

18 May 2021

Wholesale Consultation Electricity Authority Wellington

By email: <a href="mailto:wholesaleconsultation@ea.govt.nz">wholesaleconsultation@ea.govt.nz</a>

### Internal transfer prices and segmented profitability reporting

- 1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the Electricity Authority's consultation on Internal Transfer Prices and segmented profitability reporting.
- 2. Contact publicly reports its Internal Transfer Price, together with our retail margin on a sixmonthly basis consistent with generally agreed accounting practice. Our current reporting is consistent with the Authority's proposed amendments to mandate disclosure across the industry in the Electricity Industry Code.
- 3. Provision of this information by all gentailers, and retail margins for larger independent retailers, will improve market transparency, and allow all parties to assess whether competition issues exist or merit further analysis.
- 4. Contact agrees with the Authority's view that:

Independent retailers have expressed concern that in recent years the ITPs of large generator-retailers are too low and stable, given the volatility and level of spot prices and Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) New Zealand (NZ) electricity futures. The Electricity Authority's own analysis does not support these claims and indicates large generator-retailers' internal transfer prices are plausible given historical time-series of ASX futures prices and other factors.<sup>1</sup>

5. Contact's internal transfer pricing is transparent, consistent and reflects the long term. Our methodology for setting the ITP mitigates the risk of wholesale pricing volatility by essentially mimicking the approach for a hypothetical prudent retailer that builds up hedging over a three-year period utilising the ASX futures market. The ITP removes any spot price exposure as it provide an ITP volume price at each GXP where retail sales are made.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Electricity Authority, *Internal transfer prices and segmented profitability reporting, Consultation paper,* 8 April 2021, Executive Summary



### **Contact Retail Transfer Prices**

6. Consistent with GAAP reporting, Contact publicly reports on Internal Transfer Prices on a sixmonthly basis. In February 2021, Contact reported on its first half year result:<sup>2</sup>

SEGMENTAL PERFORMANCE

### Wholesale segment

		1H21 Six months ended 31 December 2020 Volume GWAP			1H20 Six months ended 31 December 2019 Volume GWAP		
Note: this table has not been rounded and might not add	GWh	\$/MWh	\$m	GWh	\$/MWh	\$m	note (see following page)
Electricity sales to Customer	1,959	93.2	183	1,986	85.2	169	1
Electricity sales to C&I (netback)	934	76.7	72	1,152	79.1	91	
Electricity sales – Direct	48	110.4	5	50	105.1	5	2
Electricity sales to C&I	982	79.0	78	1,202	80.2	96	
CfDs – Tiwai support	353			436			
CfDs - Long term sales	301			301			3
CfDs - Short term sales	544			243			3
Electricity sales - CFDs	1,198	84.3	101	980	71.0	70	
Total contracted electricity sales	4,138	87.1	361	4,168	80.4	335	
Steam sales	390	44.1	17	343	49.4	17	4
Other income			1			(1)	5
Net income on gas sales			1			1	6
Net income on electricity related services			1			0	7
Net other income			2			(0)	
Total contracted revenue (1)	4,528	84.0	380	4,512	77.9	352	
							8
Generation costs	4,426	(34.3)	(152)	4,409	(33.6)	(148)	-
Acquired generation cost	189	(117.4)	(22)	208	(111.3)	(23)	9
Generation costs (including acquired generation) (2)	4,615	(37.7)	(174)	4,617	(37.1)	(171)	
Spot electricity revenue	4,378	117.1	513	4,359	105.2	459	10
Settlement on acquired generation	189	116.8	22	208	124.7	26	11
Spot revenue and settlement on acquired generation (GWAP)	4.567	117.1	535	4,567	106.1	485	
Spot electricity cost	(2,893)	(127.6)	(369)	(3,138)	(114.1)	(358)	12
Settlement on CFDs sold	(1,198)	(119.0)	(142)	(980)	(105.2)	(103)	13
Spot purchases and settlement on CFDs sold (LWAP)	(4.091)	(125.1)	(512)	(4,118)	(112.0)	(461)	
Trading, merchant revenue and losses (3)	(	,,	23			23	
Wholesale EBITDAE (1+2+3)			229			204	-

