

5 June 2024

Attention of: Network Outage Review Panel

By email: networkoutagereview@deeca.vic.gov.au

EWOV SUBMISSION TO THE NETWORK OUTAGE REVIEW

Dear Rosemary, Gerard and Kevin,

Thank you very much for allowing the Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria (**EWOV**) to present to the Network Outage Review Panel (the **Panel**) on 27 May 2024 (the **Meeting**). As discussed in the Meeting, EWOV has agreed to provide written insights to inform the Panel's consideration of relevant issues. EWOV considers that these insights are particularly relevant for informing the following elements of the Panel's Terms of Reference (**ToR**).

- Distribution businesses' preparedness to administer the Prolonged Power Outage Payment program and other forms of Relief and Customer Support.
- Distribution businesses' tools and systems to communicate proactively with customers and external authorities, including SMS, call centres and effective information platforms and services, such as outage trackers.
- The identification of best practice systems, resources and technologies for managing extended outages, and the need for industry wide adoption.

In this submission, we:

- Provide a brief overview of EWOV.
- Provide a summary of EWOV case insights related to the storm event on 13 February 2024 (the **Storm Event**).
- Outline key observations stemming from our assessment of our case insights.
- Identify potential areas of improvement to support better consumer and market outcomes for future storm and other natural disaster events.
- Identify materials that we consider are relevant for the Panel's consideration of best practice systems, resources and technologies.

EWOV overview

EWOV is an independent service that investigates and resolves complaints. We deal with complaints in Victoria's electricity, gas and water sector, covering most companies that offer these services to consumers.

EWOV is an independent and impartial dispute resolution service. We look at the facts and circumstances of every complaint to make a fair and reasonable decision as quickly as possible. We also provide information to consumers, and we can refer consumers to other support services when relevant.

We also identify and investigate potential systemic issues and share our insights with stakeholders to try and influence positive consumer and market outcomes.

Summary of EWOV case insights

EWOV has received at least 253 complaints that are directly related to the Storm Event. The Storm Event is one of the primary drivers of recent EWOV complaints. For example, between January and March 2024, EWOV received 322 unplanned outage complaints (the most common EWOV case category for Storm Event related complaints) which is 445% higher than the 72 complaints EWOV received in the same quarter last year.¹

The primary causes of complaints relating to the Storm Event were issues with consumers accessing compensation and provider communication relating to the Storm Event. Of the 253 complaints:

- 217 (85.77%) related at least in part to consumers facing difficulties accessing compensation. 158 of the 217 cases (72.81%) relate to difficulties accessing the Prolonged Power Outage Payment (**PPOP**) and 67 (26.4%) related to other issues with compensation such as accessing Guaranteed Service Level (**GSL**) payments.²
- 31 (12.25%) related at least in part to consumers raising issues with how their providers communicated with them in relation to the Storm Event itself.³

We have provided further thematic insights in relation to each of these issues below. Details of specific case studies relating to each of these thematic insights are included at [Appendix A](#).⁴

PPOP related complaints

Theme	Details
General confusion relating to PPOP	<p>Consumers reported that they had received conflicting information and advice about their eligibility for PPOP payments. This led to consumers making PPOP claims and them being rejected despite:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being told being they were eligible by their provider and/or community representatives at recovery centres; • receiving direct notifications from providers informing them they were eligible and encouraging them to apply; or • understanding they were eligible due to representations made in the media or other communications by government representatives and/or representations on provider websites.

¹ Please note that not all unplanned outage complaints relate to the Storm Event i.e. some complaints relate to other unplanned outages that occurred in the same period. However, the Storm Event is the primary driver of the difference in the data across the two periods i.e. there was no similar Storm Event in January to March 2023.

² Please note that there is some overlap in these cases i.e. instances in which consumers faced difficulties in accessing both GSL and PPOP payments.

³ As above, there is some overlap with the compensation cases i.e. instances in which consumers raised issues both with communication and accessing compensation related to the Storm Event.

⁴ Please note that each of these case studies are Assisted Referrals. This means that the consumers had spoken to someone at their provider but the complaint remained unresolved when they raised their complaint with EWOV. In these instances, EWOV refers the matter to a higher-level complaint resolution officer at the provider. This means that each of the case studies we refer to are based on consumer representations of what occurred and have not been confirmed and/or verified by the relevant providers.

