JEMENA ELECTRICITY NETWORKS

MULTICULTURAL CUSTOMER VOICE GROUP MANUAL



OCTOBER 2023

Jemena
bringing energy to life


“Jemena”
is an Aboriginal word
that means “to hear,
to listen and to think”



Acknowledgement of Country

Jemena acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we operate and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Artwork is by Chern'ee Sutton a contemporary Indigenous artist from the Kalkadoon people from the Mount Isa area in Queensland.

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Welcome to the Multicultural Customer Voice Group



The cost of living is increasing, and we know our customers' needs and aspirations are rapidly changing. The energy industry is also at a critical point, with a growing focus on a low-carbon future and more extreme weather impacting the grid.

The residential customers in our network are a part of vibrant and rich multicultural communities. We know customers in our network as a whole speak 260 languages, come from more than 200 countries and follow 135 different faiths.

As customers with lived experience, you bring a unique perspective on energy, electricity and the future of our network. This includes your experiences navigating your way through the energy system; from using electricity, finding information and paying your bill. We also want to understand your needs, hopes and aspirations as we move to a more sustainable future.

The outcomes from our discussions with you are important as they will directly impact the future of our business, and ultimately, all of our customers. Your feedback will be incorporated into our 2026-31 price reset proposal. This proposal will be submitted to the Australian Energy Regulator for their approval.

This pack provides you with an overview of our electricity network, our engagement program and your important role as members of our Multicultural Customer Voice Group. I encourage you to get familiar with this content and write down any questions and thoughts that come up for you on the future of energy and the challenges we might face.

Thank you for your involvement and unique perspectives you bring to the group. I look forward to learning from you.

David Gillespie
Managing Director
Jemena

Message from the Multicultural Customer Voice Group Champion



It is a real privilege to welcome you to the Multicultural Customer Voice Group and to be the Champion of the group.

I'm passionate about the vibrant and diverse communities we serve and understanding the different energy needs and priorities customers have. Every household has a unique way of using energy and electricity, from the energy devices you have and the way you use them to the times of the day you use energy the most.

Customers are at the heart of our business and speaking to customers with different lived experiences really enhances our perspectives on what our customers need today and in the future. Sustainability, the rising cost of living pressures, energy affordability and reliability are a few top concerns we're hearing from customers at the moment.

The ideas and insights we will receive from you will be instrumental in guiding the services we provide and the prices we charge customers. You will help us tackle many of the challenges we face as we prepare our electricity network for a sustainable future while meeting customer and community needs today.

As the Champion of the Group, my role is to listen, connect and deeply understand your experiences, views and aspirations with energy and electricity.

I look forward to connecting with you and hearing your views and perspectives.

Pratham Bhandari
Multicultural Customer Voice Group Champion & Acting General Manager Digital Market Platforms

1. The brief

We're Jemena, your local electricity distributor, and we deliver electricity to homes and businesses in Melbourne's north-west. We manage the poles and wires that carry the electricity to your home.

As an electricity distribution network service provider, we are subject to economic regulation by the Australian Energy Regulator, under the National Electricity Rules.

Our revenue is approved in five-year cycles by the Australian Energy Regulator and, in the build-up to each new term, we submit a proposal to them which outlines our plans for the next regulatory period (the five years from 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2031) and how we expect to fund them.

As a part of the development of our regulatory proposal, our engagement with you is integral to shaping our proposal and the services we provide. This collaboration has become all the more important than ever as we start to develop the prices we will charge customers for the next regulatory period.

Our challenge

With a changing environment and continuing increases in the cost of living, providing a fair energy future has never been more important than now. With increased customer uptake of renewables and other technologies, people are rapidly changing both how they use, and what they expect of the electricity network. This requires us to rethink the best way to plan for the future and charge for electricity in a way that is fair for everyone and meets different customer expectations.

Throughout the engagement process we will be asking Jemena's customers to think about and make suggestions and recommendations on the question: **How should Jemena prepare for a sustainable energy future while meeting customer and community needs today?**

