



Energy Connections: Engaging the consumer in building stronger systems

An ICER paper

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About ICER

The International Confederation of Energy Regulators is voluntary framework for cooperation between energy regulators from around the globe. Its aim is to improve public, and policy-maker, awareness and understanding of energy regulation and its role in addressing a wide spectrum of socio-economic, environmental and market issues. By establishing this voluntary confederation, with regular and structured contacts and cooperation between regulators, the world's energy regulatory authorities hope to exchange information and best practices in the regulation field and to make a significant contribution to the evolution towards a sustainable planet. This report was prepared by ICER's Virtual Working Group on Consumers.

More information is available at www.icer-regulators.net.



Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	4
1.1	Methodology	4
1.2	The contributors	5
2	THE CHANGING PUBLIC ENVIRONMENT	6
3	WE'RE HERE: BUILDING AWARENESS OF THE REGULATOR, IT'S ROLE AND ENERGY ISSUES	7
4	WE'RE HUMAN: SPEAKING A COMMON LANGUAGE WITH CONSUMERS	8
5	WE'RE HELPFUL: SHARING KNOWLEDGE, ENABLING CHOICE	9
6	WE NEED YOU: BRINGING THE CONSUMER INTO THE REGULATORY PROCESS	10
7	WE'RE FAIR: ENFORCEMENT, COMPLIANCE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION	12
8	WE CARE: TACKLING ENERGY POVERTY	13
9	CONCLUSIONS	15
	ANNEX 1 – CASE STUDIES	16



1 Introduction

Energy regulators are, by nature, good at making and enforcing rules. It is, after all, what many were created to do. In many places, the regulator was there to wield legal power to protect the consumer from monopoly power. Today, authority alone does not get the job done. Regulators are becoming better at listening, persuading, learning, communicating and exchanging ideas with consumers. It's more than a public relations exercise, consumer empowerment and engagement have become the critical lever in affecting real change.

In many different places in the world, to varying degrees, consumers are seeing increasing levels of choice in how they buy energy. However, they can often struggle with understanding the implications of those choices and are looking for unbiased information. Consumers see rising prices and want to understand issues that affect them, but don't speak the technical language of the energy distribution sector. Consumers want to have a say in policies that impact their bill, but lack the time, and resources to submit proposals. Citizens want energy distribution and pricing to reflect their values when it comes to helping those in need with necessities of life, but tackling energy poverty could possibly take regulators into a grey area on the outskirts of social policy. And with sustainability and conservation taking on rising importance, how else to reduce consumption than by influencing the thinking of the consumer?

A review of consumer empowerment and engagement in six places – Ontario, Australia, the United States, Austria, Italy and the Netherlands – bears this out. In an era of rising prices, increased competition and growing system challenges, including the need for conservation, regulators are now also looking to consumers to provide the “people power” to affect change and improve energy markets and systems.

This paper is based on observations of these regulators' initiatives and provides a number of ideas, experiences and lessons for engaging and empowering energy consumers. The lessons learned can inform energy regulators in the common challenge of leveraging the wisdom of consumers to strengthen energy distribution systems. This paper is not intended to fully summarize any of the individual case studies. The accompanying studies should be read individually to gain the full benefit of their insights and experiences.

1.1 Methodology

The International Confederation of Energy Regulators (ICER) is dedicated to raising awareness of the role of energy regulators. It profiles the issues that matter most to energy users, and shares ideas among regulators to help members deliver the highest possible level of public service.

Virtual working groups allow for the exchange of ideas and concerns or challenges and opportunities that are common to many ICER member regulators. One of the issues many regulators are tackling is to engage consumers and improve consumer protection, especially as energy markets become more open to competition.



ICER Virtual Working Group 3 on Consumers' Issues was asked to promote discussion of consumer engagement and protection. The work group surveyed regulators within the ICER members associations for their observations and experience in consumer engagement. Thirty regulators responded to the survey. Six regulators took the opportunity to submit case studies that highlight successes and explore future challenges in consumer protection and engagement.

