



## **Press Release**

**18 November 2016**

### **Electricity retailers want robust debate around emerging technology**

Regulators must tread carefully around emerging technologies in the energy sector or they will risk blunting the huge benefits that could be available to customers, an Electricity Retailers Association (ERANZ) event was told last night [note: Thursday].

ERANZ Independent Chair Jennie Langley told a stakeholder event in Wellington, which was attended by Energy Minister Simon Bridges, that technology was changing the face of the electricity market, and the customer must be put at the centre in order to truly benefit.

“The retail sector strongly believes that the opportunities for the use of emerging technologies should develop in a competitive environment.

“We encourage the regulatory bodies – the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the Electricity Authority, and the Commerce Commission – to continue to review the regulatory framework or they will risk blunting the benefits from smart appliances, solar panels, storage batteries and smart meters that could be available to customers.”

Mrs Langley said retailers were not only committed to safety and reliability of supply, but also to the ongoing need for innovation and being able to provide options for their customers.

“This shapes the focus for ERANZ. It determines our active participation in resource-intensive submissions to ensure the retailers’ views are heard on those key issues that have impact on the success of our changing sector, including the interests of customers.

“Retailers want to engage in robust, considered debate and are looking for pragmatic ways to be part of the solution - on emerging technology such as electric vehicles, on the remarkable renewables, and on a more effective electricity system overall.

“We are in this industry because we believe in its importance and in its future. It’s a tough environment, it’s facing disruption and mounting challenges, but there are exciting opportunities that demand new ways of thinking and operating.

“We look forward to collectively making sustained progress from which everyone will benefit.”

#### **About ERANZ**

The Electricity Retailers Association of New Zealand was established in August 2015 to represent the electricity retail industry on important sector-wide issues such as delivering value to stakeholders and

consumers, and supporting the continued development of an open, competitive, sustainable and effective electricity market.

**For further information, contact Brent Webling on 021 821 383 or email [media@eranz.org.nz](mailto:media@eranz.org.nz)**