

2021

# Energy Charter Disclosure Report



**HORIZON**  
POWER

# Chief Executive Officer's Report

I am proud to share the second annual disclosure report by Horizon Power since we became the first Western Australia-based signatory to the Energy Charter in November 2019.

As Australia's only vertically integrated electricity utility we operate across the full energy supply chain: generation, transmission, distribution and retail services. We strive to ensure our customers receive safe and reliable power to their homes, businesses and communities at the lowest possible cost.

This year we took significant steps to become a more customer-centric organisation, and with guidance and collaboration from customer advocacy groups and our fellow signatories, I am pleased to report that we delivered on or made substantial progress toward achieving the commitments we established in our first report last year.

Amid the unprecedented changes occurring in our industry, I am gratified to say that our progress this year clearly demonstrates that we are well equipped to achieve our guiding ambition: *delivering energy solutions for regional growth and vibrant communities*. Against the backdrop of the pandemic, Horizon Power has continued to play a pivotal role in driving investment and research into sustainable energy solutions that will enable and encourage more efficient energy usage. Whenever possible, it is our intent that these sustainable energy solutions will be developed in partnership with our customers, incorporating their insights and addressing their future energy needs.

Over the past year we delivered more than \$40 million in COVID-19 relief payments on behalf of the WA Government. We also put in place additional support measures to our customers and have increased our community engagement efforts across all regions. Our face-to-face visits with our customers are invaluable, as they provide our team with an opportunity to receive direct feedback on a variety of projects, including co-design of tariff evolution, product



design and community-scale renewable solutions. Additionally, we have dedicated approximately \$75 million of stimulus funding from the WA State Government to support 18 projects which form part of our 'Renew the Regions' program.

The timeliness and effectiveness of this support was reflected in our achieving a record net promoter score for the second consecutive year, and customer satisfaction levels remain high.

Our role as an Energy Charter signatory underpins our commitment to place the customer at the centre of all that we do across our organisation. The trust that customers place in Horizon Power means we have a responsibility to meet their core power expectations – access to safe, reliable and affordable energy, whilst also preparing to deliver a more sustainable, renewable energy future.

While we made excellent progress this year, we still have work to do. In the coming year, we will focus on developing additional holistic solutions for hardship customers, aspiring to achieve no disconnections and continuing our efforts in designing alternative tariff options to enable reduced energy costs for our customers. We will also continue to collaborate with policy makers and social services partners to better support consumer advocacy.

The Energy Charter's #BetterTogether approach aligns with Horizon Power's Guiding Principles and values and is an appropriate philosophy for the times in which we find ourselves. Industry transformation rarely occurs in isolation, and so it is critical that we can collaborate with our energy business partners across Australia as we collectively strive to place customers at the centre of everything we do.

We are pleased to share our progress with you and look forward to your feedback and ongoing collaboration as we work together to deliver the Energy Charter vision.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Unwin'.

**Stephanie Unwin**  
Chief Executive Officer

# Highlights

## Key customer outcomes

### Improving the customer experience

**59**

**Record  
Net Promoter Score**



Opened our flagship Customer Experience Centre and relocated our contact centre to Broome.

**34%**

**Level of debt reduction  
for customers**



Improving the safety and reliability of electricity for 13 remote Aboriginal communities.

**4%**

**Customer bill  
reduction outcome**



**80 mins hydrocarbons off  
in Onslow**

### Supporting our customers through COVID-19

**\$40M** In relief payments

Delivered more than \$40 million in COVID-19 relief payments on behalf of the State Government.

**\$75M** In major projects

Delivering \$75 million in major projects to improve customer access to renewable energy and improve customer service delivery, in line with State Government's economic recovery plan.

**0** disconnections of customers in hardship

Recorded zero disconnections for customers in hardship for non-payment and added concessions to an additional 4.5% of customer accounts.

### Improving support for customers facing hardship

**86** Customers

Created personalised 18-month hardship exit plans for 86 customers facing challenging circumstances, using debt matching as a key tool toward more stable footing.

**2** New permanent roles

Created two new permanent roles for Customer Relationship Officers who work directly to support customers facing vulnerable circumstances, including proactively checking in with those identified.

 **Proactive hardship assistance**

Developed an algorithm to proactively identify customers who may be under financial stress and likely to fall into hardship.