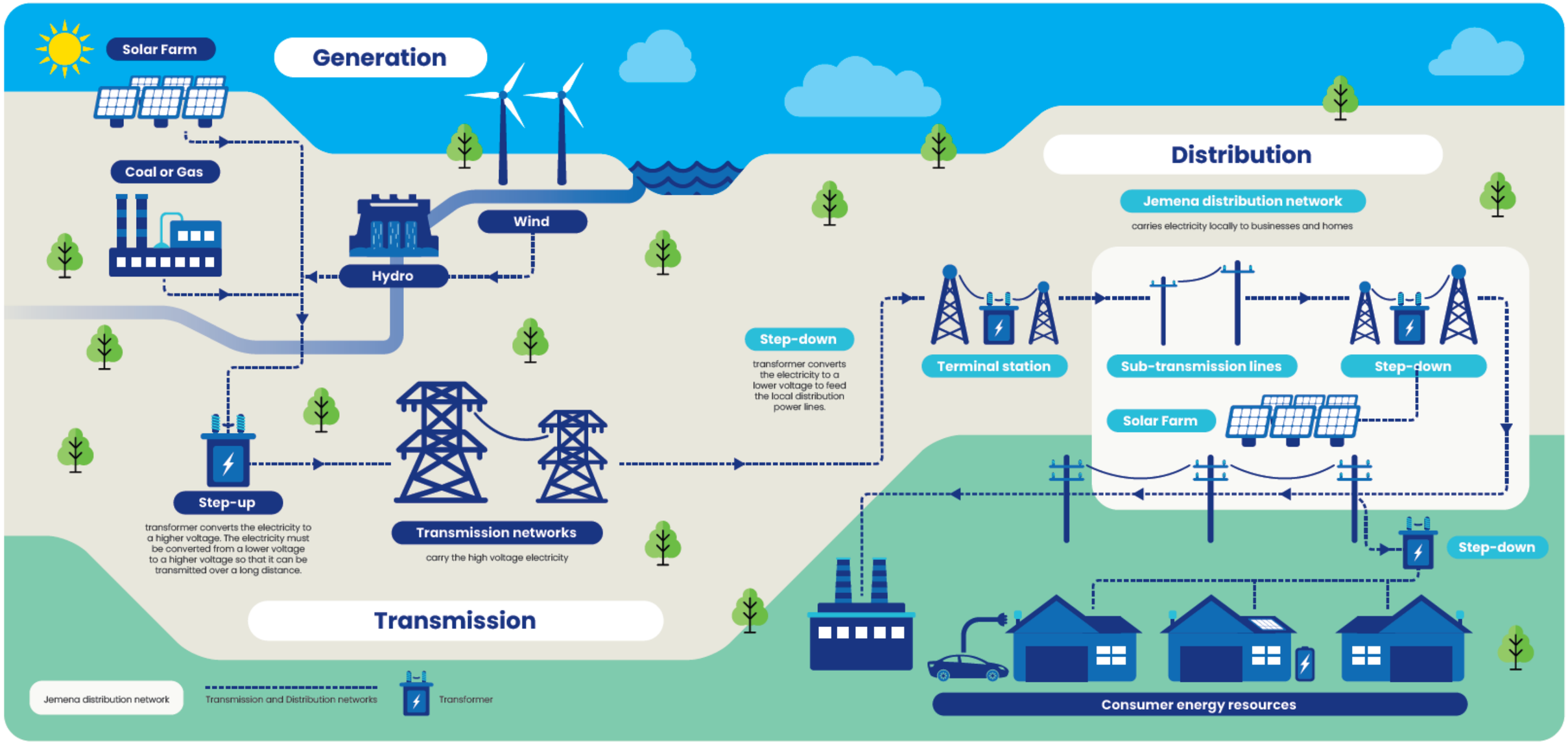
This will be our guiding question for the Customer Voice Group.

We have established key groups as part of our electricity network engagement process:

- **Customer Voice Groups** – six customer groups that include 10 -15 **customers with lived experience** in specific areas, including:
  - First Nations Customer Voice Group
  - Mental Health Customer Voice Group
  - Disability Customer Voice Group
  - Seniors Customer Voice Group
  - Young People Customer Voice Group
  - Multicultural Customer Voice Group.
- **Energy Reference Group** – an expert energy panel that can help discuss and deliberate on complex issues and provide clear, independent advice and recommendations that have the long-term interests of customers in mind.
- **People's Panel** – a group of community representatives comprising between 45 to 50 diverse customers who will make up a statistical representation of customers in our electricity distribution network.

About this pack
Reading this pack will provide you an overview of our network and the process of engagement with you.

2. How the electricity supply chain works



The electricity market in Victoria was designed to transport electricity generated from coal, gas or hydro power, and distribute it to homes and businesses. Large-scale generators are often producing electricity a long distance from where electricity is needed. To move electricity over long distances, transmission companies use extra high voltage power lines. When the electricity is closer to where it is needed the voltage is reduced, and distribution networks deliver it to the homes and businesses that need it. Jemena is an electricity distribution network business, so we manage the poles, wires and other infrastructure needed to take the electricity from the extra high voltage transmission networks, and deliver it safely to households and businesses in our network area in Melbourne.

This energy system is often referred to as ‘the grid’ and the grid is changing. More recently, we have seen the rise of solar generation, wind farms and other renewable energy sources playing a larger role in the energy supply, and sometimes this is connected directly to distribution electricity networks. Customers are also taking an active role in these markets. Households and businesses are increasingly generating and storing their own electricity through solar panels and batteries, taking less electricity from the distribution grid. In some cases, households are also selling their excess electricity, making the way we pay for electricity, and the flow of electricity, change.