Theme	Details
<p>Specific confusion about the methodology used to determine PPOP eligibility</p>	<p>Consumers reported being confused about specific PPOP eligibility in three primary circumstances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Period off supply – The confusion related to whether the eligibility criteria was a consumer being off supply for seven days or 168 hours. • Eligibility for the small business payment – The confusion related to whether a consumer who ran a small business from their home could access the small business PPOP payment even if they had a residential National Meter Identifier (NMI). • Consumers with multiple NMIs – The confusion related to whether a consumer who had multiple NMIs at one property was entitled to multiple PPOP payments i.e. payments in relation to each NMI.
<p>Factual disputes</p>	<p>The factual disputes primarily related to how long consumers were off supply for i.e. consumers indicating that they had been off supply for more than seven days and their provider indicating they had not. As part of factual disputes, consumers often reported that their neighbours or other people in their neighbourhood were able to access PPOP payments but they were not. There were two common themes as part of the factual disputes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermittent periods off supply – These factual disputes related to the period consumers were off supply when their supply was intermittent after the Storm Event i.e. whether the period off supply was just the initial period consumers were off supply after the Storm Event or was the cumulative amount when consumers experienced multiple periods off supply after the Storm Event. • Daylight savings – Multiple consumers reported issues in how their time off supply was calculated because of daylight savings. For example, in one case the provider indicated that the power was restored at 11:16pm and the consumer claimed that this did not account for daylight savings and the actual time was 12:16am.
<p>Strict application of PPOP eligibility criteria</p>	<p>These complaints related to circumstances where providers rejected consumers PPOP claims despite them being close to meeting the eligibility criteria. For example, in one case the consumer reported having their PPOP claim rejected because they had been off supply for 165 hours instead of the requisite 168 hours.</p>
<p>Issues with the PPOP application process</p>	<p>Consumers reported experiencing multiple issues with the PPOP application process including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having their claims rejected without being told the reason for the rejection; • extended delays in the application process; • having to complete applications multiple times; and • issues with their details being accurately recorded such as having to update personal information and payments being made into wrong accounts.

General compensation related complaints

Theme	Details
Consumers complaints relating to not receiving compensation and/or confusion about what compensation was available to them	The vast majority of these complaints related to consumers being denied a GSL payment or other compensation for losses incurred as a result of the Storm Event. The primary loss consumers reported was food loss stemming from not being able to turn on their fridge.
Confusion with the compensation application process	Multiple consumers reported being confused about how to make applications for compensation such as GSL payments. For example, in some cases consumers tried to make applications for GSL payments directly with their retailer.
Delays in receiving compensation and its form	These complaints primarily related to consumers wanting to access compensation quickly and the form in which they had or would like to receive compensation. For example, issues with GSL payments being applied to consumers' bills as a future credit.
Issues with the application process	Consumers reported difficulties making applications for compensation. For example, in response to the Storm Event, one provider established an Energy Resilience Community Fund which among other things aimed to provide immediate support to individuals and small businesses most impacted by the Storm Event who were not eligible for other relief payments. One consumer reported having difficulties making an application for assistance because the application could only be made online and they did not have access to a computer.

Communication related complaints

Theme	Details
Issues with providers' applications and information	These complaints primarily related to issues with one provider's outage tracker which was not available for an extended period after the Storm Event.
Extended delays in providers responding to consumers	These complaints primarily related to consumers not receiving responses from their provider to emails and other forms of communication for long periods.
Issues with providers sending timely and accurate communications	These complaints primarily related to providers either not providing information to consumers or providing inaccurate information. For example, consumers not receiving SMS confirmation when their supply had been restored or receiving inaccurate information e.g. a SMS saying their supply had been restored when it had not been.

EWOV observations

We have four primary observations stemming from our case insights.

Firstly, the amount of compensation available to support consumers impacted by the Storm Event does not appear to equate to the losses they have likely incurred. We consider this issue is particularly prominent when consumers:

- were off supply for extended periods but not for the required 168 hours to access PPOP payments; and/or
- when outages caused consumers to lose significant amounts of food.

Secondly, there appears to be a high degree of consumer confusion about what compensation is available and when consumers are entitled to it. We consider this is likely being driven by a range of factors including different compensation programs being administered by different groups, information being recorded in different places, information being convoluted and complex with different information being provided by different people. To inform this observation, we assessed all potentially relevant compensation relating to the Storm Event including where information is available and potential sources of consumer confusion. Further details of this assessment are available at [Appendix B](#).

