

HAWKE'S BAY POWER CONSUMERS 'TRUST

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Spotlight on contestable services – Submission on TOR

The Hawke's Bay Power Consumers' Trust represents the consumer beneficial owners of Unison Networks Limited, the lines distribution company for all consumers in the Hastings and Napier areas.

Unison also owns and maintains the Rotorua and Taupo electricity lines networks.

The Trust endorses and supports the submissions on the Terms of Reference (TOR) as submitted by the Energy Trusts of New Zealand Inc.

In addition, the Trust wishes to make the following observations in respect of the general matter of emerging contestable services:

What are we doing?

By considering the extent to which distributors participation in the markets is benefitting consumers or hindering competition is important to understand, but do not be swayed by believing distributors alone could influence negative outcomes contrary to consumers' interests. For consumer and community owned distributions companies such as ours, the primary goal is to support the best interests of the consumers, as owners, and also as users.

It never fails to impress upon trusts the enthusiasm displayed at annual meetings when consumers press us for looking after their interests, especially financial and security of supply. Therefore, it is unwise and unbalanced to solely limit the focus of the TOR on distribution providers alone and not apply the same focus on all major parties.

Generators and retailers are key and influential participants in the electricity sector and they should also be a focus in the TOR. Their dominance justifies involvement at no less a level than for distribution companies.

Caring for the consumer and their rights to security of supply at a reasonable cost has always been a key goal of the Commerce Commission and it also remains a focus for the Electricity Commission.

Diana Kirton
Chair
Hawke's Bay Power Consumers' Trust