1.2 The contributors

E-Control Austria is the national regulatory authority for the natural gas and electricity markets in Austria. E-Control Austria has had a dedicated Customer Affairs Department since 2009. Its main tasks include strengthening the position of consumers in the liberalized electricity and natural gas markets, publishing tailored information about the rights of consumers in these markets and coordinating the regulator's activities relevant to consumers.

The Australian Energy Regulator (AER) regulates energy markets and networks under national energy market legislation and rules. Its functions include setting revenue allowances for energy networks, ensuring suppliers comply with the legislation and rules, and taking enforcement action where necessary. Among other activities, they educate consumers and small businesses about their energy rights and opportunities. Over the past decade, the energy retail sector in Australia has transformed, with millions of customers now free to choose their energy supplier.

Since the 1990s, the Italian Parliament has introduced institutional reforms introducing competitive energy markets. The Italian Authority of Electricity and Gas (AEEGSI) ensures that consumers who need services can find them, wherever they live in the country. They reconcile the economic goals of operators with society's objectives, promote environmental protection and the efficient use of energy, and advocate for the interests of users and consumers.

Netherlands' Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) shares its experience as a multi-disciplinary regulator in the liberalized energy sector, and illustrates how competition, regulation and consumer empowerment can work closely together for the benefit of consumers. ACM was created in April 2013 through the merger of three organizations to house consumer protection and market oversight in a single authority, a model that is unique in Europe.

The Office of Consumer Advocate, Wyoming Public Service Commission, provided an overview of regulatory activity across the United States of America (USA), where there are many economic regulators of energy. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, a regulator with national authority, regulates certain wholesale generation and power transactions and has authority over transmission services. State regulators have authority over retail prices, terms and conditions of service, and quality of service that impacts retail customers. In a few instances, cities or municipalities may have certain authority over retail services and prices.



The Ontario Energy Board, a provincial regulator in Canada, protects the interests of consumers with respect to prices and the adequacy of reliability and quality of service. Its vision for energy consumers is that they have the information they need to understand the value they receive for their expenditures on energy and to make choices regarding their own use of energy. The Ontario Energy Board created a Consumer Services Division in 2014 to take a centralized approach to consumer issues.

2 The changing public environment

If knowledge is power, then the general consumer is more empowered today than at any time in the history of the modern market economy. They can compare the price of the same product for sale in two different countries, using the internet. They can allow sellers of services, such as hotels, to bid for their business. Consumers have greater influence, using social media and personal networks, to gain the attention of companies they do business with and wield influence over their behavior.

In the energy sector, consumers clearly do not feel as informed and engaged as in other commercial transactions. While markets can be opened to competition, it cannot be assumed that consumers will automatically be open to the idea of switching. Many consumers do not feel they have the knowledge to make informed choices. The typical energy bill has become a complicated document. They are not sure of their own ability to calculate the benefit of switching to a new provider.

Each of the regulators providing case studies has varying degrees of increased competition in the retail energy market. There is an inherent belief that consumers have their interests better protected, and will be better treated, if some consumers are switching providers.

From the consumer's point of view, however, increased competition should be resulting in a lower sustainable price for them, the most common benefit in most competitive markets. In the consumption of energy, however, the timing of increased competition in energy markets has coincided with an era of rising energy costs, either due to global economic trends or energy system infrastructure investment costs which must be shared among users.

The Australian submission encapsulates the challenge: "The establishment of a more national grid network, an effective wholesale trading market and full retail competition can rightly be looked upon as substantial successes of the Australian reform program. However, in recent years, there have been significant increases in electricity prices with rising network costs, the key driver of price increases. These rising electricity prices have focused considerable recent attention on the performance of the electricity sector and what further reforms could be introduced to make the market work more efficiently."

