CRM Steering Committee along with the RAP Working Group. She is also an active member of the ANZOA People and Development Interest Group.

Tanya Fitzgerald, General Manager – Strategy, Operations and Governance

Tanya commenced as General Manager – Strategy, Operations and Governance team in June 2024. With more than 20 years' experience, Tanya has worked across a variety of industries, most recently within the public sector at the State Library of Queensland following an extensive career in the private sector. Tanya is a Fellow Certified Practising Accountant, a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and holds qualifications in Change Management and Health Science (Life Coaching).

Tanya chairs the ANZOA Corporate Interest Group and is a member of the Information Steering Committee and CRM Steering Committee.

ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE ENERGY AND WATER OMBUDSMAN

The Advisory Council to the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland provides expert advice to the Energy and Water Ombudsman and the Ministers responsible for energy and water about the effective and efficient conduct and operation of our scheme.

The Advisory Council:

- monitors the Energy and Water Ombudsman's independence
- advises the Ombudsman on policy, procedural and operational issues relating to the *Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006*
- advises Ministers responsible for energy and water on the funding of the Ombudsman's functions at the end of the financial year
- advises Ministers on the Ombudsman's independence and functions of the office during the financial year.

Chair Rowena McNally

Rowena has extensive experience in the energy, water, hospital and health, aged care and disability sectors. In her various board and other roles, Rowena has worked extensively across Queensland, particularly in the State's regional areas.

She has served on the boards of Ergon Energy (Qld), Power and Water Corporation (NT), Indigenous Essential Services Pty Ltd, Gladstone Area Water Board and Burnett Water Services. She previously chaired the Mount Isa Water Board and the Ministerial Advisory Council (SEQ Flood Mitigation).

Rowena is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management and a Fellow of the Resolution Institute.

Advisory Council membership

The Advisory Council meets quarterly and comprises an independent chair and at least 6 other members. Members are appointed by the Ministers on the Chair's recommendation and after consultation with scheme participants, consumer groups and community organisations.

There must be an equal number of other members representing industry and consumer interests. Under the *Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006*, at least 2 of the industry members must represent the interests of energy retailers, at least 1 must represent the interests of energy distributors, and at least 1 must represent the interests of the water entities.

Members as at 30 June 2024

Independent Chair

- Rowena McNally

Industry representatives

- Anthony Hamill, Ergon Energy
- Rob Howes, Logan Water – City of Logan
- Iain Graham, Red Energy
- Martin Seri, Energy Queensland
- Melanie Lawrie, AGL

Consumer representatives

- Damian Finitise, Department of Infrastructure/Office of Northern Australia
- Ian Jarratt, Queensland Consumers' Association
- Dominique Lamb, Consumer small business representative
- Robyn Robinson, Council of the Ageing Queensland
- Scott Brown, Queensland Council of Social Service

Member resignations

- Chris Owen, City of Gold Coast Water & Waste
- Maree Adshead, Consumer small business representative

Roles and responsibilities of council members

The EWOQ Advisory Council Handbook details the roles and responsibilities of Council members, while the Advisory Council Code of Conduct helps members discharge their responsibilities under the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*.

Members are entitled to meeting fees approved by the Governor-in-Council and reimbursement of reasonable costs incurred for attending council meetings, based on the *Remuneration Procedures for Part-time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Boards*.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

We are required to make ethical decisions, be accountable for our actions and demonstrate integrity. We are committed to fostering a positive organisational culture that values and promotes ethical leadership and decision making.

All employees are required to observe the Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct. The principles and values in the code are incorporated into our policies and procedures as well as individual performance plans.

We are committed to fraud and corruption prevention and have a policy and plan in place. Mandated training in fraud control and corruption prevention was completed by all team members during 2023-24, along with a tailored online program on bullying and harassment.

INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK

Strong culture, accountability and trust are important pillars of any organisation and a core focus for us. Our Integrity Framework articulates our commitment to the highest standards of integrity and conduct at every level.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Queensland's *Human Rights Act 2019* recognises 23 categories of human rights and acknowledges the responsibility of public sector employees to respect, protect and promote the human rights of all individuals.

The Act requires Queensland's public agencies, including EWOQ, to act or make decisions that are compatible with these rights.

Section 97 of this Act also requires that we publish details of any:

- human rights actions taken during the reporting period
- a review of policies, programs, procedures, practices or services undertaken in relation to our compatibility with human rights
- human rights complaints received, including:
 - » the number of complaints received
 - » the outcome of the complaints
 - » any other information prescribed by regulation relating to complaints.

All reviews of our policies, procedures and plans must assess whether the documents promote and are compatible with human rights.

We received no human rights complaints between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024, however we did assist the Human Rights Commissioner with their review into a complaint.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Risk management is an integral part of strategic and business planning, and the everyday activities of EWOQ.

In accordance with section 23 of the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019, we are committed to implementing risk management strategies that ensure efficiency and effectiveness in meeting our objectives, while providing a safe and healthy workplace for our team.

We have 2 committees that provide independent comment, advice and counsel to assist the Ombudsman. These committees are the Audit and Risk Management Committee and the Information Steering Committee.

Audit and Risk Management Committee

Members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee are appointed by the Ombudsman. The committee provides independent comment, advice and counsel to assist the Ombudsman's oversight of:

- the integrity of our financial statements and internal controls
- compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements
- the process relating to internal risk management and control systems
- the performance of the internal audit function.

For the 2023-24 period, our external members were re-appointed for a period of 3 years to 4 February 2027.

Members for 2023-24 as of 30 June 2024 were:

Chair:

- Gavin Holdway, External member, Independent

Members:

- Brydie Bodnar, External member, General Manager Governance, Department of Transport & Main Roads
- Eleanor Bray, Internal member, General Manager Strategy, Operations & Governance, Energy & Water Ombudsman Queensland (Until March 2024)
- Leonie Jones, Internal member, A/General Manager Strategy, Operations & Governance, Energy & Water Ombudsman Queensland (From March 2024)

Consistent with the Remuneration Procedures for Part-time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Boards, external members of the committee who are Queensland public sector employees do not receive additional remuneration in relation to this committee. As an independent external member of the committee, Gavin Holdway was remunerated \$7,500 in the 2023-2024 financial year.

The committee observes the terms of its Audit and Risk Management Committee Charter and has due regard to Queensland Treasury's *Audit Committee Guidelines: Improving Accountability and Performance*.

The committee met on 4 occasions during 2023-24.

Internal audit

Our internal audit function is undertaken by the Queensland Government's Corporate Administration Agency (CAA) and managed through a service level agreement.

The internal audit workplan is directed through a strategic and annual plan developed in consultation with the Audit and Risk Management Committee and approved by the Ombudsman. The workplan adheres to professional standards and the Queensland Treasury's *Audit Committee guidelines: Improving Accountability and Performance*.

Internal audit activities can include:

- financial, compliance and operational reviews
- information system and data integrity reviews
- special review assignments as requested by management.

This team reports to the Audit and Risk Management Committee and operates independently of our management and our external audit function.

Business continuity management

We have a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan (BCP), which did not require activation during 2023-24.

CAA maintains a business continuity plan that provides for the recovery and/or continuity of our information technology, human resources and finance functions.

We continued flexible working practices this year as part of our commitment to continually improve employee satisfaction as well as ensuring our team can successfully conduct our entire operations remotely at short notice, if and as required.

The BCP is tested through desktop scenarios on a regular basis.

Information Steering Committee

Members of the Information Steering Committee are appointed by the Executive Management Group. The committee takes responsibility for the business issues associated with information technology, information management and information security projects, and to ensure the efficient, effective and equitable use of current and future ICT resources. The committee is responsible for:

- strategic direction, management and prioritisation of ICT projects and resources, including policy and procedure compliance with government standards and best practices

- review, approval and monitoring of ICT policies, guidelines, procedures and risks, with quarterly assessments
- implementation, review and monitoring of an Information Security Management System (ISMS) meeting Queensland Government Chief Information Office requirements
- performance and oversight of ICT service providers, contractors, vendors and ongoing projects
- identification and communication of relevant technology trends and opportunities to the Executive Management Group and escalation of serious ICT project concerns.

All committee members are employees of EWOQ and do not receive additional remuneration in relation to this committee.

The committee observes the terms of its Information Steering Committee Charter.

Information systems and record keeping

As a public service office, we are required by legislation and government standards to keep and maintain proper records of our activities.

We are committed to meeting our governance responsibilities under the relevant Acts, applicable legislation, Queensland Government's Information Standards, Queensland State Archives Standards and best practice methods outlined in applicable International Standards.

We have an Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS) and have appointed an Information Management Officer to oversee governance. The security of the EDRMS is managed in accordance with our information security management system.

Information and security management system

Our approach to managing the security of our data and information systems is guided by a set of tools made available by the Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture.

These tools include policies, frameworks, standards and guidelines that we must follow according to the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019, Subordinate Legislation 2019 No.182, made under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*.

Our operational information and security management system was fully operational in 2023-24 and as required under Queensland Government legislation, we applied the Information security policy (IS18:2018) and its suite of standards (i.e. ISO 27000) to ensure security of information and protection of information.

We implemented several initiatives to keep information safe, protect sensitive data, maintain privacy and prevent unauthorised access or misuse.

OUR GOVERNANCE

Initiatives included:

- Educated employees about information security best practices.
- Mandated the use of Microsoft Authenticator application for multifactor authentication.
- Used firewalls, intrusion detection systems and secure network configurations to protect against unauthorised access and network attacks.
- Kept systems and software up to date with the latest security patches and updates.
- Used processes for the secure disposal of sensitive information, including physical documents and electronic media.
- Ensured data was properly wiped or destroyed to prevent unauthorised retrieval.
- Conducted periodic security audits and assessments to identify vulnerabilities, gaps and areas for improvement.

