



## Overview to POC and metering in NSW

---

The electrical industry has had over 2 years notice to embrace the new proposed POC reforms that had come into effect on the 1/12/17. During this time our association NECA has organised meetings with the then Minister Of Energy Anthony John Roberts who kind of promised the transaction will be smooth and streamlined. This was back on the 20/11/2015.

From my opinion the industry was keen to embrace the change rather than object to it.

Between the time of November 2015 and August 2017, the energy retailer did not consult / advise ASPs (With exception AGL) and pretty much laid back with rumours spreading they may extend the deadline of POC.

In October 2017 the energy giants Origin / Energy Australia woke up and realised the power of choice was coming up and started to issue bulk email in regards to training to install there electricity meters. As we had no option we have enrolled in their training as they have requested.

Today being Tuesday 19/6/2018 I can advise there is absolutely no guidance, systems, procedures to performing any works other than a simple new connection at a Greenfield site or a pre planned meter exchange.

The energy retailers are not equipped to handle the volume of work and the complexity of work within the area of NSW. All of the models of systems and processes are based around the simple single domestic property with a brand new current compliant electrical switch board.

The structure of the power of choice to get a simple electricity meter is in my option red tape gone mad...

## POC metering

---

Before the POC:

1. Previously the customer would consult their ASP / Electrical contractor
2. The ASP will liaise between the customer and electricity distributor.
3. Obtain the network approvals,
4. Energise the site /s. with the appropriate electricity meters.

Under the power of choice:

1. Customer to consult their ASP/EC
2. The ASP will liaise between the customer and electricity distributor.
3. Obtain the network approvals,
4. Energise up to service fuses, Leave site de energise. (ASP)
5. Customer to contact their energy retailer,
6. Energy retailer to contact their field service provider and book a installation of their electricity meter within a certain time frame. (If the ASP is accredited with the retailer the ASP can do this work)

The above process seems very simple on paper, and obviously some immiscible that sits in lovely office has come up with this and I will explain why.

## Scenarios

---

- If we need to replace old switch board with new switchboard, we need to install compliant electricity meters. If the property is **not** a single domestic property but it is a block of 30 units domestic or commercial we technically need 30 retailer meters onsite. (Impossible).

Keeping in mind these are existing occupied site. Today being the 19/06/2018 there is no solution to this common issue.

**This remains to be A major issue under the POC.** At A meeting held with Ausgrid on 14/6/2018 they have made is crystal clear that A ASP cannot re use A existing meter on a new meter panel.


If we re use the meters there is a \$200 defect fee for each meter re used.


We currently have multiple sites that are a fire risk were strata companies have instructed a meter panel to be upgraded. We cannot work out a way forward for a practical metering solution. It is impossible to organise 30 different retailer and there MP to be onsite in a short period of time e.g. 4 hours.

It sometime takes a meter providers tech 4 hours to hang a simple 3 phase meter. (50 Burns Crs Chiswick, Vector Meter, Formway tech, 4 hours, they have barricaded the walkway to hang a simple meter.)

**This issue must be addressed ASAP.**

---





-If the same switchboard above caught on fire and all the meters were burnt or not re usable each customer would need to arrange their own retailers electricity meter to be installed after the switchboards have been re built. (Previously we would make a call to the Network DNSP, and they will release the required meters. Under the POC we will not be able to provide a turnkey service. If we do not have the customers NMI number or existing meter number it will be impossible to get a electricity meter for them. If the customer has poor English it is even more difficult for them to deal with their retailers over the phone)

- If a individual owns a single domestic property and rents the existing front dwelling, then builds a granny flat for additional income. We / The owner cannot request the alteration to the metering as the retailer customer is the tenant and not the home owner. More often alterations are required to accommodate the additional electrical load of A second dwelling (We do approximately 400 granny flat meter installations on a yearly bases)

-If you purchase a new house and want to perform a quick renovation which may lead to your electrical contractor, stating the existing meter box is too old and due for an upgrade, It will take 2 months for you to engage a new retailer then for that retailer to issue a work order there meter providers for a meter.