Contact Energy / FY21 Interim Results Presentation / 15 February 2021

SEGMENT NOTE TO OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

### Wholesale segment key

	Wholesale segment	Reference to detailed operating segment performance	Comment
	C&I electricity - Fixed Price	2	
	C&I electricity – Spot	2-spot	Spot sales are regarded as a pass-through and not reflected in performance reporting, any margin included in C&I netback
	Wholesale electricity, net of hedging	3 + 10 + 13	
Revenue	Electricity related services revenue	7	
Reve	Inter-segment electricity sales	1	
	Gas	6	Revenue from wholesale gas sales, purchase cost in gas and diesel purchases
	Steam	4	
	Other income	5	
	Electricity purchases, net of hedging	9 + 11 + 12	
	Electricity purchases – Spot	2-spot	Spot sales are regarded as a pass-through
	Electricity related services cost	7	
	Gas and diesel purchases	8 (less costs identified relating to 6)	Includes wholesale gas sales purchases (if any)
	Gas storage costs	8	
Costs	Carbon emissions	8	
	Generation transmission and reserve costs	8	
	Electricity networks, transmission and meter costs – Fixed Price	2	
	Electricity networks, transmission and meter costs - Spot	2-spot	Spot sales are regarded as a pass-through
	Gas networks, transmission and meter costs	8	
	Other operating expenses	8 (less costs identified relating to 2)	C&I operating costs are included in the calculation of netback (2) and are excluded from generation operating costs

Contact Energy / FY21 Interim Results Presentation / 15 February 2021

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See page 38: <u>https://contact.co.nz/aboutus/investor-centre/reports-and-presentations#Annual-and-half-year-reports</u>, 15 February, 2021.



## **Contact Retail Margins**

 Similarly, Contact publicly reports on gross margins on a six-monthly basis, broken down between mass market retail, SME and C&I. In February 2021, Contact reported on its first half year result:<sup>3</sup>

Residential electricity	unit	1H18	1H19	1H20	1H21	Residential gas	unit	1H18	1H19	1H20	1H2
Average connections	#	361,412	352,159	355,216	357,756	Average connections	#	60,870	61,332	61,959	60,56
Sales volumes	GWh	1,343	1,335	1,328	1,349	Sales volumes	TJ	946	936	911	954
Average usage	per ICP	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.8	Average usage	per ICP	15.5	15.3	14.7	15.7
Tariff	\$/MWh	247.8	249.9	248.2	251.1	Tariff	\$/GJ	29.6	29.1	30.6	31.3
Network, meters and levies	\$/MWh	-123.3	-120.3	-119.0	-111.7	Network, meters and levies	\$/GJ	-18.2	-16.7	-16.7	-14.6
Energy costs	\$/MWh	-84.2	-85.4	-91.6	-101.1	Energy costs	\$/GJ	-5.1	-5.6	-7.6	-8.3
Gross margin	\$/MWh	40.3	44.2	37.6	38.3	Carbon costs	\$/GJ	-0.5	-0.9	-1.4	-1.4
Gross margin	\$ per ICP	150	168	141	144	Gross margin	\$/GJ	5.8	5.9	4.9	7.0
Gross margin	\$m	54	59	50	52	Gross margin	\$ per ICP	90	90	73	88
						Gross margin	\$m	5	6	4	5
SME electricity	unit	1H18	1H19	1H20	1H21	SME gas	unit	1H18	1H19	1H20	1H21
Average connections	#	57,302	55,156	55,295	51,407	Average connections	#	3,582	3,865	3,991	3,858
Sales volumes	GWh	564	539	533	465	Sales volumes	TJ	679	809	845	720
Average usage	per ICP	9.8	9.8	9.6	9.0	Average usage	per ICP	189.7	209.4	211.8	186.7
Tariff	\$/MWh	222.9	224.4	226.7	230.7	Tariff	\$/GJ	15.5	14.8	14.9	15.8
Network, meters and levies	\$/MWh	-105.2	-106.5	-112.2	-104.4	Network, meters and levies	\$/GJ	-4.4	-5.3	-5.4	-7.9
Energy costs	\$/MWh	-81.9	-83.6	-89.3	-99.7	Energy costs	\$/GJ	-5.1	-5.6	-7.6	-8.3
Gross margin	\$/MWh	35.7	34.2	25.1	26.5	Carbon costs	\$/GJ	-0.5	-0.9	-1.4	-1.4
Gross margin	\$ per ICP	352	335	242	240	Gross margin	\$/GJ	5,5	3.0	0,5	-1.9
Gross margin	\$m	20	18	13	12	Gross margin	\$ per ICP	1,049	625	107	-352
						Gross margin	\$m	4	2	0	-1
Customer EBITDAF											
Electricity Gross margin	\$m	74	77	63	64						
Gas Gross Margin	\$m	9	8	5	5						
Broadband Gross Margin	\$m	0	0	0	-2						
Total Gross Margin	\$m	83	86	68	67						
Other income	\$m	3	2	2	3						
Other operating costs	\$m	-41	-40	-41	-40						
Customer EBITDAF	\$m	45	48	30	30						
Corporate allocation (50%)1	\$m	-7	-7	-7	-7						
Retailing EBITDAF	\$m	39	41	23	23						
EBITDAF margins (% of revenue)	%	7.8%	8.2%	4.7%	4.6%						

