



Gas Access Arrangement Review (GAAR) Development Panel

Terms of Reference

November 2025

Seeking members for AusNet's GAAR Development Panel

Shape the future of the gas network for Victorian households and businesses.

Our gas network delivers energy today to nearly 850,000 homes, businesses, hospitals, schools and other facilities in western Melbourne, Geelong and parts of western Victoria. We are one of three gas distribution businesses in Victoria. Our network covers over 12,500 km, in an area of 60,000 square kilometres. The network includes:

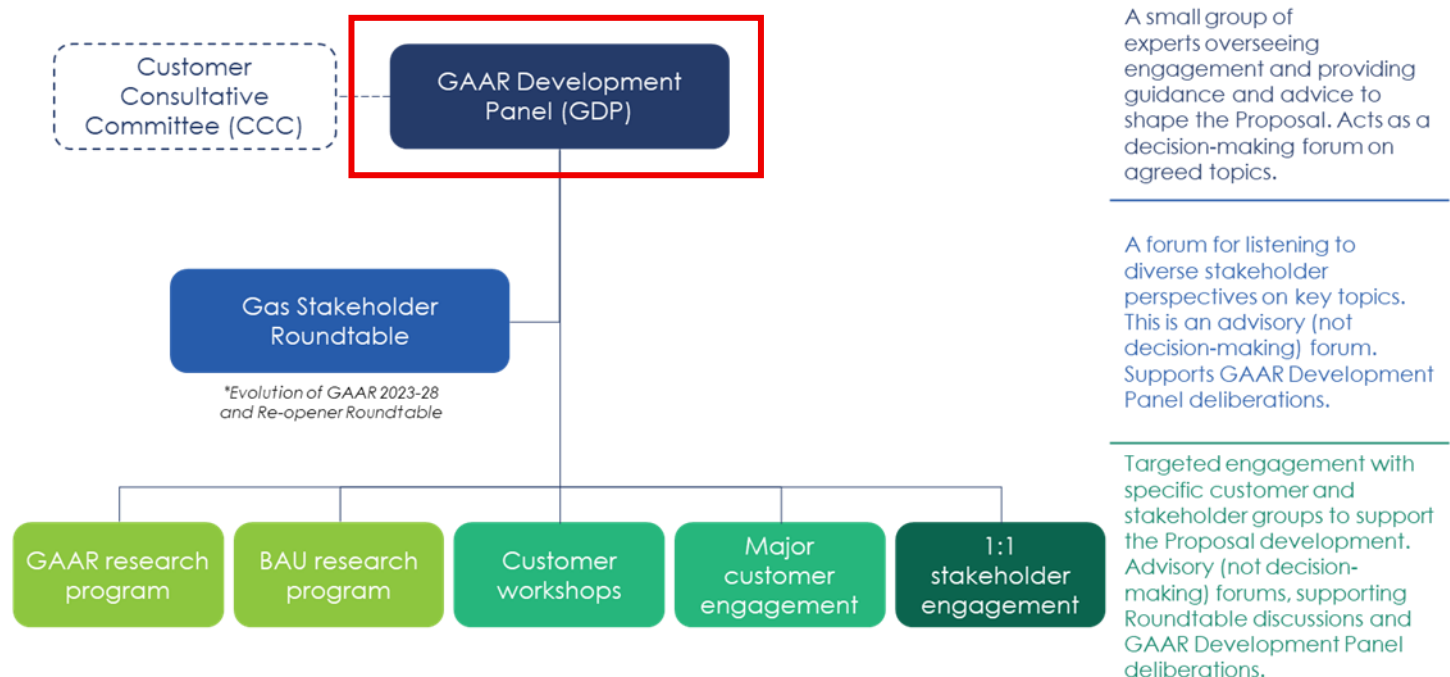
- Mains
- Mainline valves
- Pressure regulating facilities (including city gates, field and district regulators)
- Service pipes, and
- Meters and ancillary equipment.

The Gas Access Arrangement Review (GAAR) is a formal process undertaken every five years with the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) to develop the expenditure plans for our gas network. This review covers the regulatory period from 1 July 2028 to 30 June 2033.

