

Utility Hardship Forum

Troy Mulder, Retail Operations Manager

18 May 2023

HORIZON
POWER

Acknowledgement of Country

Ngala kaaditj Whadjuk Noongar moort keyen kaadak nidja boodja.

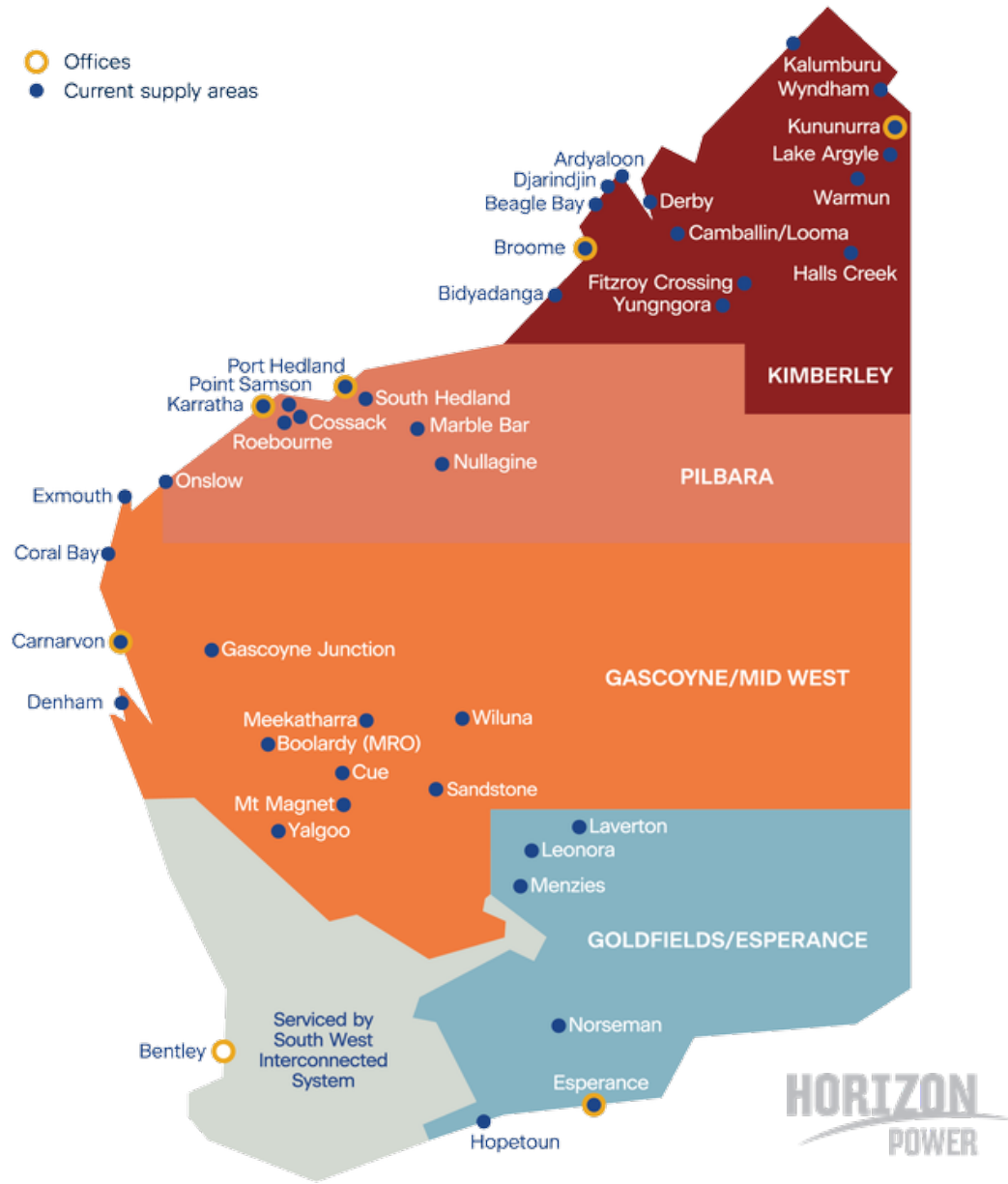
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We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Whadjuk people. We recognise and appreciate a continued connection through stories, traditions and living cultures and commit to building a brighter future together.

OUR SERVICE AREA

- From Kalumburu in the North, to Esperance in the south, our customers live and work across 2.3 million kilometres, making us responsible for delivering energy solutions across the largest geographical catchment of any Australian power provider
- We are a vertically integrated utility - this means we operate across the full energy supply chain with generation, transmission, distribution and retail services.