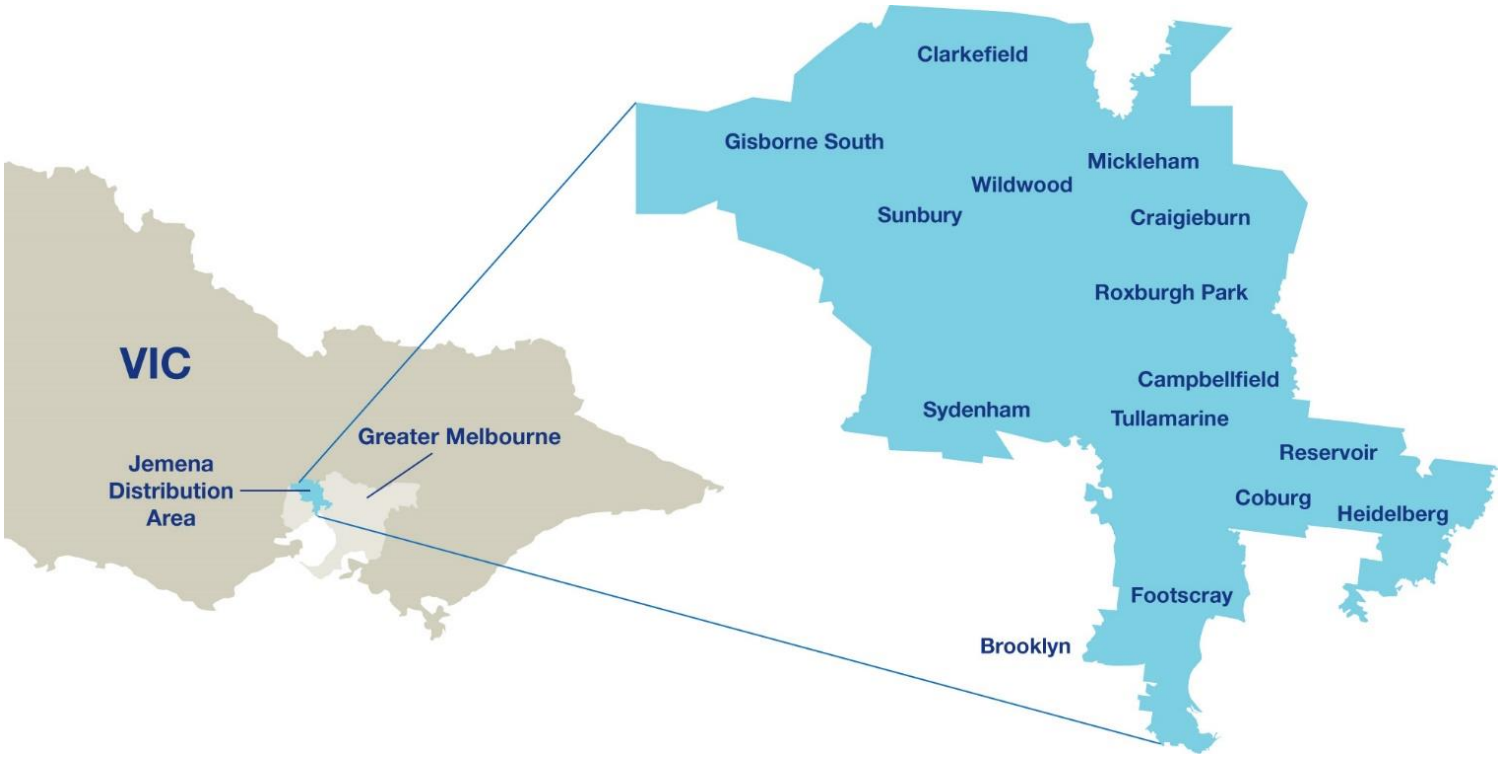
3. Jemena's electricity network

Our electricity network is one of five electricity distribution networks in Victoria. We are the sole distributor of electricity in north-west greater Melbourne. Every day we help deliver electricity to over 370,000 homes and businesses across north and western Melbourne.

Our role is to distribute electricity when and where our customers need it. We build and manage the infrastructure that transports electricity through more than 950 square kilometres of Melbourne's north-west suburbs and provides energy to support businesses and critical infrastructure such as Melbourne Airport, which sits in the middle of our distribution area.