## Focus areas for improvement

Remove the constraints we face in rooftop solar installations by revising hosting capacity calculations in the communities we serve; whilst we are making progress, significant improvements must be achieved in order to realise our goal of zero refusals across our network by 2025.

Simplify and streamline digital processes and communication for Horizon Power website, app and MyAccount.

Implement alternative pricing and tariff options and expand the availability of MyPower. Develop alternative pricing and tariff options based on the product concepts currently in development.

Design and implement a customer behavioural framework in preparation for delivery of new products and services, enabling and encouraging more efficient energy usage for our customers.

# Principle 1

STATUS: **ON TRACK**

We will put customers at the centre of our business and the energy system.



We listened to our customers and sought guidance from industry advocates to ensure our customers' needs are considered in decision making at all levels of the organisation. We will use this knowledge to guide us as we transition the energy supply chain to develop new and innovative products, services and industry offerings in the fast-changing energy landscape.

## Outcomes Achieved

- We are now actively engaged with consumer reference group WA Advocates for Consumers of Energy (WAACE) and involve Energy Policy WA's (EPWA) Consumer Advocate in key customer decisions, where appropriate. **IAP9** ✓
- A customer performance report and progress on Energy Charter principles is now included as a standing item for a Board subcommittee. **IAP8** ✓ Our People, Safety and Culture Committee (PSCC) plays an active role in overseeing our transition to a customer-centric culture, with a spotlight on key customer issues that require resolution. **IAP8** ✓
- We developed a Voice of Customer (VoC) framework with information now included in regular reports to Executive and Horizon Power Board (PSCC), including brand, customer satisfaction data and customer verbatim feedback. **IAP8** ✓
- 12% uplift in customer-centricity achieved in employee engagement survey.
- We increased our community engagement across all regions, seeking customer co-design on tariff evolution, product design and community-scale renewables. We undertook extensive engagement for 'Renew the Regions' projects, part of the WA Government's recovery plan to boost regional economies; this includes deployment of community batteries, Solar Schools and the new Customer Experience Centre, Nila Janyba, in Broome. **IAP9** ✓
- We conducted our first 'Renew the Regions' roadshow, which will become a regular biannual event in our major service areas where we share updates on our business and learn about energy priorities from the community **IAP9** ✓. Each member of our Executive team is assigned as a mentor for a region to build engagement and focus on local issues.
- We signed up to the Energy Charter National Customer Code for Energy Brokers, Consultants and Retailers, working together with signatories to further the interests of, and deliver value to, large customers.
- We significantly increased our community investment budget to \$1.1M this year and launched our Community Partnerships program sponsoring not-for-profit organisations and local government authorities in the communities we serve.



**Increased our community engagement efforts across all regions**

**We actively contributed to creating the Energy Charter's 'Customer Voice at Board Level' #BetterTogether initiative, developing a toolkit of better practice options for Boards and Directors. The Chair of our PSCC committee is actively involved in the application of the Customer Voice at Board Level resource.** **IAP8** ✓




**\$1.1M** **2021 Community investment budget**



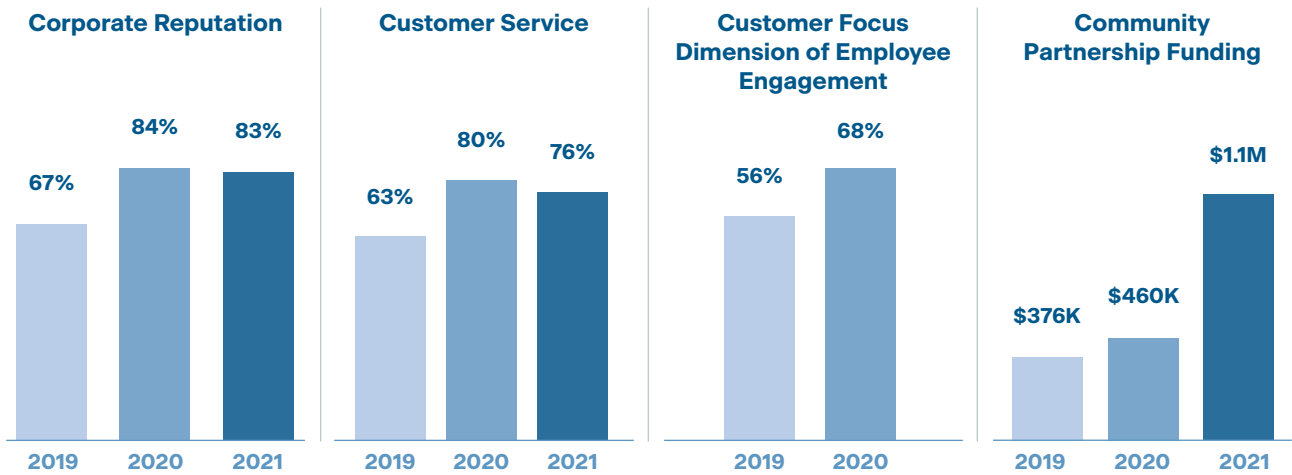
**Using our Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) framework, we are addressing long-term power needs for our service areas and completed community engagement in Exmouth and Leonora to explore ways we can co-create innovative and appropriate energy solutions focused on meeting customer needs. This framework focuses on the energy procurement process, incorporating customer requirements into future energy system design.** **IAP9** ✓ **As a result of the demand from these communities, we are developing solutions incorporating a much higher proportion of renewables.**