Information security attestation

During the mandatory annual information security reporting process, the Energy and Water Ombudsman attested to the appropriateness of our information security risk management to the Queensland Government Chief Information Security Officer, noting that appropriate assurance activities have been undertaken to inform this opinion and the organisation's information security risk position.

Workplace Health and Safety Committee

Our Workplace Health and Safety (WH&S) Committee recognises and evaluates workplace hazards and leads the development and implementation of programs to protect the employees' safety, health and wellbeing. Our committee:

- acts as a forum for health, safety and wellbeing consultative processes
- responds to employee WH&S concerns and challenges
- ensures records are kept of incidents

- leads the direction for managing health, safety and wellbeing issues
- addresses operational matters, where appropriate.

Right to information and protection of personal information

We are committed to providing the community with open and transparent access to information about our services and activities. Consistent with the *Right to Information Act 2009* and *Information Privacy Act 2009*, we proactively release information held by our office unless the Ombudsman, in conjunction with the Executive Management Group, determines that it is contrary to the public interest.

All requests for information received during 2023-24 have been released under the Administrative Access Scheme. We also participated in the Office of the Information Commissioner Queensland Privacy Awareness Week and contributed to the s185 annual report, which documents all right to information and information privacy work undertaken by Queensland Government agencies.

External dispute resolution scheme

Since 2015-16, we have been recognised as an external dispute resolution scheme by the Office of the Australian Information Commission (OAIC) under the *Privacy Act 1988*. We are required to report every quarter on serious or repeated interference with privacy or systemic privacy issues relating to these bodies to the OAIC.

We are also required to provide OAIC with an annual report including a range of data relating to complaints investigated under this jurisdiction.

Mandatory online reporting

We publish the following datasets on the Queensland Government Open Data Portal.

- consultancy spending
- language services expenditure.

An overseas travel expenditure report for the 2023-24 reporting year was not required as there was no overseas travel undertaken by our team.



Learn more

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit ewoq.com.au and search 'who we are' to find information on our governance.

Visit data.qld.gov.au and search 'EWOQ' to browse all data sets.

RELATED READING

Appendix 1 – Advisory Council remuneration

Message from the Advisory Council Chair – page 7

Our performance – page 9



Customer story

A CUSTOMER RECEIVED AN UNEXPECTEDLY HIGH BILL FOR HER UNINHABITED COMMERCIAL BUILDING

When Sylvia* received a high bill for her uninhabited commercial building, she contacted her energy provider to find out why. Sylvia's energy provider advised that the bill was a catch-up bill based on an actual meter read – as the meter had not been read for 2 years. All the previous bills had been based on estimated meter readings.

Here's how we helped:

We wanted to check if there were many cases where it might be 1 or 2 years before a customer has an actual meter read. We asked the energy provider to investigate and advise if this has happened with other customers too.

The energy provider advised that sometimes customers' meter readings are estimated, rather than read in-person. This can happen for a few different reasons – mostly when there are property access issues, but can also because of distributor-related reasons, such as extreme weather or scheduled meter reading dates. If there are property access issues twice in a row, the energy provider communicates with the customer and provides instructions on how to submit a 'self-read', which is more accurate than an estimation.

During their investigation, the energy provider identified there was an opportunity to provide a better customer experience by providing this advice to all customers who had 2 estimated bills in a row, regardless of the reason it had occurred. They also decided to offer customers the option to install a smart meter when there are issues with easily accessing the meter.

5 other customers had a similar situation occur, and since the new process commenced, we have not received any further complaints.

*Name changed to protect privacy.

Financial summary

The Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman has a strong focus on financial management, which allows for a greater ability to plan and deliver our objectives.

FUNDING AND REVENUE

We are predominantly funded by scheme participants – the energy and water retailers and distributors operating in Queensland – that are required to pay an annual participation fee and user-pays fees.

Our income for 2023-24 was \$8.59 million and included:

- \$8.07 million user-pays fees
- \$0.33 million participation fees
- \$0.19 million other revenue, including bank interest and sale of assets.

USER-PAYS FEE BREAKDOWN FOR 2023-24

- Investigation level 1: 11.77%
- Investigation level 2: 9.22%
- Investigation level 3: 2.30%
- Refer to higher level: 51.78%
- Refer back: 24.93%

EXPENSES

Our expenses in 2023-24 were \$8.78 million. Employee expenses accounted for 66% of this, with supplies and services accounting for a further 33%. Depreciation, audit fees, and costs associated with our Advisory Council made up the balance of our total expenditure.

ASSETS

As at 30 June 2024, the Office's assets totalled \$5.2 million, which was comprised of:

- cash and cash equivalents
- receivables
- prepayments
- plant and equipment.

LIABILITIES

As at 30 June 2024, our liabilities totalled \$4.6 million, which included:

- \$2.1 million in accounts payable
- \$2.0 million in unearned revenue
- \$0.5 million in employee entitlements.

Financial statements

Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman (trading as Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland) for the financial year ended 30 June 2024.

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**Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

Financial Statements

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Balance Sheet

Statement of Cash Flows

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Our Financial Performance

Note 2 Scheme Fees

Note 3 Other Revenue

Note 4 Employee Expenses

Note 5 Supplies and Services

Note 6 Other Expenses

Our Financial Position

Note 7 Cash and Cash Equivalents

Note 8 Receivables

Note 9 Plant and Equipment and Depreciation Expense

Note 10 Intangibles and amortisation expense

Note 11 Payables

Note 12 Accrued Employee Benefits

Note 13 Unearned Revenue

Other Disclosures

Note 14 Key Management Personnel (KMP) Disclosures

Note 15 Related Party Transactions

Note 16 Commitments

Note 17 Contingencies

Note 18 Events occurring after balance date

Certification

Management Certificate

**Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Statement of Income and Accumulated Surpluses
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Income from continuing operations			
Scheme fees	2.	8,403	7,784
Other revenue	3.	194	156
Total income from continuing operations		8,597	7,940
Expenses from continuing operations			
Employee expenses	4.	5,807	5,579
Supplies and services	5.	2,865	2,119
Depreciation	9.	10	21
Amortisation	10.	59	136
Other expenses	6.	42	77
Total expenses from continuing operations		8,783	7,932
Operating result surplus/(deficit) for the year		(186)	8
Plus accumulated surpluses at the beginning of the financial year		614	606
Accumulated surpluses at the end of the financial year		428	614

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Balance Sheet
As at 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	7.	3,794	3,055
Receivables	8.	1,205	189
Prepayments		173	150
Total current assets		5,172	3,394
Non-current assets			
Plant and equipment	9.	8	19
Intangible assets	10.	-	59
Total non-current assets		8	78
Total assets		5,180	3,472
Current liabilities			
Payables	11.	2,137	1,204
Accrued employee benefits	12.	497	451
Unearned revenue	13.	2,039	1,124
Total current liabilities		4,673	2,779
Total liabilities		4,673	2,779
Net assets		507	693
Equity			
Contributed equity		79	79
Accumulated surplus		428	614
Total equity		507	693

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Statement of Cash Flows
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Inflows:			
Scheme fees		9,216	7,874
Interest receipts		150	108
GST input tax credits from ATO		302	255
GST collected from customers		11	9
Other		42	48
Outflows:			
Employee expenses		(5,723)	(5,680)
Supplies and services		(2,904)	(2,386)
GST remitted to ATO		(11)	(9)
GST paid to suppliers		(302)	(255)
Other		(42)	(77)
Net cash used by/(used in) operating activities		739	(113)
Net increase(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		739	(113)
Cash and cash equivalents – beginning of the financial year	7.	3,055	3,168
Cash and cash equivalents – end of the financial year	7.	3,794	3,055

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

**Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

Note 1 – Basis of financial statement preparation

General Information

These financial statements cover the Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman trading as Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ). EWOQ does not control other entities, the financial statements are for EWOQ as an individual entity.

EWOQ is an independent dispute resolution service for Queensland's energy consumers, and water customers in South East Queensland. The Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman was established under the *Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006*. The principal place of business of EWOQ is 53 Albert Street Brisbane QLD 4000.

Authorisation of financial statements for issue

The financial statements are authorised for issue by the Energy and Water Ombudsman and the General Manager Strategy, Operations and Governance at the date of signing the Management Certificate.

Compliance with prescribed requirements

The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with section 62(1) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and section 39 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

These general purpose financial statements are prepared in accordance with the disclosure requirements of Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures. The financial statements comply with the recognition and measurement required of all Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations applicable to not-for-profit entities, and the presentation requirements in those standards as modified by AASB 1060.

Underlying measurement basis

The financial statements are prepared on an accrual basis, with the exception of the statement of cash flows which is prepared on a cash basis.

The historical cost convention is used as the measurement basis unless otherwise stated.

Presentation matters

Currency and rounding – Amounts included in the financial statements are in Australian dollars. Amounts are rounded to the nearest \$1,000 or, where that amount is \$500 or less, to zero, unless disclosure of the full amount is specifically required.

Comparatives – Comparative information reflects the audited 2022-23 financial statements.

Current/non-current classification – Assets are classified as 'current' where their carrying amount is expected to be realised within 12 months after the reporting date. Liabilities are classified as 'current' when they are due to be settled within 12 months after the reporting date, or EWOQ does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement to beyond 12 months after the reporting date. All other assets and liabilities are classified as non-current.

Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 1 – Basis of financial statement preparation (continued)

Taxation

The Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman is exempted from income tax under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936* and is exempted from the other forms of Commonwealth taxation with the exception of Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Receivables and payables in the balance sheet are shown inclusive of GST. GST credits receivable from, and GST payable to, the ATO at reporting date are separately recognised in receivable within Note 8.

New and revised accounting standards

First time mandatory application of Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations

No Australian Accounting Standards applied for the first time had any impact on the 2023-24 financial statements.

Early adoption of Accounting Standards and Interpretations

No accounting pronouncements were early adopted in the 2023-24 financial year.

Voluntary changes in material accounting policies

No voluntary changes in accounting policies occurred during the 2023-24 financial year.

**Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

Note 2 – Scheme fees

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
User-pays fees	8,072	7,425
Annual participation fees	331	359
Total	8,403	7,784

Summary of material accounting policy

EWOQ is fully funded through a combination of annual participation and quarterly user-pays fees.

EWOQ invoices in advance for annual participation fees to industry scheme participants. User-pays fees are invoiced quarterly in advance based on estimated usage and then reconciled back to actuals twice a year. User-pays and annual participation fees are recognised as revenue monthly as prescribed services are performed. Payments received in advance are initially recorded as unearned revenue in Note 13.

Note 3 – Other revenue

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Interest	152	108
Other revenue	42	48
Total	194	156

Summary of material accounting policy

EWOQ receives bank interest and is legislated to charge scheme participants interest on unpaid fees. Interest income is recognised in the statement of income and accumulated surpluses as it accrues using the effective interest rate method.

Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 4 – Employee expenses

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Employee benefits		
Wages and salaries	4,285	4,094
Employer superannuation contributions	627	575
Annual leave expenses	491	353
Long service leave levy	107	101
Employee related expenses		
Payroll tax	220	224
Workers' compensation premium	24	21
Other employee related expenses	53	211
Total	5,807	5,579
	2024	2023
Number of employees	42	41

The number of employees as at 30 June, including both full-time employees and part-time employees, is measured on a full-time equivalent basis.

Summary of material accounting policy and disclosuresShort term employee benefits

Liabilities for wages and salaries, including non-monetary benefits and annual leave that are expected to be settled wholly within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service and are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled. The liabilities are presented as current employee benefit obligations in the balance sheet.

Employer superannuation contributions

Superannuation benefits are provided through either defined contribution (accumulation) plans or the Queensland Government's defined benefit plan (the former QSuper defined benefit categories now administered by the Government Division of the Australian Retirement Trust), in accordance with employees' conditions of employment and employee instructions as to superannuation plans (where applicable).

Defined contribution plans – Employer contributions are based on rates specified under conditions of employment. EWOQ's contributions are expensed when they become payable at each fortnightly pay period.

**Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

Note 4 – Employee expenses (continued)

Defined benefit plan – the liability for the Queensland Government's defined benefits obligations is held on a whole-of-government basis. Employer contributions to the defined benefit plan is based on rates determined on the advice of the State Actuary. EWOQ's contributions are expensed when they become payable at each fortnightly pay period. EWOQ's obligations to the defined benefit plan is limited to those contributions paid.

Other employee benefits – sick leave

Prior history indicates that on average, sick leave taken each reporting period is less than the entitlement accrued. This is expected to continue in future periods. Accordingly, it is unlikely that existing accumulated entitlements will be used by employees and no liability for unused sick leave entitlements is recognised. As sick leave is non-vesting, an expense is recognised for this leave as it is taken.

Note 5 – Supplies and services

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Consultants and contractors	922	202
Information technology	726	757
Corporate service charges	508	433
Property lease and rental	477	468
Travel	75	98
Promotion and entertainment	75	84
Sundries	37	29
Printing, stationery and office supplies	27	30
Communications	18	18
Total	2,865	2,119

Summary of material accounting policy

Supplies and Services items are recorded in the period in which the expense is incurred.

The Department of Energy and Public Works (DEPW) provides EWOQ with access to office accommodation under government wide frameworks. These arrangements are categorised as procurement of services rather than leases because DEPW has substantive substitution rights over the assets.

EWOQ outsources corporate support services to the Corporate Administration Agency (CAA).

Note

Increase in consultants and contractors relates to the implementation of the new Customer Relationship Management Solution.

**Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

Note 6 – Other expenses

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
External audit fees*	29	27
Advisory Council fees	8	3
Other	5	47
Total	42	77

Disclosure

* Total audit fees paid to the Queensland Audit Office relating to the 2023-24 financial statements are estimated to be \$28,915. (2023: \$27,067). There are no non-audit services included in this amount.

Note 7 – Cash and cash equivalents

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Cash at bank	3,794	3,055
Total	3,794	3,055

Summary of material accounting policy

Cash and cash equivalents include all cash and cheques receipted at 30 June as well as deposits held at call with financial institutions.

Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 8 – Receivables

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Trade debtors	1,130	86
Long service leave reimbursements	31	68
Interest receivable	12	10
	<hr/> 1,173	<hr/> 164
GST input tax credits receivable	33	26
GST payable	(1)	(1)
Total	<hr/> 1,205	<hr/> 189

Summary of material accounting policy

Trade debtors are recognised at the amounts due at the time of invoicing on a quarterly basis to scheme participants or when invoices are issued based on scheme participant's additional use of EWOQ's services above amounts paid in advance. Settlement terms are within 14 days from receipt date for scheme participants, within 30 days from invoice date for others.

The collectability of receivables is assessed periodically with provision being made for expected credit losses. The loss allowance is estimated based on the probability and timing of potential defaults and takes into account forecasts of future economic conditions as well as past events. No provision for impairment was necessary at year end.

Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 9 – Plant and equipment and depreciation expense

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Plant and Equipment – at cost		
Gross	69	69
Less Accumulated depreciation	(61)	(50)
Total	8	19
	8	19
Plant and Equipment Reconciliation		
Carrying amount at 1 July	19	40
Acquisitions	-	-
Depreciation	(10)	(21)
Carrying amount at 30 June	8	19
	8	19

Summary of material accounting policyAsset acquisition

Actual cost is used for the initial recording of all non-current physical asset acquisitions. Cost is determined as the value given as consideration plus costs incidental to the acquisition, including all other costs incurred in getting the assets ready for use, including architects' fees and engineering design fees. However, any training costs are expensed as incurred.

Where assets are received free of charge from another Queensland public sector entity (usually via an involuntary transfer), the acquisition cost is recognised as the gross carrying amount in the books of the transferor immediately prior to the transfer together with any accumulated depreciated.

Assets acquired at no cost or for nominal consideration, other than from an involuntary transfer from another Queensland government agency, recognised at their fair value at date of acquisition in accordance with AASB 116 *Property, Plant and Equipment*.

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of expense.

Recognition of Plant and Equipment

Items of plant and equipment with a cost or other value equal to or in excess of the following thresholds are recognised for financial reporting purposes in the year of acquisition:

Plant and equipment \$5,000

Items of lesser value are expensed in the year of acquisition. Expenditure is only capitalised if it increases the service potential or useful life of an existing asset. Maintenance expenditure that merely restores original potential (arising from ordinary wear and tear etc.) is expensed.

**Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

Note 9 – Plant and equipment and depreciation expense (continued)

Measurement of plant and equipment at cost

Plant and equipment is measured at cost in accordance with the Non-Current Asset Policies.

Impairment

All non-current physical assets are assessed for indicators of impairment on an annual basis. If an indicator of possible impairment exists, EWOQ determines the asset's recoverable amount. Any amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds the recoverable amount is recorded as an impairment loss.

Depreciation

Plant and equipment are depreciated on a straight-line basis over its estimated useful life to EWOQ. Reassessments of useful lives are undertaken annually by EWOQ. Any consequential adjustments to remaining life estimates are implemented prospectively.

The following depreciation rates were used:

Plant and equipment 20–33%

Any expenditure that increases the original assessed capacity or service potential of an asset is capitalised and the new depreciable amount is depreciated over the remaining useful life of the asset to EWOQ.

Note 10 – Intangible assets and amortisation expense

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Computer software internally generated		
At cost	375	375
Accumulated amortisation	(375)	(316)
Total	-	59

Computer Software

	2024
	\$'000
Carrying amount at 1 July 2023	59
Amortisation	(59)
Carrying amount at 30 June 2024	-

Summary of material accounting policy

Intangible assets equal to or greater than \$100,000 will be recognised. These assets have been capitalised based on actual costs incurred to purchase, develop and install and amortised on a straight-line basis over the intangible's useful life of between 3-5 years.

Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 11 – Payables

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
User-pays fees – refunds	1,925	983
Accrued expense	212	221
Total	2,137	1,204

Summary of material accounting policy

User-pays fees – refunds are where revenue received in advance from a scheme participant exceeds the actual service provided in respect of that scheme participant, the difference is recognised as a payable to the scheme participant at year end.

Accrued expenses represent goods and services received prior to balance date whether invoiced or not. Accrued expenses are settled in accordance with supplier payment terms.

Note 12 – Accrued employee benefits

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Current		
Annual leave	465	422
Long service leave levy payable	32	29
Total	497	451

Summary of material accounting policy – Refer to Note 4

**Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

Note 13 – Unearned revenue

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Current		
Unearned revenue – user-pays fees	2,039	1,124
Total	2,039	1,124

Summary of material accounting policy – refer to Note 2

Cash received from scheme participants in respect of services to be provided is recognised as unearned revenue.