Figure 1 - Jemena network map in Victoria

Operating environment



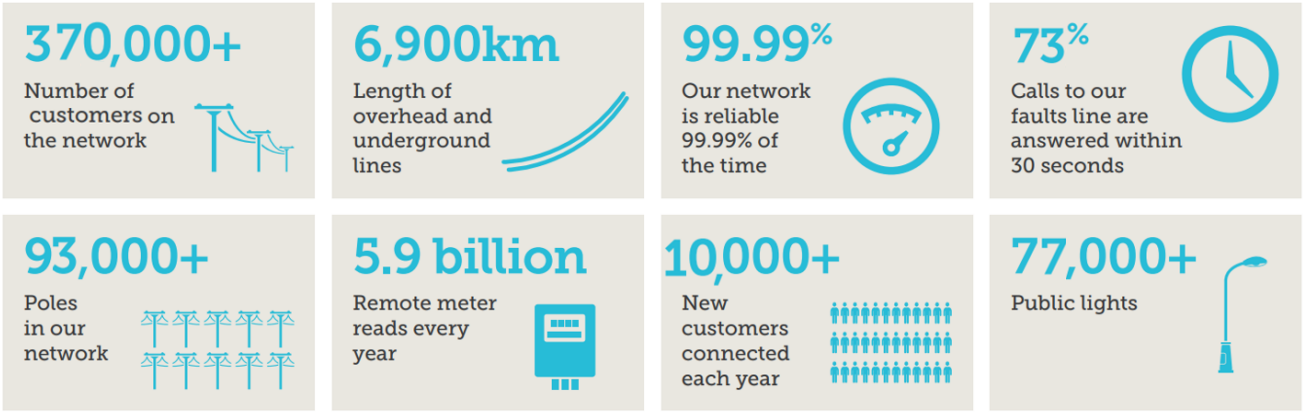
The distribution area covers a mix of industrial, commercial and residential customers, established inner suburbs, some major transport routes as well as the Melbourne International Airport. Semi-rural areas (though rapidly developing) exist around Sydenham, Sunbury and Coolaroo which have high bushfire risks.

Our network environment comprises of mainly flat land with exceptions such as Greenvale and Reservoir (though with minor undulations), and includes Maribyrnong River, Merri Creek, Darebin Creek and Steele Creek as waterways, and is bordered by the Yarra River in the east and Port Phillip Bay in the south.

Our distribution area, which is defined by the electricity distribution licence, covers the suburbs of Gisborne South, Clarkefield and Mickleham in the north to Williamstown and Footscray in the south, and from Hillside, Sydenham and Brooklyn in the west to Yallambie and Heidelberg in the east.

All in all, our distribution area covers approximately 12 per cent of the population of Victoria.

Figure 2 - Key characteristics of the electricity network



4. The energy market

The current environment

The way the electricity market functions has a profound impact on customers' health, well-being and living standards, and even the viability of businesses and whole industries. In recent years, electricity prices have risen considerably because of rising costs in the wholesale market, environmental policy measures and, in some areas, rising network costs. In turn, this has slowed the growth in demand for electricity and, at the same time, fuelled an increase in the take-up of Consumer Energy Resources (CERs) as customers take meeting their energy needs into their own hands.

Climate change, consumer choices, technology and policy changes have all accelerated the transformation of the energy market in Australia. This means electricity distribution businesses like ours constantly need to adapt and innovate in the ways in which we serve our customers, moving electricity to and from their homes and businesses. The ways in which the market will continue to evolve over the next two decades — including the costs of technology and fuel, the level of customer engagement, and the regulatory and policy response — remains a little unclear. What is clear is that, the energy system in the long term will be vastly different from that of today.

Despite the uncertainty, customers are being presented with more and more ways to take control of their own energy needs. They are increasingly shopping around for better retail offers and looking to new technologies like battery storage, electric vehicles and home energy management systems to manage their usage and lower their bills. With the cost of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems becoming cheaper all the time, it is becoming more and more common for energy consumers to generate their own energy 'behind the meter'. This, in turn, has changed the way customers use the electricity network and, in response, we must continue to evolve. For the next regulatory period, we aim to continue providing reliable energy while developing a platform that will facilitate innovation and support customers' choices about managing their own energy supply.

Our role as an electricity distribution network

As our society progresses towards a decarbonised future, the electricity system is changing and as it transforms, so too does our role as an electricity distribution network provider.

There are lots of ways that customers want to connect to, and interact with, the electricity system. This includes the use of electric vehicles, community batteries and solar. It also includes the generation of electricity back into the grid from rooftop solar. As we move to more electricity use and generation, we need to manage congestion of the network and the electricity that flows back up into the grid.