Service area

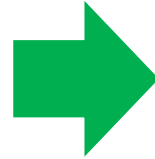
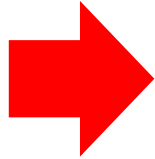


Hardship and Vulnerability Management

Common Referral Pathways and Outcomes

All Customers requiring assistance are case managed on an individual basis by a dedicated Horizon Power Customer Relationship Officer (CRO)

-  Customer engages direct
-  Financial Counsellor/Customer Advocate
-  Warm Transfer from Contact Centre after prelim. assesment
-  Hardship Probability Algorithm*
-  Community Engagement



Customer Relationship Officer (CRO)
Based locally in the regions (Kimberley, Pilbara and Gascoyne/Midwest)

-  Payment Extension/Time to Pay
-  Payment Arrangement
-  HUGS Application
-  Debt Waiver/Debt Matching
-  Prepayment
-  HEES Referral **

*Currently being updated/re-engineered

** In Trial Phase only

INCREASING CUSTOMER AWARENESS AND ASSISTANCE AVAILABILITY



Horizon Power coming to you

Visiting:

When:

Where:

Our team can assist you with the following:

- Billing enquiries
- Horizon Power App
- Move In / Move Out
- Concessions
- Local Projects
- Energy Efficiency Tips
- Updating details
- Community Partnerships

No appointments required, however if you wish to schedule one please contact:

For any urgent account enquires please contact: 1800 267 926
 Prepaid Power: 1800 447 707
 Report a fault or outage: 13 23 51
 Report a faulty streetlight: 1800 264 914



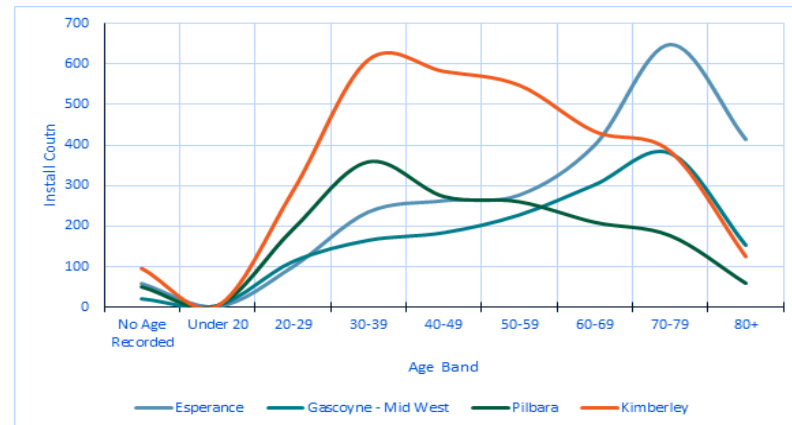
ELECTED

CUSTOMER SERVICE ON THE MOVE

- Well prepared, planned and advertised visits, on a regular schedule to towns and communities throughout our regional service delivery area
- Focused on customer engagement, awareness and education
- Builds valuable insights into our communities and customer groups through meaningful face to face interactions
- Brings customer service to the customer and engages with customers in their environment
- Provides assistance with Billing enquiries, payment difficulties and hardship assistance, Concessions, updating contact details, opening/closing accounts, energy efficiency tips and tools and more

CONCESSION CAMPAIGNS

- Customer Care campaigns that drives awareness of customer eligibility to access concessions, rebates and subsidies
- Contemporary and sensitive without being condescending, avoids using the archetype hardship to engage customers who don't want to be associated with the term hardship



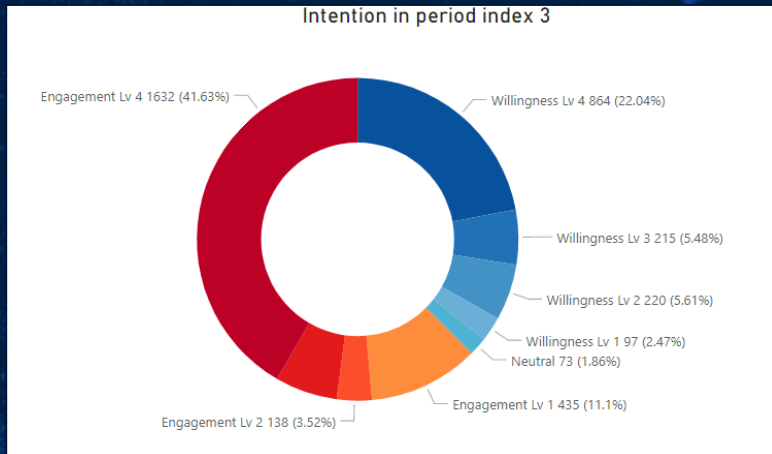
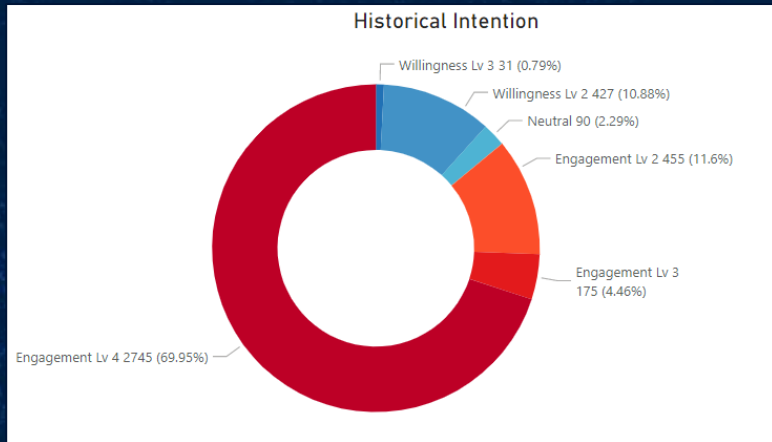
Here's some cool news.
 Save an average \$60 per month on an A2 tariff.²

