

7 December 2022

s9(2)(a)

By email: s9(2)(a)

Dear s9(2)(a)

Thank you for your request, received on 17 November 2022, which “seeks to gauge the extent of the Electricity Authority’s engagement with lobbyists and applies to the following firms:

- *Capital Government Relations*
- *Thompson Lewis*
- *Shearson Willis*
- *Draper Cormack*
- *Saunders Unsworth*
- *Cosgrove & Partners Ltd*
- *Barton Deakin*
- *Hawker Britton*
- *Anacta Consulting”*

You have requested the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *For each of the full calendar years 2020, 2021 and 2022 (until the date of this email) please provide the following information:*
  - *All communications, including emails and correspondence, exchanged with representatives of these lobbying firms*
  - *The amount of money paid to each firm in each year*
  - *The number of meetings, listed by date, between a member of your organisation and any representative of the lobbying firms listed*
- *I also request the following documents that the listed lobbying firms have provided to your organisation for the 2020, 2021 and 2022 years:*
  - *All reports, submissions, talking points, advice, memos, briefings, media training materials, preparation material for select committees, crisis management advice, strategic business advice and analysis, advice on regulatory and legislative decisions and political intelligence including information, biographies and profiles of Ministers, MPs and members of the public service.”*

The Electricity Authority (Authority) has identified 18 documents within scope of your request. These are email correspondence, a list of meetings, and some documents shared between Authority staff and Capital Government Relations in their role of providing communications services to the Consumer Advocacy Council rather than as lobbyists. These documents are attached to this email.

Some of the information is being withheld under section 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons.

The remaining documents shared as attachments between Authority staff and Capital Government Relations are already publicly available:

- [Timeline-wholesale-market-review.pdf \(ea.govt.nz\)](#)
- [Factsheet-wholesale-market-review.pdf \(ea.govt.nz\)](#)

- [Pay gap survey results Capital NZ \(cac.org.nz\)](https://www.cac.org.nz)

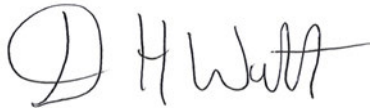
The Authority has not engaged with any of the other firms listed above during the specified timeframe whether in a lobbying capacity or otherwise.

I am satisfied, in terms of section 9(1) of the Act, that the need to withhold the information referred to above is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact us by emailing [oiia@ea.govt.nz](mailto:oiia@ea.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D H Watt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "D".

Doug Watt  
**GM Legal, Monitoring and Compliance (Acting)**

Meetings with Government Capital Relations 2022.

EA Principal Communications Advisor: Sean Martin

Met with:

Capital Government Relations senior consultant (acting in his position as communications consultant for the Consumer Advocacy Council)

Thursday 8 August 2022

Thursday 17 November 2022

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

**From:** Sean Martin  
**To:** s9(2)(a); Sean Martin  
**Subject:** CAC coffee catch-up

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Microsoft Teams meeting

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Click here to join the meeting <[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting\\_Yjk4NjEwZGUtZWVhMi00MTkxLTk0MjktZjRmMmM4OThhY2Ey%40thread v2/0?context=%7b%22tid%22%3a%2201ce6efc-7935-414f-b831-2b1d356f92e4%22%2c%22oid%22%3a%22b9f01316-47d9-4b4e-8449-c5cec9487fb7%22%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_Yjk4NjEwZGUtZWVhMi00MTkxLTk0MjktZjRmMmM4OThhY2Ey%40thread%2F0?context=%7b%22tid%22%3a%2201ce6efc-7935-414f-b831-2b1d356f92e4%22%2c%22oid%22%3a%22b9f01316-47d9-4b4e-8449-c5cec9487fb7%22%7d)>

Or join by entering a meeting ID  
Meeting ID: 438 612 540 710  
Passcode: sp6bkb

Or call in (audio only)