# HISTORIC PERFORMANCE

Contact Energy / FY21 Interim Results Presentation / 15 February 2021

### Contact Energy Retail Transfer Price methodology

- 8. Our model simulates a price that represents how much it costs an independent retailer to supply a customer with electricity down to the GXP level (not to distribution network/ICP level). Contact use this to determine a transfer price 'Contact Generation' would hypothetically sell to 'Contact Retail' if they were acting as two independent entities.
- 9. The model takes the ASX settlement prices at Otahuhu and Benmore for the three years preceding the start date of the Financial Year or Month being analysed this simulates how a retailer would hedge their purchase position in a linear manner, but then adjusts these for the previously mentioned location, and shape factors specific to each GXP.
- 10. Contact takes a consistent approach to the ITP calculation over time.<sup>4</sup>

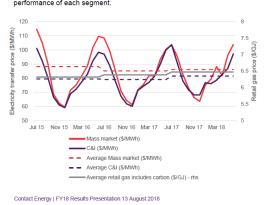
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See page 38: <u>https://contact.co.nz/aboutus/investor-centre/reports-and-presentations#Annual-and-half-year-reports</u>, 15 February, 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See page 48: <u>https://contact.co.nz/-/media/contact/pdfs/about-us/investor-centre/media-releases/contact-energy----annual-results-investor-presentation-2018.ashx</u> Full year results 2018



# Transfers of value between the two segments appropriately reflect market conditions

Inter-segment electricity and gas transfer price The fixed price, variable volume transfer price between the Customer and Generation segments is set in a manner similar to transactions with independent retailers to enable an accurate picture of the financial performance of each segment.



#### Mass market electricity

A prudent retailer, offering fixed price variable volume products would contract their forecast load incrementally. For Customer, 90 days before the start of a quarter the electricity transfer price is fixed and takes into account:

- The simple average of ASX settlement prices for the preceding 3 years for the quarter to be contracted
- Adjustments for location, seasonality and line loss based on the Customer business load profile for preceding 12 months

#### C&I electricity

The price path agreed between Generation and Customer at the time of contracting with reference to the ASX with the C&I customer.

### Retail sales

Allocated from Generation to Customer at the market price for flexible gas including a carbon cost component

- Responses to specific questions raised in the consultation are set out in the annex to this 11. letter.
- Should you have any questions, please contact us. 12.

Yours sincerely

Hunt

Chris Abbott **Head of Regulation & Government Relations** 



# Annex: Response to Authority Questions

Question	Contact Response
Q1. Do you agree with the issues identified by the Authority are worthy of attention?	Contact agrees with the Authority that "it is largely the size of integrated retailers rather than their vertical integration per se, that is the primary driver of any competition or confidence concerns." (para 2.3)
	Contact currently discloses its Internal Transfer Price (ITP), with detail similar to that proposed as changes to the Code.
	The ITPs disaggregate electricity from other services such as broadband and gas also provided by Contact.
	We agree that transparency of ITP will improve confidence and understanding of the approach taken.
	The Authority's analysis concludes that the comparative analysis should that "the ITP methodologies employed by integrated generator-retailers are plausible and result in prices broadly consistent with the range of benchmark prices the Authority derived. We also agree with the Authority's conclusion that it did not find any evidence to support non- integrated retailers' concerns that ITPs were too low and smooth given market volatility.
	The Authority notes that most gentailers currently disclose both ITPs and margins as publicly listed companies and consistent with GAAP requirements.
	The Authority's proposed mandatory reporting under the Code will ensure all gentailers (and large retailers for retail margin) disclose this information in a consistent format.
	This will ensure all parties can assess all gentailers' ITPs, assess competition and the ability of equally efficient retailers to compete on a non-discriminatory basis.
Q2. Do you agree with the objectives of the proposed amendment? If not, why not?	Contact agrees that the proposed code changes will improve transparency – and address any concerns about trust or confidence in ITPs.
Q3. Do you agree that disclosure of ITP by large generator-retailers is important for trust and confidence in electricity markets?	Improved transparency will build trust. Annual disclosure of ITPs and supporting information will improve third party understanding of what it represents and how it was derived.
Q4. Do you agree with the benefits of mandating ITP disclosure over	Agree.