Thirdly, it was difficult for consumers to access up to date and accurate information about the Storm Event. We consider this was likely driven by a range of factors including:

- consumers facing difficulties knowing where to find information e.g. knowing who a relevant distributor was and finding their outage tracker;
- issues with websites and outage trackers providing up to date and accurate information; and/or
- providers either failing to make contact or providing inaccurate information to impacted consumers.

Finally, there appears to be limited incentives for providers to restore supply to consumers as soon as possible. For example, major event day payments (which providers pay to consumers) are capped at \$90 regardless of how long consumers are without power and other compensation such as PPOP payments are funded by governments rather than providers.

Areas of improvement

EWOV considers there are five primary areas of improvement to help address issues we have identified in our observations. These are:

- strengthening relevant obligations;
- introducing additional incentives to encourage faster restoration of supply;
- improving compensation amounts and delivery;
- improving awareness and understanding of compensation; and
- improving communication and engagement.

Strengthening relevant obligations

We consider there are opportunities to strengthen obligations relating to how providers engage with consumers after storm and other natural disaster events. For example, an overarching obligation requiring providers to treat

consumers efficiently, honestly and fairly could be introduced. We consider this is particularly relevant for how providers engage with consumers during unplanned outages. Current obligations relate to:

- providers making a 24-hour telephone service available; and
- including in a prominent part of their website's information on the nature of unplanned interruptions and an estimation when supply will be restored.⁵

These obligations require providers to take certain prescribed actions or have certain arrangements in place. They do not prescribe a manner in which that engagement is to occur, in order to meet wider or different consumer needs and community expectations of appropriate support during unplanned outages.

We consider the standard of efficient, honest and fair treatment, which is applied in other sectors, may be more useful in driving careful consideration by providers of consumer and community needs, and a timelier response. In this way, the circumstances of consumers and communities can be considered and taken into account e.g. where the outage means a community has no access to online information and needs it via different channels and/or different support.

Incentives to encourage faster restoration of supply

We consider there are opportunities to introduce additional incentives to encourage providers to restore supply more quickly after storm or other natural disaster events. For example, providers could be made responsible for all compensation payments relating to storm and natural disaster events instead of governments. Further, compensation amounts could be increased and/or based on how long consumers were off supply i.e. the amount of compensation could increase the longer a consumer is off supply and incorporate cumulative periods off supply when supply is intermittent after a storm or other natural disaster event.

Compensation amounts and delivery

We consider there are opportunities to expand and/or change the way compensation is delivered to consumers impacted by storms or other natural disaster events. For example, compensation criteria such as PPOP could be applied differently i.e. not being contingent on a specific number of hours and instead based on the length of time consumers were off supply and/or the amount of financial loss they incurred. Further, there are opportunities to:

- Encourage greater consumer autonomy in how they access compensation. For example, at the request of a consumer, GSL payments could be paid directly to consumers rather than applied as credit on their next bill. This is particularly important as our case insights indicate that consumers are at times in need of financial support quickly to respond to storm or other natural disaster events.
- Limit the burden on consumers. For example, more compensation payments could be automated in certain circumstances.

Awareness and understanding of compensation

We consider there are opportunities to improve consumer awareness and understanding of relevant compensation. For example, a single resource could be created that includes details of all potentially available

⁵ *Electricity Distribution Code of Practice 2023* (Vic), clause 11.3.

compensation. In addition, relevant criteria could be simplified to improve consumer understanding. This would have the ancillary benefit of facilitating EWOV resolving relevant consumer complaints to EWOV more efficiently.

Communication and engagement

To address identified communication issues, we consider there are opportunities to improve how providers engage with consumers during storms or other natural disaster events. For example, a single resource could be created that could allow consumers to access all relevant information relating to outages during storm and other natural disaster events rather than having to visit individual provider websites and outage trackers. This could potentially be linked to the compensation resource referenced above. This would likely help to streamline consumer access to all relevant information related to storm or other natural disaster events.