Yet, if consumers see no benefit in switching, and largely stay with one provider, is there truly competition in the market, and will energy retailers feel the discipline that is natural to a competitive market, and provide the customer service that inspires loyalty? If consumers do not feel they have the knowledge to make informed choices regarding their own energy needs, how can they be expected to lend greater insight into system needs?



3 We're here: Building awareness of the regulator, it's role and energy issues

The reality for regulators is that they have a low profile. Their engagement with consumers begins at the most fundamental of starting points: Raising awareness that they exist, and in doing so, making more consumers aware that they have rights, choice and the opportunity to influence decisions affecting their energy supply.

Though regulators have long been in the business of protecting the interests of consumers, they haven't had much of a direct relationship with energy customers. As several of the case studies illustrate, this is changing. Many regulators are getting out to the places where people interact.

A common thread in the case studies is that regulators must make a concerted effort to increase their exposure. In 2012, the OEB assessed all the ways it makes contact with consumers. The review recommended continually directing some form of communication at the consumer to maintain interest, and capitalize on points of change, such as modifications to billing or rate increases, when consumer interest is already heightened. The OEB now looks for ways of integrating its consumer interactions, known as "touch points," such as online, advertising, in-person and through direct mail.

Many regulators are getting out to the places where people interact. In Austria, the regulator sets up a presence at fairs, festivals and labour union gatherings. The goal of the one-on-one introduction is to foster a continuing relationship. Many regulators use every opportunity to spread their literature detailing consumer rights, supplier responsibilities and the regulators role. Like any first meeting, continued engagement is only possible if the other party knows how to get hold of you later – and so website addresses, toll-free numbers and other points of contact are emphasized.

The U.S.A case study highlights that, "Regulators have a number of ways of trying to educate customers including using brochures, newsletters, press releases, inserts in the bill envelopes, messages on the bills, speeches and presentations, websites, and social media."

Regulators are also engaging with consumers in the places they congregate online, using both their own websites, social media platforms and through partnerships with consumer facing organizations. Regulators from Australia, Netherlands and Ontario have all produced videos in recent years that were posted to YouTube, an endeavor that can reach new audiences but that require a high degree of originality to cut through the noise in this virtual information bazaar.

Points to consider:

Engagement is not a process with a beginning and an end, but an ongoing effort to raise awareness and build partnerships that deepen engagement.

Website data can tell a story. Regulators observe how and why users come to their site. Some regulators monitor which pages receive the most traffic, and re-think the purpose and language of pages receiving little traffic.



Regulators commonly make use of consumer surveys to gauge the public's perception of energy markets, awareness of the regulator and key concerns with retailers.

4 We're Human: Speaking a common language with consumers

"Anything that can be said can be said clearly."

- Ludwig Wittgenstein

Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein was an Austrian-British philosopher who expressed ideas on logic and the philosophy of mathematics, among other subjects. If he could communicate complex concepts in clear language, surely regulators can do the same. As cited in the case studies, many are making the effort.

The obstacle for many regulators, traditionally, is a concept known as "the curse of knowledge." Regulators are valued for their deep level of expertise. However, it's possible to be so informed on a subject that you lose the ability to effectively communicate with the less informed. The audience can't understand what you're telling them, because you can't grasp what they don't know.

The case studies cover regulators in many different countries, but all agree that the regulator and the consumer in a given market need to be speaking the same plainspoken language. This means clear, concise wording that avoids the use of jargon, highly technical terms, excessive use of numbers and abstract concepts.

For regulators, it can take a sustained effort. Public facing websites, brochures and other materials aimed at the consumer are a natural place to start. However, plain language does not have to start there. Proposals, regulatory decisions and other more detailed documents can be summarized in plain language so that "raising energy literacy" can make people feel they not only understand energy issues but also see how they have a stake in helping to address them. In regulatory affairs, the Australian regulator makes available an overview paper that is accessible to consumers, which uses plain language and eliminates jargon.