voluntary disclosure?	
Q5. Do you agree that the generator-retailers subject to these provisions should have an obligation to demonstrate their ITP transfer prices are a fair reflection of the cost of electricity?	Contact is comfortable that its ITP fairly reflects the fair transfer price. Further qualification should not be necessary – as the transparency will allow independent retailers to assess the ITP and form their own view – and take action as necessary.
Q6. Do you agree that ITP disclosure requirements should encompass the price, pertinent details of the methodology used, the major component parts which the price comprises, and the terms and conditions?	Yes. The ITP disclosure requirements should encompass the price, the methodology, major component parts of the price, and terms or conditions.
Q7. Do you have any comments on the specifics of the information requirements with respect to the price, methodology, component parts, and terms and conditions?	No. We believe that the current transfer price disclosure provides sufficient detail and transparency to allow third parties to understand the methodology.
Q8. Do you agree with the proposed criteria for determining which generator-retailers should be subject to the ITP requirements?	Contact supports the EA's proposed approach to provide criteria, rather than list specific current gentailers, which will be subject to change over time. However, it is unclear why the Authority has determined a threshold of 5% based on total electricity sold to the clearing manager or based on ICPs. This is inconsistent with the approach taken on the proposed margin analysis which is set at 1%.
Q9. Do you agree that generator- retailers which own more than one retail business, and supply electricity to each by way of an ITP, should be permitted to report on a consolidated basis?	Consolidated reporting by gentailer is likely to be sufficient to allow parties to assess the reasonableness of internal transfer prices over time.
Q10. Do you agree that it would be valuable if the ITP disclosures were reported on the Authority's EMI website?	Agree.
Q11. Do you agree it would be helpful if the Authority published prices for a series of benchmark hedging strategies, for the purposes of evaluating whether generator-retailers' internal pricing reflects the cost of electricity? Are there any specific benchmark	No view.



strategies you would like to see published?	
Q12. Do you agree that to be a fair	Gentailers ITPs reflect the costs and risks of being part of a
reflection of the cost of electricity,	vertically integrated entity – costs which are avoided by
large integrated generator- retailers' ITPs should reflect the	independent retailers not operating a generation portfolio.
costs and risks of being part of a	Gentailers should not be required to then cross subsidise
vertically integrated entity? Or	different or additional costs that an independent retailer may
should their ITPs include the	face as a result of a different operating model. Independent
additional costs and risks their	retailers maintain the options to invest in generation to
retail arms would face	manage a retail portfolio.
if they were not part of an integrated business?	We agree with the Authority's approach that benchmarking
	modelling of gentailer costs of supplying electricity internally
	should ignore these costs, as no credit risk arises in this case.
Q13. Do you agree that differences	We agree that differences in costs and contractual terms are
in risk largely explain the variation in the appetite and pricing	not sufficient conditions to demonstrate discriminatory practices, and that respective cost and risk profiles largely
generators are willing to offer fixed	explain any variation.
price variable volume contracts to	
internal parties, commercial and	
industrial clients, and independent	
retailers?	
Q14. Do you agree that where a generator-retailer changes their	Agree.
ITP methodology and it has an	
impact of more than 5% on the	
current years ITP, that they be	
required to disclose the impact the	
new policy would have on the	
preceding three financial years and the current years ITP and retail	
segment profitability disclosures?	
Q15. Do you support requiring	Contact currently reports on gross margin for electricity –
gross margin electricity retail	broken down by residential, SME and C&I.
segment reporting	
a. If so: i. How precisely would	Antonic         Other         Old         Us         Us         Other         Other <thother< th=""> <thother< th=""> <thother< t<="" td=""></thother<></thother<></thother<>
this information be	Table 1         Table 2         Table 3         Table 3 <t< td=""></t<>
used to identify	Image         Image <th< td=""></th<>
potential anti-	Incomposition         N         I         I         I           Mark Mark         K         K         K         K           Mark Mark Mark Mark Mark Mark Mark Mark
competition concerns	Bit Of applications         Image
and improve decision	This breakdown is consistent with the proposed standardised
making on retail competition settings?	line items set out in para. 3.46.
Please provide	
illustrations.	
ii. What assurances are	
there that reported	
differences arising due	