Disclosure

Our legislation requires invoices for user-pays fees are to be raised in advance and payment of these invoices is due 14 days from receipt. Timing of actual payment of these invoices by scheme participants varies.

Note 14 – Key management personnel (KMP) disclosures

Details of key management personnel

The following details for key management personnel include those EWOQ positions that had authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of EWOQ during 2023-24 and 2022-23. Further information about these positions can be found in the body of EWOQ’s Annual Report under the section relating to Executive Management.

Position	Position Responsibility
Energy and Water Ombudsman	The strategic leadership, efficient and effective management of EWOQ, including its operational and financial performance.
General Manager, Assessment, Investigation and Resolution	Responsible for leading the complaint investigation and dispute resolution functions of EWOQ.
General Manager, Strategy, Operations and Governance	Responsible for the delivery of services including governance, finance, facilities management, reporting and analysis, providing strategic advice on policies and emerging industry issues.
Manager, People, Capability and Culture	Responsible for leading strategic HR solutions and contemporary HR services to meet business and cultural development needs within EWOQ.

Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 14 – Key management personnel (KMP) disclosures (continued)

KMP remuneration policies

With the exception of the Energy and Water Ombudsman, remuneration policy for EWOQ's KMP is set by the Queensland Public Sector Commission as provided for under the *Public Sector Act 2022*.

The remuneration and other terms of employment of the Energy and Water Ombudsman are specified in the Governor in Council Appointment.

Remuneration expenses for those key management personnel comprise the following components:

Short term employee expenses which include:

- Salaries, allowances and leave entitlements earned and expensed for the entire year, or for that part of the year during which the employee occupied the specified position; and
- non-monetary benefits – consisting of provision of car parking together with fringe benefits tax applicable to the benefit.

Long term employee expenses – include amounts expensed in respect to long service leave entitlements.

Post-employment expenses – include amounts expensed in respect to employer superannuation obligations.

**Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

Note 14 – Key management personnel (KMP) disclosures (continued)

The following disclosures focus on the expense incurred by EWOQ during the respective reporting periods that is attributable to key management positions. Therefore, the amounts disclosed reflect expenses recognised in the Statement of Income and Accumulated Surpluses.

Remuneration expenses

2023-24

Position	Short term Employee Expenses		Long Term Employee Expenses	Post-Employment Expenses	Total Expenses
	Monetary Expenses \$'000	Non-Monetary Expenses \$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Energy and Water Ombudsman	235	8	6	30	279
General Manager, Assessment, Investigation and Resolution	244	6	7	38	295
General Manager, Strategy, Operations and Governance	160	8	4	22	194
Manager, People, Capability and Culture	146	-	4	20	170
Manager, Communications and Engagement *	-	-	-	-	-
Total Remuneration	785	22	21	110	938

* This position was abolished in 2023-2024

**Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

Note 14 – Key management personnel (KMP) disclosures (continued)

2022-23

Position	Short term Employee Expenses		Long Term Employee Expenses	Post-Employment Expenses	Total Expenses
	Monetary Expenses \$'000	Non-Monetary Expenses \$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Energy and Water Ombudsman	241	9	6	29	285
General Manager, Assessment, Investigation and Resolution	196	9	5	24	234
General Manager, Strategy, Operations and Governance	162	9	4	21	196
Manager, People, Capability and Culture	144	-	4	19	167
Manager, Communications and Engagement (to 10 May 2023)	112	-	3	16	131
Total Remuneration	855	27	22	109	1,013

Performance payments

No KMP remuneration packages provide for performance or bonus payments.

Note 15 – Related party transactions

Transactions with people/entities related to KMP

EWOQ has no related party transactions to disclose this financial year.

Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 16 – Commitments

Commitments at reporting date (inclusive of non-recoverable GST input tax credits) are payable as follows.

Commitments for the use of office premises

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Not later than 1 year	356	484
Later than 1 year but not later than 5 years	115	433
Total	471	917

This commitment consists of the use office premises located in Brisbane, Cairns and Rockhampton. The agreements with the Department of Energy and Public Works have terms ranging from 1 to 5 years with options for renewal. See Note 5.

Contract for the Development of the Customer Relationship Management Solution

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Not later than 1 year	237	-
Later than 1 year but not later than 5 years	150	-
Total	387	-

The amount includes the cost of the development of the customer relationship management solutions and the ongoing management and support of the solution.

Note 17 – Contingencies

There were no other known contingent assets or liabilities at 30 June 2024.

Note 18 – Events Occurring after Balance Date

No event has occurred after balance date that has a material effect on these financial statements.

MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE OF THE OFFICE OF THE ENERGY AND WATER OMBUDSMAN

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared pursuant to s.62(1)(a) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (the Act), s.39 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* and other prescribed requirements. In accordance with s.62(1)(b) of the Act we certify that in our opinion:

- a) the prescribed requirements for establishing and keeping the accounts have been complied with in all material respects; and
- b) the financial statements have been drawn up to present a true and fair view, in accordance with prescribed accounting standards, of the transactions of the Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman for the financial year ended 30 June 2024 and of the financial position of the office as at the end of that year; and

We acknowledge responsibility under s.7 and s.11 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* for the establishment and maintenance, in all material respects, of an appropriate and effective system of internal controls and risk management processes with respect to financial reporting throughout the reporting period.



Tanya Fitzgerald
General Manager, Strategy, Operations
and Governance
Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Date 31 July 2024



Jane Pires
Energy and Water Ombudsman
Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman
Date 31 July 2024



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Energy and Water Ombudsman

Report on the audit of the financial report

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report of the Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman (the Office).

In my opinion, the financial report:

- a) gives a true and fair view of the Office's financial position as at 30 June 2024, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended
- b) complies with the Financial Accountability Act 2009, the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019 and Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures.

The financial report comprises the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2024, the Statement of Income and Accumulated Surpluses and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including material accounting policy information, and the Management Certificate.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Financial Report* section of my report.

I am independent of the Office in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code and the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Responsibilities of management for the financial report

Management is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019 and Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures, and for such internal control as Management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Management is also responsible for assessing the Office's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is intended to abolish the Office or to otherwise cease operations.



Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at:

https://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf

This description forms part of my auditor's report.

Statement

In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, for the year ended 30 June 2024:

- a) I received all the information and explanations I required.
- b) I consider that, the prescribed requirements in relation to the establishment and keeping of accounts were complied with in all material respects.

Prescribed requirements scope

The prescribed requirements for the establishment and keeping of accounts are contained in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, any other Act and the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019. The applicable requirements include those for keeping financial records that correctly record and explain the Office's transactions and account balances to enable the preparation of a true and fair financial report.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "mluwanga".

1 August 2024

Martin Luwanga
as delegate of the Auditor-General

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane

Appendix 1: Advisory Council

Advisory Council to the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ)

Act or instrument	<i>Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006</i>
Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitors the independence of the Energy and Water Ombudsman • provides advice and recommendations to the Energy and Water Ombudsman about the scheme's appropriateness, scope and effectiveness; policies and practices relating to the scheme's administration and conduct; processes to improve how the scheme responds to stakeholder needs; and the promotion of the scheme and preparation of the annual report • receives and considers financial budgets and business plans by the Ombudsman, including guidelines for calculating and structuring user-pays fees • makes recommendations to Ministers responsible for energy and water, and the Ombudsman, on the scheme's financial budget and business plan.
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided advice on current and emerging issues in the energy and water sectors and the implications for an external dispute resolution service for consumers, industry and government • endorsed the 2023-24 budget for the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland.
Financial reporting	Transactions to the entity are accounted for in the financial statements of Office of the Energy and Water Ombudsman.

Remuneration					
Position	Name	Meetings/ sessions/ attendance	Approved annual, sessional or daily fee	Approved sub-committee fees if applicable	Actual fees received
Chairperson	Rowena McNally	5/5	Daily fee: \$390	N/A	
Member	Anthony Hamill	4/5	Daily fee: \$300	N/A	
Member	Chris Owen ¹	3/5	Daily fee: \$300	N/A	
Member	Damian Finitsis	3/5	Daily fee: \$300	N/A	
Member	Iain Graham	3/5	Daily fee: \$300	N/A	
Member	Ian Jarratt	5/5	Daily fee: \$300	N/A	\$450
Member	Maree Adshead ¹	3/5	Daily fee: N/A ³	N/A	
Member	Martin Seri	5/5	Daily fee: \$300	N/A	
Member	Melanie Lawrie	4/5	Daily fee: \$300	N/A	
Member	Rob Howes ²	2/5	Daily fee: \$300	N/A	
Member	Robyn Robinson	4/5	Daily fee: \$300	N/A	\$450
Member	Scott Brown	3/5	Daily fee: \$300	N/A	

No. of scheduled meetings/sessions = 5.

Total out of pocket expenses = Nil.

¹Term concluded in February 2024.

²Term commenced in February 2024.

³Daily fee not applicable for permanent Queensland Government employees.

