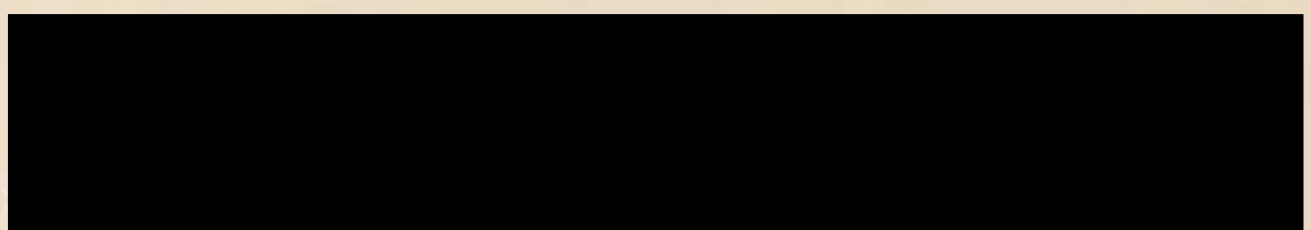


Submission form: 'Comparing and switching electricity plans'

Common Grace Aotearoa made this form. If you prefer, use the Electricity Authority's short survey, or long form (p. 49).

Name Frank Lawton

Email address 

The Electricity Authority will publish all submissions it receives (including submitters' names, but with contact details removed). If you do NOT want parts of your submission published, **specify which parts and why here**. Note they may still have to publish these parts if they receive a request under the Official Information Act.

Questions

1. What barriers have you experienced when comparing electricity companies? What would make it easier for you to compare and switch?

Difficult to see pricing options side-to-side "~~not~~ apples to apples". Complex pricing structures that differ between companies. Lack of transparency about costs like fees (e.g. disconnection).

2. The Electricity Authority is proposing:

- To support an existing or new, externally run, website(s).
- To require retailers to provide their existing consumers with best plan information.
- Community advisers to support comparison and switching.
- Promotional activity and campaigns for comparison and switching services.

Do you support their approach?

^{PowerSwitch}
Yes. I also think the website needs a upgrade, maybe if it uses real usage data to give accurate cost estimates?

3. Do you think it's important for the Authority to fund and support a comparison and switching website? Why?

Yes! For an essential service competition needs to be encouraged to keep prices manageable. People need a way to compare, which is usually difficult.

4. What problems, if any, do you see with current comparison and switching websites, such as Powerswitch?

Asks for too much info, not accurate cost estimates (doesn't use real data). Not accessible or intuitive for more vulnerable groups.

5. Do you support the proposal that companies must regularly tell customers which plan would be best for them? How often should they do this?

Absolutely. at least every 3 months

6. What do you think about the idea of requiring companies to *automatically* switch customers to the best plan? (The customers could then switch back to the old plan if they preferred.)

This is great! It should be automatic, but customers should be informed & able to opt out. It should also be clear that it's legally required to be the best plan, so that customers trust the process.

7. Do you think companies should be required to include standard information on power bills, so customers can compare easily?

Yes!! One of the most difficult things for consumers when choosing the best deal is the complicated & varied ways of structuring & presenting prices. We should be able to hold 2 plans

8. How else could the Electricity Authority support people to compare and switch power plans?

side-to-side & easily see what's better.