



28 August 2020

Audrey Zibelman
Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director
Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)

Submitted via email: stakeholderrelations@aemo.com.au

Dear Ms Zibelman,

RENEWING AEMO'S ENGAGEMENT MODEL

Origin Energy Limited (Origin) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on options to renew AEMO's engagement model.

Origin broadly supports retaining the existing structure for working groups and forums, with some minor changes to improve transparency and collaboration. The current separation of workstreams (e.g. electricity and gas; wholesale and retail) aligns well with how we operate, which enables us to choose the best subject matter experts for the working groups.

We do not support the introduction of executive-level forums. In our view, they would not improve AEMO's engagement with industry and would present inherent challenges in terms of selecting members in a balanced, representative and uncontroversial manner.

Overall comments

Across the organisation, we participate in a wide range of working groups and forums which provide an opportunity for us to understand and stay informed around any initiatives and changes AEMO may be implementing or planning. They also give us the ability to ask questions, raise issues and propose alternative solutions when appropriate. For specific projects, they provide opportunities to coordinate approaches for delivery. Overall, our experience of the working groups has been positive.

Specific options

Option 1 – Uplift BAU

We broadly support this option. In our view, the current working groups and forums are valuable, and suggest that minor changes could be made to improve transparency and collaboration, including:

- **Representation over time:** For long-running projects, fewer participants may attend over time (e.g. due to role changes or time commitment issues), which erodes the effectiveness of the group. AEMO should ensure that working groups continue to be well-represented for such projects, by requesting replacements or seeking new members. Publishing meeting timetables and scope well in advance would also promote tenure.
- **Moderator role:** Industry players are varied and have different perspectives on issues and solutions. Some working groups would benefit from having a stronger moderator to keep meetings in scope. Other groups would benefit from AEMO being more proactive in mediating differing views to ensure that projects stay on track.
- **Administrative improvements:** AEMO should focus on improving how the working groups and forums are run in order to promote collaboration. Some options include:
 - More timely circulation of minutes and documents ahead of meetings would help with transparency and collaboration.
 - Allowing more time for questions would be valuable for working group and forum attendees. Presentations should also be aimed at stimulating discussion, rather than focused on

- information provision. More timely circulation of the relevant papers as noted in the dot point above would also facilitate this approach.
- As some topics can be complex, providing time for feedback following working groups and forums would be useful.

Option 2 – Uplift and realign BAU

This option would re-classify working groups into four core streams (operations, planning, markets, WA) across three tiers (strategic, transient, functional).

We do not consider that this change would be an improvement on BAU streams. The current separation (electricity and gas; wholesale and retail) aligns best with how Origin operates and our choice of representation for each working group. Moving to Option 2 would likely increase resourcing requirements as the realigned groups would need input from multiple subject matter experts across different business units.

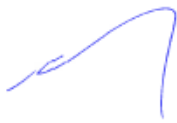
Option 3 – Uplift and realign, with co-chaired strategic oversight

We do not support this option – we are not convinced that a CEO Roundtable and co-chaired Executive Advisory Panels would add value to how AEMO engages with industry. The scope of AEMO's engagement, including the more strategic aspects such as the Integrated System Plan (ISP), tends to focus on technical and functional areas. This scope of work best suits subject matter experts.

Furthermore, the selection process for executive-level groups would likely be challenging. Invite-only or AEMO-nominated selection processes would undermine transparency and do not reflect best practice for strategic-level representative forums. Other selection processes are unlikely to result in approaches that are sufficiently balanced and uncontroversial across all industry players.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this submission further, please contact Sarah-Jane Derby at Sarah-Jane.Derby@originenergy.com.au or by phone, on (02) 8345 5101.

Yours sincerely



Steve Reid
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