Appendix 2: Case data

Table 6: Five-year received and closed by year

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Received	7,510	6,067	6,409	7,260	11,508
Closed	7,621	6,064	6,256	7,269	11,169

Table 7: Received and closed cases by month

Month	Received	Closed
Jul-23	884	785
Aug-23	822	922
Sep-23	771	798
Oct-23	878	839
Nov-23	854	841
Dec-23	663	586
Jan-24	1,033	910
Feb-24	1,213	1,007
Mar-24	1,206	907
Apr-24	1,119	1,091
May-24	1,042	1,436
Jun-24	1,023	1,047
Total	11,508	11,169

Table 8: Five-year closed cases

Closed cases	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Electricity	6,386	5,038	5,245	6,237	9,969
Gas	593	390	386	325	599
Water	452	467	420	472	399
None of the above	190	169	205	235	202
Total	7,621	6,064	6,256	7,269	11,169

Table 9: Customer profile

Sector	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Residential	7,258	5,787	6,069	7,095	10,870
Small business	361	271	182	172	289
Government	2	6	5	2	10
Total	7,621	6,064	6,256	7,269	11,169

APPENDICES

Table 10: Closed complaints by primary issue

Primary issue	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Billing	3,109	2,714	3,205	4,030	6,503
Customer Service	536	454	421	542	1,444
Provision	655	481	489	407	442
Credit	1,075	518	382	386	390
Supply	154	154	191	197	202
Transfer	199	138	106	87	90
Land	89	107	93	80	80
Marketing	49	38	40	39	45
Other	121	94	98	42	94
Total	5,987	4,698	5,025	5,810	9,290

Table 11: Closed case types

Case type	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Enquiry	732	574	592	888	1,193
Referral to another organisation	902	792	639	571	686
Refer back	2,133	1,819	2,027	2,584	4,295
Refer to higher level	1,957	1,642	2,124	2,468	4,352
Level 1 investigation	1,332	705	444	446	458
Level 2 investigation	475	428	345	264	159
Level 3 investigation	90	104	85	48	26
Final order	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7,621	6,064	6,256	7,269	11,169

Table 12: Cases referred to other organisations

Agency	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Office of Fair Trading	540	437	371	400	530
Australian Energy Regulator	217	256	165	78	74
Queensland Ombudsman	70	64	67	68	57
Department of Energy Climate*	-	15	19	16	12
Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water*	-	3	9	7	8
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	6	2	6	2	2
Queensland Competition Authority	3	3	2	0	3
Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy*	66	12	-	-	-
Total	902	792	639	571	686

*From 1 November 2020, referrals to Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy were redirected to Department of Energy and Public Works for energy-related issues or the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water for water-related issues. Further to this, in December 2023, the Department of Energy and Public Works was restructured to the Department of Energy and Climate.

Table 13: Performance targets – time taken to close cases

	Target	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
Less than 28 days	80%	6,020	79%	5,249	87%	5,499	88%	5,987	82%	7,684	69%
Less than 60 days	90%	7,342	96%	5,937	98%	6,158	98%	7,052	97%	10,732	96%
Less than 90 days	95%	7,553	99%	6,029	99%	6,228	>99%	7,232	99%	11,048	99%
More than 90 days	< 5%	68	1%	35	1%	28	<1%	37	1%	121	1%

Table 14: Potential systemic issues

Issue	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Billing	25	52	66	40	44
Customer service	24	58	55	17	17
Transfer	3	5	4	3	3
Metering	0	4	8	5	2
Marketing	8	2	8	4	2
Provision	4	2	4	1	0
Other*	9	5	8	10	3
Total	73	128	153	80	71

*Includes disconnection, hardship and network assets.

Table 15: Five-year contact method

Contact method	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Phone	5,013	3,597	3,612	3,944	6,673
Website	1,981	1,629	1,737	2,365	3,216
Email	544	595	570	561	882
Web chat*	-	204	306	376	358
Other†	83	39	31	23	40
Total	7,621	6,064	6,256	7,269	11,169

*Web chat introduced in July 2020.

†May include in person, SMS, letter and social media.

Appendix 3: Retailer and distributor data

ELECTRICITY RETAILERS

Table 16: Closed electricity retailer complaints by primary issue

Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	Origin Energy Electricity Limited	901	809	676	862	1,463
	Ergon Energy Queensland Pty Ltd	388	215	277	289	1,193
	AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Ltd	485	456	488	585	1,024
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	350	327	682	888	771
	EnergyAustralia Pty Ltd	230	162	182	272	393
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	48	52	80	93	170
	OVO Energy Pty Ltd	0	3	1	21	153
	Sumo Power Pty Ltd	-	6	44	83	137
	Simply Energy (ENGIE)	55	54	75	85	86
	Hanwha Energy Retail Australia Pty Ltd (trading as Nectr Energy)	-	2	13	47	82
	Dodo Power & Gas Pty Ltd	30	42	71	84	72
	Locality Planning Energy Pty Ltd	10	20	37	65	70
	Metered Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	10	20	42
Billing	Globird Energy Pty Ltd	-	-	8	13	39
	Altogether Group Pty Ltd	-	-	4	11	33
	Amber Electric Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	28
	Energy Locals Pty Ltd	2	7	15	6	25
	Powershop Australia Pty Ltd	24	14	13	14	21
	Blue NRG Pty Ltd	2	6	3	13	15
	Powershop - Kogan	0	5	11	14	14
	Pacific Blue Retail Pty Ltd (trading as Tango Energy)	-	-	6	5	12
	Diamond Energy Pty Ltd	8	6	5	5	11
	Humenergy Group Pty Ltd	-	-	0	3	10
	ReAmped Energy Pty Ltd	6	30	54	50	8
	Ampol Energy (Retail) Pty Ltd	-	-	-	-	8
	CovaU Pty Ltd	0	8	22	21	4
	1st Energy PTY LTD	13	13	14	20	4
	Next Business Energy Pty Ltd	5	3	1	7	4
	Momentum Energy Pty Ltd	0	4	10	2	3

Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Billing (continued)	Starcorp Energy Pty Ltd	-	-	-	-	2
	Gee Power and Gas Pty Ltd	-	-	3	4	1
	Shell Energy Retail Pty Ltd (formerly ERM Power Retail Pty Ltd)	0	1	1	0	1
	Powerhub Pty Ltd	0	0	0	0	1
	Real Utilities Pty Ltd	-	-	-	-	1
	The Embedded Networks Company	-	-	-	-	1
	Discover Energy Pty Ltd	1	0	6	37	0
	Online Power and Gas Pty Ltd (trading as Future X Power)	0	0	3	23	0
	Energy Services Management Pty Ltd (trading as Glow Power)	-	-	1	3	0
	Lumo Energy Australia Pty Ltd	3	0	0	1	0
	Smart Energy Retail Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	0
	Radian Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	1	0	0
	QEnergy Limited	21	26	13	13	-
	Elysian Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	18	7	-
	Mojo Power Pty Ltd	4	10	15	7	-
	Powerdirect Pty Ltd	21	19	22	3	-
	Social Energy Australia Pty Ltd	-	-	1	2	-
	Bright Spark Power Pty Ltd	-	-	1	0	-
	Mojo Power East Pty Ltd (formerly People Energy Pty Ltd)	6	1	0	0	-
	Power Club Limited	1	1	4	-	-
Sanctuary Energy Pty Ltd	3	1	0	-	-	
Click Energy Pty Ltd	131	65	-	-	-	
Total (Billing)		2,748	2,368	2,891	3,680	5,902
Customer service	Ergon Energy Queensland Pty Ltd	41	27	36	45	783
	Origin Energy Electricity Limited	150	116	87	116	155
	AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Ltd	65	67	54	69	114
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	52	60	57	58	68
	EnergyAustralia Pty Ltd	46	27	13	28	41
	OVO Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	2	23
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	11	4	10	14	20
	Sumo Power Pty Ltd	-	4	0	8	14
	Locality Planning Energy Pty Ltd	2	2	5	4	10
	Simply Energy (ENGIE)	15	14	8	6	8
	Globird Energy Pty Ltd	-	-	0	2	8
	Dodo Power & Gas Pty Ltd	4	2	9	11	7
	Amber Electric Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	7
Metered Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	3	5	6	

APPENDICES

Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Customer service (continued)	Hanwha Energy Retail Australia Pty Ltd (trading as Nectr Energy)	-	0	3	14	4
	Powershop - Kogan	1	1	0	1	3
	Altogether Group Pty Ltd	-	-	0	4	2
	Powershop Australia Pty Ltd	5	1	0	1	2
	CovaU Pty Ltd	0	0	0	4	1
	1st Energy PTY LTD	3	5	0	2	1
	Pacific Blue Retail Pty Ltd (trading as Tango Energy)	-	-	0	1	1
	Humenergy Group Pty Ltd	-	-	0	0	1
	The Embedded Networks Company	-	-	-	-	1
	ReAmped Energy Pty Ltd	1	4	6	2	0
	Discover Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	2	2	0
	Energy Locals Pty Ltd	0	1	2	1	0
	Gee Power and Gas Pty Ltd	-	-	2	1	0
	Blue NRG Pty Ltd	0	2	0	1	0
	Online Power and Gas Pty Ltd (trading as Future X Power)	0	0	0	1	0
	Radian Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	0
	Diamond Energy Pty Ltd	1	0	1	0	0
	Apex Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	1	0	0
	Elysian Energy Pty Ltd	0	1	3	2	-
	Mojo Power Pty Ltd	2	2	2	2	-
	Mojo Power East Pty Ltd (formerly People Energy Pty Ltd)	1	0	0	1	-
	Powerdirect Pty Ltd	0	2	2	0	-
	QEnergy Limited	3	3	1	0	-
	Enova Energy Pty Ltd	-	1	0	0	-
	Power Club Limited	0	2	0	-	-
	Sanctuary Energy Pty Ltd	4	0	0	-	-
	Click Energy Pty Ltd	11	10	-	-	-
Total (Customer service)		418	358	307	410	1,280
Credit	Ergon Energy Queensland Pty Ltd	198	90	91	110	73
	Origin Energy Electricity Limited	465	185	99	67	65
	AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Ltd	121	79	54	41	65
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	108	37	39	41	44
	Metered Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	5	23	17
	Locality Planning Energy Pty Ltd	3	2	3	7	12
	EnergyAustralia Pty Ltd	42	29	15	16	11
	Sumo Power Pty Ltd	-	0	4	3	8
Dodo Power & Gas Pty Ltd	7	10	5	14	5	

Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Credit (continued)	Hanwha Energy Retail Australia Pty Ltd (trading as Nectr Energy)	-	0	0	5	5
	1st Energy PTY LTD	8	4	4	4	5
	Simply Energy (ENGIE)	10	6	6	1	4
	Humenergy Group Pty Ltd	-	-	1	1	4
	OVO Energy Pty Ltd	0	1	0	0	4
	Amber Electric Pty Ltd	0	0	-	-	4
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	12	3	1	6	3
	ReAmped Energy Pty Ltd	1	2	8	5	3
	Powershop Australia Pty Ltd	1	3	0	1	1
	Energy Locals Pty Ltd	2	0	1	0	1
	Altogether Group Pty Ltd	-	-	1	0	1
	Next Business Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	0	1
	Smart Energy Retail Pty Ltd	-	-	0	0	1
	The Embedded Networks Company	-	-	-	-	1
	Savant Energy Power Networks Pty Ltd	-	-	-	-	1
	Discover Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	1	0
	Online Power and Gas Pty Ltd (trading as Future X Power)	0	0	0	1	0
	Energy Services Management Pty Ltd (trading as Glow Power)	-	-	0	1	0
	Diamond Energy Pty Ltd	4	0	1	0	0
	Gee Power and Gas Pty Ltd	-	-	1	0	0
	Lumo Energy Australia Pty Ltd	11	1	0	0	0
	Powerdirect Pty Ltd	9	6	4	1	-
	QEnergy Limited	3	1	2	1	-
	Mojo Power Pty Ltd	0	1	0	1	-
	Elysian Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	1	0	-
	Click Energy Pty Ltd	21	14	-	-	-
Total (Credit)		1,026	474	346	351	339
Provision	Origin Energy Electricity Limited	176	101	93	63	72
	Ergon Energy Queensland Pty Ltd	52	37	56	41	55
	AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Ltd	80	57	42	37	36
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	54	34	26	18	20
	EnergyAustralia Pty Ltd	28	24	13	13	18
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	11	12	8	6	6
	Metered Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	1	5	4
	Locality Planning Energy Pty Ltd	3	2	0	0	4
	Hanwha Energy Retail Australia Pty Ltd (trading as Nectr Energy)	-	2	0	0	4
Sumo Power Pty Ltd	-	0	3	1	3	

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Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Provision (continued)	Globird Energy Pty Ltd	-	-	1	0	3
	OVO Energy Pty Ltd	0	1	0	2	2
	Altogether Group Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	2
	Amber Electric Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	2
	Ampol Energy (Retail) Pty Ltd	-	-	-	-	2
	Powershop Australia Pty Ltd	3	2	3	4	1
	Blue NRG Pty Ltd	0	0	0	0	1
	Dodo Power & Gas Pty Ltd	3	3	6	7	0
	ReAmped Energy Pty Ltd	2	5	14	6	0
	Powershop - Kogan	0	0	0	3	0
	Simply Energy (ENGIE)	10	5	4	2	0
	CovaU Pty Ltd	0	1	2	1	0
	Diamond Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	1	0
	Energy Services Management Pty Ltd (trading as Glow Power)	-	-	0	1	0
	Apex Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	0
	1st Energy PTY LTD	0	0	4	0	0
	Discover Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	1	0	0
	Energy Locals Pty Ltd	0	2	0	0	0
	Online Power and Gas Pty Ltd (trading as Future X Power)	0	2	0	0	0
	QEnergy Limited	3	0	1	1	-
Elysian Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	8	0	-	
Powerdirect Pty Ltd	6	5	2	0	-	
Mojo Power Pty Ltd	0	0	2	0	-	
Power Club Limited	0	0	1	-	-	
Click Energy Pty Ltd	9	6	-	-	-	
Total (Provision)		440	301	291	215	235
Transfer	Origin Energy Electricity Limited	34	33	14	25	24
	AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Ltd	36	25	21	22	19
	EnergyAustralia Pty Ltd	19	15	10	15	12
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	53	17	15	5	7
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	3	2	5	3	5
	OVO Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	0	5
	Dodo Power & Gas Pty Ltd	5	1	4	0	3
	Ergon Energy Queensland Pty Ltd	2	1	3	0	2
	CovaU Pty Ltd	0	1	1	0	2
	Simply Energy (ENGIE)	9	8	4	1	1
	Pacific Blue Retail Pty Ltd (trading as Tango Energy)	-	-	1	0	1
Hanwha Energy Retail Australia Pty Ltd (trading as Nectr Energy)	-	2	0	3	0	

Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Transfer (continued)	Locality Planning Energy Pty Ltd	5	1	2	2	0
	Online Power and Gas Pty Ltd (trading as Future X Power)	0	1	2	1	0
	Sumo Power Pty Ltd	-	4	1	1	0
	Discover Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	1	0
	Energy Locals Pty Ltd	0	0	0	1	0
	Metered Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	0
	Apex Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	0
	ReAmped Energy Pty Ltd	1	0	5	0	0
	1st Energy PTY LTD	10	4	2	0	0
	Blue NRG Pty Ltd	0	4	1	0	0
	Powershop Australia Pty Ltd	0	1	1	0	0
	Radian Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	1	0	0
	Energy Services Management Pty Ltd (trading as Glow Power)	-	-	1	0	0
	Diamond Energy Pty Ltd	1	1	0	0	0
	Next Business Energy Pty Ltd	0	1	0	0	0
	Powershop - Kogan	0	1	0	0	0
	Powerdirect Pty Ltd	4	2	3	0	-
	Elysian Energy Pty Ltd	0	1	2	0	-
	Mojo Power Pty Ltd	1	0	1	0	-
	QEnergy Limited	0	2	0	0	-
	Mojo Power East Pty Ltd (formerly People Energy Pty Ltd)	1	0	0	0	-
	Power Club Limited	0	0	1	-	-
	Click Energy Pty Ltd	5	5	-	-	-
Total (Transfer)		189	133	101	82	81
Marketing	Origin Energy Electricity Limited	11	8	8	17	11
	AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Ltd	9	9	2	10	7
	Sumo Power Pty Ltd	-	3	5	2	6
	EnergyAustralia Pty Ltd	12	4	3	2	6
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	5	3	6	4	4
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	1	2	0	1	3
	OVO Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	1	2
	Simply Energy (ENGIE)	3	4	1	0	1
	Hanwha Energy Retail Australia Pty Ltd (trading as Nectr Energy)	-	2	1	0	1
	Ergon Energy Queensland Pty Ltd	1	0	1	0	1
	Powershop - Kogan	0	0	0	0	1
	Locality Planning Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	1	0
	ReAmped Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	2	0	0
	Momentum Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	2	0	0

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Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Marketing (continued)	Energy Locals Pty Ltd	0	1	1	0	0
	1st Energy PTY LTD	3	0	1	0	0
	Dodo Power & Gas Pty Ltd	0	0	1	0	0
	Online Power and Gas Pty Ltd (trading as Future X Power)	0	0	1	0	0
	Pacific Blue Retail Pty Ltd (trading as Tango Energy)	-	-	1	0	0
	Energy Services Management Pty Ltd (trading as Glow Power)	-	-	1	0	0
	Next Business Energy Pty Ltd	0	1	0	0	0
	Powerdirect Pty Ltd	0	0	1	0	-
	Elysian Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	1	0	-
	Click Energy Pty Ltd	1	0	-	-	-
Total (Marketing)		46	37	39	38	43
Other	Origin Energy Electricity Limited	28	16	13	7	16
	AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Ltd	9	2	2	3	13
	Ergon Energy Queensland Pty Ltd	23	6	13	6	9
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	5	3	2	0	4
	Sumo Power Pty Ltd	-	0	1	1	3
	EnergyAustralia Pty Ltd	2	3	1	0	1
	Dodo Power & Gas Pty Ltd	0	0	1	0	1
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	3	0	0	0	1
	Energy Locals Pty Ltd	0	0	0	0	1
	Altogether Group Pty Ltd	-	-	0	0	1
	Amber Electric Pty Ltd	0	0	-	-	1
	Simply Energy (ENGIE)	1	1	0	1	0
	Metered Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	0
	Globird Energy Pty Ltd	-	-	0	1	0
	Locality Planning Energy Pty Ltd	1	0	1	0	0
	1st Energy PTY LTD	2	1	0	0	0
	Powershop Australia Pty Ltd	0	1	0	0	0
	Diamond Energy Pty Ltd	0	1	0	0	0
	Powershop - Kogan	0	1	0	0	0
	Elysian Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	1	0	-
Powerdirect Pty Ltd	2	1	0	0	-	
Mojo Power Pty Ltd	1	1	0	0	-	
Total (Other)		77	37	35	20	51
Grand Total		4,944	3,708	4,010	4,796	7,931

- Retailer not a scheme participant during this period.

ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTORS

Table 17: Closed electricity distributor complaints by primary issue

Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Supply	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited	76	69	81	104	107
	ENERGEX limited	50	68	72	66	70
	Essential Energy	1	0	3	2	2
Total (Supply)		127	137	156	172	179
Provision	ENERGEX limited	94	84	106	96	87
	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited	39	42	35	52	68
	Essential Energy	3	1	0	1	0
Total (Provision)		136	127	141	149	155
Customer service	ENERGEX limited	48	48	44	46	55
	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited	22	11	22	28	43
	Essential Energy	0	1	0	1	0
Total (Customer service)		70	60	66	75	98
Land	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited	27	46	31	14	31
	ENERGEX limited	35	32	36	44	21
Total (Land)		62	78	67	58	52
Billing	ENERGEX limited	2	2	5	1	3
	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited	0	1	2	0	2
Total (Billing)		2	3	7	1	5
Other	ENERGEX limited	23	31	30	7	19
	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited	5	10	17	2	9
	Essential Energy	1	0	1	1	0
Total (Other)		29	41	48	10	28
Grand total		426	446	485	465	517

See page 33 for the volume of complaints received for each retailer and distributor compared with their customer numbers.

GAS RETAILERS

Table 18: Closed gas retailer complaints by primary issue

Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Billing	AGL Sales (Queensland) Pty Ltd	64	38	26	34	85
	Origin Energy Retail Ltd	88	62	62	56	77
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	0	2	5	10	15
	Globird Energy Pty Ltd	-	-	1	1	3
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	3	1	1	0	2
	CovaU Pty Ltd	0	1	1	1	1
	Western Downs Regional Council	0	0	1	1	1
	Maranoa Regional Council	0	0	1	1	0
	Discover Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	1	0
Total (Billing)		155	104	98	105	184

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Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Customer service	Origin Energy Retail Ltd	10	4	10	10	14
	AGL Sales (Queensland) Pty Ltd	6	5	7	7	8
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	1	1
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	0	0	0	1	0
Total (Customer service)		16	9	17	19	23
Provision	AGL Sales (Queensland) Pty Ltd	16	11	11	8	9
	Origin Energy Retail Ltd	16	3	15	9	5
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	0	1	0	1	2
	Western Downs Regional Council	0	0	0	0	1
	CovaU Pty Ltd	0	0	0	0	1
	Globird Energy Pty Ltd	-	-	0	0	1
Total (Provision)		32	15	26	18	19
Credit	AGL Sales (Queensland) Pty Ltd	5	11	10	10	6
	Origin Energy Retail Ltd	28	16	16	4	5
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	0	1
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	0	1	1	2	0
	Western Downs Regional Council	0	0	1	0	0
Total (Credit)		33	28	28	16	12
Transfer	AGL Sales (Queensland) Pty Ltd	2	2	3	0	4
	Origin Energy Retail Ltd	7	1	1	3	2
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	0	2	1	1	2
	Red Energy Pty Ltd	1	0	0	0	1
Total (Transfer)		10	5	5	4	9
Marketing	Origin Energy Retail Ltd	1	1	1	0	1
	AGL Sales (Queensland) Pty Ltd	2	0	0	0	1
	Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	0	0	0	1	0
Total (Marketing)		3	1	1	1	2
Other	Origin Energy Retail Ltd	3	1	1	0	3
	AGL Sales (Queensland) Pty Ltd	1	2	0	0	0
Total (Other)		4	3	1	0	3
Grand total		253	165	176	163	252

GAS DISTRIBUTORS

Table 19: Closed gas distributor complaints by primary issue

Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Supply	Australian Gas Networks Limited	7	6	8	3	7
	Allgas Energy Pty Ltd	1	0	6	3	1
	Western Downs Regional Council	0	1	0	0	0
Total (Supply)		8	7	14	6	8
Land	Australian Gas Networks Limited	5	0	3	2	4
	Allgas Energy Pty Ltd	1	1	2	5	1
Total (Land)		6	1	5	7	5

Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Provision	Australian Gas Networks Limited	22	13	9	1	2
	Allgas Energy Pty Ltd	5	2	0	4	0
	Western Downs Regional Council	0	0	0	0	0
Total (Provision)		27	15	9	5	2
Customer service	Australian Gas Networks Limited	1	3	3	3	1
	Allgas Energy Pty Ltd	1	1	0	2	0
Total (Customer service)		2	4	3	5	1
Billing	Maranoa Regional Council	0	0	2	0	0
	Allgas Energy Pty Ltd	0	0	0	0	0
Total (Billing)		0	0	2	0	0
Other	Australian Gas Networks Limited	3	1	4	0	2
	Allgas Energy Pty Ltd	0	1	1	0	1
Total (Other)		3	2	5	0	3
Grand total		46	29	38	23	19

WATER RETAILERS

Table 20: Closed water retailer complaints by primary issue

Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Billing	Urban Utilities	98	118	84	64	73
	Unitywater	54	71	57	46	69
	Gold Coast City Council	34	39	38	32	20
	Logan City Council	13	7	5	5	8
	Redland City Council	5	4	10	3	6
Total (Billing)		204	239	194	150	176
Credit	Unitywater	6	5	2	2	9
	Urban Utilities	10	6	4	1	8
	Gold Coast City Council	0	4	0	0	3
	Logan City Council	0	1	1	0	1
Total (Credit)		16	16	7	3	21
Customer service	Urban Utilities	11	6	10	5	10
	Unitywater	5	8	3	6	6
	Gold Coast City Council	6	2	2	2	1
	Logan City Council	0	1	0	1	0
	Redland City Council	0	0	0	1	0
Total (Customer service)		22	17	15	15	17
Provision	Urban Utilities	0	2	1	2	7
	Unitywater	3	2	1	4	1
	Gold Coast City Council	0	0	0	1	0
	Logan City Council	0	0	0	1	0
Total (Provision)		3	4	2	8	8

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Primary issue	Scheme participant	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Other	Logan City Council	1	0	0	1	1
	Unitywater	0	4	0	1	1
	Urban Utilities	6	2	2	1	0
	Gold Coast City Council	0	0	1	0	0
Total (Other)		7	6	3	3	2
Grand total		252	282	221	179	224

WATER DISTRIBUTORS

Table 21: Closed water distributor complaints by primary issue

Primary issue	Scheme participants	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Land	Unitywater	7	9	10	5	13
	Urban Utilities	13	17	9	10	9
	Gold Coast City Council	1	2	1	0	1
	Redland City Council	0	0	1	0	0
Total (Land)		21	28	21	15	23
Supply	Urban Utilities	13	3	8	13	9
	Unitywater	5	5	12	4	5
	Redland City Council	1	1	0	1	1
	Gold Coast City Council	0	1	1	1	0
Total (Supply)		19	10	21	19	15
Customer service	Urban Utilities	7	3	2	6	9
	Unitywater	0	3	8	4	5
	Gold Coast City Council	1	0	1	0	1
	Logan City Council	0	0	0	1	0
Total (Customer service)		8	6	11	11	15
Provision	Unitywater	3	8	11	5	6
	Urban Utilities	10	10	6	3	6
	Logan City Council	3	1	0	1	2
	Redland City Council	1	0	0	1	0
Total (Provision)		17	19	17	10	14
Other	Unitywater	0	2	3	5	4
	Logan City Council	0	0	0	0	1
	Urban Utilities	1	3	3	2	0
	Gold Coast City Council	0	0	0	1	0
	Redland City Council	0	0	0	1	0
Total (Other)		1	5	6	9	5
Grand total		66	68	76	64	72

Appendix 4: Compliance checklist

Summary of requirement		Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Letter of compliance	A letter of compliance from the accountable officer or statutory body to the relevant Minister/s	ARRs – section 7	Page 1
Accessibility	Table of contents Glossary	ARRs – section 9.1	Contents Appendix 6
	Public availability	ARRs – section 9.2	Page i
	Interpreter service statement	<i>Queensland Government Language Services Policy</i> ARRs – section 9.3	Page i
	Copyright notice	<i>Copyright Act 1968</i> ARRs – section 9.4	Page i
	Information Licensing	<i>QGEA – Information Licensing</i> ARRs – section 9.5	Page i
General information	Introductory Information	ARRs – section 10	About us
Non-financial performance	Government's objectives for the community and whole-of-government plans/specific initiatives	ARRs – section 11.1	N/A
	Agency objectives and performance indicators	ARRs – section 11.2	Our performance
	Agency service areas and service standards	ARRs – section 11.3	Our service
Financial performance	Summary of financial performance	ARRs – section 12.1	Financial summary
Governance – management and structure	Organisational structure	ARRs – section 13.1	Our governance
	Executive management	ARRs – section 13.2	Our governance
	Government bodies (statutory bodies and other entities)	ARRs – section 13.3	Our governance
	Public Sector Ethics	<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i> ARRs – section 13.4	Our governance
	Human Rights	<i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> ARRs – section 13.5	Our governance
	Queensland public service values	ARRs – section 13.6	About us

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Summary of requirement	Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Governance – risk management and accountability	Risk management	ARRs – section 14.1 Our governance
	Audit committee	ARRs – section 14.2 Our governance
	Internal audit	ARRs – section 14.3 Our governance
	External scrutiny	ARRs – section 14.4 Our governance
	Information systems and recordkeeping	ARRs – section 14.5 Our governance
	Information Security attestation	ARRs – section 14.6 Our governance
Governance – human resources	Strategic workforce planning and performance	ARRs – section 15.1 Our people
	Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment	Directive No.04/18 <i>Early Retirement, Redundancy and Retrenchment</i> ARRs – section 15.2 Our people
Open Data	Statement advising publication of information	ARRs – section 16 Our governance
	Consultancies	ARRs – section 31.1 data.qld.gov.au
	Overseas travel	ARRs – section 31.2 data.qld.gov.au
	Queensland Language Services Policy	ARRs – section 31.3 data.qld.gov.au
Financial statements	Certification of financial statements	FAA – section 62 FPMS – sections 38, 39 and 46 ARRs – section 17.1 Financial statements
	Independent Auditor’s Report	FAA – section 62 FPMS – section 46 ARRs – section 17.2 Independent Auditor’s Report

FAA *Financial Accountability Act 2009*

FPMS *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*

ARRs *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*

Appendix 5:

Current scheme participants

All licensed retailers and distributors who supply energy to small customers in Queensland (and water in South East Queensland) must become members of our scheme (scheme participants). Since February 28, 2022, prescribed entities with a retail authorisation were also required to become members of our scheme. EWOQ is predominantly funded by an industry levy paid by the scheme participants.

