

The proposal by IPART to increase the price of electricity to retail consumers by some 20% on 1st July 2009 is totally outrageous. In these economic times measures ought to be looked at to reduce the burden on ordinary householders.

Cost cutting across the board in the operation of electricity production and supply. The trimming of operational costs and improvements in productivity ought to be the order of the day as with all other businesses in this economic climate.

Electricity costs have been inexplicably rising in recent years with no reasonable explanation as to the cause other than for the three sole service carriers. Australia has some of the cheapest coal in the world and prices are falling. The industry should be looking at how to reduce costs for retail customers instead of the reverse. The notion in IPART's media release dated 12th March 2009 that suggests that providers would simply turn off the power if these price rises were rejected is not only ridiculous but fantastical.

Like everybody else these costs must only increase as much as the consumer price index anything more is to grant extravagance at the expense of those who are least able to pay. More and more people will come under bill stress and invariably be disconnected. We must not let these abhorrent price increases happen.

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