

Customer Consultative Committee (CCC)

Meeting Summary

Friday, 20 February 2026



Meeting summary

January extreme weather events

- AusNet provided an overview of the extreme bushfire and heat events experienced in January, including how the network responded and how customers were supported during the events.
- The discussion covered the challenges of restoring supply following bushfires, including access restrictions and coordination with external agencies, as well as record demand levels experienced across parts of the network. AusNet shared learnings from the response and reaffirmed its focus on emergency preparedness, clear communications and in person community support during major events.
- Committee members discussed customer experiences during prolonged outages, the importance of timely and accessible communications, and the broader impacts of extreme weather on communities. Mental health impacts on customers and workers were also raised, along with the need for ongoing support following major events.

Customer Moment

Committee members shared customer stories, experiences and feedback, including:

- Committee members shared recent customer stories, experiences and feedback from across the communities and stakeholder groups they represent.
- Discussion included customer experiences during outages and extreme weather events, with members reflecting on the importance of clear, timely and accessible communications, particularly during prolonged disruptions. Committee members also shared feedback on community resilience initiatives, including positive experiences with grant-funded projects that supported local facilities and vulnerable customers.
- A Committee member also passed on a message from a community member raising concerns about AusNet's compliance and obligations. AusNet acknowledged the feedback and noted there is ongoing engagement with Essential Services Commission and the community member on this issue and whilst they are meeting their obligations there is also recognition they want to do better.
- Broader themes raised included affordability pressures, changing customer expectations, and how cost-of-living challenges are influencing the way households think about energy use, reliability and resilience. Members noted the value of bringing these lived experiences into the Committee to help inform AusNet's ongoing engagement and decision-making.

Key AusNet updates

AusNet provided a high-level update on electricity and gas performance metrics, following the Committee's request for greater visibility of how the business is tracking.

Committee members discussed the importance of clear explanations and context to support understanding of the data, particularly where results vary over time or across regions.

Gas trends and future planning

As requested by the CCC, the Committee received an overview of recent trends in residential gas use, including declining average consumption and the impacts of electrification.

Discussion focused on how customers make decisions about appliances and energy use, challenges in accessing and understanding usage data, and the importance of supporting customers to plan ahead rather than making reactive decisions when equipment fails.

The Committee also discussed broader issues such as embedded networks, standing charges for low use customers, and safety considerations as gas use declines.

Gas Access Arrangement Review (GAAR)

AusNet provided an update on the upcoming Gas Access Arrangement Review and outlined how customers and stakeholders will be engaged throughout the process.

Committee members discussed the challenges of engaging customers on long term planning topics and the value of using data to better understand customer circumstances and future needs.

Improving energy literacy among younger customers

AusNet shared early thinking on a potential communications approach to improve energy literacy for younger customers and asked the committee members to help shape the future campaign with their perspectives from other organisations or youth within their communities.

Committee members provided feedback on effective ways to engage younger audiences, including practical, relatable information linked to everyday decisions such as renting, appliance choice and energy costs. Members also discussed the value of education through schools, interactive tools and tailoring messages for different communities.

Demand and strategies for data centres

As requested by the CCC, the Committee received an overview of emerging electricity demand from data centres and how this is being considered in broader network planning.

Discussion covered the pace of growth, the importance of coordinated planning, non-energy impacts such as water use, and the need to manage uncertainty as technology and demand patterns continue to evolve.

Energy Resilience Community Fund

AusNet provided an update on the Energy Resilience Community Fund, including its objectives and examples of funded projects.

Committee members discussed the value of the program in supporting community resilience, opportunities to better demonstrate outcomes, and how resilience can include measures such as energy efficiency and reduced demand, not just new infrastructure.

AusNet have produced six video case studies highlighting a mix of Major and Energy Resilience Grants recipients and their projects:

- Tecoma: <https://vimeo.com/1151755260?fl=tl&fe=ec>
- Millgrove: <https://vimeo.com/1151755073?fl=tl&fe=ec>
- Phillip Island Visitor Centre: <https://vimeo.com/1151754635?fl=tl&fe=ec>
- Kongwak: <https://vimeo.com/1151755425?fl=tl&fe=ec>
- Badger Creek: <https://vimeo.com/1151754925?fl=tl&fe=ec>
- Seaspray: <https://vimeo.com/1151754790?fl=tl&fe=ec>
- Montrose Township Group – they received an education and literacy grant to produce three preparedness videos: <https://www.youtube.com/@montrosetownshipgroup3765>

Independent speakers and future topics

The Committee discussed opportunities to invite independent speakers to future meetings to provide additional perspectives. Suggested topics included customer behaviour, electrification, forecasting, emerging technologies and new energy market models.

HOME Research Grant

AusNet thanked Committee members for their involvement in supporting the selection of the HOME Research Grant recipient and shared context on the research focus.

Members discussed the importance of building on existing research and using findings to inform future engagement and policy discussions.

Next steps

The Committee reflected positively on the breadth of topics covered and the opportunity to hear insights from across the business. AusNet thanked members for their contributions and confirmed that where possible the feedback from the meeting will inform future discussions and engagement.