In Ontario, Notices of Application now use plain language, which allow consumers to see at a glance how an application could impact them and how they can learn more and have their say on potential changes.

Plain language not only helps consumers understand more about their own energy concerns, "raising energy literacy" can help the system work better as a whole. As the U.S.A paper states: "The regulatory process works best when customers are informed and have a basic understanding of utility services, operations and prices as well as a basic understanding of the role of the regulator."

Points to consider:

It can be useful to compare the reading level of the regulator's public communications with the reading level employed by the local newspaper. They should be comparable.



If others are sharing your consumer materials, this is a good sign that outside audiences find them to be clear and useful.

Australia's regulator directly engages retailers in the clear language challenge to make the system more understandable for consumers.

5 We're Helpful: Sharing knowledge, enabling choice

The energy consumer fuelling up their vehicle can look across the street, at a competing filling station, and easily comprehend the benefit of switching supplier – a clear price is right there on the sign.

Those paying for energy at home face a much more complex price structure to understand. Most important, vehicle fuel customers will cross the street at any time to get a better deal, which injects discipline into the market. Home energy consumers don't have the same opportunities to move their business around.

Even in those markets with higher levels of choice and competition, the consumer does not feel equipped to make confident price comparisons. There's a fear of unknown consequences in signing a contract for fixed periods. Many, faced with options they can't fully grasp, and wanting to avoid "buyer's remorse", choose the most natural course: staying with what they know.

In the Netherlands, for example, the regulator has found that 56 per cent of all consumers have never switched supplier even though there is both choice and opportunity. Their consumer surveys point to low trust, high perceptions of switching barriers and satisfaction with the status quo as reasons for consumers staying put.

To assist consumers with understanding the choices before them, many regulators have created price comparison tools. In some cases, such as in Austria, the regulator is legally required to facilitate easy comparisons between energy offers. Their Tarifkalkulator uses postal code and annual consumption and lists all available energy offers from lowest to highest price. If consumers don't know their annual consumption, they can provide information on household size.

Calculators strive to offer a "no surprises" price. That is, all network charges and taxes are included in the listed prices. In 2013, the tool was used 800,000 times in a market with 4 million metering points for electricity and 1.2 million for gas.

In Australia, the Energy Made Easy website performs a similar service. Retailers are required to enter all generally available offers into the system within two days of the offer becoming available to customers. Energy Made Easy also contributes to conservation goals by providing households to compare how their energy use measures up to households of a similar size.

Italy's "Trova Offerte", managed by the energy Regulatory Authority, is a price comparison service that allows households to find the best offering from among 25 supplier proposals. Unlike Australia, supplier participation is voluntary, though 50 electricity products, 35 gas products and 15 dual fuel products are published, and the home page receives 400,000 visitors per year.



In Ontario, energy consumers can enter their usage and select their utility to see an estimate of their bill, together with useful explanations of charges. Just below on the same page, they can enter their usage data to see what their bill would look like if they signed a contract with an energy retailer. Retail contracts with residential and small business consumers must also be accompanied by a price comparison that shows the current utility price and the price they would pay under the retail contract. Rather than waiting for the first bill from the retailer to see the consequence of their choice, the tool provides a preview into the “what if” scenario.

The regulator in the Netherlands not only made price comparison tools available, on third party websites, but drove traffic to the comparison tools by developing witty and engaging online videos that poke gently fun at the misgivings of consumers to switch, which were called “You Snooze, You Lose.”

Points to consider:

Motivating consumers to make active choices will take more than one campaign. Rather it is a sustained effort that builds “energy literacy” and confidence over time.

Not all consumers need to be switching or engaging in price competition – market discipline can be generated if a retailers know that some consumers can and will switch suppliers.

Regulators can learn lessons by studying other markets defined by risk aversion where service offerings are relatively similar, such as finance and insurance.

