Gas Networks 2050 Access Arrangement Customer Forum 6

GZ

**Tuesday 15 August 2023** 



#### Acknowledgement of Country

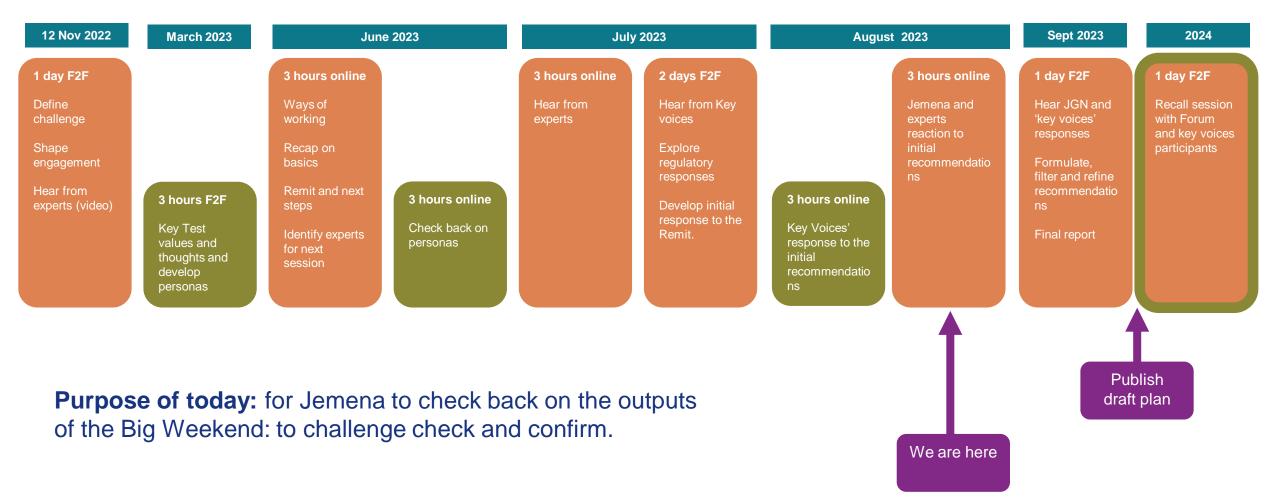
We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands upon which we operate and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, and culture.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging.

**Pictured**: artwork by Aboriginal artist Chern'ee Sutton from Mount Isa for our Group's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan



## Our journey





### What we'll be doing tonight

		Lead	Activity
	How Jemena should manage uncertainty		
100 mins	How Jemena should meet customer expectations	Jemena	Challenge
	Moving towards renewable gas	Energy sector experts	
	Accelerating capital recovery		
30 mins	A new approach to asset management	Jemena	Check
	Digital metering		
	A new approach to connections		
30 mins	Supporting vulnerable customers	Jemena	Confirm
	Permanent disconnections		

# Our ways of working





#### Inclusive

- Loudest voice is not always the right one
- Give everyone the opportunity to be heard
- Listen and be respectful
- Be adaptive and sensitive of where people are coming from in terms of culture background

#### Questioning

- Provide different perspectives so we can look at a problem from different angles
- Identifying what we don't know is hard but necessary
- Ask questions and engage in slow critical thinking



#### Participating

- No idea is wrong
- Get involved/engaged with the process to the best of one's ability
- Focus on open communication and listen to different opinions

## **Navigating the Zoom Room**





### Log on to GroupMap



Browse to **join.groupmap.com** and enter invite code

C85-DD4-95E

https://join.groupmap.com/C85-DD4-95E 🗇



**Challenge** Managing uncertainty Meeting customer values Moving towards renewable gas



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### The remit

Australia is transitioning to net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

We see a role for Jemena Gas Networks in the transition and beyond 2050. However, there is more and more uncertainty in the energy sector, and cost of living pressures and energy prices are rising.

We want to adapt and act now so we can create our future, but we need the support of our customers to do this.

Can we do this in a way that is fair for customers over the next five years, and beyond, whilst managing uncertainty and remaining affordable in the future?

# How should Jemena manage uncertainty?

#### You said:

- Transparent communications between Jemena and customers e.g. cost structure, timeframes for change.
- Holding Government accountable on renewable gas options and customer impacts.
- Research and development and strategic investment.
- Meeting customer expectations.