-If a individual has just purchased a new house and wants to knock the house down we cannot contact the meter provider to remove the meter, Keeping in mind there is no retailer for the site. Who do we / I contact to abolish the NMI that is associated to the site? How are the existing meters surrendered to the MP?  
On this same scenario if the person wants a temporary builders service and the existing account is with Origin, and the customer calls AGL to set them up as the new retailer it take 3 months or A little less for the transfer to happen. If they wait for origin to install a new meter its takes them over 3 months and countless hours on the phone.

- If a developer/builder/individual purchases a site that has 1 or 10 electricity meter, the 1 or 10 retailers will need to come to the site to remove the electricity meter. The only issue is the builder / developer cannot act on behalf of the retailer customer who was his tenant that has vacated the site. We encounter this problem on a weekly basis.

## A few key points the geniuses have missed in the design of the power of choice.

1. A online platform that is accessible to the public, which provides A search of A address to obtain the sites NMI number and existing meter numbers and its associated energy retailer. (This is not a privacy matter, simply like a rego check)
2. The continued use of a default electricity type 5 meter. Where the customer genuinely has the power of choice to use a electricity meter that records only KWH or records the date, time and KWH where it was used.  
(An amendment of the meteorology rules need to occur, under the current rules if a electricity meter is relocated it must be re calibrated or replaced. Re calibration of the field is not possible)

My basic understanding of the power of choice is a national approach to the NEM. However the each state on the NEM has the ability to construct their own reform and amend rules and regulations as required. In NSW we are the only state that has ASP's. As we have ASP's like me providing electrical connections the customer has the option of choosing who they want the work performed by. During the time of drafting rules for POC NSW there was not enough consultation if any with companies like myself. The rule makers barely understand the complexity of an old state such a NSW, nor do they understand local council requirements with the approval of a DA and the availability of power. (I can continue on and on but I need to stop somewhere)

## Bad work / Industry Practices

1. I can connect a brand new property to the electricity network, install a off the shelf EDMI electricity meter. As the electricity network does not see the installation meter number I can have literally have free power and no one will pick it up as there systems do not talk.

Another scenario of a wrought can be:

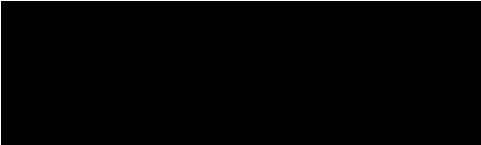
2. 8 town houses get built in Granville, The builder calls Origin Energy and obtains 8x NMI number, Origin energy send out there installer to install the electricity meter. A doggy contractor energises the site without load approval. No one inspects the site. The customer will get a electricity bill, but without the load approval the electricity network is compromised. Endeavour Energy has no way of seeing what happens on a site with retailer metering.

If in this scenario a load application had been sent, Endeavour Energy can request the builder / developer to upgrade the electricity network at their expense.

If there is a option for a wrought especially a easy one it will be exploited.

---





3. Under the current rule of the retailer / meter provider, the MP is not required to have the permission to connect letter or certificate of compliance of electrical works.

E.g.

- Home owner calls Energy Australia to arrange connection of power.
- EA contacts Vector to arrange for the meter to be installed.
- Vector attends site, installs the electricity meter leaves the site isolated by the means of a sticker.
- The onsite person or EC removes the sticker and turns the power on.

Nowhere in the process is it asked for or presented for the site specific certificate of compliance or permission to connect.

4. If the customer initiates a upgrade or alteration to their own meter box Origin Energy wants 2 weeks' notice for a installer lead meter change. During this 2 week process Origin will send the customer a letter indicating the power will be off on the nominated day. The meter has to be installed on this particular day. If the day is missed the meter installation is then put off for another 2 weeks as this is the time frame required by AEMO. This is ridiculous not practical will not work and does not work.

5. If A ASP energises the site without the electricity meter the meter box appears to be de energised. The retailer / MP take their time in installing the meter. During the time of the property being lived from the network and the meter being installed there is a high chance that a cooper thief can assume the cables are de energised. He/she can cut the cables which can potentially kill them.