6 We Need You: Bringing the consumer into the regulatory process

Consumers have knowledge, experience and input that’s extremely valuable. Regulators recognize that consumers are a resource – millions of eyes and ears throughout the market – who can share their experience, frustrations and concerns to help enhance system performance.

The complexity of the energy market and regulatory process have made it difficult for consumers to participate meaningfully. As a result, proposals of network businesses are not being rigorously challenged by consumers or their representatives.

As a result, regulators in the case studies are making concerted efforts to not only push information out to the consumer, but to bring the consumer in -- to be a more active participant in the regulatory process.

In the U.S.A, regulators put the burden of proof on the utility seeking a rate change. They must show the request is reasonable. In such a process, with the regulator reviewing requests, the consumer should be protected. However, as the case study points out, if no one speaks out on the consumer interest, or the potential harm of the rate change, the utility’s evidence goes undisputed. As they argue, the moment at which consumers often become aware of a price increase is when they sit at the kitchen table to open their latest energy bill. However, at that point, their opportunity to submit their opinion has passed.



Even when a customer does want to submit their input or concerns, the legal discovery process and formal administrative hearing can be a significant barrier to participation.

That's why many state regulators are working actively to get more consumer input at the table when proposals are considered through the use of designated consumer advocates. The consumer advocate could be a separate government agency funded by government, ratepayers or the utility itself. In some states, non-governmental consumer advocates have been created and are funded by ratepayers and, in some cases, regulators require utilities to fund the groups. Whatever form they take, they have the policy, legal and communications counsel to allow the consumer voice to be heard in the halls of power. Just as regulators have formed national and international associations to share knowledge and experience, consumer advocates in the U.S.A have formed a national association to work together on common challenges.

The Italian regulator provides an example of improving engagement by making the topic discussed more accessible to a general audience. They publish non-technical summaries in an "Atlas" for Energy Consumers' Rights. They also apply the criteria of transparency when adopting rules and decisions. They accept written observations and, when necessary, hold group and individual hearings with interested parties, especially consumer associations.

Ontario's regulator is actively seeking consumer views in reviewing legislation and making regulatory submissions. In December 2013, the OEB embarked on a review of Part II of the Energy Consumer Protection Act. It included focus group sessions, an online workbook that consumers could complete, and a survey of over 1,500 people who had some experience with retail energy markets.

Ontario's Minister of Energy asked the OEB to examine and report on TransCanada PipeLines Limited's proposed Energy East Pipeline from an Ontario perspective. While the decision to approve the proposed Energy East Pipeline is entirely the responsibility of the National Energy Board and the federal cabinet, the Government of Ontario intends to participate as an intervenor, with their submission informed by the broad consultations with the public and stakeholders, including First Nations and communities on the pipeline route.

Australia's regulator established a consumer challenge panel to provide advice on issues important to consumers in the regulatory process, and Ontario has plans to establish a similar forum.

The regulator in Australia puts the onus on network businesses to develop consumer engagement strategies. Before a network business submits a proposal, they must show how they have consulted the community, and the regulator has developed guidelines on how best to gather meaningful input. In addition, quality of the consumer engagement is considered in evaluating proposals. To take the effort further, the Consumer Challenge Panel was established to advise the regulator on issues that are important to consumers in the regulatory process and enhance consumer input into some of the more complex, technical issues that arise in regulation.

Points to consider:

It takes effort to get consumers engaged in the regulatory process – simply posting notices of hearings or consultations is not likely to solicit input.



Consumer engagement can be everybody's business –for example, utilities seeking a regulatory change or approval (such as a rate changes can be asked to present the consumer perspective.

The consumer can be a valuable source of input in getting regulatory decisions right, but as individuals, consumers do not have the expertise or resources. Support for consumer advocates can help increase consumer input.

