

Consumers Sector Representatives – Steven Hall, Mark Schembri, Tony Thoma, Adam White

- The consumer sectors support an integrated approach within the industry with respect to communications with customers during outages. The past year saw two significant outages that materially impacted businesses, namely the flooding in July and the ice storm in December, and which emphasized the gap in communications. The industry should look at improving its communications regarding the restoration of power and the provision of meaningful information so that customers can effectively manage activities within their own organization.
- Support looking at how global adjustment (GA) estimates are incorporated into LDC billing to better align with the way the market is transacting. If an LDC's bill is based on the first GA estimate and HOEP turns out higher than forecasted, as it did in January, consumers can see higher costs.
- Consumers support the IESO's work on demand response and hope for increased utilization of demand-side resources and believe that the retail sector can contribute.
- With respect to the Province's conservation first directive, consumers feel that there are a number of benefits to this directive and hope the OPA and IESO will work together effectively to implement as many initiatives as practical in support of this directive.
- The issue of communications between consumers, distributors and transmitters is a concern during extreme weather events as identified by other stakeholders.
- Question the robustness of the infrastructure to withstand these extreme weather events and the status and deferral of maintenance of these assets. How do consumers know that the right amount of reinvestment and reengineering is being conducted on these assets?
- Under the current price structure, with the convergence of time-of-use rates and the high percentage of the bill being consumed by global adjustment, there is little financial motivation for residential consumers to participate. The IESO, and possibly the OPA, should bring forward rate schemes to the Ontario Energy Board and Ministry of Energy for consideration some best practices on how to engage residential consumers in the market as learned from other jurisdictions such as Oklahoma Gas & Electric.
- Electricity prices are by far the most important priority for consumers.
- Consumer buy-in requires engagement and understanding. The industry needs to get back to basics, without energy jargon, to help general consumers make sense of pricing, including concepts such as global adjustment. Industry cannot move forward with engagement without acknowledging concerns and rebuilding trust.
- There is a growing concern that the industry will lose supporters of marketplace if efforts aren't made to engage and educate. He's hearing from some municipalities that as global adjustment increases, the value of price signals and forward contracts is lessening, causing some organizations to feel that their energy management programs are no longer needed.

- The type of outreach and timeliness of communications during outages is critical, particularly for commercial and institutional consumers that are served by multiple LDCs. While some LDCs, such as Enersource, did an excellent job during the recent outage, of providing timely updates on their website, others did not.
- Minimize burden of paperwork that create barriers for commercial and industrial consumers to participate in market. Make it work for the consumer first before everything else.
- Consumers want to be engaged and to have control over what goes on in their own homes. It is important that demand response participation is voluntary.
- The greatest challenge facing **major power consumers is the** high and escalating cost of energy in **Ontario**. It is necessary to understand what the contributing factors are and what steps can be taken to lower those costs of energy. There should be proactivity on the part of the sector to understand and explain. The IESO has an important leading role in this endeavour. It is important to explore potential efficiency opportunities, understand the timelines and prioritize them in order to chart a course to extract those efficiencies. To do this, it is important to understand how the market works, the physical dimensions and physics of the power system, and what are the co-dependencies between gas and electricity markets. The IESO, as the origin of all market information is transparent; the gas market is an example of a market where there is no such record keeping and no transparency.
- The primary role for the IESO is to be an impartial, transparent, fair administrator of the market and as such, it should be held to the highest standard. While it does a very good job, there is a failing of transparency in some elements of the IESO's governance and management of the market. In this role the IESO has an obligation to promote its transparency, and communicate and engage on the issues. There is a need for co-ordinated, simple and clear communications.
- There are potential opportunities to be explored for consumers to participate in capacity markets.
- Some of the barriers to efficiency opportunities are institutional, maybe legal and therefore political, not fundamentally financial, economic or physical. The IESO is positioned to be the impartial facilitator for efficiency raising innovations in the IESO-administered market by developing them or allowing them to happen in the market more broadly.