

MEDIA RELEASE

New rules help Canberrans manage their electricity bills, but retailers can do more

A new ACT government survey shows that Canberra residents are better informed and more confident in choosing a retail electricity plan that could save them money.

In 2021, the Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission expanded the protections for electricity consumers through the new ACT Retail Electricity (Transparency and Comparability) Code. The Code introduced new rules to help customers engage confidently with the electricity retail energy market and to find a plan that would better suit their circumstances. The Code took effect from 1 October 2021.

“We knew electricity consumers have found electricity plans complex and difficult to understand. We also recognised that high electricity bills were adding to increasing cost of living pressures and the costs of doing business in the ACT,” Senior Commissioner Dimasi said.

“The new rules in the Code require retailers to present electricity offers in a standardised way to make it easier for consumers to compare offers. Retailers must also place a message in bills reminding their customers to check the www.energymadeeasy.gov.au website, which helps compare plans across all retailers in the ACT, and to call their retailer for more information.”

The survey, released 11 August 2022, measured the early impacts of the new rules. From the survey we learned that:

- 67% of respondents express confidence that they are on the best electricity plan for them, which is an increase from a similar 2019 survey when only 53% of respondents were confident they were on the best plan
- 58% of respondents who had used the reference price comparison found it helped them compare offers.

Senior Commissioner Joe Dimasi said that the new rules have helped consumers to better understand the offers available in the market and find a cheaper plan.

“But the survey showed that many people are still confused by communications from their electricity retailer. Retailers need to do more work to communicate more clearly and effectively,” he said.

“My message to Canberrans is to compare market offers to the reference price at least once a year. You can also contact the retailer for individualised help to find a plan that’s right for you.”

The commission will write to retailers, sharing the results of this survey and communicating our expectations on giving consumers clear advice.

Full results of the survey are available [here](#).

Contact

To contact us, please visit our website at www.icrc.act.gov.au. Alternatively, you can contact us by phone on (02) 6205 0799 or by email at icrc@act.gov.au.