+64 4-886 4873,,130135921# <tel:+6448864873,,130135921#> New Zealand, Wellington

Phone Conference ID: 130 135 921#

Find a local number <<https://dialin.teams.microsoft.com/f2dce344-d6c4-4f2d-a6ba-b979e5f3459f?id=130135921>> | Reset PIN <<https://dialin.teams.microsoft.com/usp/pstnconferencing>>

Learn More <<https://aka.ms/JoinTeamsMeeting>> | Meeting options <[https://teams.microsoft.com/meetingOptions/?organizerId=b9f01316-47d9-4b4e-8449-c5cec9487fb7&tenantId=01ce6efc-7935-414f-b831-2b1d356f92e4&threadId=19\\_meeting\\_Yjk4NjEwZGUtZWVhMi00MTkxLTk0MjktZjRmMmM4OThhY2Ey%40thread v2&messageId=0&language=en-US](https://teams.microsoft.com/meetingOptions/?organizerId=b9f01316-47d9-4b4e-8449-c5cec9487fb7&tenantId=01ce6efc-7935-414f-b831-2b1d356f92e4&threadId=19_meeting_Yjk4NjEwZGUtZWVhMi00MTkxLTk0MjktZjRmMmM4OThhY2Ey%40thread%2F0?context=%7b%22tid%22%3a%2201ce6efc-7935-414f-b831-2b1d356f92e4%22%2c%22oid%22%3a%22b9f01316-47d9-4b4e-8449-c5cec9487fb7%22%7d)>

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

**From:** Sean Martin  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** Coffee with EA/CAC

---

Hi s9(2)(a)

How does this work for you tomorrow for a coffee?

Old Bank suit?

Cheers

Sean

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Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

Click here to join the meeting <[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting\\_MGQxZjEyYjctOTIINC00NzI0LWFkZWMtZWwNTThhZTAzOWNh%40thread%2F0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2201ce6efc-7935-414f-b831-2b1d356f92e4%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22b9f01316-47d9-4b4e-8449-c5cec9487fb7%22%7d%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MGQxZjEyYjctOTIINC00NzI0LWFkZWMtZWwNTThhZTAzOWNh%40thread%2F0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2201ce6efc-7935-414f-b831-2b1d356f92e4%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22b9f01316-47d9-4b4e-8449-c5cec9487fb7%22%7d%7d)>

Meeting ID: 415 480 658 65  
Passcode: qgQSsz

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Released under the Official Information Act 1982

**From:** [Sean Martin](#)  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Introduction/connection  
**Date:** Thursday, 28 July 2022 12:23:00 pm  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.gif](#)  
[image004.jpg](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)

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Yep, we're in what's referred to by some as Darth Vader's pencil case.

Sounds good – Mojo Old Bank works for me – I'll follow-up with a meeting invite.

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**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 28 July 2022 12:20 pm  
**To:** Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** RE: Introduction/connection

Great, how about a 930 coffee on the Thursday? You're in the Aeon black box right? Happy to come closer to you if you like. Mojo Old Bank?

---

**From:** Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 28 July 2022 12:13 pm  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Introduction/connection

Hi s9(2)(a)

How are you placed early next week to catch-up re:CAC

Monday morning is looking free at this stage and so is Tuesday arvo from 2pm. Failing that, Thursday is also good for me.

Let me know what suits.

Cheers  
Sean

---

**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 21 July 2022 3:59 pm  
**To:** Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** RE: Introduction/connection

Great, let's stay in touch and meet when you can over the next month.

The members have been confirmed, just awaiting the announcement to go live any day now I

hope.

Cheers

s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Thursday, 21 July 2022 3:49 pm

**To:** s9(2)(a)

**Subject:** RE: Introduction/connection

Hi s9(2)(a)

Thanks for getting in touch.

I know a fair bit about the CAC from my time at MBIE and a colleague there gave me a heads-up that the members of the council have been appointed and will be announced shortly – I understood it was going to be sometime this week.