- Note Re: IAP9/IAP11 In addition to our engagement with WA Advocacy for Consumer Energy (WAACE), we participate in broad engagement and consultation efforts at the local level, liaising with a variety of stakeholders including Local Government, Chambers of Commerce and non-government organisations (NGO). The vast area we service results in regional differences requiring a tailored approach to the communities we serve.



**12%** uplift in customer-centricity results for employee engagement.

## How we measure outcomes



## Commitments for the future

- Implement a regular and structured roster of face-to-face engagement across all regional and remote towns to ensure customers have a channel to seek information and share their opinions and concerns with us. This will be in place within the year.
- We will roll out our VoC framework, currently in place at Board level, across the organisation to better integrate customer feedback and opportunities for improvement.

## How we're tracking on the promises we made

### ✓ Achieved

Harness customer input and feedback by leveraging the Western Australian Advocates for Consumers of Energy Forum (WAACE).

### ✓ Achieved

The implementation of regular Board reporting on the progress of Horizon Power's customer-centric organisation initiative, including progress against the Energy Charter Maturity Model.

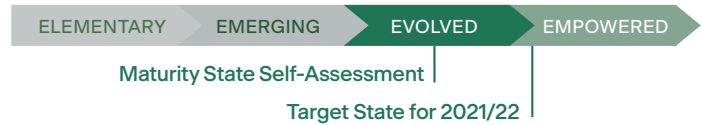
### ✓ Achieved

Implement a Voice of Customer program to better integrate customer feedback and improvement opportunities into operational decision making.

# Principle 2

STATUS: **ON TRACK**

We will improve energy affordability for all customers.



We have a clearly defined strategic goal to reduce customer energy bills, with tariff evolution, energy education and a focus on distributed energy resources (DER) to achieve this outcome.

## Outcomes achieved

- We are on track to deliver an approximate 4% reduction in customer energy bills by the end of the 2021/22 financial year, toward a goal of 10% total reduction by the end of 2025; projects underway to deliver this savings include Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), MyPower tariff, Solar Schools and Smart Streetlights.
- We have actively worked for tariff evolution to address energy affordability, collaborating with customer advocates WA Council of Social Services (WACOSS) and the Financial Counsellors Association (FCA), and EPWA on construction and delivery of pilot demand-based tariffs, focusing on better understanding consumer usage patterns and the desirability of fairer pricing models.
- The WA Government mandated no disconnections within the COVID-19 period to early June 2021. We completely revised our approach to debt collection and customer support during this period. Our "Keeping Connected" campaign allowed for a more supportive environment and the success of this effort was reflected in a significant level of debt reduction for our customers, moving from \$6.6 million for 90-day debt in June 2019 to \$4.3 million in June 2021. No customer in hardship was disconnected for non-payment within the year.
- Our proactive and empathetic approach to debt relief and customer care resulted in a Net Promoter Score of 59 at June 2021, a record for Horizon Power, even after disconnections recommenced at the beginning of June.
- We released the SmartSun summary pilot report that demonstrated how we can minimise energy use in new homes through a combination of rooftop solar, battery storage, energy efficient appliances and energy education to reduce customer energy costs by \$2,500 per household per annum, while maintaining their comfort and amenity.
- Our Onslow trial assisted 272 customers or 46% of the community, to install rooftop solar and battery systems and enable Onslow to run hydrocarbons off during an 80-minute trial.



