

IPART Review into Retailers' meter installation practices in NSW, June 2018.

I would like to raise an issue that is affecting customers and their electricians (ASP's, Authorised Service Providers) since POC (Power of Choice) that was forced upon residents of NSW in Dec 2017.

I have a back ground in the Electricity supply industry.

I worked for the local network (LNSP) for more than 30 years and have a good understanding of NECF/NERR (National Electricity Regulator Rules) procedures.

I am currently involved in the training and accreditation of ASP's to install advanced metering (smart meters) in NSW.

The process we have used to train the ASP's in NSW is comprehensive and aims to eliminate any potential issues with incorrect data or meters being installed on the incorrect NMI, as could have happened before the NEM enforced POC when the LNSP was charged with issuing meters.

This process includes requirements by the ASP to;

- request metering equipment (and NMI if new connection) through a web based portal and nominate the date the job will be done
- receive individual meters issued to the individual job, not in bulk. (This removes the ability to do a job without authority & provides the location of stock)
- collect data, (photos, removed meter readings, new meter & comms details, etc.) for each site (NMI) via an app that is 'fit-for-purpose'
- complete the job, and upload meter data to the NEM

When the ASP makes a request, he must nominate a date the job will be done so that outage notifications by the retailer can take place.

Most of the ASP's in the scheme have issue with this, as this is "customer generated work", i.e. the customer has approached the ASP (either directly or indirectly, e.g. through a solar company) to change their metering to suit the installation (solar install, 3 phase upgrade, etc.)

The Retailer/s have set a minimum timeframe, up to 15 business days, before the work order will be able to be completed - due to the Retailers understanding of current NEM outage notification guidelines to their customers for an interruption to their supply.

If the meter is not able to be exchanged on this date the job must be rescheduled a minimum of 10 business days to allow for yet another outage notification to the customer that has requested the job be done in the first place.

I believe that the NEM notification rules could be split into several categories of outage notification;

- Network generated work - line maintenance, etc. (by the Networks; Essential, Ausgrid, Endeavour - NSW) – *no change proposed*
- Retailer generated work - bulk meter replacements, etc. (by their nominated Meter Providers) – *no change proposed*
- Customer generated work - solar system installs, 3 phase upgrades, OPCL installs, etc. (by the ASP's - in NSW)

If these 3 groups were adopted, the customer generated work category would allow the ASP to negotiate a date with the customer to do the meter exchange.

This would be no different to the customers' electrician/ASP turning the customer off to repair the stove or a install a light switch – i.e. the customer has an interruption to supply, but the retailer has, nor requires, any control of it.

The outcome would be the customer gets the desired work done and the electrician is able to maintain his business and relationships with both his customer and retailer/meter provider

This would allow many of the ASP's to plan their work around when the customer wants their job done, and then the customer would get their meter exchanged in a timely manner, without undue delays due to rescheduling for weather, unforeseen circumstances, etc.

I appreciate the opportunity to make a submission and can be contacted on [REDACTED]

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Dubbo