

Foresighting Forum 2019

Data Powering Better Energy Outcomes for Consumers

Closing Remarks: Rosemary Sinclair AM

Over the course of the last two days we have had a game changing conversation about how to use data to power better energy outcomes for consumers.

Game changing because we have had “everyone” in the room, we have listened to and started to understand consumer perspectives and best to meet consumers “where they are”.

We have met some very interesting characters, many of whom you will be able to enjoy through the years it will take to progress this important work – by referring to Energy Consumers Australia website for video and audio from Foresighting Forum 2019.

Such as an “excited economist” from Canberra, “data connoisseurs” from AEMO and the Commonwealth and indeed a “data maven” from the CSIRO. Maven is the Yiddish work for “one who understands”, and I would add profoundly in this case.

We have discussed many interesting and relevant perspectives:

- If you make decisions in the dark, you WILL make bad decisions
- If we don't know the consumers REALLY well, we will get it REALLY wrong.
- Data work must extend to the consumers we have left behind in the past
- Off grid is not always a technical term. It can mean living in your car.
- What do we want from Data? ACTION.
- We are at the end of One Size Fits All in energy.
- Mission: Data – powering energy savings.
- Data - enabling the Demand Side to exercise strong competitive pressure.
- Consumer Data Right is a right for consumers, not businesses, not intermediaries.
- How do we manage risks of detriment?
- How do we make Consent meaningful?
- How do we make sure no-one is worse off?
- The power comes from data about me enabling decisions by me.
- Consumers care about hot showers and cold beers. Energy seen as a service.
- We need the Simplicity of Apple products and services – simple and complex at the same time.
- Energy efficiency – getting the service you want, using less energy.

In closing, I'd like to suggest two books that may help you think more deeply about the issues we have to solve to get to Data Powering Better Energy Outcomes for Consumers. Both are by Michael Lewis – The Fifth Risk and The Undoing Project. The first goes to the important issues of the role of policy and regulation in achieving outcomes for consumers in important services. The second is a guide to undoing old ways of thinking using evidence on how people make decisions.

We are starting to think about Foresighting Forum 2020 which will focus on a Consumer Vision for the Future Energy Ecosystem. Our ECA lead for this work will be Chris Alexander, Director of Advocacy and Communications. If you are interested in being part of our early thinking please get in touch with

Chris, BUT you will need to be prepared to step with us into the shoes of consumers, rather than being part of another “insider” discussion.

We are planning to speak directly to consumers and leading thinkers around the world. We are keen to collaborate with people from every part of the energy sector as we work to understand the consumers preferred future for energy. This must be our guide through the transition of this important sector.

We have recently undertaken an analysis of all the work underway in the energy sector –Vertigan Governance Review recommendations, Finkel Report recommendations, ACCC recommendations, Energy Council work program, Energy Council Strategic Energy Plan, Energy Security Board tasks, AEMC Strategic Priorities, AER Statement of Expectations among others. Our summary of this work fills 60 A3 pages. Our conclusion is “We can’t get there from here”. What we need is an outcomes focused approach based on expressed consumer preferences, a Consumer Vision.

We will work to develop this Consumer Vision and use Foresighting Forum 2020 to discuss what it means for Policy; Regulation including Market Design, Monopoly Regulation and Consumer Protection; and Investment – public, private and consumer and Business Model.

Your contribution would be very warmly welcomed.

Let me close Foresighting Forum 2019: Data Powering Better Energy Outcomes for Consumers by saying I have seen in the last 12 months and during our two days of discussions a real shift in focus across the sector, a pivot, identifiable in discussions and actions, to seeking and delivering better outcomes for energy consumers.

More work is needed, and we need more runs on the board to rebuild Trust and Confidence.

But I have no doubt we will do this work and achieve our shared outcomes Better. Together.

Thank you for your time and your thinking. We will look forward to seeing you at Foresighting Forum 2020.