

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Metering and Billing by Power and Water Corporation**

**18 February 2013**

The Commission's functions and powers are set out in the *Utilities Commission Act*. Specific responsibilities regarding a particular industry are assigned to the Commission under relevant industry regulation Acts. The Commission currently has specific responsibilities in electricity, water and sewerage industries.

The objectives of the Commission are to promote competitive and fair market conduct, prevent the misuse of monopoly or market power, facilitate entry into relevant markets, promote economic efficiency, and protect the long-term interests of consumers.

In early January 2013, the Commission queried Power and Water Corporation on how it would apply the increase in regulated retail tariffs from 1 January 2013 if meters are not read either on 31 December or 1 January.

Power and Water Corporation advised the Commission that customers on 'accumulative meters' will have their usage pro-rata split over the old and new tariffs and this process has been traditionally used for 1 July increases in the past.

Power and Water Corporation is able to identify customer usage before and after 1 January for customers on an 'interval meter'.

The Commission understands that, for those customers who claim to have dramatically reduced their usage from 1 January 2013 and have documented evidence to support their claim, Power and Water Corporation will adjust their account accordingly. The Commission's view is that this process appears reasonable.

Customers who are concerned about how their account has been calculated or would like to know what type of meter they have, should speak to Power and Water Corporation in the first instance. Customers should try to resolve any disputes regarding metering or billing with Power and Water Corporation directly.

If the concerns cannot be resolved, they can be directed to the NT Ombudsman who has responsibility for investigating complaints from small electricity, water supply and sewerage services customers of Power and Water Corporation.

The Commission's role in investigating complaints against licensed electricity participants (including Power and Water Corporation) is more limited and governed by the *Electricity Reform Act*. The Commission may only investigate a complaint if the complaint is on the grounds that the entity is engaging in conduct that is contrary to one (or more) of its licence conditions; or the electricity entity is engaging in conduct that is contrary to the objects of the *Electricity Reform Act* or the *Utilities Commission Act*.

**Any queries should be submitted in writing to the Commission**  
**[utilities.commission@nt.gov.au](mailto:utilities.commission@nt.gov.au)**.