7 We're Fair: Enforcement, compliance and conflict resolution

While consumer empowerment and engagement is an issue frequently studied and discussed by regulators, the consumer thinks about these issues as it relates to them. In other words, when they have a concern, they want to be heard. When they have a problem, they want it fixed. When they've been treated unfairly, they want to be compensated. To them, engagement is about more than information. Empowerment is about more than market choice and input into regulatory affairs. They want action, too, on their behalf, when appropriate.

Action, often more than words, builds credibility and trust. For regulators to earn that reputation, consumers need to see and feel that they have recourse if they are misled by marketers or mistreated by energy retailers. They need to know that in matters of enforcement, the regulator is watching their interests, and in matters of conflict, the regulator will ensure their voice is heard.

Regulators invest in communication and public relations programs to make consumers aware of their rights in the marketplace. However, in the long run, credibility of regulators, in the eyes of consumers, depends heavily on whether a single maligned and unhappy customer can get a powerful, multi-million dollar energy company to respect their concern, admit an error and correct a mistake.

In Italy, standard for quality of service are guaranteed. To most consumers, "guarantee" has a clear meaning: "If you fail in my service, I will be compensated." That's exactly what energy customers will see when their supplier is found to have failed in prescribed areas of service and quality. When specific standards are not met by the fault of the supplier, users are entitled to receive automatic compensation payments through their bills. Complaints are sent first to the supplier who must respond within 40 days. If the supplier missed the deadline, 20 euros is paid to the customer. When complaints can't be settled directly, they are sent to a central unit, commonly referred to as "Sportello", which in 2013 handled 44,000 complaints.

Italy also offers a dispute resolution service, free and completed entirely on-line. Other places are also moving the complaint and resolution service on-line, a development that makes the process more convenient and accessible for many consumers. In the U.S.A, Florida and Ohio, for example, offer such a service, along with toll-free numbers for filing complaints or gathering information.



All of these case studies support the idea that consumer protection can form a virtuous loop that supports further consumer engagement. Funds collected via penalties are used on further consumer engagement campaigns. In Ontario, administrative penalties levied for non-compliance with legal and regulatory obligations are used to fund consumer education efforts that, to date, have included radio advertising and multi-lingual street teams to educate consumers about retail energy contracts.

Visible enforcement, clear penalties, accessible dispute resolution and other can do more than just regulate the activity of energy companies. These activities can also give consumers the confidence to make more active choices in choosing their energy supplier, if consumers know those companies are playing by the rules.

8 We Care: Tackling energy poverty

Those with low incomes experience energy markets differently. No one likes receiving utility bills in their mail. There are, however, customers who open the envelope with a true sense of fear and apprehension. For them, rising costs for energy could mean less food in the cupboard this month. In any community, there are people who experience poverty for a variety of circumstances.

Each of the jurisdictions covered in the case studies, has some form of assistance for low income people, as well as programs to help avoid disconnection for non-payment. It is important for regulators to have a clear understanding of energy poverty and some have responsibilities for addressing these issues within parameters set by government but at the same time, regulators have a clear mission and mandate.

While assisting low-income energy customers is a worthwhile objective, they must be careful to consider program design. There is a need for balance in providing meaningful help to those in poverty, while also treating all system participants fairly.

One of the central questions for regulators and regulated utilities is defining energy poverty and identifying who would qualify for support. However, some regulators are consulting widely for ideas and input to define a clear scope and scale for such programs. There's a recognition that while the energy sector does not typically have the expertise to measure poverty and identify those in need, many other government programs and social agencies excel in this area. Eligibility criteria for existing low-income programs in other policy areas, such as income assistance, can help define eligibility for energy support programs in a way that align with societal values.

Italy implemented a "social bonus" for electricity in 2008 and for gas in 2009. The discount helps customers experiencing "economic hardship." The social bonus is based on indicators of poverty already used to identify recipients for social programs, but customers must send a specific application to the regulator to receive the social bonus. Up to the end of 2013, about 1 million families in the electricity sector and almost 650,000 families in the gas sector have acceded the "social bonus". The social bonus is fully compatible with energy retail competitive markets.



