

⬇ Our Organisation

CHARTER OF SERVICE

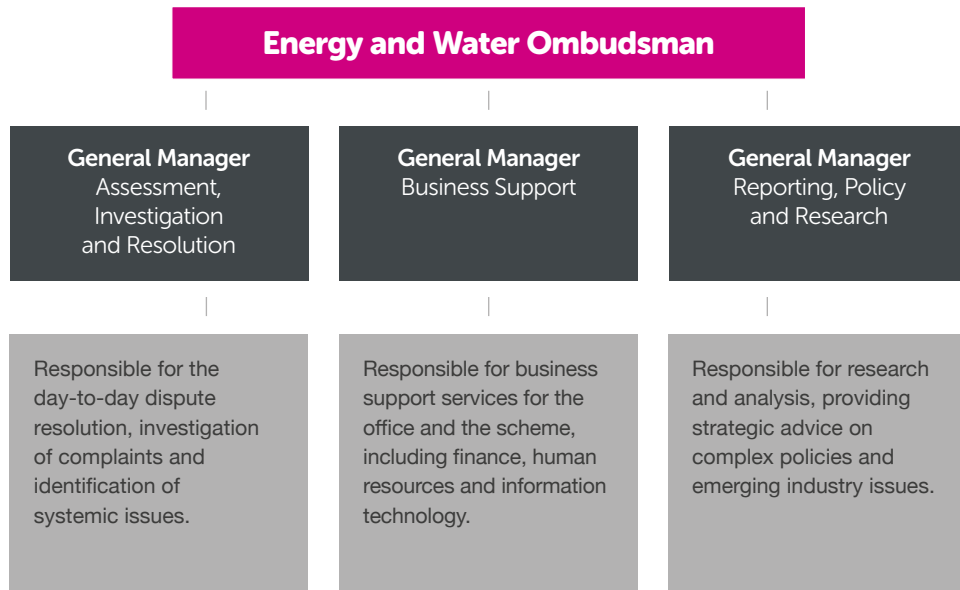
Our Charter of Service sets out the standard of service residential and small business energy and water customers, and energy and water entities, can expect if their dispute is referred to us for investigation and resolution.

The charter outlines:

- what customers and scheme participants can expect from us
- how we deal with disputes
- how we ensure easy access to the scheme
- how we assist customers from different cultures and backgrounds
- what we require when acting on behalf of a customer
- how customers can help us
- how scheme participants can help us
- how complaints and feedback about our services is handled.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

We have three teams who work under the leadership of the Energy and Water Ombudsman.





Corporate governance

Our corporate governance framework guides how we manage our business, minimise our risks, and meet our legislative obligations. Our systems are based on strong ethical foundations and our commitment to fairness, accountability and transparency.

A number of committees oversee our corporate governance, including:

- Executive Management Group
- Advisory Council (see page 12 and 36)
- Audit and Risk Management Committee (see page 37)
- Information Steering Committee

Executive Management Group

The Executive Management Group (EMG) assists the Ombudsman in the stewardship of EWOQ and plays an important role in:

- setting and monitoring the strategic direction
- monitoring financial and non-financial performance
- promoting innovation, research, continuous improvement and quality client service
- ensuring the optimum use of human, financial and information resources and infrastructure.

In 2018-19, our Executive Management Group members were:

Jane Pires Energy and Water Ombudsman

Jane Pires was appointed as the Energy and Water Ombudsman in December 2016. With more than 25 years' experience in customer service and complaint management, Jane has extensive senior executive experience and a Master of Business Administration majoring in dispute resolution.

As Energy and Water Ombudsman, Jane leads the scheme in Queensland, providing a timely, effective and independent way of resolving disputes and ensuring complaints are handled in an expeditious manner. She is committed to providing all Queenslanders with equal access to the service, contributing to improved service delivery in the energy and water sectors, and fostering a culture of excellence within the team.

In September 2018, Jane was also appointed to the role of Land Access Ombudsman for Queensland.

John Jones General Manager – Assessment, Investigation and Resolution

John Jones leads the complaint investigation and dispute resolution functions of the office and represents EWOQ at forums with state and national jurisdictional regulators, and industry and consumer representatives. He first joined the organisation in July 2007 as General Manager Operations for Energy Ombudsman Queensland.

Lyn Stevens General Manager – Business Support

Lyn Stevens manages the business support function of EWOQ, which she established in 2007 while in the role of Manager Corporate Services for Energy Ombudsman Queensland. Lyn has extensive experience managing a comprehensive range of business support activities, organisational change processes, and developing and implementing effective and efficient systems and processes.

Ilona Cenefels General Manager – Reporting, Policy and Research

Ilona Cenefels is responsible for leading advice on complex policies and emerging issues and overseeing the reporting and research activities within EWOQ. She joined the organisation in June 2010 as Manager Policy and Research.

Visit
www.ewoq.com.au/corporate-governance
 to view the framework.





Testimonial

“ We wish to thank the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland and your amazing Investigation and Conciliation Officers for listening to us and providing us with support and advice to fight for our rights as consumers.

We had the opportunity for our voice to be heard and clarification given on what we believed an unfair situation we had found ourselves in.

