

# Media Release



30 September 2020

## Customer views shape AusNet Services' investment and deliver lower network bills

AusNet Services Group (**AusNet Services**) received the Australian Energy Regulator's (AER) Draft Decision today on the distributor's customer led 2021-26 Electricity Distribution Price Review Proposal.

The Proposal sets out AusNet Services' plans for the delivery of electricity distribution services and is the first in Australia to have customer representation formally influence how future network investment is made.

Under a new form of regulatory review, an independent Customer Forum was engaged to negotiate aspects of AusNet Services' regulatory proposal on behalf of customers.

The new form of regulatory review known as the 'New Reg' consumer engagement process was designed to ensure consumers' preferences drive regulatory proposals and outcomes. Developed by the AER, Energy Networks Australia and Energy Consumers Australia, AusNet Services is the first to trial the 'New Reg' consumer engagement process.

Tony Narvaez, Managing Director, AusNet Services acknowledged the AER Draft Decision as a broad endorsement of the agreements reached with the Customer Forum.

"The result of this Australian first trial was a Proposal that has delivered significant price relief for our customers while providing for expenditures to maintain and improve the safety and reliability of the network", said Mr Narvaez.

This outcome will deliver substantive benefits to AusNet Services' electricity distribution network customers, including:

- An expected average cut to the distribution network component of customer bills of \$148, in real terms, in the 5 year period compared to 2020 (or \$73 after the impact of inflation);
- Continued investment in network safety, security and reliability;
- Innovation funding to support the customer led investment in rooftop solar and batteries;
- A new incentive scheme that rewards improvements to the customer experience during outages and connections; and,
- Pricing arrangements that reflect a Victorian-wide customer consultation.

"We would like to thank the Customer Forum members for their professionalism, dedication and enthusiasm during the long negotiating process", said Mr Narvaez.

AusNet Services will formally respond with a Revised Proposal in early December. A Final Decision is expected by 30 April 2021.

For a full copy of the Draft Decision, please refer to the AER's website [www.aer.gov.au](http://www.aer.gov.au)

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## **About AusNet Services**

AusNet Services Group is a diversified Australian energy infrastructure business with over \$10.8 billion of electricity and gas network and connection assets. These assets deliver energy safely and reliably to around 1.5 million customers across Victoria. Our network and connection assets are designed, built, maintained and operated by our 1,600 employees across our regulated networks and our commercial energy services business, Mondo. AusNet Services is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX: AST).