Am I eligible?
 You live in WA north of the 28th Parallel and have:
 - A WA Reside Card
 - A WA Reside Card and at least one of the following:
 - Unemployment
 - Concessions Card
 - Community Services Health Card

On behalf of the State Government, Horizon Power is pleased to offer eligible customers a rebate to help offset some of the electricity costs associated with running an air conditioner. This rebate is only available to customers living in areas of WA that experience prolonged periods of heat and discomfort. It also applies for a specific number of months each year, depending on where you live. For more information, and to see if you qualify, visit horizonpower.com.au or call 1800 267 926 to register your concession card details.



HARDSHIP PROBABILITY - WILLINGNESS TO MAKE PAYMENT



- Predictive Hardship Algorithm - analysis of payment behaviours and patterns to rate the probability of payment delinquency and default
- Classification rankings identify a customers willingness to make payment either by the due date or during short and/or long term
- Classification derived from both short and long term payment behaviours
- Takes Hardship identification and management away from being reactive and proactively engages with customers who may need assistance
- Currently being updated/redeveloped but will provide CRO's the ability to proactively engage customers who may be susceptible to hardship and payment difficulties to provide early assistance and relief
- Requires sensitivity, and tactful communications to avoid offending when proactively engaging

FAMILY VIOLENCE

1800RESPECT

NATIONAL DOMESTIC FAMILY AND
SEXUAL VIOLENCE COUNSELLING SERVICE

 Lifeline

ECTED

- New provisions introduced to the Code of Conduct for Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers in February 2022
- Systemic and Procedural changes implemented to identify customers experiencing or recovering from FV, and to then provide assistance, eg:
 - ‘Harboured’ Customer flag immediately identifies a vulnerable customer and protects their information
 - Agreed contact methods and arrangements for safe contact
 - Customers will not be required to provide details of their circumstances every time they make contact
 - Disconnection Moratorium for Non Payment for a period of 9 months
 - Other tailored assistance, incl. Hardship Assistance as required
- Customers experiencing FV are case managed by our CRO team
- Expedited applications for HUGS Grants under extenuating circumstances are common
- Debt waivers (either partial or complete are applied to customers experiencing or recovering from FDV
- FV Customers offered information and referral to other support agencies/avenues
- Comprehensive training conducted by Lifeline for all customer-facing staff, contact centre and regional teams

PREPAID POWER



ECTED

- Often seen as a penalty for disadvantaged and vulnerable customers - this is not the case
- Is completely voluntary, and customers may move between post paid and prepaid contracts (conditions do apply)
- Removes bill shock and large accruals of debt
- Enables others in the household to contribute to power costs
- Purchase of Credits is valuable through the Horizon App or at Recharge Operator outlets spread across our service network
- Moving a vulnerable customer from post-paid to pre-paid does not absolve previous debt - > allows reliability of supply whilst under assistance
- Allows Emergency Credit of up to \$30 before disconnection
- Customers on Prepayment afforded Hardship assistance on a case by case basis
- Unfortunately, customers requiring Life Support protections are not eligible for prepaid power



Avoid bill shock

Have greater control of your energy costs by paying for your power in advance, then adjusting your electricity use to fit your budget.



Buy power from your phone

Top up your credit through our app and receive notifications when you are running low on credit.



No fees or lock in contracts

Switch back to other payment methods if you want to - there's no lock-in contract or extra cost to switch services.



Share your power costs

Anybody with your account number can add credit through our app. It's a great way for everyone to contribute.