Will be keen to have a chat in the coming weeks – our CE has just scheduled quarterly meetings with Deborah – the first of which is due on 22 August so would be keen to catch up before then.

And yes, there is the shared NZR connection – NZ is wonderfully small in that regard!

Cheers



**Sean Martin**

Principal Communications and Engagement Advisor

Mob: s9(2)(a)

**Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko**

Level 7, AON Centre

1 Willis Street

Wellington 6011

New Zealand

[www.ea.govt.nz](http://www.ea.govt.nz)



---

**From:** s9(2)(a)

**Sent:** Thursday, 21 July 2022 2:37 pm

**To:** s9(2)(a) Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** RE: Introduction/connection

Thanks s9(2)(a) and hi Sean, and welcome aboard the EA.

I'm providing comms support for the Consumer Advocacy Council as it gets underway.

Not sure how familiar you are with the CAC – more details at [www.cac.org.nz](http://www.cac.org.nz)

The council is the new advocacy body for residential and small business consumers and is officially launched by Minister Clark on 3 August. Very simply, our role is to be a strong voice for the concerns of consumers who often struggle to be heard in the marketplace.

The chair is Deborah Hart and the remaining members of the council have just been appointed.

Anyway, it may be good to have a chat over coffee at some point when your legs are firmly under the desk at the authority. We seem to have some shared rugby history too I gather, I'm sure we won't be short of conversation!

Look forward to hearing back.

Ngā mihi

**s9(2)(a)**

Senior Consultant

Capital GR

**s9(2)(a)**

[capitalnz.com](http://capitalnz.com)

Level 4, Civic Assurance House

116 Lambton Quay

Wellington, New Zealand



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**From:** **s9(2)(a)**

**Sent:** Thursday, 21 July 2022 2:30 pm

**To:** Sean Martin <[sean.martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:sean.martin@ea.govt.nz)>; **s9(2)(a)**

**Subject:** Introduction/connection

Hi Sean

Hope this finds you well. I am in windy Welly so trust you are trying to stay WARM!!

I just wanted to introduce and connect you with an old comms colleague/mate (and another former NZ Rugby peep), **s9(2)(a)**, who is also doing a bit of work around the energy sector.

Will leave you two to get acquainted.



And will reach out and try and arrange a coffee next time I'm down here Sean.

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



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**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**To:** Sean Martin  
**Subject:** FW: Aurora Energy must do better to avoid power outages says Consumer Advocacy Council [UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Date:** Thursday, 28 July 2022 1:28:10 pm

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FYI

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**From:** InfoCAC <info@cac.org.nz>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 28 July 2022 1:16 pm  
**To:** InfoCAC <info@cac.org.nz>  
**Cc:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** Aurora Energy must do better to avoid power outages says Consumer Advocacy Council [UNCLASSIFIED]

Media release – 28 July 2022

## **Aurora Energy must do better to avoid power outages says Consumer Advocacy Council**

The latest series of power outages in Dunedin has prompted the Consumer Advocacy Council to issue a “please explain” to network company Aurora Energy.

“We are very disappointed to hear that consumers in central Dunedin have had to endure power outages on winter evenings, some lasting several hours,” said Consumer Advocacy Council Chair Deborah Hart.

The [outages](#) appear to have been caused by demand rising to take advantage of free power hours offered by retailers

“Consumers should be able to take advantage of free power offers safe in the knowledge that the electricity will be supplied. They shouldn’t be blamed when the power goes off.

“This is not only inconvenient, disrupting meals and study for some, it’s also a health issue - no-one should have to be sitting in a cold, unheated home in the depths of winter.

“It’s Aurora’s job to manage their network, know the load on their transformers and supply electricity. Given the number of times there have been outages across its network, Aurora needs to do better and should have a mitigation plan that puts the needs of its 92,000 customers for a reliable supply at its heart.

“We will be writing to Aurora to understand why this is happening and asking what it intends to do to ensure consumers’ needs for consistent and reliable supply are met.

