

ASX Announcement



2 April 2020

AusNet Services to implement measures to provide support for customers enduring hardship

AusNet Services has announced a suite of measures to provide support to customers enduring hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The electricity and gas network relief package compliments other initiatives across the gas and electricity sector and will be effective as of 1 April 2020.

The key elements of the relief package are:

- relief for residential and small business customers experiencing hardship;
- network charges from 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 will be rebated or deferred; and
- applies to customers who go into hardship from 1 March 2020 (for small business from 1 April 2020).

Managing Director, Mr Tony Narvaez said: "AusNet Services is committed to supporting customers and communities who suffer hardship in these extremely difficult and stressful times. In collaboration with Energy Networks Australia, we are proud to support and deliver a package of relief initiatives, targeted to those most in need, when they need it most. Our core focus is unchanged - to provide safe and reliable network services. Access to essential services has never been more important. AusNet Services will continue to do its part, pursuing the collective goal, that vulnerable Victorian energy users can emerge from this crisis, and resume life as normal."

Hardship and other eligibility requirements apply to the relief package and the ultimate financial profile of the relief will, among other things, depend on the economic impact of the various government stimulus packages released in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

AusNet Services continues to assess the financial and other impacts to its business of the economic and commercial issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and will keep the market informed of any material developments.

The relief package has also been adopted by other energy networks businesses across Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia and further information is available in the attached press release from Energy Networks Australia.

Paul Lynch
Company Secretary

This announcement was authorised for release by the Board of AusNet Services Ltd.

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ENERGY NETWORK RELIEF PACKAGE ANNOUNCED

Energy networks across New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia have announced a suite of measures to provide support to customers enduring hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The [electricity and gas network relief package](#) complements other initiatives across the gas and electricity sector and will take effect from 1 April.

Energy Networks Australia CEO Andrew Dillon said the comprehensive package was aimed at small business and residential customers and would help ensure energy retailers can better assist those facing hardship.

“Networks understand these are extraordinarily tough times for small business and energy bill relief will really help,” Mr Dillon said.

“For small businesses that are mothballed, electricity and gas network charges will not be applied from the start of April to the end of June 2020, if their consumption is less than a quarter what it was in 2019.

“Networks know it is in everyone’s interest to support small businesses through what is an extremely challenging period.”

The package also includes measures to support households by helping energy retailers provide further assistance to those who fall into hardship as a result of COVID-19.

“Networks will be deferring or rebating electricity and gas network charges for impacted customers,” Mr Dillon said.

“This assists impacted customers and helps energy retailers, who administer energy hardship programs.

“Networks and retailers realise it’s important the industry pulls together to support the many small businesses and households who will face growing challenges over the months ahead.

“Networks will work with energy retailers to ensure the benefits of this package flow through to customers smoothly.”

Governments have already announced various energy support measures for affected customers.

Mr Dillon said energy network crews across the country were continuing to do critical works during this crisis to keep the power on, the gas flowing and the energy system safe and reliable.

The number of planned outages for these critical works would be minimised and they would be as brief as possible.

This [Energy Networks Australia video](#) explains why critical maintenance is undertaken.

For an online version of this media release, [click here](#).

Participating networks:



ENDS

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Energy Networks Australia is the national industry body representing Australia's electricity transmission and distribution and gas distribution networks. Our members provide more than 16 million electricity and gas connections to almost every home and business across Australia.