#### We're committed to:

- transparent
   communications with
   customers
- continuing to talk to government about gas policy.

#### We're wondering:

- how could we prepare our business, and our network for a possible scenario where the network is smaller, whilst also keeping options open?
- how could we support our customers, whichever scenario pans out?

#### How should Jemena meet customer values?

	You said	We understand this to mean	We're wondering
Reliability Planning	Benchmarking and lesson-learning case studies of current projects globally are crucial. Validate risk assessments to make sure we are on track with reliability planning and risk. There will be no increased risk of fires and explosions after the transition due to proper risk mitigation where required. This applies to home and appliances.	We understand from you that reliability is important and we consider risk management of all assets (e.g. pipes, meters and valves) when managing the transition.	We are curious about how this has been articulated in your recommendations, for example do you prefer deferring asset replacement for 5 years or targeted replacements across the network?
Environment	Where it benefits the customers, new competitors must be allowed. Other than the net zero goal, all aspects of environmental impact (e.g. energy and land use) must be considered.	The regulatory framework for gas is currently being updated so that pipeline service providers cannot be involved in the production of renewable gas. Instead, we must facilitate new sources of renewable gas connecting to our network. We note the environmental impact (energy and land use) and will report on these annually through our ESG requirements. Jemena is a sole distributor or business so that's why it's regulated.	Noting how we're regulated, we're curious about what this could look like when you say that competitors must be allowed?

#### How should Jemena meet customer values?

Value	You said	We understand this to mean	We're wondering
Fair	Significant changes to the system (e.g. new incompatible fuel) should not be charged to the current customer base. This would apply for new products and customers would not be automatically signed up to this. Customers can also choose other energy sources.	Customers should not pay to invest in the network to make it compatible with 'incompatible fuels' ie hydrogen at more than a 10% blend	Is our understanding correct?
Choice Planning	Use of various energy sources (e.g. solar, wind, other electracy sources) as a society must be investigated and factored in for investment and planning purposes.	Using various energy sources including electricity (i.e. solar, wind, and coal) and gas (i.e. natural gas and renewable gas). We're looking at what's within our control. Jemena Gas Networks is NSW based and is the focus of this reset (recognising Jemena also has electricity assets in Victoria and are completing a separate price reset process for this).	We're curious what 'various energy sources' means to you?
Affordable	Seeing the high level of bill / financial stress experienced by Australians, we expect costs to be maintained close to current levels. Therefore, any redundancy affecting the transition (business or asset) must be managed affectively.	We think you are saying that Jemena should manage our business prudently and effectively with a good eye to the future; and that we should not pass necessary costs onto the customer as a result of the transition.	Are you saying that business efficiency is the best way to manage affordability amidst uncertainty and the transition. Or is there something else you'd like us to understand?

# **Challenge questions**

- Small groups
- Reflect on the questions
- Report back on one key insight each

#### Moving towards renewable gas

No connections	Support	Expedite
1 (3%)	22 (59%)	14 (38%)
No new connections, use some biomethane to reduce natural gas demand.	<ul> <li>Support! As we have a better understanding the benefits the impact and environmental factors</li> <li>Support - as it gives a choice and feel like its more suitable option</li> <li>Plan conservative approach until more more policy focus is known</li> <li>Preferable up till 2030 - can assess further then if its worth to continue then or expedite</li> <li>Support as there is no directive for alternative gases. Can't sustain these customers. However this decision may change later depending on government</li> <li>Support - change happens slowly towards a positive greener future</li> <li>\$3 is manageable</li> <li>Because of cost hydrogen for only business Look at hydrogen for commercial?</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Expeditebut support customers who can't meet the costs impact - Why I need renewable energy for the environment</li> <li>Expedite: Because renewable gas should be an option/choice for the customers who want to use gas and who have gas as a priority as compared to electricity</li> <li>Jemena will cease to exist otherwise</li> <li>Very important - we need to focus on different gas options and utilise all options - learn from other countries</li> <li>Faster the better - Better for the environment - cost is minimum</li> <li>Sends a strong message that Jemena is serious about Net Zero target</li> <li>Expedite as cheaper long term</li> <li>Expedite with biomethane because the gas is happening regardless. Put hydrogen on back burner wait for price to come down and technology to catch up. \$6/year is nothing in comparison to over \$1000 bill/year</li> </ul>

#### The reason for this preference:

People want to invest in renewables. This choice gives more flexibility and is a more cautious approach.

