Customer Advisory Panel

Panel Terms of Reference

Updated July 2025

CitiPower, Powercor and United Energy

2025

Purpose of the Customer Advisory Panel (CAP)

The Customer Advisory Panel (CAP) exists to provide focus, expert challenge and insight on customer issues and engagement, to inform and influence strategic decisions and operational delivery by Powercor, CitiPower and United Energy. This input is provided in the context of both the regulatory reset process and the ongoing work of the three networks, and covers the diverse interests of household, commercial and industrial customers.

Key functions include:

* Expert advice and assurance on customer and community engagement, research, and insight

* Information flows and insights from the organisations and communities where CAP members work and members' broader relationships

* Identification of significant consumer issues and informed and knowledgeable debate and advice about them.

The CAP's feedback and guidance will be used to ensure customer and stakeholder views are captured, tested, and embedded in the businesses' decision-making processes, and further emerging challenges are identified and addressed with customer and stakeholder views at the forefront of proposed solutions.

A major part of the CAP's focus to 2026 has been and continues to be to provide guidance and challenge throughout the 2026-31 reset process for each of the three businesses. Its input is crucial in ensuring the future of the electricity network reflects evidenced customer preferences and priorities, including preferred customer trade-offs between price and service, and takes account of likely future trends and developments.

The Panel's approach will recognise that Powercor, CitiPower and United Energy are separate networks, with quite different customer profiles and some distinct issues resulting from their unique geographic coverage. The Panel will however also seek to identify any commonalities between them and compare and contrast their performance where appropriate.

CAP structure and membership

The CAP currently comprises six members, including an independent Chair and Deputy Chair. Members are informed customer and stakeholder representatives from a variety of interests, and fields of expertise, to ensure a range of perspectives are considered.

The membership is intended to include expertise in relation to household, commercial and industrial customers, experience in relation to certain customer segments such as customers in vulnerable circumstances, young customers, rural customers and/or culturally diverse customers, and skills relating to matters such as stakeholder engagement and customer insight, regulation, risk, policy, infrastructure and the energy transition.

Any additional or replacement members will be appointed in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair. The business will also periodically review the performance and impact of the CAP and may amend its structure and/or membership.

Scope

The CAP's scope is to is to bring the voice of customers, stakeholders, and communities to support the business' internal strategic decision-making process. For example:

- significant operational changes
- new business initiatives
- future plans for the network
- regulatory and policy changes.

The CAP will have opportunities to give feedback on the agenda via the Chair for each meeting, so that discussions reflect customer priorities while also taking account of the needs of the business.

In bringing their voices to the table, the networks are inviting the CAP to inform and test their approaches and plans.

CAP members will not be required to endorse business practices, initiatives, plans or positions on regulatory or policy matters, though the business will explain how CAP members' views have influenced decisions.

The CAP may not always reach a consensus on a particular issue, and sometimes the nature of the debate between members may be useful to the organisation in their decision making. Relevant staff of the business may therefore observe Panel items to gain a full understanding of the points raised in discussion.

The 2026-31 regulatory reset

The 2026-2031 regulatory reset is a significant focus for the CAP. The CAP provides feedback and guidance on customer research, engagement, trials, and other customer related interactions. It also engages in key elements of the regulatory proposal, determined through a consultative process with CAP. Members have the opportunity to shape meeting agendas, though the business will also need to obtain CAP input on particular topics and themes.

The CAP is not expected to endorse the networks' draft, final or revised regulatory proposals or to participate in a negotiated outcome. The CAP is further not expected to endorse the business' stakeholder engagement programs, unless it chooses to do so. CAP members may have differing views on some topics.

