

GAAR 2028-33

GAAR Development Panel (GDP)

Summary Notes | Meeting #2

Details	Members	AusNet Team
9am to 1pm Monday 30 March 2026 In-person only Chair: Andrew Dillon Secretariat: AusNet prepared draft, finalised by Chair Andrew Dillon	Andrew Dillon, <i>Chair</i> Damian Sullivan David Prins Gavin Duffy Kellie Larsen Nicole Wallis Observers: Nil Apologies: Andrew Richards	Fran Duiker, <i>EGM Gas & Metering</i> Moyo Tian, <i>GM Strategy & Regulation (Gas)</i> Eliza Cochrane, <i>Price Review Manager</i> Ben Ryan, <i>Manager Policy & Regulation</i> Kyle Olsen, <i>Senior Engagement Specialist</i> Lia Mavrias, <i>Engagement Specialist</i>

Key outcomes

GDP members agreed their definition of support and a set of guiding principles.

The GDP agreed on and finalised a set of focus questions, building on their input from the first meeting in February. These focus questions will inform the future agendas and discussions for the GDP to cover throughout the process

Purpose & Agenda

Time	#	Item	Outcome	Facilitator/s
9:00	1	Welcome and opening remarks		Chair
9:10	2	What does support look like	GDP members agreeing on a definition of "support"	Chair
9:45	3	Playback of focus questions	An agreed and finalised set of focus questions for the GDP	Chair/AusNet
11:30		Lunch		
12:00	4	References services proposal and planning for the Stakeholder Roundtable	Share an overview of the Reference Services Proposal and seek feedback on our approach	Eliza Cochrane
12:20	5	Demand forecast and customer segmentation approach	Share an introduction to customer segmentation, our RFQ process for demand modelling, and seeking any initial concerns or questions to share with successful providers before our next meeting	Ben Ryan
12:50	6	Open floor, next steps & close	GDP members have raised anything else on their mind. Agreement on next steps	Chair

Summary of discussion

Topics	Discussion points
1. Welcome & opening remarks	Andrew Dillon welcomed the group and noted the main purposes of today's meeting – in particular, for the panel to decide on a definition of support and focus questions for the GDP as part of the GAAR process.
2. What does support look like	A draft definition and associated guiding principles of support was developed by the Chair and AusNet to help guide GDP discussion. Andrew opened the activity noting the key outcome was for the GDP to agree on a definition of support to flow through for all future GDP discussions. Discussion: • Several members noted that GDP support should target the approach AusNet has taken to reach a decision and its intent, rather than explicitly supporting a decision which AusNet has the capabilities, experience, and responsibility to make. • The GDP sought to clarify, in the context of feedback on the recent EDPR process for the Victorian DNSPs, that their support would not be for specific projects or solutions beyond supporting the customer perspectives, strategic direction, and approach to trade-offs involved – final proposals, projects, and trade-offs are AusNet's responsibility. • The GDP agreed their overarching definition of support: <i>GDP support for a decision, action or approach means at a minimum that 'I broadly agree with this'.</i> • The GDP amended one principle to <i>'GDP support relates to customer perspectives, strategic direction, and AusNet's approach to trade-offs. It does not verify modelling, cost efficiency or numerical inputs - this is the role of the AER to scrutinise.</i> • The GDP agreed that where a vote may be required to give support, this will be handled on a case-by-case basis, with a summary of the varying views captured in meeting minutes and GDP independent reports. • The definition and guiding principles of support finalised by the GDP can be found in appendix 1.
3. Playback of focus questions	Andrew provided an overview of the topics and focus questions, noting that the proposed focus questions were developed based on direct input from the GDP at their first meeting. It was noted that GDP members had varying levels of comfort with the level of ownership on the IAP2 spectrum for some areas, to be discussed in detail at each focus question. Discussion: • The GDP agreed that the summary of areas of interest to the GDP and GAAR process can be published. This can be found in appendix 2. Discussion on the summary included: ○ General discussion clarifying points of detail about the chart. ○ The GDP discussed out of scope points, particularly: government advocacy, wholesale energy market predictions, and financial hardship vs. broader definitions of vulnerability. The GDP agreed this list is out of scope.

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- The GDP agreed that innovation is not a standalone focus question but rather should be addressed as part of other questions, in particular, focus question #9 which covers replacement decisions.
 - Following a discussion on each proposed focus question, the GDP agreed and finalised the 9 focus questions below to inform future discussions they will have throughout the process:
 1. **How might AusNet develop a good demand forecasting methodology?**
 2. **How can the GDP better understand AusNet's current and future customer use and service?**
 3. **Is AusNet's Haulage tariff structure equitable, cost reflective and understandable?**
 4. **How might AusNet engage with customers on how volume risk is shared between customers and AusNet?**
 5. **How might AusNet forecast and plan for a potential rise in dormant connections?**
 6. **What are the cost and equity implications of options to fund renewable gas investment?**
 7. **How might AusNet best support customers, making our services fit for purpose for all?**
 8. **How does Ausnet equitably balance price impacts between current and future consumers?**
 9. **How might AusNet deliver safety & reliability trade-offs considering minimum standards?**
 - Throughout the discussion the GDP proposed several changes to the level of ownership on the IAP2 spectrum the GDP will have for each topic, proposing 'Collaborate' co-ownership is most appropriate for engagement design topics.
 - The GDP also proposed changes to the wording of the question and types of topics to be covered, for example, clarifying that 'dormant connections' versus 'dormant accounts' was the focus for the group, and that engaging on 'AusNet's approach to engaging on [tariff structures]' was more appropriate than 'engaging with customers on [tariff structures]'.
 - The GDP asked when the AER would be able to observe engagement and AusNet took an action to follow up with the AER.