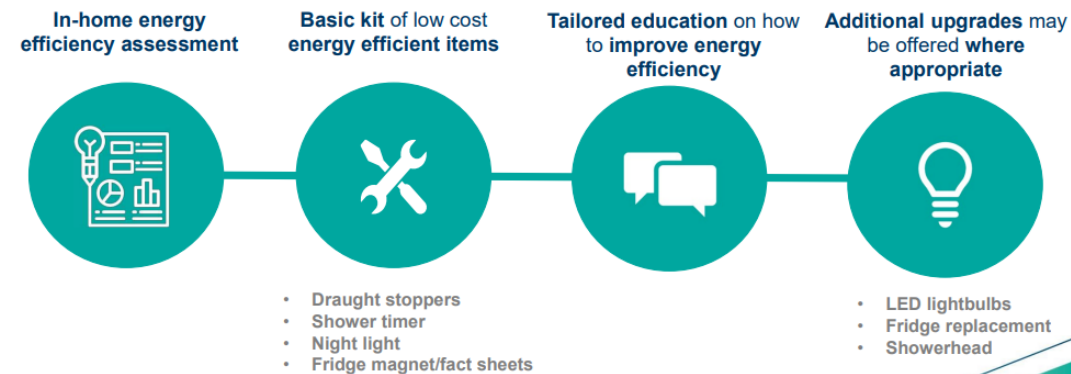
HOUSEHOLD ENERGY EFFICIENCY SCHEME (HEES)



- State Funded program to offer energy efficiency coaching and assistance to vulnerable customers
- Aims to:
 - address underlying factors that contribute to high household energy debt
 - complements other relief measures, such as HUGS Grants, energy Assistance payments, Power Assist and Emergency credit and debt considerations
- Delivered in partnership with EPWA, Synergy and Horizon
- Utilises existing NGO Relationships and capabilities in the regions
- Multi-touch point process, initial assessment followed by ongoing coaching and monitoring of energy behaviours

What it might involve:

Delivery will be led through a partnership between Synergy, Horizon Power and NGOs



Questions?

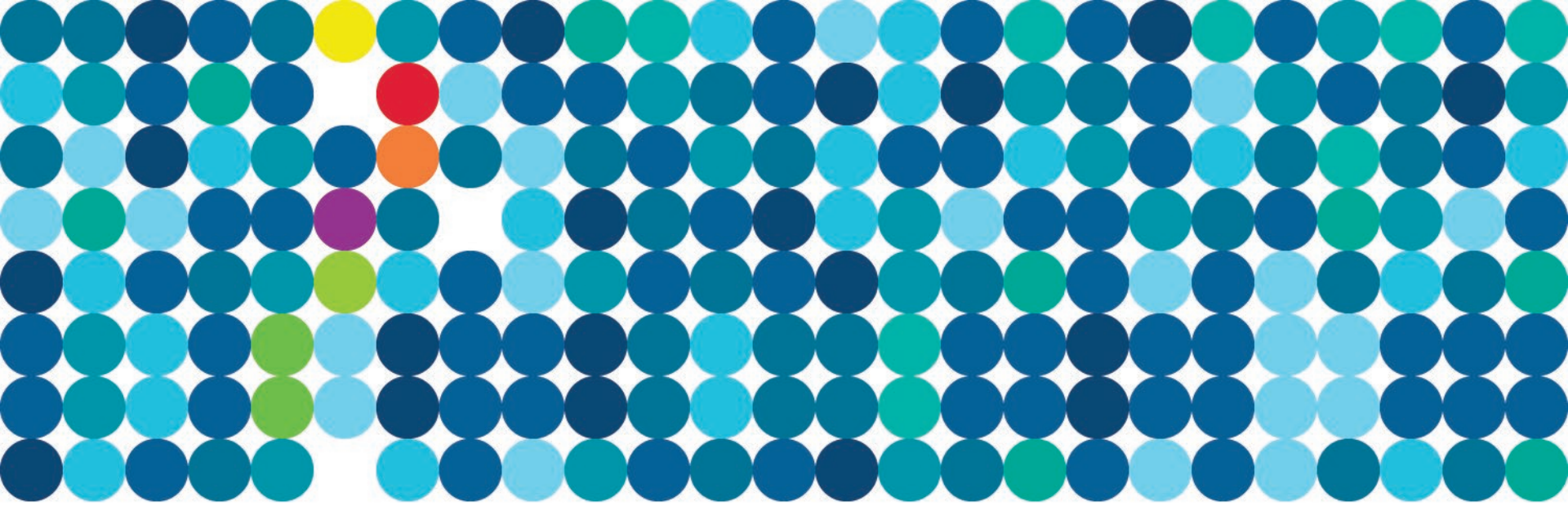
Troy Mulder

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HORIZON
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State Emergency Relief Committee

May 2023



Contents



- Hardship Programs
- Hardship Review
- Outbound Calls
- Family Violence

Water Assist



- Regular payment arrangement where Water Corporation matches customer payments
- Dollar for dollar up to \$150 per month

Must be:

- Owner/occupier
- Assessed as experiencing financial hardship by a registered Financial Counsellor
- Debt between \$750 - \$5,000

Provides an incentive to encourage regular payments.