“Consumers need to be able to rely on electricity supply and the demands are only going to grow as we experience more extreme climate events and as more households charge electric vehicles. Networks should be preparing for increased network loading or working on alternatives to manage increased demand,” said

Deborah Hart.

Contact:

s9(2)(a)

### [The Consumer Advocacy Council](#)

The Consumer Advocacy Council is the independent advocate for residential and small business electricity consumers in Aotearoa New Zealand. It aims to protect the interests of some five million residential consumers and half a million small businesses in relation to electricity. The council was established last year following a recommendation from the 2018/19 Electricity Pricing Review which found that small electricity consumers were struggling to be heard by the electricity sector. Our aim is to be a strong voice for small consumers by providing evidence-based advocacy on policy and regulatory consultations, and in decision-making processes.

[www.govt.nz](http://www.govt.nz) - your guide to finding and using New Zealand government services

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**From:** [Sean Martin](#)  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Media monitoring - Fuseworks  
**Date:** Friday, 5 August 2022 1:48:00 pm  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.gif](#)  
[image004.jpg](#)  
[image005.png](#)

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Hi s9(2)(a)

Can you flick me Kirsty's contact details – have had a hunt here but don't seem to have them

Cheers  
Sean

---

**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Friday, 5 August 2022 12:11 pm  
**To:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: Media monitoring - Fuseworks

Sean

We are doing this! Are you able to email Kirsty please re the keywords, that would be much appreciated.

Cheers  
Mike

---

**From:** Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 4 August 2022 2:23 pm  
**To:** s9(2)(a) >  
**Subject:** RE: Media monitoring - Fuseworks

Hi s9(2)(a)

Yeah, good to chat.

I find Fuseworks good – we had iSentia at MBIE and they were okay but think FW is better.

I'll be happy to email Kirsty our search key words to help speed up the process.

Cheers

**Sean Martin**  
Principal Communications and Engagement Advisor

Mob: s9(2)(a)

**Electricity Authority - Te Mana Hiko**

Level 7, AON Centre

1 Willis Street

Wellington 6011

New Zealand

[www.ea.govt.nz](http://www.ea.govt.nz)



---

**From:** s9(2)(a)

**Sent:** Thursday, 4 August 2022 1:57 pm

**To:** Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Media monitoring - Fuseworks

Sean

Good to catch up, forgot to talk about media monitoring though.

I'm close to signing with Fuseworks but just wanted to check if you are happy with the service?

And if we do choose them, would you be ok to email Kirsty at Fuseworks for permission to share your key word items.

We could then adapt if need be – would help shorten the set up process and I'm keen to get cracking.

I did use Fuseworks at NZ Rugby and liked them at the time btw

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(a)

Senior Consultant

Capital

s9(2)(a)

[capitalnz.com](http://capitalnz.com)

Level 4, Civic Assurance House

116 Lambton Quay

Wellington, New Zealand



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**From:** [Sean Martin](#)  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Deborah on Nine to Noon tomorrow  
**Date:** Wednesday, 17 August 2022 10:26:00 am  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.gif](#)  
[image004.jpg](#)  
[image005.png](#)

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Hi s9(2)(a)

Andy Doube our GM of Market Policy will call Deborah today to give her a heads-up about the board's decision and the announcement that will be made tomorrow morning pre-market opening.

Sean

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**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 16 August 2022 3:32 pm  
**To:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: Deborah on Nine to Noon tomorrow

Excellent, thanks mate

---


**From:** Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 16 August 2022 3:24 pm  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Deborah on Nine to Noon tomorrow

Hi s9(2)(a)

Thanks for the heads-up - appreciated.

Just to let you know that I'll be in touch tomorrow with the outcome of a Board meeting which is considering a remedy to the Tiwai contract issue that Deborah highlighted in her opinion piece in the Herald the other week.

