

Extending the Electricity Price Review’s Final Recommendations to the Gas Market - An Assessment

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Question	Comment
<p>Q1 Do you support the role of the CAC being extended to Gas markets for the benefit of residential and small business Gas consumers? If so, when should it occur? What measures should GIC be taking to better engage with of residential and small business Gas consumers?</p>	<p>We strongly support the extension of the CAC’s remit to Gas consumers. We believe gas consumers should have the same access to the benefits of the CAC’s advocacy as electricity consumers.</p> <p>Utilities Disputes considers complaints made by consumers about electricity and gas providers. We are independent and do not provide advocacy services, however we often encounter situations where consumers would benefit from greater access to advocacy in relation to gas suppliers.</p>
<p>Q2 Do you support the extension of the energy hardship initiatives in B1- B6 and B8 to include Gas (please address each separately)? Do you support the extension of the electricity market arrangements on PPDs to Gas?</p>	<p>Utilities Disputes considers both gas and electricity cases and are aware of situations where gas consumers would benefit from the energy hardship provisions in B1-B6 and B8. We believe there should be consistency between the provisions offered and support the provisions in B1-B6 and B8 being extended to gas consumers.</p> <p>The GIC notes retailers in the gas market have moved away from the prompt payment discount model. While we cannot provide specific evidence to support this we believe prompt payment discounts should not be permitted in the gas market to be consistent with the electricity market. The reasons set out in the EPR Report would apply equally to the gas industry and would also reduce consumer confusion and potential complaints.</p>
<p>Q3 Do you support the extension of PowerSwitch to include LPG (reticulation and bottles)? Do you support GIC’s views on the initiatives in C1–C6 (please address each separately)?</p>	<p>We support the extension of Powerswitch to include gas pricing. Our intake team regularly refers electricity consumers to Powerswitch when they are dissatisfied with their current provider and the plan they are on and ask us which provider they should switch to.</p> <p>While we support the inclusion of LPG in this service we do not believe there would be a high uptake as the LPG market has less providers and is more localised.</p> <p>We support consistency between the gas and electricity markets across the provisions in C2,</p>

	<p>C3 and C5. This will limit consumer confusion and potential complaints.</p> <p>We endorse the provisions the Electricity Authority has developed to improve the awareness of Powerswitch and Utilities Disputes. We observe that most providers that offer gas also offer electricity and will likely implement any requirements across both. Nevertheless however it is sensible for the GIC to mirror the Electricity Authority's requirements to ensure consistency and limit potential consumer confusion.</p>
<p>Q4 Do you support GIC's views in respect of the initiatives in D1 to D4 (please address each separately)?</p>	<p>No comment.</p>
<p>Q5 Do you support GIC's initial view to not extend the initiatives in E1-E4 to include Gas (please address each separately)?</p>	<p>No comment.</p>
<p>Q6 Do you support GIC's initial view to not extend the initiatives in F1-F4 to include Gas (please address each separately)?</p>	<p>No comment.</p>
<p>Q7 Do you support the extension of the initiatives in G1-G4 to include Gas (please address each separately)?</p>	<p>No comment.</p>