Start Over



- Regular payment arrangement where customer pays enough to cover current year's charges
- Water Corporation matches payments as a lump sum after Year 1
- After Year 2 – all outstanding debt waived

Must Be:

- Owner/occupier
- Assessed as experiencing financial hardship by a registered Financial Counsellor
- Debt >\$5,000

Provides an incentive to encourage regular payments as previous debt doesn't have to be paid down

Hardship Review



- Review parameters of existing programs
- Take counsel from social sector
- Put more money in vulnerable customers pockets
- Implementation in next 4 or 5 months

Outbound Calls



- 7 CSCs, team leader and analyst
- Call every customer before they're referred to a debt collector
- Aim is to surface hardship and facilitate joining program



Family Violence

- Family Violence Policy
- Managed through Financial Support team
- Confidentiality – system enhancements to facilitate this
- Incidents are increasing and can prove complex due to owner liability

Any
questions?

Utility Hardship Forum

Kleenheat





ABORIGINAL ENGAGEMENT
Relationships, Respect & Opportunities

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on, the Whadjuk Noongar people.

I acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this region.



Team sense of purpose



Safety.

Safety is our first priority.

This means our own safety, as well as the safety of those around us. It also applies to everyone we - or our products - interact and come into contact with. No exceptions.



Integrity.

We do the right thing.

Every time, without fail. Integrity is all about doing what we say we will do, and standing by our word. It also means we treat others equally and with respect.



Collaboration.

Working together works.

When it's a joint effort, everything flows. We collaborate with our own teams, across teams, and outside of these when we need to.



Customer focus.

We make sure they matter most.

Our current and future customers get top billing in everything we set out to do. When we put them first, we're in a great place to maintain our thriving business.



Accountability.

We own our behaviour.

Being accountable means we take ownership of our actions and lead by example. We're clear on expectations of others, and we give and accept feedback so we can keep improving.



Achieving positive outcomes for vulnerable customers by providing exceptional customer service and ongoing support



How we assist our customers



We're committed to providing reliable service and support while looking after the well-being of our customers through difficult times.



- Personalised solutions
- Fresh Start
- Community support

Questions?

Thank you.

Kleenheat



Synergy Financial Hardship

May 2023

Customer Support team – Their role is early intervention for emerging hardship customers and those customers who experience circumstantial or short term hardship. They focus predominantly on reduction of existing debt. Customers are likely to have some ability to manage their average consumption costs.

What do they offer?

- One to one support
- Financial incentives – payment matching, debt waivers
- Referrals to Hardship utility grant scheme (HUGS)
- Promise to pay arrangements, micro payment arrangements, Centrepay
- Bill extensions



Case Management team – their role is to coordinate supports for customers experiencing chronic and extreme hardship, and customers who experience financial hardship due to domestic violence. They focus primarily on education and consumption reduction.

What do they offer?

- One to one support, with financial incentives when needed
- Referrals to HUGS
- Safety and support through the Fresh start program
- Education through the Household energy efficiency scheme (HEES)
- Lower cost energy through Community energy tariff
- Foodbank referrals
- Connection point for community supports



At the start of 2023, the Energy Regulatory Authority (ERA) introduced new measures to support customers experiencing domestic violence.

What has changed?

- Increased protection of information, including the guidelines for recording of information, password protection and additional security measures for contacts on the account
- Safe communication plan
- Option to create a new account that has no connection to the customer's old address or account
- Financial support through debt reduction or waivers
- Removal from disconnection pathways for a minimum of 9 months
- Case management for additional security and support



What is HEES?

HEES is a Government initiative that Synergy and Horizon Power are delivering to Western Australia.

Synergy has partnered with Anglicare to deliver the services, where the goal is to help customers reduce their energy consumption and, therefore, their energy costs/bills.

The services include:

- An energy assessment over the phone with an energy coach
- An energy audit (in person or virtually) or phone coaching
- A customised action plan with recommendations from the energy coach
- An energy efficiency toolkit (based on the customer's needs)
- Follow up calls from the energy coach after 2 and 4 months
- 2 surveys to assess the benefits and customer service



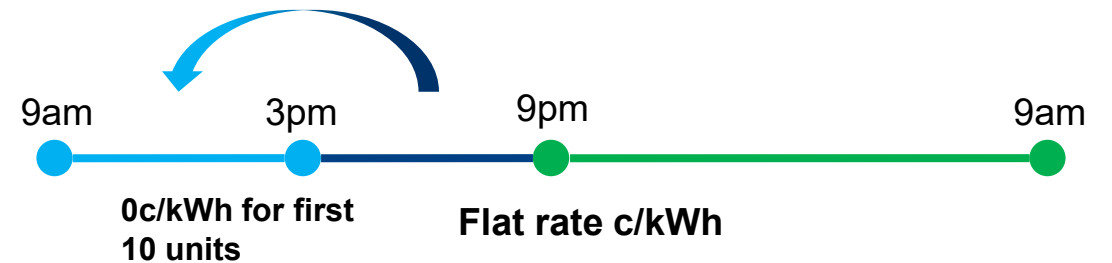
What is Community energy tariff?

Community energy tariff is a new residential tariff offering customers an alternative to solar, with \$0 electricity in the middle of the day to encourage customers to change their energy usage towards the off peak times of the day.