Cheers

 **Sean Martin**  
Principal Communications and Engagement Advisor  
Mob: s9(2)(a)

**Electricity Authority - Te Mana Hiko**  
Level 7, AON Centre  
1 Willis Street  
Wellington 6011  
New Zealand  
[www.ea.govt.nz](http://www.ea.govt.nz)

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**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 16 August 2022 3:15 pm  
**To:** Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** Deborah on Nine to Noon tomorrow

Sean

Letting you know that Deborah is doing a long interview on Nine to Noon just after 9am tomorrow. Just a broad ranging piece on the council so will touch on lots of issue I imagine.

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(a)  
Senior Consultant  
Capital  
s9(2)(a)  
[capitalnz.com](http://capitalnz.com)

Level 4, Civic Assurance House  
116 Lambton Quay  
Wellington, New Zealand



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**From:** Sean Martin  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Council release  
**Date:** Thursday, 18 August 2022 9:46:00 am  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg  
image002.png

Appreciated – yeah, we only got a the final Board decision yesterday so it was a bit of a sprint to get everything aligned

**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 18 August 2022 9:45 am  
**To:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: Council release

All good Sean, didn't mean to criticise, looked like a biggie in terms of comms planning, we scrambled pretty quickly as Deborah was dead keen to swing behind you guys

**From:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 18 August 2022 9:41 am  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Council release

Hi s9(2)(a)

Sorry I didn't alert you earlier as was rushing about but James just did an interview on NtN on our announcement – gave CAC a reference towards the end. It was on at 9:20

Audio isn't up yet but here's the blurb:

### Electricity Authority puts restrictions on very large electricity contracts

Tiwai Point aluminium smelter is owned by Rio Tinto, the second largest metals and mining corporation in the world.

Photo: Otago Daily Times / Stephen Jaquier

The Electricity Authority says very large electricity contracts will only be allowed under certain conditions, under a new interim restriction just announced this morning. The move targets very large, discounted wholesale contracts such as that of the Tiwai Aluminium Smelter - which it says has the potential to make small consumers pay more. Last year the Authority estimated the impact of Tiwai's discounted power, could potentially lead to households paying up to \$200 extra on their electricity bills each year. The new restriction will be for nine months, while a proposed permanent amendment is consulted on. Kathryn speaks with the Electricity Authority's Chief Executive James Stevenson-Wallace.

**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 18 August 2022 8:33 am  
**To:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: Council release

Cheers mate, it was a bit of a rush so sorry we couldn't get it to you earlier

**From:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 18 August 2022 8:29 am  
**To:** s9(2)(a)

**Subject:** RE: Council release

[REDACTED]

Thanks – it just landed via Fuseworks!

Appreciate CAC s support

Will be in touch soon

Cheers  
Sean

---

**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 18 August 2022 8:27 am  
**To:** Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** Council release

Sean

Our supporting statement going out shortly

Thanks for help yesterday

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(a)  
Senior Consultant  
Capital

s9(2)(a)  
[capitalnz.com](http://capitalnz.com)

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18 August 2022

Media release

**Consumer Advocacy Council backs Electricity Authority move to protect small consumers over Tiwai contract**

Current negotiations for a new electricity supply contract for the Tiwai Point aluminium smelter must not disadvantage New Zealand consumers, the Consumer Advocacy Council said today.

The Electricity Authority has this morning released an urgent amendment to the Electricity Industry Participation Code 2010 to impose restrictions on very large electricity contracts, those above 150MW, that could force small consumers to pay more than they should.

Meridian and Contact are currently negotiating a new contract to supply the smelter from the end of 2024 which meets that threshold.

“We applaud the Authority in sending a very clear message to the generators that they must not settle on contracts that disadvantage residential and small business consumers. These deals must always be in the long-term benefit of consumers,” said Consumer Advocacy Council Chair Deborah Hart.