Best practice systems, resources and technologies

In considering best practice systems, resources and technologies, we encourage the Panel to consider:

- Ofgem's 2022 Arwen Report (**Arwen Report**) and changes Ofgem has implemented following the Arwen Report.⁶
- The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts 2024 report relating to the Optus outage of 8 November 2023 report (**Optus Outage Review Report**).⁷

In relation to the Arwen report and subsequent Ofgem actions, we would like to emphasise the following:

- Ofgem increased the maximum amount of compensation consumers can access as a result of severe weather events from £700 to £2,000.⁸
- Ofgem made it simpler for consumers to access compensation payments by making bank transfers available.⁹
- Compensation amounts are linked to how long consumers are off supply for.¹⁰ For example, during certain storm events, consumers can access £80 if their power has been cut-off for 48 hours and an extra £40 for every 6 hours afterwards.¹¹
- Further changes are being implemented to enable more consumers to automatically receive compensation.¹²
- Network companies are responsible for paying the compensation.¹³

In relation to the Optus Outage Review Report, we would like to emphasise two recommendations. One recommendation relates to compensation and other relates to communication during major service disruptions.

⁶ Ofgem. (2022). [Storm Arwen Report](#). This report relates to network companies' response to a storm event that resulted in 40,000 consumers being off supply for more than three days and 4,000 consumers being off supply for over a week

⁷ The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. (2024). [Review into the Optus outage of 8 November 2023 - Final Report](#). This report relates to the Optus Network suffering a nation-wide outage in 2023.

⁸ Ofgem. (2023). [Ofgem announces rise in storm compensation cap from £700 to £2,000](#).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ofgem. (2022). [Storm Arwen Report](#), p. 43.

¹³ Ibid.

- **Compensation** – The Optus Outage Review Report recommended that an industry wide standardised approach to the form of resolutions available to consumers affected by a crisis or large-scale outage should be implemented. The Optus Outage Review Report noted that this would assist the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman to address mass events without requiring large numbers of individual complaints, investigations and resolutions.¹⁴
- **Communication** – The Optus Outage Review Report recommended for protocols relating to notifying and communicating major service disruptions to be improved. As part of the improvements, it noted that there should be clear and detailed requirements for government communication and collaboration through a central communication point in government.¹⁵

¹⁴ The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. (2024). [Review into the Optus outage of 8 November 2023 - Final Report](#), p. 10.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Appendix A – Case studies

Please note that each of these case studies are Assisted Referrals. This means that the consumers had spoken to someone at their provider but the complaint remained unresolved when they raised their complaint with EWOV. In these instances, EWOV refers the matter to a higher-level complaint resolution officer at the provider. This means that each of the case studies we refer to are based on consumer representations of what occurred and have not been confirmed and/or verified by the relevant providers.

Case reference	Theme	Details
PPOP compensation		
A	General confusion relating to PPOP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported issues with their provider relating to the Storm Event. 2. The consumer indicated they were off supply from 13 February 2024 to 19 February 2024 and 22 February 2024 to 23 February 2024. 3. The consumer spoke to two representatives from their provider who advised they were eligible for the PPOP payment. 4. The provider advised the consumer to go online to apply for PPOP, which they did. 5. The consumer had their claimed rejected because they had not been offline for the requisite period. 6. The consumer considered they had evidence that they were off supply for seven days.
B	Specific confusion about the methodology used to determine PPOP eligibility – Business payments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported issues with their provider in relation to an unplanned power outage due to the Storm Event. 2. The consumer reported being off supply for 10 days. 3. The consumer indicated that they ran a plumbing business from their home. 4. The consumer advised that their provider rejected their power outage claim advising the power bill was not in the business name and is in their personal name. 5. The consumer advised they have attempted to try resolve the issue with their provider, but it remains unresolved.
C	Specific confusion about the methodology used to determine eligibility for PPOP payments – Period off supply	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported issues with their provider with regards to PPOP. 2. The consumer was affected by the prolonged outage after the Storm Event. 3. The consumer reported that they were off-supply for a period of eight days. 4. The consumer applied for the PPOP and was advised they were ineligible as they did not meet the requirement. 5. The consumer reported that they were advised by their provider that the regulations have changed from number of days to number of hours.