What are the features of this tariff?

- Available for customers on the Case management program
- Customers must be on an AMI meter.
- It is aimed at customers without Solar, Battery or EV at the premise that they are residing.
- This tariff enables customers to make the most of the middle of the day \$0 (capped) variable electricity rates daily. Customers can save on their bill by shifting their energy use towards times when energy is cheaper.
- The tariff has two rates across two-time bands: Off Peak (9am to 3pm), Flat (3pm to 9am). \$1.90 supply charge applies.
- It is aimed at customers without Solar, Battery or EV at the premise that they are residing.

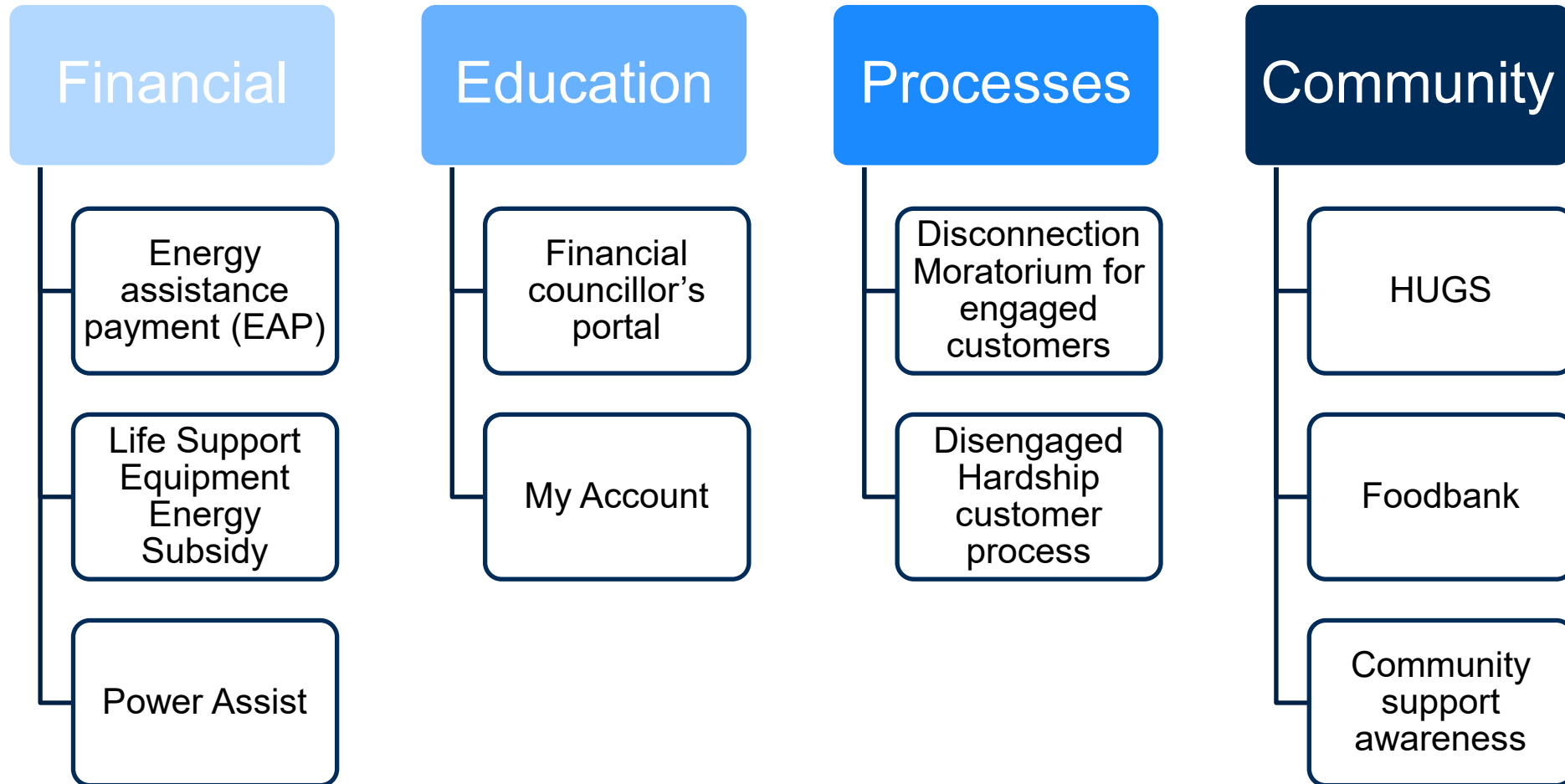
Shift and Save



National energy relief payments

Commonwealth and State governments announced a new national energy relief payment for the 2024/25 financial year.

