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**Via email**

**Re: Easy and Transparent Trading Consultation Paper**

Jemena Gas Networks (NSW) Limited (**JGN**) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Easy and Transparent Trading Consultation Paper (consultation paper).

JGN is the natural gas distributor for 1.3 million households and businesses across NSW. We are also responsible for reading gas meters and providing that gas meter data to NSW gas retailers for customer billing.

The NSW Government is interested in hearing from stakeholders regarding measures that can increase transparency and consumer choice to drive efficient markets and promote economic prosperity. In this context the consultation paper raises particular obligations on strata lots regarding how they interact with energy companies to ultimately provide a better customer experience and promote choice for residents.

While we do not wish to comment on this recommendation directly, we would like to take this opportunity to raise an initiative that would both:

- reduce the administrative burden on building managers in dealing with utilities (including JGN) to access common areas for meter reading;
- improve the energy market experience for residents in strata units in related to reducing the incidence of estimated gas bills (and potentially also estimated electricity bills).

Currently in NSW (but unlike in Victoria) building managers have different security arrangements across energy and water utilities for access to common areas. This means that each utility often needs separate arrangements with the building manager for these areas. This results in the higher than necessary occurrence of the utility needing to contact the building manager for access to read meters, and where this is not possible, estimated meter reads and resulting resident frustration can result.

Our recommendation is that new strata buildings have a unified approach to working with utility providers and also ensure a common utility abloy lock is applied to all

rooms where utility meters are held. This will allow meter readers to access with one key. This has been rolled out in Victoria in recent years and, in our experience as an electricity distributor in that State, it has reduced administrative burden on all parties and improved customer experience.

If you wish to discuss this mission further please contact Energy Policy Manager

Your sincerely

Ian Israelsohn  
General Manager Policy and External Affairs