As part of this process, we must submit our five-year plan, known as our Revenue Proposal, to the AER by 1 June 2027. The AER will then assess our Proposal and set the revenue that influence the prices customers pay for gas, the services we provide, and the level of customer experience we deliver.

Customer and stakeholder engagement is central to the GAAR process. We work closely with our customers, stakeholders, and the AER to shape plans for our network.

Our engagement model has been designed to enable a broad range of customer representatives and stakeholders to participate and have their say in shaping our Proposal, with clearly defined pathways for inputs to be reconciled to best reflect customer preferences.



About the GAAR Development Panel

To support the development of our Proposal, we are establishing the GAAR Development Panel (GDP), which will represent AusNet customers throughout the GAAR 2028-33 process. The GDP is an overarching governance group overseeing engagement and providing guidance and advice to shape a Proposal that aligns with customers' preferences. The GDP will engage in deep, focussed discussions on complex topics that are most significant to the Proposal. It may act as a decision-making forum on agreed topics.

Those interested in joining the GAAR Development Panel are invited to apply for the following position/s:

- One **GAAR Development Panel Chair**, and
- Up to five **GAAR Development Panel members**.

Purpose

To work constructively with AusNet to shape a Proposal that:

- a) Reflects customers' interests, and
- b) They can support.

Membership

An independent Chair plus up to five engaged and informed representatives of customers or experts with strong industry knowledge and technical expertise. Members are required to represent the interests of all AusNet gas customers and respect (and reflect) the outputs of other engagement activities in their work. Panel members will be selected to reflect a broad range of consumers and bring diverse industry knowledge to the discussion.

Meeting frequency

The GDP will meet through a mix of in-person and online meetings on weekdays throughout 2026 and 2027. Meetings are expected to begin in February 2026, occurring every two months through the first half of the year for roughly half a day. From mid-2026 onward, the meeting frequency will shift to every 4-6 weeks, continuing until the Proposal is submitted in May 2027. Frequency and duration of meetings may change as required.

Governance

An independent GAAR Development Panel Chair will be appointed, with the Chair holding the responsibilities outlined below.

Various AusNet teams including the Engagement and Gas Strategy and Regulation teams will support the Chair to fulfil their role as required.

The Chair may call on the support of AusNet for Secretariat services which may include coordinating meetings, acting as the primary point of contact for any requests or queries from GDP members and preparing draft meeting summaries for the Chair's review. Secretariat support provided will be agreed with the Chair on appointment.

Agenda items

AusNet and the GDP Chair will work collaboratively to design the agenda and topics for discussion for each GDP meeting. Topics will be chosen based on their relevance to our Proposal and the level of influence GDP members have in shaping specific aspects of our Proposal. Agenda items may also come from other GDP members and as a result of our other research and engagement activities throughout the process.

Application and selection process

Please send your CV or LinkedIn profile and a brief cover letter with the role/s you would like to apply for via our online application form on our [Community Hub Website](#) by Monday 15 December 2025.

Brief interviews with shortlisted applicants will be held in early January 2026.

Position descriptions

GAAR Development Panel member

The GDP members' role is to support AusNet to achieve the overarching engagement objective: to develop a Proposal that reflects consumer needs, is supported by stakeholders and is accepted by the AER.

Key responsibilities

To achieve this, GDP members will:

- 1. Collaborate with AusNet to design and execute an inclusive and effective engagement program by:**
 - Co-designing parts of the engagement plan, including at a minimum the detailed plan for customer workshops and design of customer research on accelerated depreciation outcomes
 - Participating in other engagement activities as required, including attending relevant Gas Stakeholder Roundtable sessions, speaking at AER public forums, attending at least one customer workshop, and participating in 1:1 stakeholder engagement as desired, and
 - Providing strategic oversight to the engagement program, providing independent advice to AusNet and proposing adjustments to engagement topics, activities, or approach in the pursuit of the engagement objective.
- 2. Support AusNet to shape a Proposal in a dynamic, complex and uncertain context by:**
 - Reconciling disparate customer preferences, as anticipated through the engagement process, to recommend a compromise for AusNet to pursue in our Proposal
 - Discussing and forming a consensus on the approach a prudent service provider should take in the current dynamic environment, and
 - Constructively challenging AusNet's approach, participating in good faith to achieve the engagement objective within the scope of the Proposal and the existing regulatory framework.
- 3. Represent customers' interests on topics requiring expert knowledge by:**
 - Identifying and prioritising the issues that matter the most for customer groups, based on observations through the engagement program
 - Bringing expert advice for consideration based on technical expertise of the subject matter (e.g. gas markets, regulation, and policy) or from experience with customers outside of the engagement program (e.g. representing a customer or industry group or otherwise), and
 - Consulting on AusNet's approach to complex topics, including, for example, the approach to accelerated depreciation, tariff variation mechanisms, or strategic network planning.

