

**Energy Consumers Australia Board Meeting Communique  
11 February 2016**

***Meeting with Tasmanian Energy and Resources Minister***

Members of the ECA Board met with Tasmanian Minister for Energy and Resources, the Hon Matthew Groom, MP, and Tasmanian stakeholders before the meeting.

The Minister outlined the government's energy priorities, including the need to develop customer-focused markets.

The ECA Board welcomed the Minister's openness to further engagement with consumer stakeholders.

***Meeting with Tasmanian stakeholders***

The Board meeting was preceded by a meeting with Tasmanian stakeholders, including representatives from:

- Aurora Energy
- Local Government Association Tasmania
- Chamber of Commerce & Industry Tasmania
- UTAS
- TASCOS
- Anglicare Tasmania
- Tas Networks
- Backroad Connections
- Goanna Energy Consulting

Issues raised included:

- Empowering consumers in decision-making, and the need to identify effective engagement mechanisms and strategies
- Lack of competition in the Tasmanian retail sector, and its impact on price
- Energy affordability – ECA briefed the group on its work assessing the whole-of-system cost of disconnecting consumers. Participants also were briefed on the current status of the review of the Aurora Pay as You Go product
- Energy productivity – the need for effective programs for households and small business on energy efficiency and consumption.

The Board was briefed on the University of Tasmania research in relation to the introduction and impact of electric vehicles, and the demand response exchange.

### ***Strategic Planning***

The Board continued its 2016/17 strategic planning process.

### ***ECA Grants Review***

The Board agreed on the revised structure, eligibility criteria and policies of its revised grants program.

The program will be announced in mid-March 2016.

### ***Grants approved***

At this meeting, the Board approved the following grants:

- AP 787 – Business SA – Analysis of SA Power Networks tariff reform through its proposed TSS in relation to impacts on small business
- AP 788 – RMIT - Smart home control: exploring the potential for enabling technologies in vulnerable and disengaged households
- AP 789 – Financial and Consumer Rights Council – Rank the Energy Retailer 2016
- AP 791 – Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS) – Understanding the interaction between energy supply and residential rental housing arrangements
- AP 792– QCOSS – Advocacy for residential and business consumers to QLD Productivity Commission Review of Electricity Prices
- AP 793 – Tasmanian Small Business Council - Small Business Advocacy on TasNetworks Distribution Determination 2017-2019
- AP 794 – St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria and National Council - Tariff-tracking and price analysis in NSW, QLD, SA, ACT and TAS post price resets in July 2016
- AP 795 - Total Environment Centre - Networks & batteries: what's best for consumers?

A full list of ECA grants can be seen at its [website](#).