

## Feedback sought on electricity distribution reliability standards

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW (IPART) is seeking feedback on how to set the level of reliability provided by the NSW electricity distribution network businesses.

Reliability refers to the extent to which customers have a continuous supply of electricity.

IPART Tribunal Member Sandra Gamble said the review will consider whether customers are receiving the reliability and security that they value from the distribution networks.

“The distribution networks provide the local poles and wires that transport electricity to household and business customers in urban, regional and remote areas of NSW,” Ms Gamble said.

“Since 2007-08, the networks have generally provided better levels of reliability than are required by their standards, in terms of the frequency and length of unplanned outages.”

“However, as extreme weather events become more frequent, it is important to strike a balance between the costs that the businesses incur in providing more resilient, reliable networks and the value that customers place on experiencing fewer and shorter outages.”

“Also, new technologies such as rooftop solar and batteries are providing customers with the ability to generate, store and supply electricity to the network. The distribution networks need to adapt to ensure that they can provide reliable and secure two-way flows needed by these technologies.”

A paper released today seeks feedback on a range of issues to be considered as part of the review. Submissions on the Issues Paper will be received until 24 April 2020 and considered by IPART before a draft report is released in September. A final report will be provided to the NSW Minister for Energy and Environment by December 2020.

The review will complement other work looking at the overall reliability and security of the national energy market to ensure going forward there is sufficient reliable supply to meet our energy demands.

Any new reliability standards would apply for the regulatory control period commencing 1 July 2024.

The Issues Paper is available on IPART’s website <<http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au>>.