



Australian Government



Australian
**Small Business and
Family Enterprise**
Ombudsman

11 November 2021

Mr David Hatfield
Director
Competition Exemptions Branch
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
GPO Box 3131
CANBERRA ACT 2601

via email: exemptions@accc.gov.au

Dear Mr Hatfield

Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) – Application for Authorisation AA 1000586

Access to uninterrupted supply of electricity is of critical importance to all Australian small and family businesses. Australian small businesses need to be confident that their electricity needs are met with minimal disruption, so that they can be productive, efficient, and profitable. We are supportive of AEMO's renewal application for relevant industry participants to share information, personnel, and services for a further 12 months, so that they can efficiently allocate resources to best manage the backlog in critical maintenance.


Our Office supports the application and authorisation for the following reasons;

- Efficient management of the maintenance backlog will benefit the Australian economy via limiting power outages, subsequent lost productivity, wastage and commercial disruption;
- Electricity market manipulation or anti-competitive behaviour is effectively mitigated via ACCC oversight;
- The September 2020 AA 1000484 approval did not result in small business concerns; and
- Small business contractors are likely to participate in the supply of maintenance services.

Furthermore, our Office would encourage the power generators and electricity transmission infrastructure businesses to actively engage with relevant small businesses to seek solutions and mutually beneficial outcomes to resolve the maintenance backlog, and to limit possible electricity supply disruptions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Mr Dave Meakin on [REDACTED] or at [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely


[REDACTED]
The Hon. Bruce Billson
Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman

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