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Australian Energy Market Operator application for authorisation AA1000484— interim authorisation decision and interested party consultation

The Australian Energy Council (the AEC) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission regarding the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) application for authorisation (the Authorisation).

The AEC is the industry body representing 24 electricity and downstream natural gas businesses operating in the competitive wholesale and retail energy markets. These businesses collectively generate the majority of electricity in Australia and sell gas and electricity to over 10 million homes and businesses. These businesses are expected to be

The AEC supports AEMO's application, and considers that it will enable AEMO and industry participants to effectively and efficiently deliver reliable supply to Australian households and businesses throughout this pandemic.

Importantly, the AEMO application is expressly limited to ensuring safe and reliable energy supply during the COVID-19 crisis. The AEC notes that since the Interim Authorisation was granted on 3 April (and amended on 17 April), AEMO has reported minimal, if any, material contracts, arrangements or understandings between industry participants have taken place. This is not surprising, given the success of Australian efforts to flatten the curve, and decrease the immediate critical health risks experienced in other countries. However, the mere presence of an authorisation of this nature should not unduly impact the competitive operation of the electricity market in the long term, and thus is unlikely to result in net public detriments.

On the other hand, if circumstances change in the coming months, and the health impact of COVID-19 again reaches crisis point, the impact of having an authorisation such as this in place will be immeasurable, and can only result in an increase in benefits to consumers. For this reason the AEC considers the ACCC should grant an authorisation to the AEMO mirroring the conduct described in the interim authorisation of 17 April 2020 for a period of 12 months.

For any questions about our submission please contact me by email at [REDACTED]
or on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



Ben Barnes
Director, Retail Policy