Panel member roles and ways of working

To ensure customers' needs are at the centre of what the networks do, and so that customer preferences and priorities are reflected in their decision making, CAP members' roles and responsibilities will include:

- reviewing, evaluating, and testing customer research and engagement to identify needs, preferences and priorities. This may include co-designing customer research and engagement with the business, or proposing new research or engagement, to be used in business decision making
- collaborate with the business, to identify challenges and potential solutions to deliver on customer preferences and priorities; this includes defining 'problem statements' and evaluation of solutions
- presenting evidence-based views and feedback from CAP members to ensure CAP member views are captured and fully taken account of decision making:
- CAP members should seek to use evidence including customer research to support their positions
- CAP members are expected to bring their expertise and insights from their work and their wider professional networks to the conversation
- it is not a requirement for the CAP to reach a consensus on issues, and the debate between members may be as important as any agreed positions. Differing views will be noted and taken into consideration by the business
- for complex issues, or where discussions are not making headway or require more focus than is possible in a full CAP meeting, the Chair may set a process and timeframe for the issue to be considered further in an appropriate forum such as a smaller working group. This may include requesting additional information to support the discussion.

Secretariat

The CAP will be facilitated by the Chair, with the business providing day to day operational support (Secretariat).

CAP members should raise questions, topics, or issues for discussion through the Chair. Raised issues, questions or topics will then be provided to the Secretariat for inclusion on the next CAP meeting agenda as appropriate.

Period of engagement and compensation

The current CAP membership is engaged until 31 December 2025.

Compensation is offered to CAP members for their time, acknowledging the active ongoing involvement required to get the best outcomes for customers and the community. This includes meeting preparation, participation and follow up, and additional engagement with stakeholders as necessary.

Resource requirement and frequency of meetings

Due to the 2026-2031 regulatory reset engagement timelines, the frequency of meetings will vary by year. Some meetings during the year will be in-person and may include field trips. All other meetings will be via Microsoft Teams.

For all meetings, members will be provided with reading materials at least a week in advance. It will be assumed the material has been read prior to the meeting to allow more time for debate and exchange of views. Members will only be required to provide verbal feedback and input, which the business will minute and circulate.

The business' responsibilities

- The work of the CAP is demonstrably supported by the whole business including the senior leadership team and CEO
- Timely organisation of meetings and gatherings, ensuring as many members are available as possible for each meeting
- Provide responses to all issues, questions through CAP minutes and/or via Chair as appropriate
- All relevant information is circulated to members prior to meetings and on request
- Opportunity is provided for members to nominate agenda items via the Chair
- Follow up on information requests is provided in a reasonable and timely manner
- Appropriate business representatives are available at the meetings and for follow-up questions, conversations and meetings as required, to be coordinated through the CAP chair
- Transparency will be provided of drafted meeting notes and materials for comment
- The business will explain how all CAP feedback is being used in its decision making.

Members' responsibilities

- All CAP members are expected to contribute to all topics of discussion, regardless of level of expertise or knowledge in the topic. This is because all feedback is valued and expertise in a topic (e.g., technical knowledge is not required)

- CAP members will conduct themselves in a professional, constructive, and respectful manner, both to one another and to the business' staff, and to commit to attend every meeting unless there is a pressing reason why this is not possible
- Respect the views and beliefs of other members and provide an atmosphere where all members feel comfortable to contribute
- Seek to represent the views of the broader community
- Work positively to find solutions to issues or concerns
- Declare any actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest that is relevant to their role on the CAP
- Allow the business to communicate in a factual way the membership and work of the CAP, and support actions to ensure that the work of the CAP on behalf of customers is accountable and transparent, for example by writing blogs
- Not communicate confidential information that is discussed at the CAP, as advised by the Chair and business, such as issues of a sensitive commercial nature
- Many CAP members are likely to have established profiles in debates about energy issues, as a result of their work for other organisations in the field. However, they should not speak externally (for example to the media, at conferences or in meetings) as a member of the CAP. If there is opportunity for the CAP to make public comment, its agreed by the Chair on who would be the best representative to present and reflect the perspectives of the CAP.

Review Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the General Manager Regulation every 12 months, in consultation with the Chair and with input from CAP members, and they may be updated at other times.