Scheme participant	Product type	Service type
1st Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
AGL Sales (Queensland Electricity) Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
AGL Sales (Queensland) Pty Ltd	Gas	Retailer
Alinta Energy Retail Sales Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
Allgas Energy Pty Ltd	Gas	Distributor
Altogether Group Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Amber Electric Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Ampol Energy (Retail) Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Apex Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Australian Gas Networks Limited	Gas	Distributor
Blue NRG Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
CovaU Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
Diamond Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Discover Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
Dodo Power & Gas Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Electricity in a Box Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Energex Limited	Electricity	Distributor
Energy Locals Pty Ltd*	Electricity	Retailer
Energy Services Management Pty Ltd (trading as Glow Power)	Electricity	Retailer
EnergyAustralia Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Ergon Energy Corporation Ltd	Electricity	Distributor
Ergon Energy Qld Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Essential Energy	Electricity	Distributor
Gee Power and Gas Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
Globird Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
Gold Coast City Council	Water	Distributor and Retailer
Hanwha Energy Retail Australia Pty Ltd (trading as Nectr)	Electricity	Retailer
Humenergy Group Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
Locality Planning Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Logan City Council	Water	Distributor and Retailer
Lumo Energy Australia Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer

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Scheme participant	Product type	Service type
Maranoa Regional Council	Gas	Distributor and Retailer
Metered Energy Holdings Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
Momentum Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Next Business Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Online Power and Gas Pty Ltd (trading as Future X Power)	Electricity	Retailer
Origin Energy Electricity Limited	Electricity	Retailer
Origin Energy Retail Ltd	Gas	Retailer
OVO Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
Pacific Blue Retail Pty Ltd (trading as Tango energy)	Electricity	Retailer
Powerhub Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Powershop Australia Pty Ltd**	Electricity	Retailer
Radian Holdings Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Real Utilities Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
ReAmped Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Red Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
Redland City Council	Water	Distributor and Retailer
Savant Energy Power Networks Pty Ltd	Electricity and Gas	Retailer
Shell Energy Retail Pty Ltd (formerly ERM Power Retail Pty Ltd)	Electricity	Retailer
Simply Energy (Engie)	Electricity	Retailer
Smart Energy Retail Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Starcorp Energy Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Sumo Power Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
Telstra Energy (Retail) Pty Ltd	Electricity	Retailer
The Embedded Networks Company	Electricity	Retailer
Unitywater	Water	Distributor and Retailer
Urban Utilities	Water	Distributor and Retailer
Western Downs Regional Council	Gas	Distributor and Retailer

* Sales and marketing activities conducted by Sonnen.

** Sales and marketing activities conducted by Kogan Energy.

Appendix 6: Glossary

ANZOA Australia and New Zealand Ombudsman Association.

ANZEWON Australian and New Zealand Energy & Water Ombudsman Network.

Billing a case issue relating to high or disputed bills, delays, errors, estimated accounts, fees and charges, rebates or concessions, tariffs, meters and refunds.

Case any contact a customer has with EWOQ, including an enquiry, refer back to supplier, refer to higher level, refer to another organisation or investigation.

Complaint is a case billed to a scheme participant (i.e. refer back to supplier, refer to higher level or investigation).

Credit a case issue relating to payment difficulties, disconnection or bad debt.

Customer service a case issue relating to a scheme participant's failure to inform or respond, incorrect advice, poor attitude or privacy issues.

Embedded network a privately owned network where the electrical wiring is configured in such a way that the site owner on sells energy to tenants and residents, commonly found in apartment blocks, retirement villages and caravan parks.

Enquiry a case type assigned to a general query about electricity, gas or water that is not a complaint nor associated with a scheme participant.

EWOQ Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland.

Exempt seller an energy seller who only sells energy incidentally at a specific site (an embedded network) to a defined group of customers.

Investigation a complaint type that EWOQ investigates and facilitates an outcome that is fair and reasonable. Investigations can be Level 1, 2 or 3 depending on the time taken to resolve the issue.

Land a case issue relating to the impact of network assets, network maintenance and vegetation management.

Marketing a case issue relating to conduct by energy marketers, such as misleading information, pressure and non-account holder sign up.

Provision a case issue relating to problems with new or existing connections.

Refer back when a customer has not contacted their provider to resolve their issue prior to submitting their complaint to EWOQ. We refer them back to their provider.

Refer to higher level (RHL) we can refer a customer's complaint to a higher level of authority within the supplier before starting an investigation.

Refer to other organisations we have memoranda of understanding with other government authorities who have jurisdiction over aspects of the energy or water sector outside our jurisdiction, including the Office of Fair Trading and the Australian Energy Regulator.

Scheme participant energy distributors and retailers operating in Queensland and water distributors and retailers in South East Queensland who must join the EWOQ scheme.

Small customer a residential or small business consumer who uses less than 100 megawatt hours of electricity a year, less than one terajoule of gas a year, or – for those in South East Queensland – less than 100 kilolitres of water a year.

Supply a case issue relating to the quality of energy supply, damage or loss, outages or sewerage overflow.

Transfer a case issue relating to errors in billing or transfer of account due to switching energy retailers, contract terms, delay in transfer or site ownership.

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Our thanks

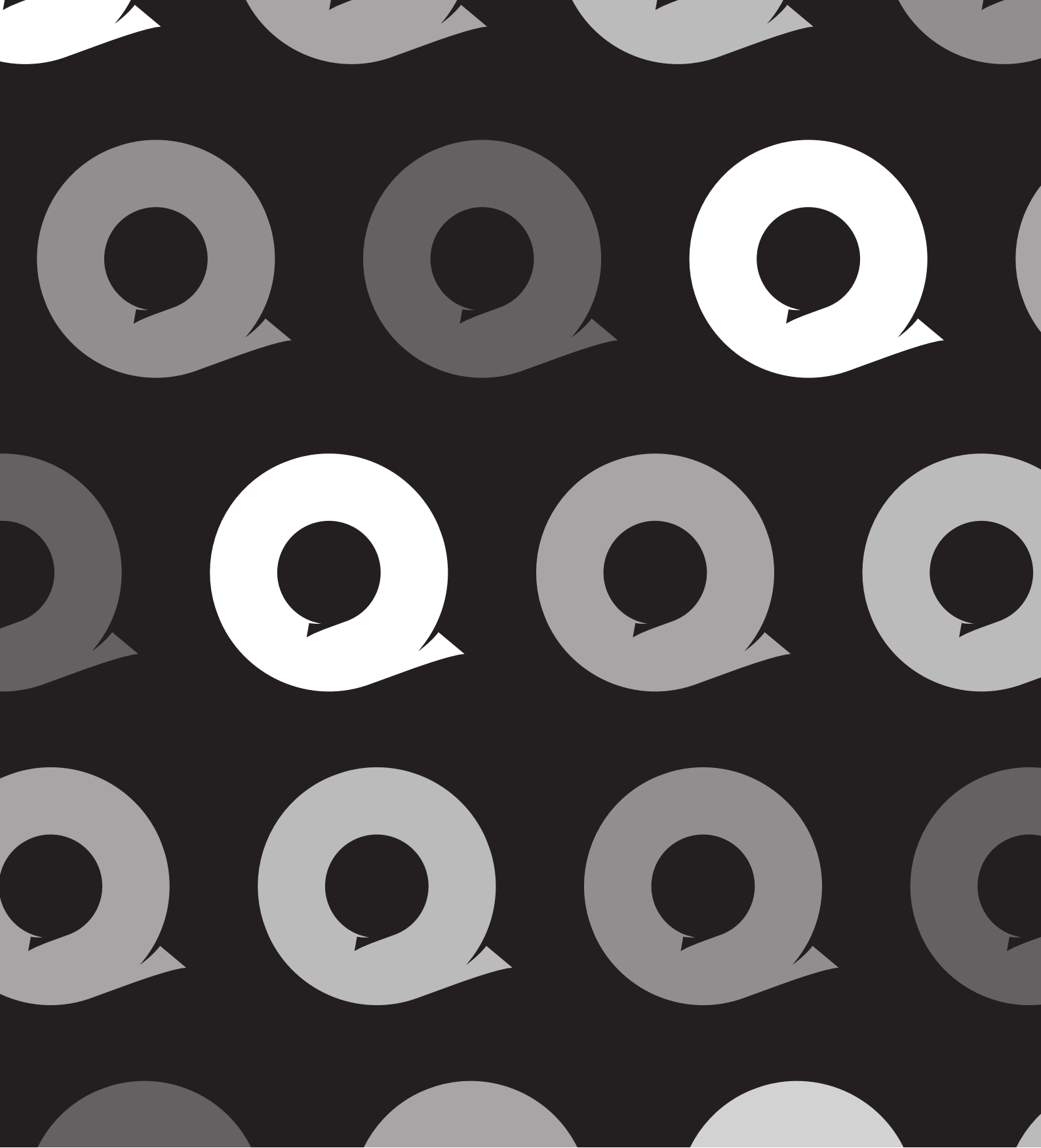
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Printed on Ecostar 100



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Queensland**