**4%** Reduction in customer energy bills



**10%** Total reduction by the end of 2025

- In response to WA Local Government Authority (LGA) expressing concerns regarding the affordability of streetlights for its members, we delivered a plan to make energy efficient smart light-emitting diode (LED) streetlights available to LGA's, beginning with installations in Derby.
- We made improvements to customer systems architecture to improve the accuracy of bill estimates and a more thorough picture of hourly energy data in our app.

A significant level of debt reduction for our customers

**\$6.6M** ↓  
**\$4.3M**

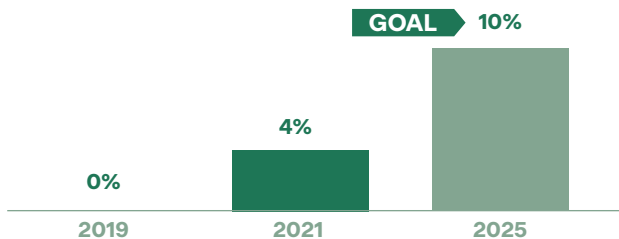


**\$2500**  
Customer energy reduction per household per annum

**46%** Of the Onslow community installed solar and battery systems during our trial

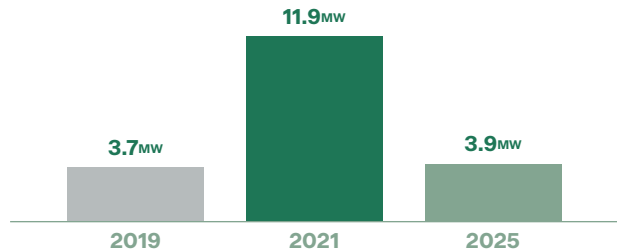
## How we measure outcomes

### Customer Bill Reduction\*



\*target of 10% customer energy bill reduction by 2025

### Additional Customer Rooftop Solar Approved\*



\*Source: Renewables Application Tracker

## Work in progress

- To ensure a reliable energy supply for our customers, we must work within the hosting capacity available within the communities we serve – in most cases, current capacity is severely constrained. This is a crucial barrier for us as customers tell us they see solar as the most feasible method for reducing their energy bills.

Our hosting capacity team has revised calculations for technical limits, allowing us to offer additional hosting capacity across currently constrained towns whilst maintaining stability and reliability of the network. Our customer application journey for renewables applications has been streamlined to improve the experience for customers and solar installers.

All solar applications will now be processed on an equitable basis, with capacity allocations for various customer segments in high-demand towns and overflow capability to remove a customer pain point of needing to resubmit applications.

- Using learnings from SmartSun, Carnarvon and Onslow trials, we will re-evaluate renewable energy limits across our communities and identify ways to remove this constraint and increase rooftop solar access for customers by 2025.
- Alternative tariffs were not implemented; however, product concepts developed through customer co-creation will be developed (see details below).

## Commitments for the future

- We will apply technical learnings and insights from our DER trials and investments in BESS to determine if we can increase hosting capacity limits across our service area in 2021/22.
- We will continue to seek investment in BESS and utilise this to enable more customers to install rooftop solar, either directly or through enabling products.
- We will develop the next generation of the MyPower product, collaborating with customers and stakeholders to develop solutions to support a variety of customer needs. The product design will be completed in the 2021/22 financial year, with product implementation dependent upon regulatory approvals due to the high levels of government subsidies applicable in our service areas.
- We will continue to roll out our Solar Schools program through our 'Renew the Regions' program, with 20+ additional schools set to receive solar installation throughout the coming year.
- We will engage with local governments across WA to develop a plan to deliver energy-efficient LED streetlights from 2021/22 to help reduce local council energy bills; new LED streetlights also improve security on local streets, helping to keep our local communities safe and improve liveability.
- We will commence a three-year program to deliver charging infrastructure to facilitate the take-up of electric vehicles (EV), joining with Synergy and EPWA to build the world's largest EV charging highway.
- We will investigate opportunities to provide access to renewables for those who may not have the upfront capital or appropriate roof space to install their own solar and/or storage solution.

## How we're tracking on the promises we made

### In progress

Expanding opportunities for MyPower and developing alternative tariffs that support different customer lifestyle needs.

### In progress

Providing pre-payment options to customers as an opt-in product (refer to Principle 5).

### In progress

Application of technical learnings and insights from DER trials, and investment in battery solutions, to support additional release of hosting capacity.