4. Reference services proposal and planning for the Stakeholder Roundtable

Eliza Cochrane provided an overview of AusNet's Reference Service Proposal, tariff variation mechanism and tariff structures and sought feedback on how this detailed information could best be presented to external stakeholders and customers.

Discussion:

- General discussion on AusNet's proposed services and tariffs.
 - The GDP provided feedback on how to best present the detailed information of this topic, including starting with context and definitions earlier (inc. recent AER decisions, network charges in the context of a total gas bill), rephrasing industry specific wording (e.g. 'usage' rather than 'haulage'), and framing the impacts directionally for customers.
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- The GDP also suggested that customers participating in workshops could bring their own bills and AusNet could describe the impacts of its proposal on the customer bill directly to help build customer understanding.
- The GDP noted that the impact of flattening tariff blocks on the emissions objective in the NGO would depend on retailer tariff structures and the energy sources substituted by the customer, if applicable.
- AusNet took an action to reflect the changes suggested by the GDP in the way it presents this information to stakeholders and customers.

Kyle Olsen also gave a brief overview of the plan for engagement on these topics with the Gas Stakeholder Roundtable in April.

Discussion:

- Clarifying questions and discussion on the Roundtable structure.
- The GDP agreed with the approach of selecting a Chair for the Roundtable, with the responsibility shared between AusNet and the GDP Chair depending on the content and discussion of the meeting.
- AusNet invited 2-3 GDP members to observe the Roundtable in April.

5. Demand forecast and customer segmentation approach

Ben Ryan provided a brief overview of AusNet's demand forecast methodology and approach to customer segmentation. He noted this is a topic that will be explored further with the GDP throughout the process, and that AusNet is currently sourcing a provider for an independent demand forecast.

Discussion:

- General discussion on the methodology, including how AusNet was proposing to model industrial loads and specific customer types like bulk hot water.
- AusNet took an action to include the demand forecast from the last GAAR process, what the AER decision was and how demand materialised throughout the period in relation to this when next presenting demand forecasting information.
- A panel member suggested that the impacts of climate change on weather should be considered in future demand scenarios.

6. Open floor, next steps & close

Andrew spoke to the next steps and future draft agendas and then opened the floor for any general business before closing the meeting.

Discussion included:

- A panel member noted the limited time to cover all content; options include extending meeting time, reducing content, or increasing pre-work. The GDP generally agreed that using the online engagement tool 'Padlet' improves meeting efficiency and supports the Chair in prioritising items.
- AusNet took an action to add a standing agenda item to review the forward meeting agendas to manage timelines.
- A panel member suggested that it should be decided who should be the point of contact for concerns for the Stakeholder Roundtable. It was agreed that depending on the nature of the concern, panel members can go to either the Chair or AusNet.

Action items

Action	Assigned to	Status	Due
1 A standing item to review the forward agenda to be added to future meeting agendas.	AusNet	Complete	Ongoing
2 Reflect the changes suggested by the GDP in the way information on reference services and tariffs is presented to stakeholders and customers.	AusNet	Not started	Stakeholder Roundtable (April 2026)
3 Include the demand forecast from the last GAAR process, what the AER decision was and how demand materialised throughout the period in relation to this.	AusNet	Not started	Next GDP meeting (May 2026)
4 Follow up with the AER to observe engagement through the GAAR process.	AusNet	In progress	Next GDP meeting (May 2026)
Possible future agenda items:			
6 - A site visit/s - Forecasting the main points of political contention and policy uncertainty in the lead-up to the 2026 state election. - Debriefing on the AER's Final Decisions for AGN SA and EvoEnergy (due May 2026). - AEMC presenting its <i>Gas networks in transition</i> options paper.	AusNet & Chair	Ongoing	Ongoing unless marked otherwise

Appendix 1

GDP agreed definition of support and its guiding principles.