Case reference	Theme	Details
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The provider referred the consumer to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.
D	Factual disputes about how long consumers were off supply – Daylight savings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The consumer reported issues with their provider in relation to an unplanned outage. The consumer was affected by the Storm Event. The consumer reported that they advised their provider that they were without power until 12.01am 20 February 2024 and they would be eligible for PPOP. The provider declined the application and indicated that the power was restored at 11.16pm. The consumer advised that Melbourne is in daylight savings time and considers the power was restored at 12.16am. The consumer advised that for previous outages, their provider would send out messages to inform them when the power had been restored. On this occasion it did not send a message.
E	Factual disputes about how long consumers were off supply – Intermittent periods off supply	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The consumer reported issues with a compensation claim after the Storm Event. After the Storm Event, the consumer indicated they were off supply for two weeks and they hired a generator to keep their fridge on. The consumer reported that they had no internet and had to take leave from work. The consumer applied for the compensation payment and had not received a response from their provider when they contacted EWOV. The consumer contacted their provider to seek an update on their claim. The consumer reported that their provider advised it had manually investigated the claim and advised the consumer was ineligible as there had been intermittent periods of power restoration during the two weeks which meant they had not been off supply for the requisite period. The consumer advised they were running a generator and were unaware of any power being restored. The consumer advised they had not received any SMS or other communication regarding the power being restored during this time.
F	Strict application of PPOP eligibility criteria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The consumer reported having issues with their PPOP application. The consumer submitted an application on 28 February 2024. The consumer reported following up with their provider on multiple occasions. They said they were advised the claim had been sent for manual review and it gone through various reallocations and escalation processes. The consumer reported that on March 2024 they received an SMS from their provider advising that their claim had been denied. The consumer contacted their provider who advised that the SMS had been sent in error.

Case reference	Theme	Details
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The consumer reported being frustrated with the inconsistent information from their provider. 6. After EWOV become involved, the consumer reported that their provider contacted them and advised that they were not eligible for PPOP. The provider advised that eligibility depended on hours and the consumer was short by two to three hours.
G	Issues with the PPOP application process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported experiencing issues with their provider in relation to PPOP. 2. The consumer advised that they were off supply for seven days due to the Storm Event. 3. The consumer reported that they made an application and received a message from their provider advising that there was an error with their meter. 4. Each time the consumer completed the form they received an error message. 5. The consumer advised that they contacted their provider and were told that there were several people with the same issue but it is was unable to provide further information. 6. The consumer reported having a disability and being very stressed about the delay.
General compensation		
H	Consumers complaints relating to not receiving compensation and/or confusion about what compensation was available to them	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported experiencing issues stemming from being off supply. 2. The consumer reported that they were without power from 4.30pm on 13 February 2024 to 12.00 pm on 16 February 2024. 3. The consumer advised that they threw out the entire contents of a large fridge and freezer and the cost of the spoiled food was approximately \$450 to \$500. 4. The consumer contacted both their distributor and their retailer who both advised that they could not make claims for food wastage. 5. The consumer was dissatisfied with that outcome.
I	Confusion with the compensation application process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported issues relating to receiving incorrect information about GSL payments. 2. The consumer advised that in the past they were automatically credited on their account for GSL payment due to power outages. 3. The consumer advised that they were without power for over a week after the Storm Event. 4. The consumer received their latest bill without any credit for the GSL payment.

Case reference	Theme	Details
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The consumer contacted their retailer and it advised them that it could not obtain this information from the distributor and that the consumer needed to contact the distributor directly. 6. The consumer reported being concerned and frustrated as they were not aware of this being a requirement in the past.
J	Delays in receiving compensation and the compensation form	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported issues with their provider in relation to a GSL payment delay. 2. The consumer reported experiencing a power outage from 13 February 2024 to 14 February 2024. 3. The consumer believed they were entitled for a GSL payment as the power was off for more than 12 hours. 4. The consumer reported calling their provider twice about the payment delay and was not happy with the customer service.
K	Issues with the application process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported difficulties accessing hardship payments relating to the Storm Event. 2. The consumer contacted their provider and was referred to multiple different departments who provided different information. 3. The consumer reported that they could not make an application for the provider's Community Relief Fund because they did not have access to a computer and applications had to be made online. 4. After EWOV intervened, the provider contacted the consumer and sought their bank details. The consumer indicated that the provider would make a payment but there were delays.
Communication of the Storm Event		
L	Issues with providers' applications and information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported issues with their provider in relation to the Storm Event. 2. The consumer reported that the provider's outage tracker was not available for three days and its phone number rang out due to high demand. 3. The consumer reported that they received the first message from their provider on Tuesday 13 February 2024 at 4:34pm stating that the power was restored with their NMI number. 4. At 10:39pm on the same day, the consumer reported that they received a second text stating that due to the storm damage there would be a prolonged outage for multiple days. 5. The consumer reported receiving multiple texts over the next few days with various estimations as to when the power would be restored. 6. The consumer reported receiving the thirteenth text at 5:14pm Monday 19 February 2024 stating that another update would be provided the next day. The

