

17 December 2025

s 9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

Your request

Thank you for your request, received on 21 November 2025, under the Official Information Act 1982 (Act) for the following information:

- *Any analysis of how April 2025 lines price rises have impacted disconnection rates or arrears levels*
- *Any analysis of how the April 2026 lines price rises will impact disconnection rates or arrears levels*
- *Any correspondence with the Minister of Social Development or MSD staff about the coming lines price rises in April 2026.*

Our response

The Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko (Authority) does not hold any information in the scope of your request. Therefore, your request is refused in full under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist.

Ensuring that everyone has easy access to affordable electricity is a strategic priority for the Authority. We are working with the sector and across government to ensure power remains affordable for all consumers, including with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). On 11 November, we hosted a wānanga with representatives from the electricity industry, government agencies, and consumer advocacy groups to discuss how we can increase consumer trust and to check in on past wānanga, including actions on affordability. This included representatives from MSD.

As you note, following decisions by the Commerce Commission, higher distribution and transmission charges have impacted retail prices. This may have resulted in indirect effects on disconnection rates, arrears levels and other indicators of financial stress. To ensure transparency of such information, we have been publishing a range of 'retailer financial stress' measures via our Electricity Market Information portal [Retailer Financial Stress](#).

In order to build transparency in how retailers were planning to respond to higher distribution and transmission charges in 2025, we:

- Issued (in December 2024) a Section 46 request seeking information on anticipated price changes and mitigation measures to protect consumers in affected regions. This included the estimated percentage increases in retail electricity prices to mass market customers (from February to June 2025) due to line charges.
- Developed and published the [Regional Power Prices](#) dashboard, using data from the Section 46 request. This aggregates retailer responses and constructs regional tariffs for

low and standard users, split by fixed and variable tariff components. It shows the impact of increased line charges on power bills by region from February to July 2025.

We are strengthening transparency and accountability in New Zealand's retail electricity market more broadly. Earlier this year, we introduced a new (clause 2.16 'Retail Market Monitoring') information notice to introduce mandatory monthly reporting on domestic and small business customers by retailers. More information about this notice can be found in this [decision paper](#).

We have been processing and validating this data since the first data submission in August 2025 and working closely with retailers to ensure their first submissions are complete, accurate and fit for purpose. This will create an automated supply of high-quality data that enables us to regularly publish robust insights and analysis on the retail electricity market.

We have recently published a new [disconnections dashboard](#) in December, using data from the Retail Market Monitoring notice. The disconnections dashboard is a tool to support improvements in consumer care, particularly for those who may be facing energy hardship. It will help to inform our work on how to support customers who are frequently disconnected or disconnected for long periods.

The Retail Market Monitoring notice also provides a range of 'retailer consumer care' data, including on arrears. We are planning to analyse the retailer consumer care data and develop a publication plan in 2026.

Lastly, the Authority introduced the Consumer Care Obligations earlier this year. As you're aware, the Consumer Care Obligations are rules that power companies must follow to help consumers stay connected and pay their power bills. For more information about these obligations visit our website here: www.ea.govt.nz/your-power/consumer-care-obligations.

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 or freephone 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, the Authority may proactively release a copy of this response on our website. All personal data, including your name and contact details, will be removed before publication.

If you'd like to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact us by emailing oiia@ea.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Airihi Mahuika', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Airihi Mahuika
GM Legal, Monitoring and Compliance