

**Energy Consumers Australia Board Meeting Communiqué
30 July 2015**

ECA Address to COAG Energy Council

ECA's Chair, Louise Sylvan, and CEO, Rosemary Sinclair, briefed the Board on their participation in the COAG Energy Council meeting on 23 July 2015.

Along with the three national energy market bodies, the ECA Chair and CEO briefed the Council on the development of its forward work program, and outlined ECA's activities to date. ECA also participated in the Council's discussion with stakeholders.

The Board welcomed the Council's emphasis on stakeholder consultation, and its intention to seek advice on better ways to engage with energy consumers, including through consultation with ECA. – add links to statements out of COAG

Grants Review

The Board agreed to initiate the review of its grants program. ECA is now consulting with stakeholders as it develops its grant program structure and eligibility criteria. In designing the program, the intention is to start from first principles – building where appropriate on the Consumer Advocacy Panel's experience, but recognising ECA has its own mandate and functions.

ECA will shortly publish an Issues Paper, available on the ECA website, outlining the principles underpinning the review and seeking stakeholder input on the proposed features of the grant program. Submissions are due 11 September 2015.

ECA Advocacy: Australian Competition Tribunal forthcoming community consultation

The Board considered the approach ECA will take in the Tribunal consultation on 6 August 2015, noting its interest in the new limited merits review process. Directors agreed that the consultation provided an important opportunity to emphasise the Tribunal's obligation to consider the long-term interests of consumers.

The CEO also briefed the Board on ECA's coordination with consumer groups to discuss the process and issues for the consultation.

Operational

The Board noted the good progress made in establishing ECA. New premises in Sydney have been identified, and recruitment of senior staff will begin shortly.

Grants approved

At this meeting, the Board approved the following grants:

- AP 760 – SACOSS – Embedding Better Practice Among Energy Retailers
- AP 761 – Cummings Economics – FNQ Consumer Input to QPC Inquiry into Electricity Pricing