Case reference	Theme	Details
		<p>consumer indicated that they had not receive any communication from this point forward until the date that they contacted EWOV.</p>
M	Issues with providers' applications and information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported experiencing issues stemming from the Storm Event. 2. The consumer reported that they considered their provider had mismanaged its communication and updates compared to other distribution companies. The consumer considered that its provider's outage tracker provided no useful information, unlike the sites from the other companies that showed maps and actual street names. 3. The consumer reported that they called their provider, and their provider hung up on them. The consumer also believes that their provider did not respond on social media. 4. The consumer considered that their provider sent useless text messages that did not provide practical information e.g. whether they should move out or stay put for longer. 5. The consumer reported that their provider sent inconsistent information about when supply would be returned.
N	Extended delays in providers responding to consumers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported experiencing issues with their provider in relation to the Storm Event. 2. The consumer reported that they had contacted their provider multiple times and had not received a reply. 3. The consumer reported experiencing a power outage on 13 February 2024, until 18 February 2024 then again on Thursday 22 February 2024. 4. The consumer reported that their school childcare and kinder was also closed due to the outage and they were forced to have a week unpaid leave from work. 5. The consumer advised that they sent emails to their provider on 22 February 2024 and spoke with their provider on 27 February 2024. The consumer then sent an email sent on 5 March 2024 and had another phone call with their provider. Their provider advised that no action could occur for two weeks. 6. The consumer said that their provider did not provide any services to the area to assess damage for four days.
O	Issues with providers sending timely and accurate communications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The consumer reported experiencing issues with their provider in relation to the Storm Event. 2. The consumer advised that they had contacted their provider ten times to confirm an estimated time for when the power would come back on. 3. The consumer reported that they received an SMS advising that their power was on. The consumer then contacted their provider who advised that the SMS was sent in error.

Case reference	Theme	Details
		<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. The consumer advised that there was no information available on their provider's outage tracker.5. The consumer advised that their child had cancer and needed to rest at home.6. The consumer advised that their provider indicated that supply would be returned by 6pm on 15 February 2024 but this did not occur.

Appendix B – Compensation assessment

Type	Details	Location	Confusion
PPOP	Payments funded by the Victorian Government and Australian Government, to provide financial relief to households and businesses that were without power for seven or more cumulative days due to extreme weather events on Tuesday, 13 February. Residential payments are up to \$1,920 and small business payments are \$5,760.	Some government websites, distributor websites and newspaper articles.	Eligibility for the payments is unclear (see PPOP part of the Case insights section here).
Major event day payment	\$90 payment when there is more than 12 hours of an unplanned interruption on a major event day.	Essential Services Commission (ESC) website, newspaper articles and some distributor websites.	A major event day is defined in the <i>Electricity Distribution Code of Practice</i> as a day classified as a Major Event Day by the IEEE standard 1366-2012: IEEE Guide for Electric Power Distribution Reliability Indices, where the “reporting period” referred to in that classification comprises a regulatory year. This is complex and likely difficult for a consumer to determine.
Other GSL payments	Payments range from \$40 to \$380 depending on a range of factors in the <i>Electricity Distribution Code of Practice</i> .	ESC website, some distributor websites, some government websites.	The <i>Electricity Distribution Code of Practice</i> includes an exception when an unplanned outage is found to be caused by events outside a distributor’s control.

Type	Details	Location	Confusion
			This is complex and likely difficult for a consumer to determine.
Emergency Relief Payment	Victorian government payment available to provide assistance, such as with fixing homes damaged by storms.	Victorian and some other government websites.	Limited advertising of payments and the eligibility criteria is unclear.
Ausnet Energy Resilience Community Fund	Ausnet initiated fund that amongst other things, aims to provide support to individuals and small businesses impacted by the Storm Event through relief payments.	Ausnet website, ESC website and some newspaper articles.	Limited advertising and limited eligibility e.g. confined to consumers with a health care card or a pension card.