### In progress

Improvements to customer systems architecture and data integrity to ensure accuracy of billing and energy management data.

# Principle 3


STATUS: **ON TRACK**

Provide energy safely, sustainably and reliably.



Our ambition of delivering energy solutions for regional growth and vibrant communities is dependent upon our ability to continually evolve our service offering, ensuring we provide a range of energy solutions to meet our customers' needs.

## Outcomes Achieved

- As a Government Trading Enterprise (GTE) we support the Western Australian Climate Policy which identifies many of our goals and projects as key steps in the State's response to climate change. We support the State's aspiration of net zero emissions for WA by 2050, and are working closely with other GTEs, Synergy and Western Power, in collaboration with EPWA's Energy Transformation Task Force (ETTF) and EPWA Consumer Advocate, to enact change to ensure the delivery of secure, reliable, sustainable and affordable electricity for Western Australians. 
- The DER Roadmap, developed by the ETTF and released by the WA Minister for Energy in April 2020, outlines the case for change and actions required to deliver the 2025 vision of 'a future where DER is integral to a safe, reliable and efficient electricity system, and where the full capabilities of DER can provide benefits and value to all customers'.
- To deliver our 2019-24 Corporate Strategy, we are currently addressing many of the 36 recommended DER Actions outlined in the WA Government's Roadmap.
- We completed an assessment of costs and benefits of a program to update or replace pre AS4777:2015 customer rooftop solar inverters to enable greater functionality and participation in DER management programs. In Carnarvon we conducted audits of customer inverter settings and found that less than 5% of audited inverters had correct settings that complied with Australian Standards. Settings were corrected to ensure customers benefited from efficient inverter operation. We intend to continue the inverter auditing process in the future.
- We are improving the safety and reliability of electricity for residents of 13 remote Aboriginal communities across regional WA through the Aboriginal Community Embedded Networks program, standardising the electricity, supply and future operations for these customers; initial work has begun with completion expected in early 2022.
- We extended our footprint of Standalone Power Systems (SPS) which increase reliability in remote communities, and now have 34 SPS units installed.



**We completed two technology trials to test visibility and control of DER:**

- **The Broome SmartSun project used the SwitchDin suite of products to dynamically control solar PV, energy storage, and other home appliances while reducing infrastructure cost in new developments and lowering customer electricity costs without impacting comfort levels.**
- **The Carnarvon DER trials used Reposit Power's Virtual Power Plant (VPP) technology to manage network power quality by orchestrating solar PV and optimising customer batteries in a high-penetration DER environment; analysis of results led to an improved method for calculating hosting capacity and learnings will be used in other towns where we face hosting capacity limits.**

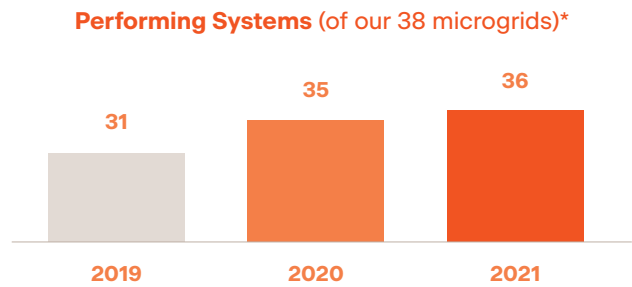


- We are engaged in knowledge-sharing efforts with Synergy, Western Power, Australian Energy Market Operator, CEC and other utilities to ensure critical learnings (specifically related to high-penetration solar, battery storage and inverter interaction with the network) are shared with the appropriate stakeholders and energy sector.
- We created a dedicated safety lead role within our regional-focused stimulus projects to actively engage with customers and elevate the safety culture within Horizon Power.
- We delivered several electrical safety campaigns this year, designed to inform customers by providing safety knowledge and preparedness in the event of an incident, while also safeguarding our electrical infrastructure.



- We launched our three-year Connected Safety, Health and Wellbeing strategy which identifies critical risks across our business, together with the control actions required to help safeguard ourselves and the public.
- We began construction on our Denham Hydrogen Demonstration Plant, Australia's first regional renewable hydrogen facility.
- Our Esperance Power Project (EPP) is helping increase the renewable power generation capability of our network; we are significantly lowering the town's carbon footprint via the installation of two new state-of-the-art wind turbines in the EPP renewables hub. New wind turbines will produce 60% more wind power than the combined output of Esperance's existing wind farms and enable us to reduce emissions by approximately 50% across the region.