We are so thankful for the help provided by the Ombudsman in being so approachable and representing our interests by first of all hearing us, investigating our query and addressing our complaint so quickly. This matter has now been resolved and we thank you for advocating for us.

We honestly believe that without your intervention this matter would still be causing us stress and anxiety and it is only because of your assistance that we can now breathe easy and move on with our lives.

Advisory Council

The Advisory Council monitors the independence of the Energy and Water Ombudsman scheme and provides advice to the Ombudsman on the operation of the Act (see page 10 for the Chair's message and members).

Council members represent the interests of the sector and must act in the best interests of the scheme when exercising their council responsibilities.

The Chair may hold office for up to five years, however, there is no restriction on the length of terms of ordinary members. On appointment to the Advisory Council, members receive an induction to help them understand the scheme and how the office operates.

The *EWOQ Advisory Council Handbook* details the roles and responsibilities of council members, while the *Advisory Council Code of Conduct* helps council members discharge their responsibilities under the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*. While not a prescriptive code, it contains the ethics, principles and values which council members have agreed to put into practice. Both documents are available from our website.

Council members are entitled to meeting fees approved by the Governor-in-Council, and reimbursement of reasonable costs incurred for attending council meetings, based on the *Remuneration Procedures for Part-time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Boards*.

See Appendix 5 for details of fees paid to council members.

Visit
[www.ewoq.com.au/
advisory-council](http://www.ewoq.com.au/advisory-council)
to learn more.



Risk management and accountability

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is an integral part of strategic and business planning, and the everyday activities of EWOQ.

In accordance with section 15 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*, EWOQ is committed to implementing risk management strategies that ensure efficiency and effectiveness in meeting our objectives, while also providing a safe and healthy workplace for staff.

ARMC observes the terms of the Audit and Risk Management Committee Charter and has due regard to Queensland Treasury's Audit Committee Guidelines.

During 2018-19, the committee met on four occasions and invited both external and internal audit representatives to regularly attend meetings.

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC) are appointed by the Energy and Water Ombudsman. The committee provides independent comment, advice and counsel to assist the Ombudsman's oversight of:

- the integrity of EWOQ's financial statements and internal controls
- compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements
- the process relating to internal risk management and control systems
- the performance of the internal audit function

Key achievements for 2018-19

- Endorsed the financial statements 2017-18 and considered all audit recommendations by external audit.
- Endorsed the strategic and annual internal audit plan for approval by the Energy and Water Ombudsman.
- Monitored ongoing risk management activities within the organisation.
- Monitored progress of the annual internal audit plan and outcomes from audits undertaken.
- Reviewed the Risk Management Framework and Policy.

The two external members of the committee are Queensland public sector employees and consistent with the *Remuneration Procedures for Part-time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Boards* do not receive additional remuneration in relation to this committee.

In 2018-19, the committee members were:

- Irene Sitton, Chairperson
- Fiona Treneer, external member
- Ilona Genefels, internal member
- Karen Hendry, internal member

INTERNAL AUDIT

Our internal audit function is undertaken by the Corporate Administration Agency (CAA) and managed through a service level agreement. The internal audit workplan is directed through a strategic and annual plan developed in consultation with the Audit and Risk Management Committee and approved by the Ombudsman, which has due regard to professional standards and the *Audit Committee guidelines: Improving accountability and performance* issued by Queensland Treasury.

Internal audit activities can include financial, compliance and operational reviews; information system and data integrity reviews; and special review assignments as requested by management.

This team reports to the Audit and Risk Committee and operates independently of our management and our external audit function.

Key achievements for 2018-19

Provided reports to the Audit and Risk Committee and the Energy and Water Ombudsman on the results of internal audits undertaken, as well as monitored and reported on the implementation of recommendations:

- compliance with AS/NZ 10002 2014 Industry Benchmarks
- systemic issues
- email and internet usage

BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT

Our external service provider CAA maintains a business continuity plan which provides for the recovery and/or continuity of our information technology, human resources and finance functions. We continue to develop our risk registers and have started developing a comprehensive business continuity plan.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND RECORDKEEPING

As a public service office, we are required by legislation and government standards to keep and maintain proper records of our activities. We are committed to meeting our governance responsibilities under the relevant Acts, applicable legislation, state government Information Standards, Queensland State Archives Standards and best practice methods outlined in applicable International Standards.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

We are committed to providing the community with open and transparent access to information about our services and activities. Consistent with the *Right to Information Act 2009* and *Information Privacy Act 2009*, we proactively release information held by our office unless, on balance, it is contrary to the public interest to provide the information.

All requests for information received during 2018-19 have been released under Administrative Access Scheme. We also participated in the Office of the Information Commissioner Queensland (OIC) Privacy Awareness Week and contributed to the s185 annual report.

EXTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION SCHEME

Since 2015-16, we have been recognised as an external dispute resolution scheme by the Office of the Australian Information Commission (OAIC) under the *Privacy Act 1988*.

We are required to report on serious or repeated interference with privacy or systemic privacy issues relating to these bodies to the OAIC every quarter. We are also required to provide OAIC with an annual report including a range of data relating to complaints investigated under this jurisdiction.

MANDATORY ONLINE REPORTING

The following datasets are published on the Queensland Government open data website (www.data.qld.gov.au):

- consultancies
- language services
- overseas travel