



Press release

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Retailers welcome EPR focus on customers

The Electricity Retailers' Association is looking forward to working with the Government to ensure customers continue to enjoy the benefits of a world-class competitive electricity system, ERANZ Chief Executive Cameron Burrows says.

"The review shows the electricity sector is delivering for Kiwis. Retail competition between 40 power companies is driving innovation and keeping prices down. The annual average power bill is down \$120 since 2015, we have the 12th cheapest electricity in the OECD, and customer switching is at the highest level in eight years," Mr Burrows says.

"As a sector we're always looking to improve—that's why ERANZ supports the majority of the recommendations. We look forward to working with the Government, the Electricity Authority, and others to further develop the detail of the changes, driving outcomes for consumers while mitigating any unintended consequences.

"It is positive that many of the energy hardship changes build on existing work being progressed by the sector, including mandating the existing voluntary guidelines for medically dependent customers and building on ERANZ's existing cross-sector vulnerable consumer working group.

"It was particularly pleasing to see the Review highlight the benefits of [EnergyMate](#)—a collaboration between power companies, lines companies, the Government, and community groups delivering in-home coaching for families struggling to pay their power bills.

"Some whānau can struggle to afford to heat their home in winter because of poorly insulated housing, low incomes, and a lack of energy literacy. We're committed to helping ensure all Kiwis to live in warm, dry homes with affordable energy costs—and will continue to work with the Government to progress that."

"ERANZ supports moves to strengthen powerswitch.org.nz and promote it to consumers. Some families can save \$200 by comparing power plans. However, we're keen to see more details of the proposed government-backed switching trial, as it potentially represents a significant intervention in a competitive market.

"It is important that people choose plans for themselves rather than having it done for them. For some Kiwis, factors like customer service levels, bundling with other services, and payment options which can help avoid high bills in winter can be just as important as price.

"Competition is driving greater choice for customers, and over half of all households check they're on the right plan each year. Over 440,000 Kiwis switched retailers in the last 12 months. 165,000 households switch plans within their existing retailer each year, and a further 610,000 compare plans but choose not to switch.

"Other decisions ERANZ supports include the removal of the low fixed charge regulations which penalise many large, poor households, the creation of a consumer advisory council, and changes that will enhance the electricity sector's role in supporting a low-carbon future.

"The Electricity Price Review was a useful process. The electricity sector is performing well, but this is a good opportunity to look at what we can do to improve and continue to deliver robust, reliable, and affordable electricity for New Zealanders."

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About ERANZ

The Electricity Retailers' Association of New Zealand (ERANZ) represents companies that sell electricity to Kiwi households and businesses. Our members supply 92% of New Zealand's electricity to Kiwis.

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