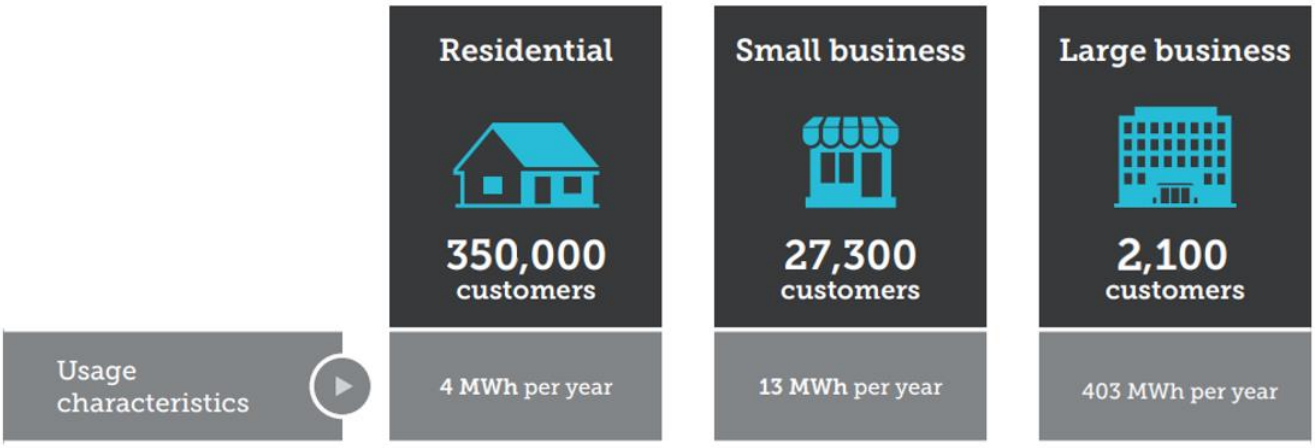
The transition to this new role will be heavily influenced by customers, governments and regulators, as well as other changes in the external market environment. With a changing role, we need to pre-empt the transformation, minimise the impact, and embrace the opportunities it presents. We see that greater dependence on data and communications will be necessary, and our interactions with markets and customers will increase.

5. Our customers

As a provider of essential services we have an important relationship with our customers and local communities. Customers are at the heart of our commitment to deliver electricity safely, reliably and affordably.

Apart from a few very large customers, anyone who is currently connected to Jemena's electricity distribution network is a customer of ours. We also connect new customers and provide distribution services to other groups like property developers, landlords and businesses of all sizes, from sole traders through to large energy consumers such as Melbourne and Essendon airports, industrial customers and hospitals.

Figure 3 - Jemena customers and average usage characteristics



Residential customers

We are the sole distributer of electricity in north-west greater Melbourne, servicing more than 350,000 households. The residential customers and communities in our network are diverse, spanning across some of Victoria's fastest growing Local Government Areas including Hume, Merri-bek, Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley.

Our residential customers are made up of diverse households that include:

- Households with solar
- Households with electric vehicles
- Households with batteries
- Dual fuel households with gas and electricity
- Households with electricity only
- Renters and homeowners
- Households of different densities (low, med and high)
- Households with different socio-economic status
- Customers with lived experience of disability and mental health difficulties
- First Nations peoples
- Seniors
- Young People
- Culturally diverse households.

Large customers

Our large commercial and industrial customers consume more than 50 per cent of the electricity that flows through our network made up of over 2,100 customers in north and western Melbourne. (Large commercial and industrial businesses are classified as having 200+ employees.)

Large customers come from a range of industries including:

- aviation
- transport
- data centres and high-tech industries
- property development
- health and medical
- education
- local councils
- logistics
- food manufacturing
- telecommunications
- other utilities.

Each large customer has different energy priorities that reflect the realities of their industries and the customers they serve.

Small and medium business customers

Our small to medium sized business customers are made up of over 27,000 diverse customers across north and western Melbourne.

Small to medium businesses in our distribution network area a vital part of our rich and vibrant communities. (Small businesses are classified as having 5-9 employees, while a medium business is classified as having 10-199 employees.)

Each small and medium business has unique circumstances and ways of operating, including different working environments, retail spaces and office locations.

Small to medium businesses include a large mix of sectors and professions, for example:

- accommodation and hotels
- agriculture
- bars, clubs and breweries.
- cafes, food stalls and restaurants
- clothing
- consultancies
- entertainment and music
- florists
- furniture building and restoration
- printing and design
- real estate
- retail
- small goods, delicatessens and butchers.

6. How we are regulated

The ability to distribute electricity in Victoria is governed through state-based laws. The Essential Service Commission of Victoria is the authority that issues licences to businesses including Jemena to distribute electricity.

We are also subject to economic regulation by the Australian Energy Regulator under the National Electricity Rules. As an electricity distribution network business, the prices we charge customers are overseen by the Australian Energy Regulator who regulate all energy networks.

The cost of distributing energy across the electricity network is paid for through the network charges included in customers' electricity bills. Typically, network charges make up approximately 33 per cent of a household customer's total bill.

Figure 4 - Stages of charges of an electricity bill



Every five years we submit a Regulatory Proposal to the Australian Energy Regulator that must outline:

- the services we will offer
- the costs we are likely to incur in providing these services
- the prices we propose to charge during the next regulatory period.

The Australian Energy Regulator only approves the proposal if it complies with the National Electricity Rules and promotes the long-term interests of our customers.

What our proposal will look like

The Regulatory Proposal for the 2026-31 period will include:

- our story and vision for the future
- the services we offer (and which services are regulated)
- an expenditure forecast
- incentive schemes
- how our costs are recovered (including recovery timeframes)
- a forecast of network usage
- prices, including their levels, structure and how they are adjusted.