	Payment Type	Payment Date		
		July	December	
EAP Recipients	National Energy Relief Payment	\$175	\$175	\$350 National Energy Relief Payment to EAP concession card holders \$150 WA Top Up Energy Relief Payment This payment is <u>in addition</u> to the National payment. Note: EAP customers will also receive their normal EAP payment of \$326.32 spread across each billing period for the year.
	WA Top Up Energy Relief Payment	\$75	\$75	
Residential Customers (excluding EAP)	WA Energy Relief Payment	\$200	\$200	\$400 WA Government Energy Relief Payment Note: The previously mentioned Carer and Family Tax benefit A&B customers will be captured under this cohort of customers.
Small Business Customers (L1, R1, C1, D1, K1)	National payment	\$325	\$325	\$650 National Payment to small business customers Eligible includes: L1, R1, C1, D1 & K1



- Questions?



WC Alinta Assist Hardship Program



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About the Team

The Alinta Assist Team is a dedicated team designed to assist our customer experiencing Hardship or in a vulnerable situation. The team currently consist of 10 trained Alinta Assist agents who take all hardship and Vulnerable customer related calls.

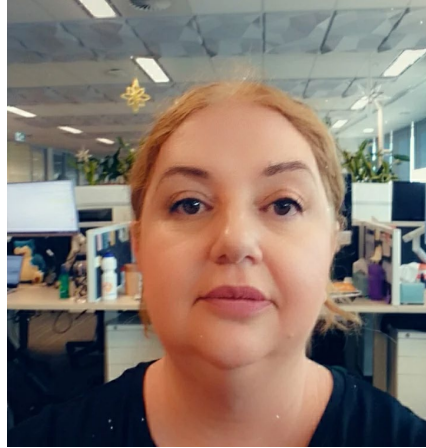
Our Role:

- Assist all vulnerable/hardship customers to help make an affordable payment plan.
- Review customers accounts on a regular basis.
- Educate on gas saving tips and consumption and arrears.
- Refer to the necessary supporting service for further assistance.
- Assess and apply for HUGs.
- Ensure that the customer is on our best available offer.

Meet The Team



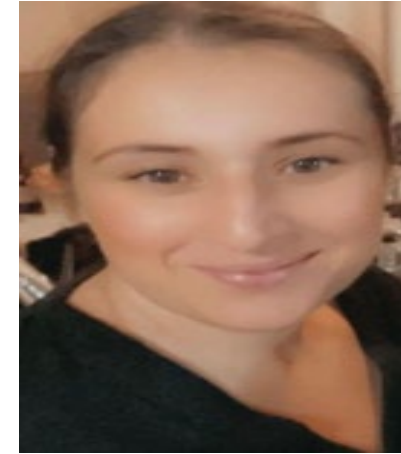
Kathryn – Alinta Assist Specialist



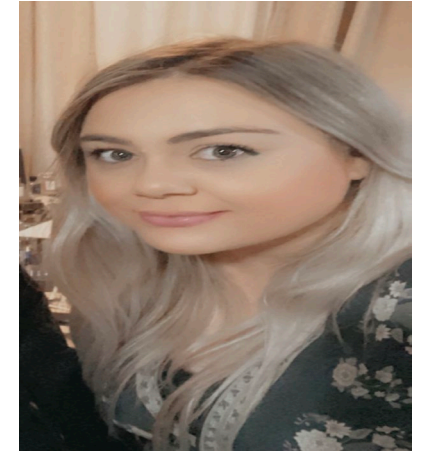
Nicole – Alinta Assist Specialist



Megan – Alinta Assist Specialist



Alev – Alinta Assist Specialist



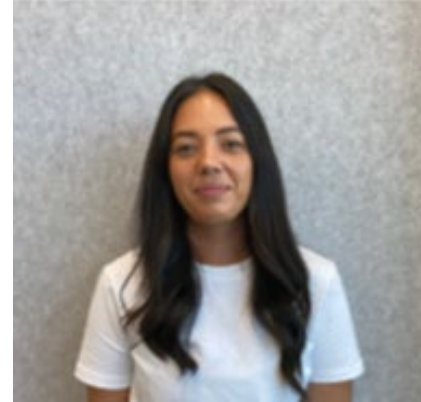
Kayleigh – Alinta Assist Specialist



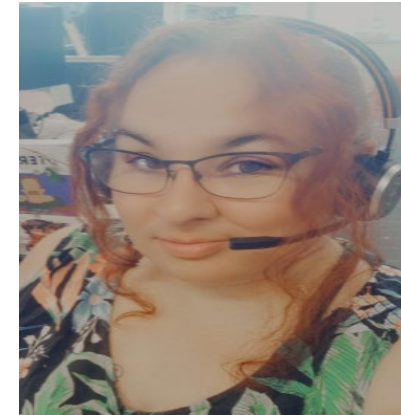
Errol – Alinta Assist Specialist



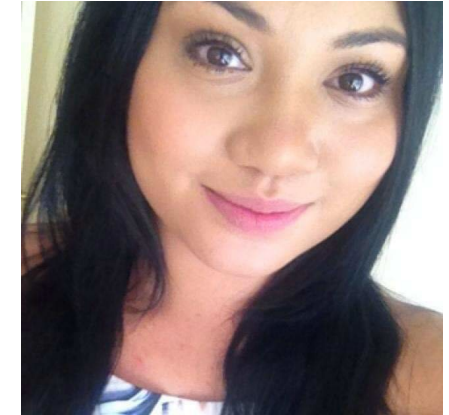
Lekeisha – Alinta Assist Specialist



Ilesha – Alinta Assist Specialist



Teresa – Alinta Assist Specialist



Stacy – Alinta Assist Specialist



Product Offer

Alinta Assist Hardship Campaign

(commenced Feb 2023)