#### Why this preference is fair for customers:

There is more time for people to be informed. This is a more conservative approach to raising consumer bill prices.

#### Jemena should keep in mind:

- Policies change at any time.
- Technology may change especially beyond 2030.
- [There is] unclear Government policy.
- The voting was close.

### Getting ready for the fishbowl

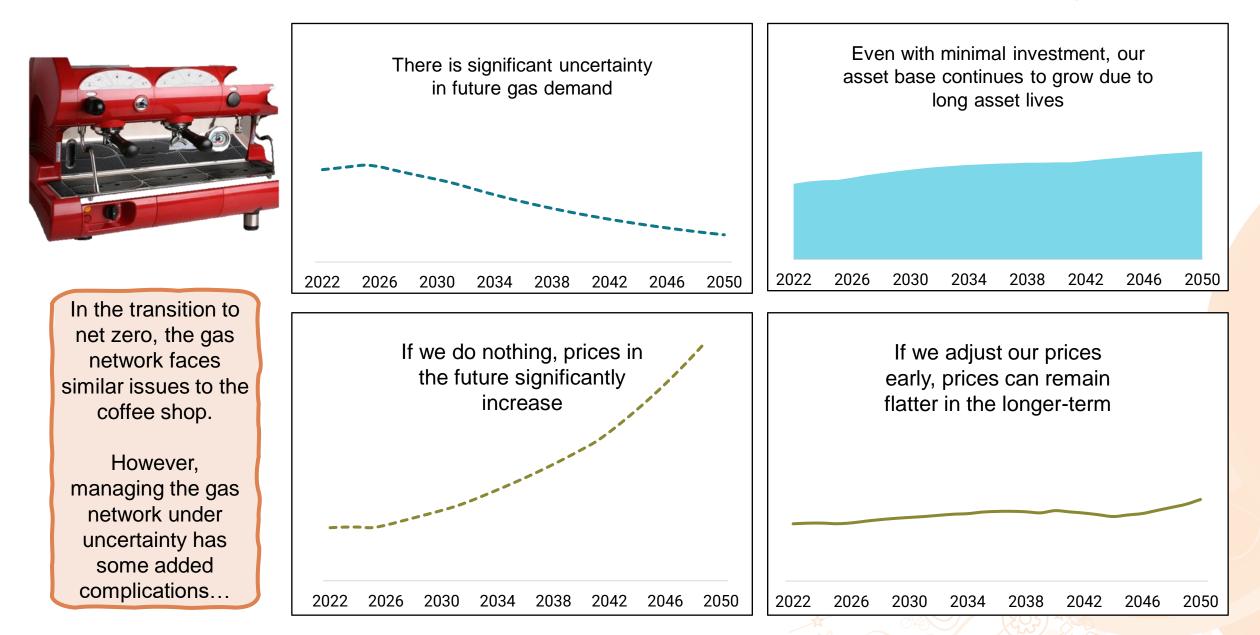


**Check** Accelerating capital recovery Asset management Digital meters





#### Reminder – accelerated capital recovery



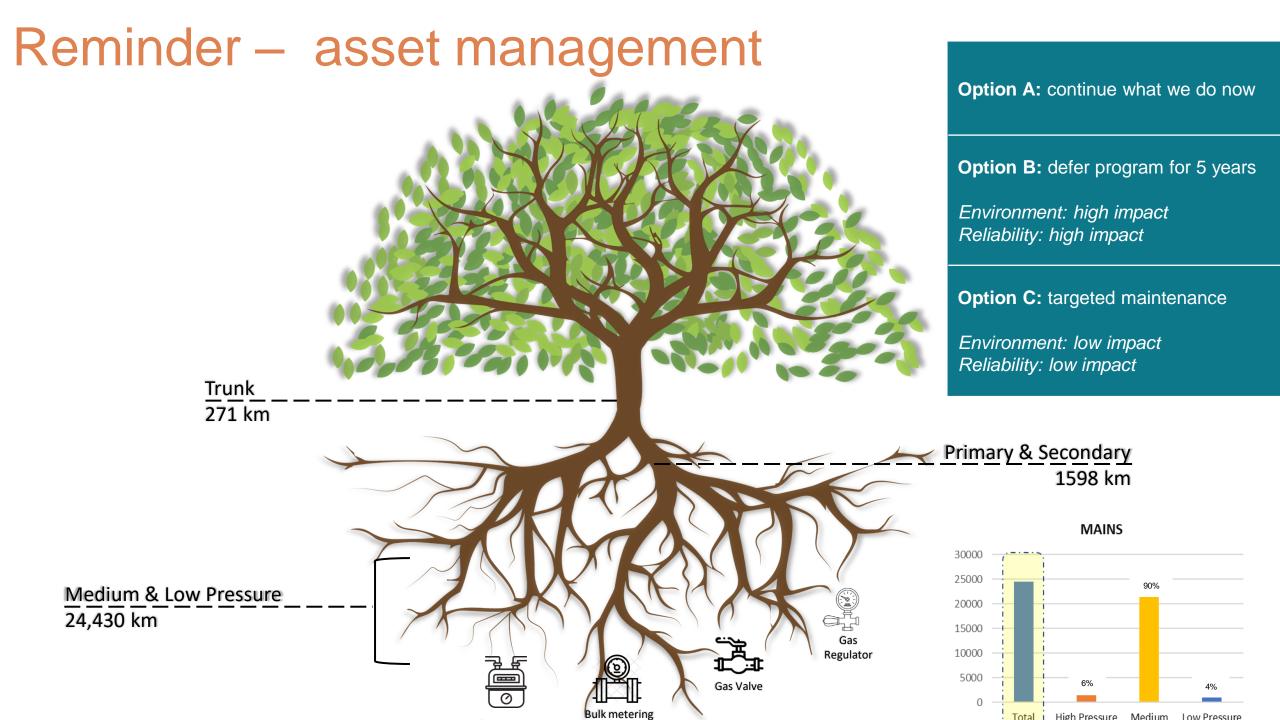
# What you said: accelerated capital recovery

\$300m	\$500m	\$700m
15 (44%)	15 (44%)	4 (12%)
Still depends on government policy. Is acting too quickly on asset recovery jumping the gun? 300m as there is no certainty at that time customer point of view there is no need to invest more price change needs to be gradual as policy	Keep middle to have less - shock Keep in middle to serve all incl Jemena+future+ customers it's midway - do this but also review in 2- 3 years/shorter than 5 years if this is the right path still Customers cannot shoulder all the risk	Given there's both a state and national hydrogen funding sources, hydrogen is something the government is preferred to embrace. Because of that it's reasonable to invest more to
May change in the future Uncertain on end of gas so low. And may change on government decision	Middle for fairness of all customer. Too much increase = loss of some who can't afford	allow for it to be realised Flatter prices long term will hold a bigger customer base meaning fairer costs to remaining
I place a greater value on a dollar today rather than the future. So want the least impact on bills initially Bring on electrification	Moderate response until future is clearer Reg Response slider - 15% its affordable for consumers in consideration of other costs/commitments	customers. Increased responses need to be presented as an investment in future-environment - affordability and fairness
Unsure if a future in gas is viable but Jemena/retailers should be investing so that their business exists - not so much customer responsibility	If bill impacts are accurately calculated to account for decline in gas usage (i.e. no bill shock for "invested customers")	Since in the long term its going to benefit more. However, it could be negotiated / communicated with the customers to avoid bill shock
Keep impact low - High bills will drive customers away	I support this option (or even higher) as long as vulnerable customers are properly supported	

The reason for this preference: A moderate approach is needed. Jemena needs to protect customers against bill shocks. But need to keep increases moderate. Assets need to be recovered faster so the investment can take place when the time is right.

Why this preference is fair for customers: Because it balances business and consumer needs in the longterm.

Jemena should keep in mind: Impacts on vulnerable customers and keep investing once the future is clearer.



