



27 April 2017

[Submitted by web portal: <http://www.aph.gov.au/moderngrid>]

Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

Submission to the inquiry into modernising Australia's electricity grid.

The Consumer Action Law Centre (**Consumer Action**) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy's inquiry into modernising Australia's electricity grid.

A modern network must benefit all consumers as affordable, reliable and secure supply of electricity is essential to health, wellbeing, economic participation and social inclusion. Consumer Action's *Power Transformed* report describes the challenges in building consumer engagement and trust in the developing energy market, and identifies key issues facing consumers. To assist policy makers, it sets out principles for establishing a framework to support better consumer outcomes:

- It should be easy for people to engage and make effective decisions.
- Appropriate consumer protections should be applied to all energy products and services.
- The benefits of a transforming market should be shared across the whole community.

Electricity system reforms must be informed by, and accommodate, actual consumer behaviour if we are to achieve outcomes in the long-term interests of consumers. Reform processes could also be supported by further research on actual consumer outcomes in the current market.

We attach our *Power Transformed* report for the committee's consideration in relation to the modernising of Australia's electricity grid.

About Consumer Action

Consumer Action Law Centre is an independent, not-for profit consumer organisation based in Melbourne. We work to advance fairness in consumer markets, particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable consumers, through financial counselling, legal advice and representation, and policy work and campaigns. Delivering assistance services to Victorian consumers, we have a national

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reach through our deep expertise in consumer law and policy and direct knowledge of the consumer experience of modern markets.

Yours sincerely

CONSUMER ACTION LAW CENTRE

Gerard Brody
Chief Executive Officer