To develop the five-year proposal over the coming two years we will:

- listen to and incorporate customer feedback
- consider the services we provide
- forecast the costs of providing our services
- calculate the prices required to recover the forecast costs.

Figure 6 – Example of the 2021-26 proposal



7. Customer engagement program

We have a desire to continuously improve our culture that is centred around understanding our customers' needs and serving them better. We want our engagement program to position Jemena at the forefront of delivering innovative customer engagement to a diverse spectrum of customers.

The price reset is a platform to meaningfully engage with a broad spectrum of customers in our distribution area, including customers who experience vulnerability.

Our Regulatory Proposal for the next regulatory period will give us a unique opportunity to:

- invite customers to help shape the services we offer, and
- inspire our team to improve outcomes for customers.

The Regulatory Proposal that we submit to the Australian Energy Regulator will be directly shaped by customers through our engagement program.

As a part of this process, we seek to partner with a full range of our customers, including our friendly energy savvy customers right through to customers who have low energy literacy or face barriers to engaging with energy.

Our engagement program also aims to meet the specific needs of our electricity customers, taking into consideration:

- the rich diversity of our customers
- learnings from previous price resets
- the unique requirements, issues and challenges our customers face
- our desire to engage with customers experiencing vulnerability
- dedicated opportunities to create synergies with the other Victorian Electricity Distribution Businesses (VIC DBs) for joint engagement, enabling consistency and efficiency in our engagement approach on common issues.

Engagement groups

Our engagement streams are designed for us to deeply understand and engage with the full spectrum of customers.

Throughout the engagement process we will be asking Jemena's customers to think about and make suggestions and recommendations on the question:

- **How should Jemena prepare for a sustainable energy future while meeting customer and community needs today?**

Our core areas of engagement include:

- **Energy Reference Group** – the establishment of an expert energy panel that can help discuss complex issues and provide clear, independent advice and recommendations that have the long-term interests of customers in mind.

- **People's Panel** – the establishment of a People's Panel which includes between 40 to 45 diverse customers who will make up a statistical representation of customers in our network in order to shape our 2026-31 regulatory proposal.

- **Customer Voice Groups** – Establishing customer voice groups that include 10-15 members, including customers with lived experience of disability, mental health, multicultural, young people, First Nations and seniors. Each group will have a senior leader from Jemena to help champion the group to connect, listen and understand their needs.

- **Customer service insights** – Interview existing frontline customer service team members on the issues and pain points customers they are experiencing and investigate customer complaint information to build an understanding. In addition to the existing Customer Service Satisfaction Score (CSAT) survey, conduct a bespoke survey for JEN customers for the price reset to gain a broad spectrum of views and data points.

- **Joint VIC DB engagement** – Joint engagement sessions with VIC DBs across the topics of affordability and equity, reliability and resilience, energy transformation, customer experience and customers experiencing vulnerability.