“In October 2021, a review into the wholesale electricity market competition by the Authority criticised a previous contract by Meridian and Contact which provided super cheap power to Tiwai Pt meaning consumers could be subsidising Tiwai by up to \$200 per household each year. That was effectively a transfer of as much as \$500M in total every year of the contract to the owners of the smelter.

“The Council represents the voice of five million residential consumers and 500,000 SMEs. Consumers’ interests must be taken into account by the generators in negotiations for all contracts. We are pleased that the Authority is protecting consumers with urgency given new contract negotiations for Tiwai Pt are underway.

“We accept that an operation consuming so much power, 24/7, should get a discounted rate, but that rate must be fair and reasonable for all consumers and not repeat the mistakes of the past,” said Deborah Hart.

Contact:

s9(2)(a)

### The Consumer Advocacy Council

*The Consumer Advocacy Council is the independent advocate for residential and small business electricity consumers in Aotearoa New Zealand. It aims to protect the interests of some five million residential consumers and half a million small businesses in relation to electricity. The council was established last year following a recommendation from the 2018/19 Electricity Pricing Review which found that small electricity consumers were struggling to be heard by the electricity sector. Our aim is to be a strong voice for small consumers by providing evidence-based advocacy on policy and regulatory consultations, and in decision-making processes.*

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**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**To:** [Sean Martin](#)  
**Subject:** Sarah Gillies media training?  
**Date:** Tuesday, 30 August 2022 11:17:58 am  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

Sean

I see Sarah has been appointed acting CE

If you were thinking of brushing up her media skills, happy to flick you a proposal for a short, sharp session.

Look forward to hearing back.

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(a)  
Senior Consultant  
Capital  
s9(2)(a)  
[capitalnz.com](http://capitalnz.com)

Level 4, Civic Assurance House  
116 Lambton Quay  
Wellington, New Zealand



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**From:** [Sean Martin](#)  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Catch up?  
**Date:** Thursday, 13 October 2022 2:17:00 pm  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

Hi s9(2)(a)

No problems – sorry I missed your call. I headed out for a run while I had the chance.

Happy to talk about those issues although I know Sarah (acting CE) has had media training recently so think we're good on that front – sorry I hadn't got back to you on that.

The process yesterday was not ideal – we've had a lot of sickness/Covid in our team which left me carrying the can to do just about everything – too many balls in the air!

I'm at a team away day tomorrow so a catch-up/call Monday would be better – my afternoon after 1.30 is free if that suits.

Cheers  
Sean

---

**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 13 October 2022 12:22 pm  
**To:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Catch up?

Sean

Sorry I had to drop the call, a damn client!

Keen to chat about two things:

For the Council - Process around yesterday's release on the wholesale market

Media training for the acting CE

I'm probably slammed now today, but let us know if there is a time tomorrow to chat

Thanks

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(a)  
Senior Consultant  
Capital  
s9(2)(a)  
[capitalnz.com](http://capitalnz.com)

Level 4, Civic Assurance House  
116 Lambton Quay  
Wellington, New Zealand



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**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**To:** Sean Martin  
**Subject:** RE: Assets - Wholesale Market Review  
**Date:** Monday, 17 October 2022 2:49:15 pm  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.gif](#)  
[image004.jpg](#)

---

Thanks mate, appreciated, looks handy, let's stay in touch.

---

**From:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Monday, 17 October 2022 2:34 pm  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** Assets - Wholesale Market Review

Hi s9(2)(a)

Good to talk. Here are those assets that I mentioned.

Factsheet: [Review of competition in the wholesale electricity market](#)

Timeline: [Wholesale market competition review and other actions](#)

Apologies again for things falling through the cracks last week.

Will be in touch.

Cheers

**Sean Martin**  
Principal Communications and Engagement Advisor

Mob: s9(2)(a)

**Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko**

Level 7, AON Centre

1 Willis Street

Wellington 601

New Zealand

[www.ea.govt.nz](http://www.ea.govt.nz)



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**From:** [Sean Martin](#)  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Consumer Advocacy Council survey heads up  
**Date:** Monday, 7 November 2022 5:14:00 pm  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

Thanks for the heads-up s9(2)(a)

Talk tomorrow.

