

12 February 2016

Ms Jacqueline Crawshaw
Manager, National Energy Policy
Division of Resources and Energy
NSW Department of Industry
GPO Box 5477
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Sent via email to: energy.submissions@industry.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Crawshaw,

Master Electricians Australia (MEA) has been made aware of the Department of Industry's consultations on a market-led roll out of smart meters and the release of the consultation paper, "*Smart meters: Removing regulatory barriers and maintaining consumer safety for a market-led roll out of smart meters in New South Wales*". As a leading body representing the electrotechnology industry we appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

MEA is supportive of the NSW government's decision to adopt a market-led approach to the roll out of smart meters. With each household having its own living situation, energy usage and capacity for change, it is not appropriate for government to impose mandatory smart metering when the impact on consumers can vary so significantly.

Regarding the issues raised in the discussion paper, MEA's key concerns relate to the skills and training of meter installers. Specifically, the proposed lack of specialist training that will be required by those installing meters for consumers. While electrical contractors licensed by NSW Fair Trading are provided with a broad range of skills, there is a specific skills set required for the installation of meters that an electrical contractor may not possess. The Accredited Service Provider scheme ensures that the electrical distribution network and connection to the distribution network remains reliable and safe. As indicated in the consultation paper, distributors have noted the impact that training has on the number of defect notices. This demonstrates the importance of meter installers undertaking specialised training in order to perform their role.

MEA would not agree with metering providers conducting training and issuing accreditation for meter installers. Given that metering providers make their profits from the sale and installation of meters, there is a potential conflict of interest, real or perceived, if the same providers set the training and accreditation standards for installers. Training and safety standards could be compromised in an effort to cut costs and boost profit margins. To ensure the maintenance of standards and neutrality, we recommend that the accreditation scheme be administered by NSW Fair Trading or an independent third party.

We urge the Department of Industry not to compromise the skills and training standards for metering installers and to retain the Accredited Service Provider scheme.

MEA would be eager to be involved in any further discussions on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Jody McGann
State Manager - NSW

D Nettlefold & Sons Pty Ltd, trading as SUDA Electrical, owner, David Nettlefold, gives the undertakings set out in this letter.

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Owner, SUDA Electrical

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Witness

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Print Name

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Witness Print Name

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Date

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Date