		<b>.</b>
	to legitimate	
	commercial reasons	
	won't be misconstrued	
	as evidence of anti-	
	competitive practices?	
b. If no	• •	
i.	Do you have a	
	preferred alternative	
	retail segment	
	profitability metric	
	which is feasible and	
	low cost to implement,	
	and would improve	
	information on	
	potential anti-	
	competitive practices?	
	retail segment gross margin	This breakdown is consistent with the proposed standardised
-	ng was introduced, do you	line items set out in para. 3.46.
agree:		
a.	With the proposed	We agree that firms with more than 1% market share should
	definition and line items	be subject to these provisions.
	constituting gross margin?	
b.	That gross margin and the	It is unclear why anonymity is necessary or appropriate for
	constituent parts should be	those retailers with greater than 1% of ICPs.
	reported on nominal	
	dollars and a per MWh	
	basis?	
c.	That firms with more than	
_	1% market share of all ICPs	
	should be subject to these	
	provisions?	
d.	That reporting should be	
u.	centralised on the	
	Authority's EMI website?	
e.	That firms with less than	
е.	5% market share of ICPs	
	would be reported on an	
	anonymised basis on the	
	EMI, and only report on a	
	per MWh basis?	
f.	That entities with more	
	than one retail business	
	can report on a	
	consolidated basis?	
Q19. D	o you agree that gross	Gross margin segmented at an aggregate country level is
margin	segmented retail reporting	sufficient to provide transparency. Further granularity would
at an a	ggregate country level is	drive compliance costs, risk disclosing commercially
sufficie	ent to support confidence in	confidential information and dampening competition.
the wh	olesale market? If not:	
a.	What categorisations	
	would you propose?	
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<ul> <li>b. How would further granularity advance trust and confidence?</li> <li>c. What would the marginal cost of reporting at increased granularity be compared to the proposal in the paper?</li> <li>Q20. Do you support mandating gross margin reporting for the generation, and commercial and industrial segments? If so,</li> <li>a. What line items would you propose for each segment?</li> <li>b. How precisely would this information be used to identify potential anti- competition concerns? Please provide illustrations.</li> <li>c. What assurances are there that reported differences arising due to legitimate commercial reasons won't be misconstrued as</li> </ul>	<section-header><text><section-header><section-header></section-header></section-header></text></section-header>
evidence of anti- competitive practices? Q21. Do you agree the benefits of the proposed amendment outweigh its costs?	Contact currently voluntarily discloses its ITP, methodology and margins for residential, SME and C&I customers. Mandatory reporting through EMI will make comparison easier, reduce search costs and allow for ongoing analysis by parties and the Authority. Further disaggregation of data (such as by region) would incur cost and increase the risks of disclosure of commercially
Q22. Do you agree the proposed amendment is preferable to the other options? If you disagree, please explain your preferred option in terms consistent with the Authority's statutory objective in section 15 of the Electricity Industry Act 2010. Q23. Do you agree the Authority's	sensitive information. Contact supports the proposed amendment. Agree.
Q23. Do you agree the Authority's proposed amendment complies with section 32(1) of the Act? Q24. Do you have any comments on the drafting of the proposed amendment?	Contact supports the draft proposed amendment.

### Responses to Questions 16 and 17

Question 16: Do you believe that for multiple product line retail businesses, the costs and revenues specific to electricity can be unbundled from other product lines, with sufficient rigour to advance confidence in the electricity industry?

Yes. Contact's margin reporting on electricity only includes costs and revenues specific to electricity.

Question 17: Do you support requiring gross margin electricity retail segment reporting?

Yes.