# What you said: asset management

Option A	Option B	Option C
0 (0%)	18 (51%)	17 (48%)
	<ul> <li>Extremely important, let's prepare plan Defer - should end up electric hare</li> <li>But may (change) opinion later on due to a clearer directive by government</li> <li>Why: provide room to understand/learn uncertainties and make better prediction to which path is the optimal one</li> <li>Makes sense to diversify sources of energy subject to change with future technologies</li> <li>Delay but in the context of R &amp; D and improved repair/detection</li> <li>Possibility of leaks are the lowest</li> <li>Would rather least cost up front. Also we don't know what cost saving innovations that might arise in future, so would rather target immediate</li> <li>Wait until there is a concrete plan from the government</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Seems more suited to a "gas future" while maintaining safety</li> <li>As then you have the ability to efficiently upgrade the system</li> <li>Benefits both short and long term according to outcome</li> <li>I would choose B but would be concerned of the impact in 5 years when a clearer decision is made to move forward that costs would jump as less has been done for the last 5 years</li> <li>if flexibility is maintained to manage costs (i.e. stick to projected bill impacts by adjusting pace)</li> <li>Thinking in terms of what is most likely to be a future with more electrification, it makes sense for rehabilitation should be targeted</li> <li>Best in terms of long term expenditure. Appears to be more effective</li> <li>Prefer to make this decision with more complete information on the future when better known</li> </ul>

The reason for this preference: The future is uncertain. This puts off expensive decisions until more info is available. There is no impact on profitability and no immediate impact to customers.

Why this preference is fair for customers: Safety will be maintained so no negative impact on customers.

#### Jemena should keep in mind:

- New investment may be required and better investment in safety and reliability.
- The voting was close, so either option 2 or 3 could be considered (pause or reduce replacement).

# Reminder – digital meters

#### **Benefits**

Accurate and on-demand reads

Safety for meter readers

Able to remotely disconnect

Avoid bill shock

Smaller size



#### Challenges

More expensive than regular (mechanical) meters

Investment in uncertainty

### What you said: digital meters

Do nothing (0 meters)	Aged / defective (8,000 meters)	All, hard to access (36,000 meters)	Hard to access, aged and defective (70,000 meters)	Hard to reach, aged and defective, and internal (245,000 meters)
4 (10%)	8 (21%)	6 (15%)	11 (28%)	10 (26%)
Do nothing - no impact on bills. This isn't a high priority Who cares? Bigger fish to fry I'm not convinced that this will be beneficial to the customer and a good way to spend \$\$ How is digital metres a priority?!?!?	Replace where necessary, don't create more waste Replace if old is broken to digital - replace for hard to reach places - don't replace if not broken or easily accessible Only replace ones required for reliability. Don't add unnecessary costs to make customers disconnect Only if necessary. Not all places need new ones More reasonable in time of uncertainty	Significant upscale digital Upgrade- reliable- new tech - internal and hard to access should be digital A moderate solution Over time, things need updating and people are rural Replacement when needed makes the most sense Moderate solution to make progress while avoiding pushing customer bills too high	Replace all over time. More efficient accurate and productive Replace all mech meters but becoz(sic) Jemena saves on cost of meter readers, do not pass cost of e-meters to customers in full Safety concerns for old/defective/hard to access meters Replace them. There old, breaking down, in unsafe places. Digital ones are new with good technology long lasting batteries and safe to use. Why charge us? Makes sense to change it. Replace them	Easier for everyone - change us of digital meters in general Please go ahead and install digital meters to replace expiring mechanical meter. We don't want want uncalculated bill production or bill shock. Presume manufacturer or retailer to absorb some cost of digital meter. After all if no digital meter installed manufacturer earns nothing. So much cost saving from not having to send person to read meter. Avoid personal injury and work compensation claim from dog bites, site injury/accidents

Jemena should roll out a program to replace all meters with digital metering but a program for those with the greatest need including the vulnerable using 'knock to stay connected' type model.