Ontario's Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) also uses existing government indicators of poverty. The Board establishes the eligibility criteria and level of funding contributions, and provides information about the program on its website and through outreach events. In order for a customer to access emergency financial assistance and special customer service rules, the customer must go through a social service agency that determines whether or not the customer qualifies as low-income. The issue of energy poverty is one that regulators are continuing to study. While the LEAP program is currently being reviewed, on March 26, 2015, the Ontario government announced the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP), an initiative to be administered through the OEB that will come into effect on January 1, 2016 to provide low-income Ontarians with financial assistance.

Demographic trends, towards an aging population, and health trends, towards more home care, are combining to create an emerging issue of regulators: assisting low income customers who are dependent on life-saving electricity and gas. Italy's social bonus is already available to such customers.

There's a growing recognition that assisting low-income customers can deliver system benefits, such as fewer disconnections. Low income programs are also an opportunity to engage and empower audiences that are not always reached via websites and other public relations activities.

Some regulators are exploring whether conservation can be a tool in fighting energy poverty. Austria's regulator has intensified activities to combat energy poverty in Austria, an issue described as "often debated but rarely specified". As a response, they have led the way in conducting detailed, evidence-based investigations.

Among other findings, they've found awareness of conservation programs to be particularly low among those considered to be experiencing energy poverty. "According to a 2013 survey, a significant share of energy poor people remains unaware of their own possibilities to decrease their bills – often because of advanced age, lower levels of education or "longstanding or outdated habits". With professional energy counselling and other measures, many Austrian households could quickly benefit without cutting back on their standard of living."

Points to consider:

Regulators and utilities are not in the business of designing and delivering social programs, but they need to improve their understanding of energy poverty.

Regulators are increasingly expected to lead thinking on the issue, consult widely and design appropriate, targeted programs where needed. Social agencies and poverty advocates can help regulators can a deeper understanding of the many faces of poverty in their community.

Conservation programs, in addition to promoting environmental sustainability, could also help in the fight against energy poverty.



9 Conclusions

Most of the broader goals and visions articulated by electricity and gas regulators depend on the consumer. For increased competition, we need, at least, some customers to be exercising choice. To make better regulatory decisions, we need wider input, especially from the household energy user. To promote conservation, we need everyone doing their part. To deliver on smart grids, we need higher energy literacy.

Price consciousness is usually the beginning of the engagement for the consumer. Interpreting the monthly bill is the beginning of understanding. These events can prompt the consumer to go to a website to compare prices, or call a toll-free number to ask a question or seek redress for a complaint. Regulators need to make the most of these opportunities by communicating in a voice that is clear, human and empathetic.

Consumers understand their energy needs but they are not equipped to navigate the technical nature of regulatory reviews. More work is needed to get consumers actively involved in and influencing network decision making. Many consumers are unaware of the full range of retail options available to them, which means there is less competition in the market and, more importantly, some customers could be making energy choices that do not best suit their needs.

The encouraging news is that, thanks to the internet, regulators have more opportunities to reach and interact with consumers. As rising prices give consumers more incentive to be engaged, regulators must meet this increased interest with opportunities for meaningful engagement. As the case studies illustrate, overcoming these challenges takes a sustained effort, and evolving strategies. There is much that regulators can learn from each other.



Annex 1 – Case studies

- Case study by AEMC (Australia): Consumer engagement reforms in Australia's National Electricity Market
- Case study by E-control (Austria): Consumer Issues
- Case study by Ontario Energy Board (Canada): Case Study on Consumer Protection and Engagement in Ontario
- Case study by AEEGSI (Italy): Case Study on Consumer Issues
- Case study by Wyoming Public Service Commission (USA): Remembering Customers in the Energy Regulation Process
- Case study by ACM (The Netherlands): You Snooze, You Lose! Engaging Consumers in Retail Energy Markets

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