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Summary

“Alinta Energy is mindful of the current cost of living pressures affecting our most vulnerable customers. This is just one component of our broader program of ways we’re working to support customers experiencing financial hardship at this time”

Customers on our Alinta Assist campaign who are on no discount or receiving a discount less than 35% have been offered our best generally available discounted product of 35% off gas usage charges for two years. A letter has been sent out to these customers, encouraging them to call the Alinta Assist team to take up the offer.

What is the offer?

35% off gas usage charges for two years based on our standard residential gas price. This is our best generally available offer.

Can the customer choose a different product?

Although We are offering the Fair Go 35 product offer, customers can choose to take up another offer discounted product if they prefer e.g 25% off gas usage for three years.

How does the customer take up the offer?

A letter has been sent to all eligible customers encouraging them to call the Alinta Assist Team to switch onto the discounted product. This offer is only available over the phone. Our customers also are offered the product when onboarding onto the Alinta assist program.

Is The offer a locked in contract?

This offer is not a locked in contract. Customers, can switch to our best generally available offer at any time.

When will the customer start receiving the discount?

Once the customer has spoken to our Alinta Assist agent and requested/accepted the discounted product, the discount will be backdated from the last read date.

Vulnerable Customer's



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Family Violence Customers

Alinta Energy recognise that our customers Privacy and safety is paramount, and ensures that all steps are taken to make sure that information is not shared with incorrect party's (especially perpetrators of Family Violence.) All customers experiencing Family Violence are handled with sensitivity, caution and empathy.

Actions Alinta takes:

- Training across the contact centre on how to handle an FV call.
- A specialised Trained Team (Alinta Assist) to handle these calls. The customer will be warm transferred to the team from the front line contact centre
- Update and confirm all information on the customers account, including postal address, email, phone numbers, contact people that are listed on the account.
- Ask the customer what the best way to contact them is, should we need to contact them
- Offer a password for further protection
- Refer to 1800 RESPECT and other supporting services that them may require
- A Vulnerable Flag is applied onto the account to alert any Customer service reps right away that this call needs to be treated with sensitivity and to transfer to the Alinta Assist team
- Assess eligibility for an extraordinary circumstance hugs grant and review other support we may have to offer.

Welcome Pack



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Welcome Packs

As part of our new initiatives that we are working on we are currently producing a welcome pack. This pack will be sent to all customers who onboard to our Alinta Assist Hardship Program.

The pack will include the following

- Expectations on remaining on the program
- Energy saving Brochure
- Grants and Schemes
- Confirmation of the payment plan
- Contact details for Alinta Assist
- Hardship Policy and where it is available

Quarterly Review



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Quarterly Review

All customers on the Alinta Assist Program will be part of the regular Quarterly Review process.

As part of onboarding to the Alinta Assist program, The customer will be set on the quarterly reviews for every 90 days.

During the quarterly review discussion, the Alinta Assist representative will discuss

- Consumption and Arrears
- Gas saving Tips
- HUGs eligibility
- Check that the customer is on the best available product offer
- Changes in circumstances
- Referrals to supporting services
- Payment plan review

Pilot Payment Matching scheme



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Pilot Payment Matching Scheme

Under development

What?

- Trial a payment incentive to increased customer engagement on the Alinta Assist Program (Proof of concept), to be reviewed six months from start date
- Match dollar for dollar payments for customer enrolled on to the Scheme

Why?

- Encourage a consistent internal process to ensure customer engagement
- Support our customers to adhere to their payment arrangement
 - Reducing total debt
 - Increasing completion of the Alinta Assist Program
- Drive an increase in dollar value of payments to be meeting consumption
 - Changing customer behavior
- Provide our customers a 'helping hand' in times when they need support and advice on how to best manage their energy consumption and bills

Guidelines

- The Customer must be covering at least consumption to qualify.
- Customer will be removed from the incentive once they have completed or been terminated from the Alinta Assist Program.
- HUGs must be applied when eligible.
- Existing Alinta Assist customer only.

Contact Details and Other Information

- Alinta Assist Hardship Team : 1300 920 557
- Alinta Assist Email : wc.hardship@alintaenergy.com.au
- Hardship and FV policy : www.alintaenergy.com.au

Thank you