Definition

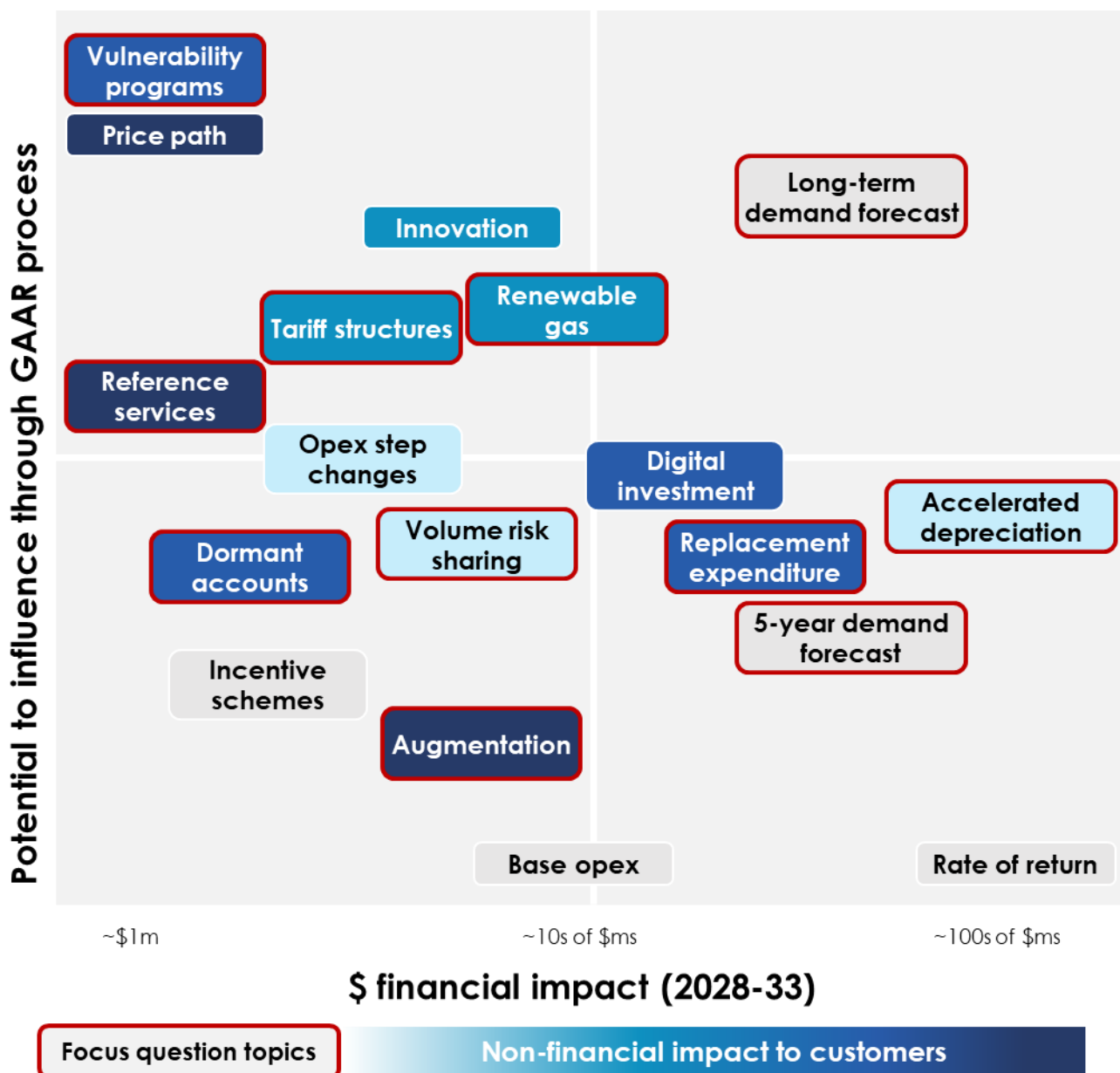
GDP support for a decision, actions or approach means at a minimum that 'I broadly agree with this'.

Guiding principles

- 1 GDP support relates to customer perspectives, strategic direction, and AusNet's approach to trade-offs. It does not verify modelling, cost efficiency or numerical inputs - this is the role of the AER to scrutinise.
- 2 In the first instance, the GDP should seek consensus positions. If in doubt, the Chair will determine support by a vote and will capture any material dissenting views in the meeting summary and in the independent panel report, if required.
- 3 Where the GDP supports (or does not support) a position, any conditions, constraints and trade-offs that led to that position should be clearly articulated and documented.
- 4 Support should be informed by evidence and engagement insights, and expressed with reference to customer needs, preferences and impacts.

Appendix 2

Illustrative summary of topics relevant to the GAAR process, their financial impact and the level of influence the GDP has.



Topics out of scope for GAAR process:

- Going below minimum standards (e.g. safety and reliability)
- Going outside our prescribed role/s (e.g. financial hardship)
- Prudence and efficiency of the costings AusNet shares during engagement (this is the AER's role)
- Deviating from the AER's expectations (on methodology etc.)
- Influencing government policy
- Predictions of gas & electricity wholesale prices (possible impacts will be considered in household energy modelling)
- Non-regulated alternatives for non-regulated asset base (RAB) recovery of historical gas network costs
- Giving legal advice or assessing prudence and efficiency of costs shared by AusNet