Topics in the GDP's remit will be decided in collaboration with the GDP. The GDP will also be involved in determining the level of influence (and ownership) they want over the direction of various parts of the Proposal – that is, where on the IAP2 spectrum of public participation they would like to operate.

Time commitment: 0.5 to 1.5 days per month, varying through the process

GAAR Development Panel Chair

The GDP Chair's role is to support AusNet to achieve the overarching engagement objective: to develop a Proposal that reflects consumer needs, is supported by stakeholders and is accepted by the AER.

Key responsibilities

To achieve this role, the GDP Chair will:

- Chair the GAAR Development Panel, balancing consensus amongst members while respecting a diversity of views to support AusNet progressing the development of its GAAR 2028-33 Proposal
- Support the effective operation of the GAAR Development Panel in preparation for and during each meeting
- Work with AusNet to set meeting agendas and maintain accurate record-keeping, including meeting summaries. The Chair may either approve minutes prepared by AusNet or choose to maintain their own records, and

- Promote trust and accountability in the GAAR 2028-33 engagement program by designing and managing to appropriate governance mechanisms, if/as needed.
- Provide independent advice and feedback to AusNet staff on relevant issues and topics as required
- Advise AusNet on administrative matters, including panel membership, dispute resolution and stakeholder management
- Actively participate in GAAR Development Panel work as appropriate
- Participate in briefings and meetings, both online and in-person, with key AusNet stakeholders (such as the Customer Consultative Committee), AusNet executives and the AER, as needed, and
- Coordinate the development and production of up to 3 independent report/s that meet the AER's requirements.

Applicants for Chair must be:

- Independent i.e. not representing a specific organisation or customer or stakeholder group or perspective, and
- Able to help balance the diverse views of those who represent specific interest areas.

Experience or skills in one or more of the following areas is desirable:

- Leadership experience in consumer advocacy
- Expertise in energy sector and/or infrastructure regulation, and
- Board, reference group or panel experience.

Time commitment: 1-2 days per month (February 2026 – May 2027)

Code of conduct

The GAAR Development Panel (GDP) is designed to enable customer input, expertise and advice for AusNet's GAAR 2028-33 processes. All members of the GDP are expected to adhere to the following Code of Conduct.

- (1) Purpose and scope
The GDP provides a forum for collaboration between AusNet and its customers and stakeholders, fostering open and constructive engagement. This Code of Conduct outlines expectations for behavior to promote effective and respectful engagement.
- (2) Respect and professionalism
 - (a) Members are expected to engage respectfully, courteously, and professionally at all times.
 - (b) Discriminatory or offensive behavior, including harassment, bullying, or intolerance, is not acceptable.
 - (c) Members should promote an environment where diverse viewpoints are valued and considered thoughtfully.
- (3) Confidentiality
 - (a) Members must respect that confidential material will often be shared with the GDP and within GDP meetings.
 - (b) Information shared with the GDP by AusNet or other members must remain confidential and should not be disclosed to any external party without proper authorisation. A cautious and prudent approach should be adopted in handling such information.
 - (c) Prior to releasing information to the public, other organisations (including government) or media, including via the media or on social media, members are required to contact AusNet to ensure they are fully aware of any possible issues that may be raised.
 - (d) Members are required to refer, as soon as possible, any media enquiries about the GDP or a matter it has discussed to the AusNet media line on +61 (0)3 9483 0989.
- (4) Conflict of interest