## How we measure outcomes



\*Source Asset Management Reports

**1<sup>st</sup>**

**Regional renewable hydrogen facility**



**Review DER load forecasts in all Horizon Power microgrids**



## Work in progress

- Evolve workplace safety practices when working on customer premises, ensuring we engage contractors who are compliant with our Environmental, Health and Safety plan, including self-auditing, third-party auditing and process improvement.
- Our findings from correcting inverter settings in Carnarvon will feed into a technical webinar series for the CEC that will guide regional solar installers to ensure customers receive the full benefit of their solar investment.
- In support of our strategic goal of 'zero refusals when connecting rooftop solar by 2025', we are gradually increasing hosting capacity as we identify and deliver the most viable DER management solutions. We will review DER load forecasts in all Horizon Power microgrids by 31 December 2021.

## Commitments for the future

- We plan to install a further 42 SPS in remote properties across our service areas, increasing our delivery of these renewable energy systems.
- Customers in two of our towns are impacted by power supplies not performing to the required standard. We will improve the reliability of power for the town of Denham by rebuilding a back-up power supply (SPS, control system and switchboard) which we plan to have in place by June 2022. In Lake Argyle, funding has been allocated to address the response time from loss of supply to back-up generation availability, with a solution expected by June 2022.



**42**

**SPS in remote properties across our service areas**

## How we're tracking on the promises we made

**In progress**

**Improve the safety and reliability of electricity for customers in 12 remote communities through working with government to regularise their networks.**

**In progress**

**Evolve workplace safety practices, particularly when working within customers premises.**

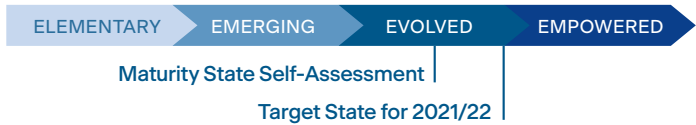
**In progress**

**Continued rollout and evolution of Standalone Power Systems (SPS).**

# Principle 4


STATUS: **ON TRACK**

## Improve the customer experience.



To meet the changing expectations, demands and energy needs of our current and future customer base, we must continually engage with our energy consumers to ensure we deliver positive customer outcomes and remain relevant in today’s evolving consumer market.

### Outcomes Achieved

- Our app enables customers to view their energy usage (24-hour delay) and understand what is driving their energy use. This is used by our customer service team to assist customers to better understand energy usage and high bills. 
- We established a bimonthly customer sentiment tracker and are incorporating the insights gained into the business to inform and guide our decision making. By way of example, customers told us our digital self-service offerings required improvement, particularly during the registration process; a business case has been approved to improve and simplify this process.
- We opened a storefront outreach location in Fitzroy Crossing, offering in-person customer support and service one day per month.
- We implemented a direct debit instalment program to provide customers with a flexible payment option; customers can establish a direct debit instalment amount or direct debit variable monthly payment which acts as an easy ‘set and forget’ payment system. Approximately 8% of customers have adopted direct debit and 1% of customers have established direct debit instalments since implemented last year.
- Our application process for new customer-funded infrastructure projects is now available online, providing an efficient process to submit applications when seeking new connections to our network.
- On occasion we were issuing collection letters after customers had paid as our payments system applied these in a batch process with up to a 24-hour delay. We now offer real-time payments for our digital channels and our “Interactive Voice Response” (IVR) system will move to real time payments in August (addressing a customer pain point).

**We introduced a new power outage feature across our digital channels in September 2020, providing customers with timely access to planned and unplanned power outages. This was developed to address an identified customer pain point of unknown power outages causing significant distress; the feature is accessible via the free Horizon Power app and the company website.**

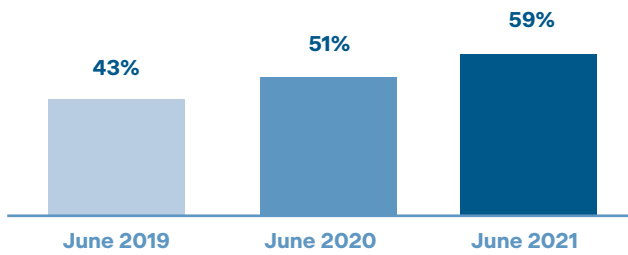


**8%** Of customers have adopted direct debit

**We opened our new Customer Experience Centre in Broome in May, offering an innovative, hands-on, experiential interaction for local customers; to understand how we could improve our retail customer service delivery, we interviewed our customer service employees to gain feedback on service interaction types, physical space and customer needs. Bringing this service home to a regional base creates new jobs in the local community, and provides our customers with face-to-face interaction with individuals who understand the reality of living and working in some of WA’s most remote communities.**

