

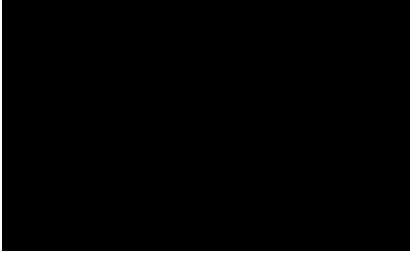

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Submission: Please find the attached document explaining in detail the process and issues we are currently facing in relation to having power connected to our customers.

The main problem we are experiencing is the time frame it is taking to be either issued with a meter for us to carry out the connection works or for the retailer to allocate an installer to carry out the installation works, in some cases this part of the process can take several months.

Attempting to contact retailers is also a very difficult process, we quite often get no response via telephone or we are put on hold continually until the line drops out, if we continue ringing we generally do eventually get through to the retailer only to get advised there is nothing more they can do at the time or they can see what has gone wrong and that they have sorted out the problem but still in cases waiting for a meter to be installed. Contact via email proves to be even less effective as we quote often get no response at all.



19 June 2018

Power Connections

In regards to the roll out of smart metres in NSW supposedly should have been a welcome move for customers but to date this is not going to plan, and it is causing major problems for all involved. I have outlined a basic pin point of the major problems we are currently facing with any new connection of power for our customers.

1) To start the process we have two options, either we as the electrician or the customer is required to obtain a NMI from a retailer. This initial part of the process has not changed but the problems we are finding is:

- Explaining the process to the client
- If the new site is not registered we are finding it almost impossible to obtain a NMI therefore we cannot start the process, this becomes a problem down the track when we are out of time because the rest of the process takes so long.

2) We submit an application for connection to Essential Energy and wait for an approval number to come back. This comes back as approved or needing level 1 & 3 works (if level 1 or 3 works are required this can take months). This again has not changed.

3) In the past we would order a meter from Essential Energy and have it in the system awaiting appropriate construction time for connection to the premises.

- With the new system we have no control nor anybody to contact for support in regards to meter supply, we are forced to wait until a meter provider contacts us to advise they have a meter to install at our job. To get to this stage it is either taking a long time or due to us starting the process early we are receiving calls for meter installation way in advance to when the site is actually ready for connection, therefore us having to reschedule the connection date. Once paperwork is submitted there is no way of following up, which leaves us and the client wondering (for weeks/months) if it is going to happen.

4) We are currently accredited with Acumen who is the meter provider for Origin. We recently had a job requiring CT metering, after speaking to Acumen they said nothing had changed for CT metering and for us to submit an application for CT metering to Essential Energy. Essential Energy came back to us advising they do not do CT Metering anymore and that we need to contact our retailer, whereas Origin advises that we are to contact a meter provider. After the entire day on the phone and several emails, I received an application form to submit to Origin. This has been submitted although to date we have had no return correspondence in regards to the process or where this is up to.

Our experience has only been with Origin and AGL. The feedback we are receiving from Level 2 contractors in our area is that it is very difficult and people are waiting a long time to have power connected and even stories of sites having to operate with generator power until they can have power connected through the new system.

It is our opinion that there seems to be a lack of communication and knowledge between retailers, meter providers and Essential Energy, while ever this continues it will be very difficult to obtain accurate information and job status. Please contact me if I can help with any more information.

Regards