### What we want to check

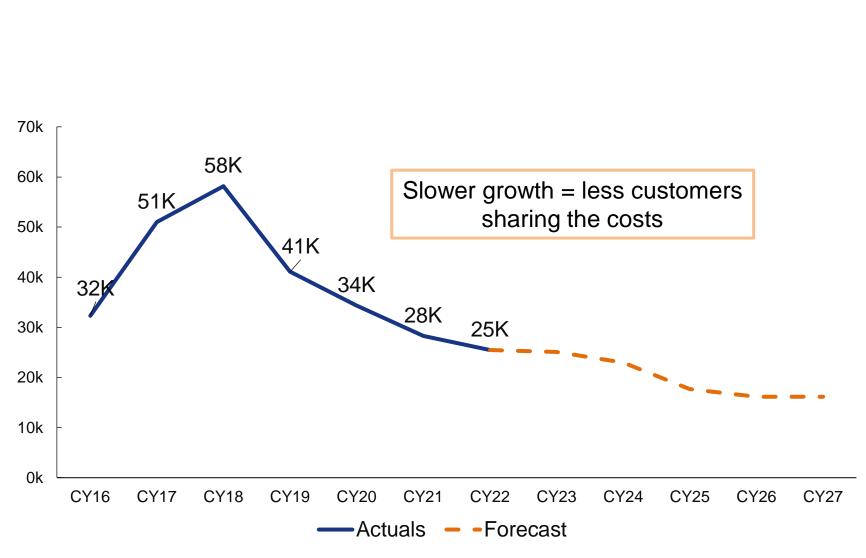
Response	We heard	We propose to test
Accelerating capital recovery	Speed up capital recovery, but keep it fairly 'slow and steady'	Accelerating recovery of around \$500 million
Asset management	Don't proceed with the current asset management approach, but a split between deferment and a targeted approach	A targeted rehabilitation approach to ensure the safety of the system
Digital meters	Proceed with a digital meter roll but a range of views on the extent	What do you need to land more clearly on one option. What should we be trying to achieve?

#### Confirm

New connections Supporting vulnerable customers Permanent disconnections



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Example of a connection to a residence (a basic connection)

Example of a connection to a new estate (a negotiated connection)

#### Reminder – new connections

### What you said: new connections

Low upfront	upfront Medium upfront		
9(26%)	15 (43%)	11 (31%)	
Communal support minimises individual burden	Keep it in the middle to encourage new customers to connect and keep existing customers to stay.	Disincentivise until biogas is in place	
Low still as the uncertainty around gas. However, could change later on due to government decisions	Fairness to provide room for innovation and larger customer base	We should be actively discouraging new connections to incentivise change to electric	
Happy with the current arrangement	People need middle ground and may think more rationally before making new	High as new connections will taper	
Those who want to connect should have the lowest fees to incentivise them. Then the user base increases so costs can be spread across more people	connections Keep it fair among new and old customers	Doesn't disincentivise connections and doesn't penalise existing customers too much	
Asking customers more \$ at the connection might them not to connect/that could	Higher percentage of costs should be held by new customers and Jemena	Fair personal choice to connect to gas. It's about choice!	
negatively impact Continue to incentivise connection! Cost of living very high, may lose too many customers	A part of the connection fee could be charged from the customers who are reconnecting after renovation or rebuilding. Whereas the customers who are getting new connections for the first time, their charges could completely be	Highest cost to the individual making a new connection may make them decide to not connect gas. Fewer customers means less money supporting the	
Trying to ensure a larger customer base by asking new customers to pay such a large	shared between the whole customer base	company and customers as a whole	
amount will mean people won't choose to connect = snowball to mean less customers, les affordable, less options for energy	While its important to encourage new customers a nominal share in the cost of connection helps future proof everyone	We can always reduce contributions once/if biogas is viable	

The reason for this preference: This will reduce the impact on existing customer base especially when falling growth is considered.

Why this preference is fair for customers: User pays hence reducing impact on existing customers (at least in part).

Jemena should keep in mind: Impact on public's perception about choosing gas. This may increase a negative view about adopting gas.