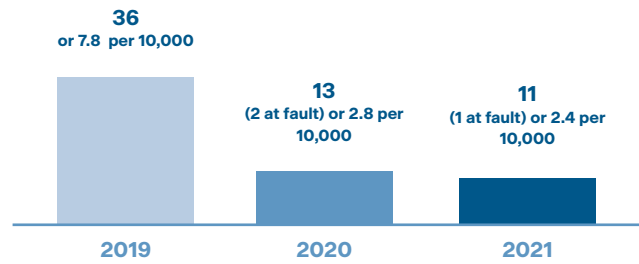
## How we measure outcomes

Net Promoter Score (NPS)\*



\*Source Customer Service Monthly Report

Ombudsman Complaints\*



\*Source Energy Ombudsman and Customer Service Monthly Report

## Work in progress

- We are simplifying and streamlining digital processes and communication for the Horizon Power website, app and MyAccount. The project business case was approved earlier this year, with a progressive implementation throughout 2022 to improve customer experience on the website, with refinements to the app and MyAccount Portal following in 2023.
- In our efforts to continually improve customer experience, we are introducing a new technology this year which aims to increase our percentage of first-call resolution and reduce the need for transferring customer calls.

## Commitments for the future

- By June 2022, local customers will have access to face-to-face support with bill payment and other service issues through regular team member visits to each regional town, based on our learnings from the Fitzroy Crossing storefront we opened this year.
- We will expand our ability to provide local phone-based support by implementing a distributed call centre approach in 2021, ensuring as many calls as possible are serviced locally to provide a personalised service with region specific understanding of customer concerns.
- We will design and implement a customer behavioural framework in preparation for the creation and delivery of new products and services to enable and encourage more efficient energy usage for our customers.
- Through the last half of 2021, we will change payment providers for our real-time pay channels to avoid customers being chased for debt when they have already paid.
- By June 2022 we will improve the customer registration process for our online services like MyAccount and the Horizon Power customer app.
- Horizon Power works closely with the WA Energy Ombudsman to resolve customer complaints. The following information is tracked and advised by the Ombudsman.
  - In 2020/21 only one investigation was required (0.2 per 10,000 customers)
  - In total there were three enquiries, 12 Stage 1 complaints and 11 of these escalated to Stage 2 complaints. For one of these, Horizon Power identified itself as being 'at fault'.

## How we're tracking on the promises we made

### ✓ Achieved

Implement systems to automatically capture customer sentiment and then use this data to identify areas that we need to improve.

Improve information and updates on planned and unplanned outages.

Improve face-to-face service for our customers by establishing the Customer Experience Centre in Broome, and relocating contact centre roles to WA.

### ○ In progress

Make it easier for customers to register for online service through MyAccount and the app.

Simplify and streamline digital processes and communication of information across the website, app and MyAccount.

### ○ In progress

Improve customer experience by introducing new technology to improve first call resolution, and reduce (or eliminate) the need to be transferred.

Find ways to help customers reduce their energy bills.

# Principle 5

STATUS: **ON TRACK**

## Support customers facing vulnerable circumstances.




Providing a range of hardship accommodation measures is a standard tenet of 'business as usual' at Horizon Power. Our aim is to proactively identify and assist customers facing vulnerable circumstances, working to inform and educate our customers to reduce the length and severity of debt accumulation.