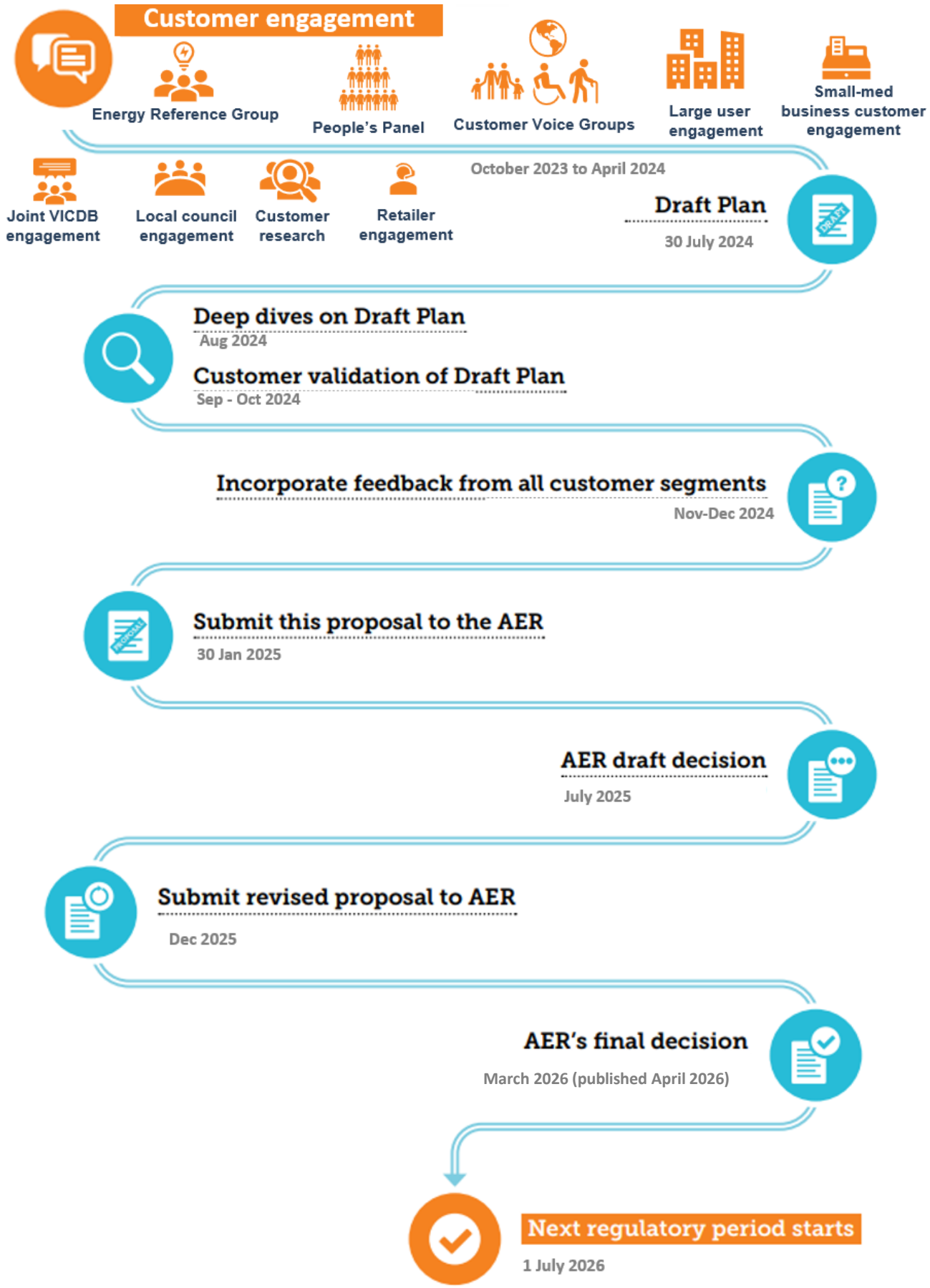
- **Small to medium business engagement** – small business forums, surveys and in-depth interviews/meetings with diverse small to medium businesses across our network.

- **Large/commercial customer engagement** – surveys, large user forum and in-depth interviews/meetings to engage with large commercial customers.

- **Electricity retailer engagement** – Bespoke engagement with electricity retailers and retailer bodies, including retailer forums, surveys, in-depth interviews/meetings and engagement with customers affected by family violence.

- **Local council engagement** - surveys, in-depth interviews/meetings and Local Council Forums to understand the needs of Local Councils and the local communities they service.

Engagement roadmap



8. Customer Voice Group

Through your role as a Customer Voice Group member, you will have the chance to influence the future of energy and the pricing of electricity, how it impacts customer bills, the community, and how to meet Jemena's customer needs now and into the future.

A Customer Voice Group bring together customers that have particular lived experience. The aim of the group is for customers to provide their views and input to shape the future of Jemena's electricity network.

Your role & responsibilities

You will be joined by up to 18 other participants and asked to share your experiences.

You don't need to be an expert in electricity to participate. You just need to be a member of a household that uses electricity and therefore pays an electricity bill.

You will have access to a range of information and expertise on how the electricity system works. You will hear from speakers and have the chance to request additional information. Your role includes both listening and contributing. You will also have discussions in small groups which will help you to have deeper conversations, share your views and learn more about other people's perspectives.

Expectations of Customer Voice Group members:

1. **Read** this information pack and the background materials as provided.
2. **Attend** all sessions – while we recognise that life can be unpredictable, it is important you can attend all sessions of the Panel. Please advise register@mosaiclab.com.au of any changes to your availability.
3. **Participate** in an open, respectful and thoughtful manner.
4. You are welcome to **ask your family and friends** for their thoughts on issues facing Jemena and its priorities, as background to your Customer Voice Group participation.

Role of Jemena

Jemena has a project team supporting the engagement process. Its role includes:

- Providing relevant and useful information ahead of each session that will help you provide advice
- Responding to your questions and reasonable requests for further information
- Receive and respond to your advice.

Jemena also has a dedicated Champion for the Customer Voice Group who is a designated senior leader, who will:

- Listen, connect and understand your energy needs and preferences
- Advocate for and champion for you across the organisation.

The Jemena team that will be supporting the process will be:



Pratham Bhandari
Customer Voice Group Champion



Matthew Serpell
Program Director, Electricity Price Reset



Louise Baring
Customer Engagement Lead

Role of MosaicLab facilitators

MosaicLab is Jemena's Engagement Partner. They are a team of facilitators dedicated to bringing diverse groups of people together to solve complex problems.

MosaicLab's role is to host the Customer Voice Group and facilitate your discussions.
This includes:

- organising the logistics for all sessions
- promoting informed discussion
- enabling everyone to have a chance to participate and contribute
- remaining neutral and, therefore, not having a stake or interest in the content or outcome
- responding and adapting to the group's needs.