#### Reminder – vulnerable customers potential focus areas

Non-exhaustive

Awareness	Accessibility	Action
Building a network of support for customers experiencing vulnerability	More accessible language	Single point of contact
Education program	Enhanced social media presence and greater visual information	Priority support for customers experiencing vulnerability
Supporting to build resilient communities	Support hub	Cross utility programs

# What you said: supporting vulnerable customers

Maintain	Do more	
11 (29%)	27 (71%)	Jemena needs to provide
Retailers should step up more	Do more. To invest for long-term ensuring support for customers and ability for more people to remain customers.	education and awareness program for high priority
There should be a permanent solution	Do more - regular information highlighted in our bills so they are reminder of potential help	vulnerable customers by
Provide link for vulnerable client to upload their bill to help them understand their bill	Increase as we can make savings elsewhere within the company	understanding all levels of vulnerability, which includ
better. Help them to upload photo of meter reading to prevent bill shock	You should have been doing this years ago	communicating and / or
Maintain - it's working	Do more: as the living costs raising the people need more support. In a way to communicate/more accessible for more people	translating clearly by lette
More support needed - ageing population	Do more (with less) can we maintain the same budget but produce more	and emails, environmenta
Jemena continue normal levels BUT	outcomes for the vulnerable customers	issues and financial costs
individually increase support to those in your community outside of Jemena! Support your neighbours, invest in resources for your	Do more! Only minimal talks on being more inclusive and and needs to be stronger focus on the vulnerable and make them feel more supported	(statistics / factsheets).
community	No brainer! Even \$1/yr more is negligible. \$0.30c a year is nothing knowing that I am helping someone vulnerable	Jemena needs to take a approach to communicate
Need to phase out and provide xxxx and change	Do more and consider sensitive approach for vulnerable customers by perhaps a means test or affordability results	all customers including C elderly and not tech savv
More awareness but also testing/audting to avoid xxxx and make sure people in need actually have access	Do more. Consider discounts such as 20% to 30% off annual gas bills for extremely struggling customers customers	Jemena must cater to
Maintain current support. This area should be	This needs to be raised in price!	diversity of customers.
he domain mainly of the retailer	There is a need for more standardised monitoring process to check	, i
Maintain, especially for flexible payment plans	whatever cost is going in, its effective and the outcomes are positive and really working for vulnerable customers	
Maintain as current - launch more support programs	Provide support to first time vulnerable. Education necessary among all. more vulnerable people need to know about the support programs available	

### Reminder – permanent disconnections



## What you said: permanent disconnections

Individual pays	75%	50%	25%	Everyone pays
26 (70%)	1 (3%)	6 (16%)	1 (3%)	3 (8%)
It is not fair for overall customer base to shoulder the cost of the luxury home None - Individual decision - user pays. Understand why disconnection is happening There should be a penalty if you disconnect to avoid exacerbating a shrinking customer base Choice is customers if renovating or knock down rebuild, they can afford it others shouldn't pay this cost when they re- connect. Subsidise the reconnect fee only Disconnecting customer should pay, not shared by others as connection cost was already passed to all Individual pays for removal. The person making the choice should bear the responsibility Why should other customers have to pay for other customers choices and allocated costs.	Not much impact	Share costs so there is incentive to larger customer base. Look to provide incentives for re-connecting to ensure future customers. Jemena must keep a solid customer base to provide choices + not lose customers Keep it half-way, less dramatic Sharing the cost 50% is fair to both individual customers and those staying on the network	25% individual pays But 10% if disconnecting from system not compatible with new fuel	Share cost - incentivise disconnections! Sucks for you if you're left behind I don't support funding more fossil fuels so it would be good if more people left Incentivise people leaving until biogas (sorry Jemena)

Keep cost of permanent disconnection at actual cost. Maintain current arrangement.

Estimation of time frame to make decisions four future with gas. Ultimately, Jemena needs to maintain customer connections and continue its growth. Disconnections shouldn't be shared among the whole customer base because it is not fair.

Incentives to reconnect. By following these points to develop the draft plan, Jemena will ensure fairness to customers and the ongoing viability of the gas network, now and in the future.

## What we want to confirm

Response	We heard
New connections	A range of views for sharing the cost of new gas connections, with a majority preference for a medium to high upfront contribution to connect.
Supporting vulnerable customers	A clear majority preference for doing more to support vulnerable customers
Permanent disconnections	Clear preference for a 'user pays' model for permanent disconnections

#### Thank you!

Any feedback: GasNetworks2050@jemena.com.au

Login to your private online community to discuss what you heard today:

yournetwork.jemena.com.au/login