### Outcomes achieved

- In consultation with WACOSS, FCA, EPWA and WAACE, we expanded and improved our hardship programs, now working with more than 1,200 families to help reduce energy debt and keep their electricity connected. **IAP7** / **IAP9** / **IAP12**. In light of the WA Government's mandate of no disconnections within the COVID period, we kept all hardship customers connected in 2020/21. **IAP12**
- We are collaborating with EPWA and WACOSS to develop a tailored regional WA Household Energy Efficiency Scheme (HEES) that reflects the specific requirements of our regional customers.
- Our outreach efforts saw us add almost 2,100 concessions, an increase of 4.5%, to our customer accounts, many of whom were on Government benefits for the first time and were unaware they were entitled to concessions on their energy accounts.
- We created two new permanent roles for Customer Relationship Officers in Port Hedland and Broome, who will work directly to support customers facing vulnerable circumstances.
- We implemented a Family and Domestic Violence Policy and have provided 10 customers with a fresh start following family violence incidents, helping them get back on their feet as they return home and attempt to rebuild their lives. **IAP1**
- We worked with Services Australia and organised staff access to the Centrelink Business Portal, which allows us to validate all new concessions and ensure customers receive the maximum benefits for which they are eligible. **IAP3**
- We collaborated with Bloodwood Tree in Port Hedland and Wiluna Community Health Service to provide in-person customer support and educate customers about our prepayment program options. **IAP12** This is the first time this option has been available outside remote Aboriginal Communities.
- We revised our debt collection processes and revised all communications to display an empathetic, supportive tone. Where we once transferred calls to a Hardship or Credit Officer, we now involve a Customer Support Officer. We have also recently commenced in-home visits by a Customer Relationship Officer (ahead of HEES noted above), part of a more supportive approach to customer engagement. **IAP7**

**We developed an algorithm to identify customers who may be encountering difficulty paying their bills, proactively contacting them to see if we could assist and also ensure they receive their full entitlement for concessions. Of the 288 contacted, 160 were assisted with the remainder uncontactable or not responsive.** **IAP1** / **IAP12**



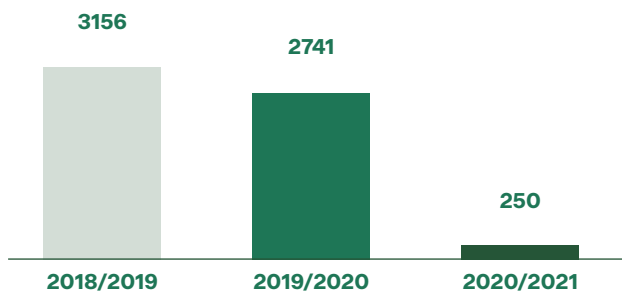
**2,100**  
Concessions

**We actively engaged customers facing hardship who were identified as better off on MyPower pricing. These consumers were encouraged to switch pricing plans and provided with frequent check-ins to ensure they remained 'better off'. If any customer was not 'better off' they were advised. Any customer in hardship was switched back to a standard tariff and refunded the difference between the two tariffs. Now 10% of customers facing hardship (134 of 1,262 customers in hardship) have lower bills as a result of MyPower (noting MyPower is only available in two of our major towns at this stage).** **IAP2**



## How we measure outcomes

### Residential Customer Disconnections for Non-payment\*



\*Source ERA Annual Performance Data CCR40 (excludes prepayment customers)



# 70%

**Target for customers in hardship to remain connected**

## Commitments for the future

- We unequivocally aspire to keep all customers connected. We also recognise that there will be circumstances where customers will be disconnected for non-payment when we cannot contact them. Disconnection acts as a trigger for customers to get in touch which allows us to help, and we can get the power back on quickly, usually within 30 minutes.
- We set an initial target to ensure at least 70% of customers in hardship remain connected, with an aspiration of 100%. IAP12 ✓
- To maximise concessions, we will shortly implement an automated process that checks Centrelink entitlements for all customers and automatically applies the correct benefits.
- We will make our prepayment program available to all residential customers by June 2022. A soft launch of this has already commenced in select towns.
- In partnership with NGO's we will deliver the tailored Hardship Energy Efficiency Scheme (HEES). Home visits will commence in August 2021, working one-on-one with customers in a hardship state to provide a holistic service approach, including seeking energy efficiency improvement and ensuring concessions are maximised and opportunities for debt treatment are considered IAP10 ✓. The HEES program will run over three years.

## How we're tracking on the promises we made

### ✓ Achieved

Continue working with customers affected by COVID-19 or financial hardship, to minimise outstanding debt.

### ✓ Achieved

Help customers avoid large debt accumulation by identifying individuals who may be facing vulnerable circumstances and engaging with them early.

### ✓ Achieved

Continue to improve our empathy and accessibility so customers facing vulnerable circumstances feel comfortable contacting us.

### ✓ Achieved

Develop trials of new hardship models, including debt forgiveness, rewarding demonstrated improved financial behaviours.

Find ways to reduce the number of de-energisations for non-payment.

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