The same situation in reversed is a high probability as well. If the retailer / mp remove the electricity meter from a meter box A untrained person will assume the meter box is de energised. This will either kill A cooper thief or demolishing contractor. It is critical that the meter is installed / removed at the same time as the incoming service mains within a single domestic property

## The Frustration and slow speed

---

The time frame it takes for the retailer to raise the service order request and initiate the MP is really frustrating. A good example is as below:

New connection approx 8 days  
Alteration request 30 days

Changing retailers for a existing site can take up to **3 months**. Where this is important is within the scenario of the house has been purchased by a new person and they want to do a electrical alteration. If the tenant or previous owner was with Origin and the customer now wants to go with AGL can and does take up to 3 months to change retailers.

After the frustrating wait with the retailer and MP, we then have the retailer who really insists that they must nominate a day to the customer for the planned work. AEMO has a rule where written notice must be given to the customer for a power outage. I can understand with a retailer performing bulk meter changes and randomly attending properties. They must give notices. I cannot understand why the retailer needs to be involved with customer initiated works. The customer is organising the electrical contractors and is paying for the upgrades and repairs, yet the retailer sends them a letter saying they are completing a upgrade on the nominated day. The rule change from above needs to relax the rules for customer initiated works.

There must also be a ability to change retailer and meter providers before the site is electrified.

What I mean by this is, If the customer initially sets up there electricity account with Origin they cannot change the energy retailer to AGL until the site is electrified.


Once the customer realises that the retailer is not organised and is stuffing them around they do not have the choice to change. The customers only hope is EWON thereafter.

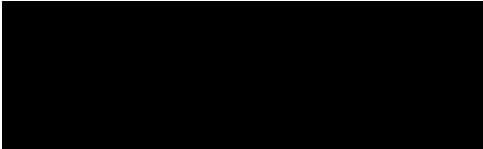
## Issues with MP's

---

Meter Providers such as vector put customers in an unfair situation; they will not install electricity meters on asbestos panel. They request the meter panel to be replaced. This is a expensive job. Asbestos is A common OHS issue within our work place, Providing it is managed it does not pose a risk to us or the occupants of the dwelling.

---





When there is an elderly customer and A MP does this to him/her it really annoys me. They put the customer to unnecessary expense.

Within a multi occupancy scenario the meter boxes can be challenging. If the job seems to be anything other than meter on meter off, the MPs again make it difficult for customer. They request a new meter panel to be installed so when they re attend they simply replace A meter. The issue is we cannot re locate the existing meters to a new meter panel, yet we refuse to work for the MP's that do not recognise ASP's within NSW.

If we as the ASP lodge a job to the retailer and notify the MP, the MP try's really hard to take the meter installation from us. If the job is not completed within the time frame nominated they will send their own contactors to install the meter. The issue they face with this is we need to do major installations to the property before the meter can be installed. All they do is confuse the situation with the owner / electrical contractor.

## My Personal Summary of POC NSW

---

The POC has good intentions for electricity consumer across Australia. The major issue is the individuals that have drafted the POC have failed.

They have failed as they are narrow minded into the way electricity connections occur within NSW. POC and AEMO are trying to apply one way for meter installation across Australia.

This is equivalent to removing all levels of government state and local and only having one level of government across Australia like the federal government.

NSW has 3 electricity distributors and hundreds of local government all with different criteria.

The POC needs to be more flexible with the rules and remove the stupid 5 day wait for a customer initiated meter change.

The energy retailers do not recognise ASP's within NSW. More needs to be done with retailer processes with and for ASPs.

For the retailers and MPs that we are accredited with it is absolute madness with the paperwork and down time to obtain a electricity meter.

The POC has significantly affected my small business. It has put additional cost to me to employ more people to sort out the paperwork within the office. It has confused my techs with the different approach that each MP has to the same job. The profit margins to install a meter are not viable yet we still have to provide the service to our customer to offer a turnkey service.

King Regards