---

**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Monday, 7 November 2022 5:02 pm  
**To:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Consumer Advocacy Council survey heads up

Sean

We're planning a wee media splash Weds morning based on some research conducted by Talbot Mills.

Will flick you the final copies of the PR and slides tomorrow morning all going well.

Basically, we've surveyed consumers about how they are coping in these inflationary times, how they are adjusting spending on electricity and their trust in retailers.

Talk then

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(a)  
Senior Consultant  
Capital  
s9(2)(a)  
[capitalnz.com](http://capitalnz.com)

Level 4, Civic Assurance House  
116 Lambton Quay  
Wellington, New Zealand



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**From:** [Sean Martin](#)  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Consumer Advocacy Council survey  
**Date:** Tuesday, 8 November 2022 3:17:00 pm  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

Thanks s9(2)(a)

Sorry for the delay coming back to you – have been tied up with Board meeting today.

Any other media requesting interviews? Imagine it'll get a good run with breakfast broadcast media.

Sean

---

**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 8 November 2022 1:02 pm  
**To:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Consumer Advocacy Council survey

Sean

As promised, hope you find this of interest.

Note the embargo.

Stuff plans to run this tomorrow morning at least, Tom PS does a wee on camera thing with Deborah so that's a first for us.

We also have a video on social too so watch out for that. Just Deborah explaining the survey results.

Any questions, sing out

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(a)  
Senior Consultant  
Capital  
s9(2)(a)  
[capitalnz.com](http://capitalnz.com)

Level 4, Civic Chambers  
116 Lambton Quay  
Wellington, New Zealand



**EMBARGOED UNTIL 5AM WEDS 9 NOVEMBER 2022**

Media release

9 November 2022

## **Kiwis cutting back on heating and hot showers as cost-of-living bites**

### **Three out of four say electricity retailers are failing to provide good value for money – new survey**

The cost-of-living crisis has forced some New Zealand households to cut back on heating rooms and taking hot showers according to a Consumer Advocacy Council survey.

And only one in four rate their electricity retailers as providing good value for money.

“This is a real wake-up call for electricity retailers,” said Council Chair Deborah Hart. “Retailers need to think very carefully about increasing the price of electricity at a time when consumers are so stretched and so many of their customers don’t think they’re getting value for money.”

The Consumer Advocacy Council commissioned Talbot Mills Research to test the concerns of electricity consumers. 1441 people were surveyed between 11 and 24 October.

“Our job is to be a strong voice for consumers, so it’s really important we find out what consumers are thinking when it comes to electricity prices, their power bills and how they’re being treated by electricity retailers,” said Hart.

Consumers were asked about the pressures on their household budget at a time of high inflation. From a list of nine ordinary household expenses, power bills rated fourth highest in their top concerns - consumers were more worried about food, vehicle running costs, and mortgage and rental payments, but electricity was close behind.

As a result, many people took action to get their power bills down particularly during the cold winter months.

Around one out of two consumers were often only heating the room they were in, and around the same number were often putting on extra clothes to stay warm. Over a third of consumers reduced the use of heaters and heat pumps and a quarter frequently turned off heaters altogether. One in four consumers cut back on showers and other hot water use.

Renters tended to take all these steps to reduce their power bills more often than those owning a home.

“The warmer months ahead should help lower costs for consumers,” said Hart. “But the pressures on household budgets are real.

“Electricity retailers should be really sensitive to the challenges facing their customers, particularly when they can’t pay their power bill.

“That’s why we thought it was a good time to ask consumers how they felt about their electricity retailers. Do they trust their retailer to provide good value for money?

“Overall, people trusted their electricity retailers to provide value for money less than banks, telcos and Kiwisaver providers. Only one in four consumers believed their power company provided good value for money.

