



16 April 2013

Electricity Authority
Level 7, ASB Bank Tower
2 Hunter Street
WELLINGTON

Via email: submissions@ea.govt.nz

Dear Authority

Review of advisory group administrative arrangements

Contact is pleased to provide feedback on this Consultation Paper.

1. What is your view of the effectiveness of the current advisory group model?

Contact supports the use of advisory groups (groups) by the Electricity Authority and considers the current arrangement to be generally effective.

2. Do you agree the process for agreeing work plans between the Authority and advisory groups does not need refinement?

Contact agrees that the process is generally working well. However, Contact remains concerned at the number of projects being undertaken by the Wholesale Advisory Group (WAG).

3. Do you agree the range of skills and experience on advisory groups does not need to be broadened?

In our experience the groups generally have a good mix of skills. However, we feel the Retail Advisory Group (RAG) could benefit from the inclusion of someone with wholesale market experience (and vice versa with the WAG) as the markets are integrally linked. One way of addressing this would be for a member of the WAG to attend the RAG (and vice versa).

4. Do you agree the sizes of the advisory groups do not need to be increased?

Generally yes, but subject to our response to question three.

5. Do you agree with the Authority's proposed amendments regarding members' terms of appointment

Yes. In Contact's view the proposed change is sensible.

6. Do you agree it is not necessary to specify how many Authority staff should be present at each advisory group meeting?

Yes, provided the Chair retains the ability to discuss and determine with Authority staff ahead of each meeting, who from the Authority should attend the meeting.

7. Do you agree with the Authority's proposed amendment regarding the publication of meeting papers?

No. In the interests of transparency, papers should be made available on the Authority's website at the same time they are provided to advisory group members. We do not agree with the reasons given for withholding them.

8 Do you consider any other changes are required to improve the effectiveness of the advisory group?

In our view a reduced work programme would assist the effectiveness of advisory groups.

Additionally, when considering a party for membership of an advisory group we would encourage the Authority to focus on the skills of nominees, rather than their title or tier level.

Yours sincerely



Louise Griffin
Regulatory Affairs Advisor