- (a) Members must disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest to the Secretariat.
 - (b) Members should avoid using their position for personal benefit.
 - (c) Members must promptly inform AusNet if they have or intend to refer any matters, personal or otherwise, to the Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria. This notification will allow AusNet to ensure its compliance with relevant regulations and obligations regarding engagement with the Ombudsman and its customers, and any restrictions on interactions during such processes.
- (5) Contribution to discussions
- (a) Members are encouraged to actively participate, share ideas, and contribute constructively.
 - (b) Discussions should stay relevant and focused on the GDP's objectives.
 - (c) Members should listen attentively and give due consideration to diverse perspectives when forming their own positions, and reaching a decision as a group.
- (6) Accountability and integrity
- (a) Members should act with integrity and in good faith, contributing to discussions and decisions that reflect the best interests of the broader customer base.
 - (b) Contributions should be based on facts and objective analysis, where possible.
- (7) Collaboration and teamwork
- (a) The GDP's work is informed through collaboration and shared understanding. Members should foster a cooperative spirit, work to build trust, and aim for solutions that benefit all.
 - (b) Disagreements should be handled constructively, with members striving to understand and reconcile different perspectives.
 - (c) The GDP will also work together to reconcile different perspectives from various other research and engagement activities as part of the GAAR Proposal process.
- (8) Meetings and attendance
- (a) Committee members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings to ensure active and meaningful participation. Participation includes preparation for meetings, engagement in discussions, and follow-up on relevant actions.
 - (b) If a member cannot attend a meeting, they should give prior warning, and share any relevant contributions with the Secretariat ahead of the meeting when possible.
 - (c) Members who are unable to meet participation expectations may have their role on the GDP reviewed.
- (9) Meeting preparation and out-of-session contributions
- (a) Members are expected to prepare appropriately for meetings, including reading all provided meeting materials in advance to engage meaningfully in discussions.
 - (b) From time to time, members may be asked to review information or provide feedback outside of scheduled meetings. Members are encouraged to participate in these out-of-session activities to support the GDP's ongoing work and the timely progress of AusNet's Proposal and engagement activities.
- (10) Decision-making and consensus
- (a) For a meeting to proceed, a quorum of at least three GDP members must be present. This does not apply for optional meetings or any meetings where members are asked to observe.
 - (b) Members are expected to work constructively and collaboratively, supporting the progress and outcomes of the GDP. Even when individual perspectives differ, members should help ensure the process moves forward effectively and that collective decisions are respected in the interest of advancing AusNet's Proposal.
 - (c) While consensus on every decision is not required, the GDP should document the range of viewpoints expressed when agreement cannot be reached. However, differing opinions should not impede the GDP's ability to provide clear direction to AusNet as a collective.
- (11) Remuneration and fees

- (a) Remuneration and reimbursement arrangements will be discussed with shortlisted candidates prior to their formal acceptance of a position on the GDP. Rates will be determined in alignment with the responsibilities of the role, ensuring transparency and mutual agreement before the commencement of duties.
- (b) Any remuneration will cover attendance at all scheduled meetings, preparation time, and reasonable out-of-session contributions as requested by AusNet. AusNet reserves the right to adjust remuneration amounts for the affected period.
- (c) Any remuneration fee does not include travel time or costs associated with meeting attendance. Committee members will be reimbursed for vehicle expenses at Australian Taxation Office (ATO) rates, as well as reasonable accommodation and meal expenses incurred while attending GDP-related activities.
- (d) AusNet reserves the right to review and amend the reimbursement arrangements periodically to ensure they remain appropriate and aligned with organisational priorities, industry standards, and budgetary considerations. Any changes to the fee structure will be communicated to members with reasonable notice, allowing for feedback or discussion as needed.

(12) Review and amendments

- (a) This Code of Conduct may be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective and relevant.
- (b) Members are invited to provide feedback to improve the GDP's processes and the overall effectiveness of collaboration.

(13) Acknowledgement

By participating in the GDP, members commit to upholding the principles in this Code of Conduct, contributing to collaborative work in a respectful and constructive manner.

AusNet

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