“We advise consumers to find the plan that best suits their budget and the retailer that best looks after them because by shopping around you can often save money. We encourage consumers to talk to their retailer about their plans and use Consumer NZ’s [Powerswitch](#) tool to make sure they are on the right plan.”

Latest Powerswitch data shows potential savings from switching electricity providers has grown by 24% in the past year, with the median saving now sitting at \$385 a year.

“The most important thing is that electricity is an essential service, and everyone needs to be able to afford to use it. Retailers must remember that

“Over the coming months we’ll be undertaking more extensive surveys of both consumers and SMEs so we can better understand what worries them. This will help us advocate for the changes needed to ensure electricity is affordable, reliable and sustainable,” said Deborah Hart.

ENDS

Contact

s9(2)(a)

Attached: Talbot Mills Research survey

### **The Consumer Advocacy Council**

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**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**To:** [Sean Martin](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Heads-up  
**Date:** Tuesday, 15 November 2022 10:16:06 am  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.gif](#)  
[image004.jpg](#)

---

Thanks mate, didn't know s9(2)(a) was still around – she's a survivor!

Be good to catch up – a few things in our patch.

I'm good for Weds or Friday morning of that works for a coffee.

s9(2)(a)

---

**From:** Sean Martin <[Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz](mailto:Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 15 November 2022 10:04 am  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** Heads-up

Hi s9(2)(a)

Just to advise that I've just got off the phone to energy commentator s9(2)(a) who was requesting information on CAC – contact details, media releases etc.

I'll provide her with links to the website etc but just letting you know that she might be in touch.

Might be worth having a coffee in the next week or so to update you on bits and bobs in our space coming up.

Cheers  
Sean

**Sean Martin**  
Principal Communications and Engagement Advisor

Mob: s9(2)(a)

**Electricity Authority - Te Mana Hiko**

Level 7, AON Centre  
1 Willis Street  
Wellington 6011  
New Zealand  
[www.ea.govt.nz](http://www.ea.govt.nz)



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**From:** [Sean Martin](#)  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Declined: Coffee with EA/CAC  
**Date:** Tuesday, 15 November 2022 10:35:00 am

---

Roger that, resent with 1100 Thurs

-----Original Appointment-----

**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 15 November 2022 10:27 am  
**To:** Sean Martin  
**Subject:** Declined: Coffee with EA/CAC  
**When:** Wednesday, 16 November 2022 10:00 am-10:30 am (UTC+12:00) Auckland, Wellington.  
**Where:** Mojo Old Bank (237 Lambton Quay, Wellington Central, Wellington Wellington Region)

Sorry mate, full up tomorrow, but could do 11am Thursday?

Otherwise a bit jiggered until next week.

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**From:** s9(2)(a)  
**To:** Sean Martin  
**Subject:** RE: Follow-up  
**Date:** Thursday, 17 November 2022 12:25:39 pm  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.gif](#)  
[image004.jpg](#)

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Thanks mate, all that is really appreciated.

My shout next time. Reckon we should do this again early to mid December. Will make a diary note to tee it up

s9(2)(a)

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**From:** Sean Martin <Sean.Martin@ea.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 17 November 2022 12:16 pm  
**To:** s9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** Follow-up

Hi s9(2)(a)

As promised, here's the detail on the MDAG (Market Development Advisory Group) 100% project. <https://www.ea.govt.nz/development/advisory-technical-groups/mdag/mdag-price-discovery-project/> A few meaty issues ...ignore the timeframe on the webpage – this has slipped out.

Paper is due to go out for 3-month consultation early Dec – some pre-release engagement might be taking place (day before release) but let me check and come back to you.

Have spoken to our policy manager about talking to Deborah on Winter 2023 – he told me he called her yesterday to talk through things – so she will know about it at tomorrow's WIP. I'll share our comms once finalised.

Sean

Sean Martin  
Principal Communications and Engagement Advisor  
Mob: s9(2)(a)

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