

## ENERGY AND WATER OMBUDSMAN

### 1. Background

Following the passage of the *Water Services Act 2012*, the existing Energy Ombudsman Western Australia has become the Energy and Water Ombudsman Western Australia from 1 January 2014.

### 2. The Energy and Water Ombudsman



Chris Field is the Western Australian Ombudsman. He concurrently holds the roles of Energy and Water Ombudsman and State Records Commissioner. Chris is the President of the Australasian Pacific Ombudsman Region and a Director of the International Ombudsman Institute. He is an Executive Member of the Australian and New Zealand Ombudsman Association.

Chris is an Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Western Australia and founder and co-coordinator of the unit *Government Accountability – Law and Practice*. Chris is also the author of a range of publications on law, economics and public policy, including the university text, *Current Issues in Consumer Law and Policy*. He is also the 'Consumer Dealings' editor of the *Australian Business Law Review*.

He commenced his career as a lawyer at Arthur Robinson and Hedderwicks (now Allens Linklaters), prior to holding the roles of Executive Director, Consumer Law Centre Victoria and Chairman, Australian Consumers' Association (now Choice). Immediately prior to his appointment as Ombudsman, he was an inaugural Member of the Western Australian Economic Regulation Authority. He holds Arts and Law (Honours) degrees

### 3. What do we do?

The Energy and Water Ombudsman investigates and resolves complaints concerning the provision of services by energy or water services providers.

The types of energy and water issues that the Ombudsman can consider include:

- Provision or supply of electricity, gas or water;
- Billing;
- The administration of credit and payment services;
- Alleged or disputed debts and the recovery of debts;
- Disconnection and restriction of supply and refundable advances;
- Service standard payments;
- Marketing of services;
- The exercise of powers in relation to land, neighbouring land or property;
- Damage or loss due to supply issues; and
- Complaints by a person other than a customer who is affected by a water service.

### 4. Who can complain to us?

Electricity, gas or water services customers and other people affected by a water service.

### 5. What can't we investigate?

The Energy and Water Ombudsman cannot investigate:

- The setting of prices or tariffs or determining price structures;
- Commercial activities that are outside the scope of the electricity, gas or water service licence;
- The content of Government policies;
- Complaints under consideration by, or previously considered by any court or tribunal; or that the Ombudsman considers should be dealt with by a court or tribunal;
- Any matter specifically required by legislation, codes licences and orders to be handled by another authority; and
- Issues to do with bottled gas.

In resolving a complaint, the Energy and Water Ombudsman must take into account:

- Events beyond the reasonable control of the electricity, gas or water service provider; and
- The actions taken by an electricity, gas or water service provider (and any resulting consequence) that are in compliance with a direction or notice received by the provider.

The Energy and Water Ombudsman may decline to investigate if the complainant does not have sufficient interest in the matter, an investigation is not warranted or there is a more appropriate body to deal with the complaint.

## 6. When to complain to us?

Before contacting us, customers should try to resolve the complaint with the electricity, gas or water provider first.

## 7. Who are the Current Providers?

### Electricity Providers

- Alinta
- Griffin Energy Sales
- Horizon Power
- Perth Energy
- Rottnest Island Authority
- Synergy
- Western Power

### Water Services Providers

- Aquasol Pty Ltd
- Aqwest - Bunbury Water Corporation
- Busselton Water Board
- City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- Gascoyne Water Co-operative
- Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd
- Harvey Water (SW Irrigation Management Co-op)
- Moama Lifestyle Villages Pty Ltd

- Ord Irrigation Cooperative
- Peel Water Pty Ltd
- Preston Valley Irrigation Co-operative
- Rottnest Island Authority
- Shire of Brookton
- Shire of Coolgardie
- Shire of Dalwallinu

### Gas Providers

- Alinta
- Esperence Power Station
- Synergy
- WA Gas Networks
- Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas
- Worley Parsons Asset Management

- Shire of Denmark
- Shire of Dowerin
- Shire of Dumbleyung
- Shire of East Pilbara
- Shire of Gnowangerup
- Shire of Goomalling
- Shire of Jerramungup
- Shire of Kent
- Shire of Koorda
- Shire of Lake Grace
- Shire of Moora
- Shire of Morawa
- Shire of Ravensthorpe
- Shire of Victoria Plains
- Shire of Wichepin
- Shire of Yilgarn
- Water Corporation

## 7. How to contact us

Complaints can be made by telephone on (08) 9220 7588, mail, fax, email at [energyandwater@ombudsman.wa.gov.au](mailto:energyandwater@ombudsman.wa.gov.au), or via our website using the Online Form. Forms can also be printed from our website. Full contact details are provided below.

**Contact:** Erin D'Mello, Communications Manager  
Phone: 9220 7567 Email: [erin.dmello@ombudsman.wa.gov.au](mailto:erin.dmello@ombudsman.wa.gov.au)