The MosaicLab team that will be supporting the process will be:



Lyndal Mackintosh
Principal Facilitator



Belinda Lowing
Senior Facilitator



Naomi Oosting
Senior Facilitator and Project Manager



Jody Kingston
Facilitator and Project Support



Aaron Bosch
Facilitator and Project Support

Commitment to an enjoyable experience

It is our intention that the Customer Voice Group sessions take place in a friendly, respectful and supportive manner. Jemena and your facilitators are committed to making sure that the experience is as enjoyable and productive as possible for all involved.

As part of this commitment, it is expected that everyone – including the facilitators and Jemena's representatives, are respectful of each other and protected from unnecessary emotional or psychological harm.

Discussions will be focused on the challenge. There will be no time available to discuss other issues/topics that are not related to the remit.

Discussions will be focused on the challenge of **How should Jemena prepare for a sustainable energy future while meeting customer needs today?**

Different views and healthy disagreements are encouraged and welcomed as part of the process. However, any threatening, derogatory or aggressive words or actions that could be supposed to cause distress to others, will be appropriately managed by your facilitators.

Observers

Observers are an important part of any deliberative process as they provide an opportunity for people to view the Customer Voice Group sessions and other engagement processes in action. Having observers in attendance helps to build understanding and enhance the transparency of the process.

We will always introduce any observers to the Customer Voice Group sessions so that the group knows who they are and what organisation they come from. Observers are provided with a set of rules and are not able to participate in or disrupt the group's process.

There will potentially be observers from the Australian Energy Regulator and members of the Customer Challenge Panel.

Payments

The Customer Voice Group will meet over a minimum of four sessions.

We recognise this significant commitment. Members will receive **$350** to cover costs associated with attendance and to recognise their commitment to their community. Bank details will be confirmed prior to payment and payment will be made at the end of the fourth session.

If you require travel assistance to the first in-person session please email register@mosaiclab.com.au.

Session times and dates

Below, we outline our preliminary schedule of topics and scheduled timings. We may add additional sessions if more time is required to extend discussions further.

Date	Session	Time details	Location
Tuesday 24 October	Session 1	5.30pm to 8.30pm	Broadmeadows Community Hub 182 Widford St, Broadmeadows
Thursday 16 November	Session 2	5.30pm to 8.30pm	Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83872982464 Meeting ID: 838 7298 2464 Passcode: 742812
Thursday 8 February	Session 3	5.30pm to 8.30pm	Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83872982464 Meeting ID: 838 7298 2464 Passcode: 742812
Thursday 7 March	Session 4	5.30pm to 8.30pm	In person – location to be provided

Working together online

Some of the customer voice sessions are proposed to take place online.

If you don't have a computer or internet access at home, please let us know as soon as possible so that Jemena can make arrangements to ensure you can participate. Please note that participating using a tablet or phone is not advisable due to the tools used throughout the sessions.

GridTalk website

Our online engagement hub for the project is **GridTalk.com.au**. We will share information about the Customer Voice Group, discussions and outcomes from meetings on this site. This is also the engagement hub for our customers and local communities to find information about the project and engagement process.

Media and social media guidelines

Customer Voice Group members are welcome to post on social media about their participation, however, we ask that you respect the privacy of fellow Customer Voice Group members, guest speakers, Jemena and MosaicLab staff.

If you use social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) to post about your experiences during the process, we encourage you to use the hashtags: #jemena #GridTalk #futureofenergy

Anything said to a journalist, submitted to a media organisation or posted online on social media is a public comment. Please be polite and respectful of others and their opinions, don't reference specific individuals, and only speak from your perspective – not on behalf of the group.

As the group's advisory role occurs over an extended period of time, members are requested not to pre-empt any outcomes on social media or in the traditional media.

Jemena's project team is available on **GridTalk@jemena.com.au** to assist group members if required.

Filming and photography

To promote transparency in the overall deliberative process and subsequent Jemena decision making, we may photograph and record some sessions of the Customer Voice Group.

Some Customer Voice Group members will be invited to participate in brief "vox pop" style recorded interviews about their participation.

The photographs and videos will also be used to promote Jemena's engagement process.

A photographic permission form will be emailed prior to the first session. If comfortable, please provide permission for Jemena and MosaicLab to photograph and video your participation by completing the online form.

Please let us know by emailing register@mosaiclab.com.au if you do not wish to be photographed or videoed.

Media enquiries

For media enquiries please call 1300 331 239.

Food

Arrival tea & coffee, light finger food will be provided.

Please let us know if you have any dietary requirements through the registration email: **register@mosaiclab.com.au**

Key contacts

Jemena enquires

For general project enquiries email **GridTalk@jemena.com.au**

RSVPs, attendance catering enquiries

Please keep forum correspondence regarding attendance, dietary requirements and general enquiries through: **register@mosaiclab.com.au**

GridTalk.com.au

