

# **Retail Data Project Post Implementation Review**

Electricity Authority

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# Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The Electricity Authority (The Authority) wish to explore how retailers view and administer data provision for the Retail Data Project (RDP). The Authority are canvassing opinion across Third Party Providers (TPP) themselves which will provide a broad picture of how the RDP is working.

## 1.2 Methodology

The report outlines the responses from telephone interviews conducted with electricity retailers and gentailers in New Zealand. In total 13 respondents were interviewed out of 18 potential respondents provided by The Authority.

Fieldwork was conducted from 4th September to 3rd of October 2018.

Due to the small sample size the counts have been reported instead of percentages in the tables.

# Executive summary

The volume of requests for consumption data were widely spread across the retailers interviewed. While some retailers had received low demand for consumption data since the code changes in February 2016, four retailers had logged 1,000 or more data requests in that time.

If third party players become more active in the market you can only expect demand to increase.

Many retailers already had some systems in place to process requests for consumption data. However, less than half had automated systems in place to deal with consumption data requests from agents, and only one had an automated procedure to deal with requests for tariff data from a third party provider. Cost was considered a key barrier to setting up new systems to deal with data requests, particularly for smaller retailers.

Delays in provision of data were seen to have declined as all parties learnt what was required and the most efficient way to manage requests on both sides.

To improve the efficiency and standardisation of data provision, some called on The Authority to educate both agents and consumers about the process required when requesting data under the RDP.

## 2.1 Consumption data

### Access

Over half of respondents interviewed indicated the code changes in 2016 prompted their organisation to set up access paths for consumption data.

### Number of consumption data requests since code changes

Across all types of requests (from automated avenues, specifically requested consumption data and via agents) three out of 13 respondents received less than 100 requests over the last two years. Three respondents received a moderate number of requests of 100 up to 999 requests. While four respondents had 1,000 or more requests since 2016. Three respondents could not estimate the number of requests since the code changes.

### Authorisation process

Respondents indicated that they need written or verbal consent via telephone from their customers to allow an agent to access consumption data on the customer's behalf. Each respondent stressed the importance of ensuring written or verbal consent before processing an agent's request for consumption data.

The authorisation process is heavily dependent on what the customer requests. Factors that impact on the authorisation process are; the length of authorisation granted to agents, the method of requests and the level of demand for agent requests for consumption data.

#### Refused to provide consumption data to any agent

Seven of the 11 respondents who have received consumption data requests from agents indicated they have had to refuse to provide consumption data. The majority of these respondents indicated the refusals were mainly due to inadequate authorisation.

#### Automated procedures for consumption data requests from agents

Five of the 11 respondents who have received consumption data requests from agents stated they have set up automated procedures to deal with these consumption data requests.

Key barriers to setting up automated procedures to deal with consumption data requests from agents included the low level of demand and the cost of implementing an automated procedure.

#### Delayed consumption data requests

Most of the respondents indicated that some requests for consumption data have been delayed beyond the five-business day timeframe. The majority indicated that the delays were experienced in the early stages of the code changes. These were considered minor teething problems around educating both staff, customers and agents about the process.

#### Barriers to providing data

The majority of respondents did not see any barriers to providing data. Although a few did mention that there may be limitations to the data provided, which meant the request may not be possible due to the customer's metering system or that the format of EIEP13 was not customer friendly.

Only four respondents indicated they saw barriers to providing data. Three of these respondents mentioned the cost of providing data was quite large for their organisation. One respondent specifically mentioned the lack of clarity from The Authority in terms of the implication of the Privacy Act impacting on retailers' ability to provide consumption data.

#### Suggestions to make it easier to provide consumption data to agents

There were three main suggestions made by respondents for how The Authority could make it easier for retailers to provide consumption data to agents.

1. The most commonly mentioned suggestion was to educate agents and consumers about the most efficient process for gaining authorisation and requesting data under the RDP.
2. The second suggestion was for The Authority to provide clarity on the application of the Privacy Act in regard to the RDP.

3. Lastly one respondent suggested a central data management system so that all consumption data can be accessed from a single source.

## 2.2 Provision of tariff data

### Automated procedures for tariff data

The majority of respondents have not set up any automated procedures to deal with requests for tariff data from third party providers. Two had not received any requests from agents.

Most retailers that did not have automated procedures, were also not using EIEP14 to send tariff data to third party providers. The main reason for not using EIEP14 was that processes were already in place to provide the data and it was not worth the cost to implement EIEP14.

### Price comparison websites

The majority of respondents provide tariff data to Powerswitch. Seven respondents also mentioned providing tariff data to Switchme and a smaller number stated that they provided data to Glimp.

Generally, most respondents think that tariffs were accurately reflected on price comparison websites. As a high-level comparison, the tariff data on these sites were seen as a reasonably good measure to compare standard pricing as long as the data is kept up to date. However, there were concerns that these websites did not include the non-financial benefits that retailers provide and that consumers did not understand metering configurations which could impact on the results provided by the sites.

Some also believed the websites could confuse consumers as plans were portrayed differently across the various sites.

## 2.3 Connection data API

### Connection data API on the EMI website

Close to half of respondents use the ICP connection data API hosted on EMI. Five said they do not use it and two were unsure if it is used in their organisation. Respondents who used the API mentioned using it for market analytics and general monitoring.

### Suggested data to add to the connection data API

There were a number of suggestions to improve the connection data API. Some of the suggestions related to the addition of specific data fields, while other suggestions were around adding metering information and expanding the API search functionality.

# Report

## 3.1 Consumption data

### 3.1.1 Access

There were a wide variety of ways customers could access consumption data. The most commonly mentioned was the data provided in their bill, followed closely by information provided via the telephone, and customers accessing data from their accounts on the retailer's website. Via email and The Authority registry hub featured at lower levels. Other online tools and a retailer App were mentioned by a few respondents.

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#### Ways customers can access consumption data

<i>What ways can customers access consumption data from you?</i>	
	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
Bill	12
Telephone (call centre)	8
Via website (from their account)	8
Email	7
EA Registry hub/portal	4
Other online tools (Live chat, Facebook)	2
App	1
Post	1

Base: All respondents

Note: Multiple response questions

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When asked about whether agents can use the same avenues to obtain consumption data, most respondents stated that agents can access or get their own login – so long as they have authorisation from the customer.

Some retailers noted that they do not have a platform for agents to log in, but they do provide the consumption data predominantly via email once authorisation has been confirmed. A few retailers noted that a customer may have decided to share their login details with an agent, but the retailer will then generally email the consumption data request directly to the authorised agent.

## Obtaining consumption data

*Can agents also use these avenues to obtain consumption data, if authorised by the customer?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
Agents can get own login/access	7
Customers can give agent login details or digitally authorise access (like online direct credit authority)	2
No	3
Unsure	1

Base: All respondents

Seven of the 13 retailers interviewed indicated the code changes in 2016 prompted their organisation to set up access paths for consumption data. Although a few of these respondents stated that some of these avenues already existed and they only made minor changes or upgrades to their systems.

Most of the remaining retailers (six retailers) indicated they had these avenues already set up, some well before the code changes in 2016.

## Methods of obtaining consumption data in response to 2016 code changes

*Did you set these ways to access consumption data in response to the code changes that came into effect on 1 February 2016? The code changes made it mandatory for retailers to provide up to 24 months of consumption data to customers or their authorised agents if requested.*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
Yes	7
No	6
Unsure	-

Base: All respondents



Most retailers were providing half-hourly data to their customers, provided they have the right metering system such as a smart meter. Daily consumption and monthly data both featured at lower levels. Two retailers indicated that the granularity of data customers receive depends on the customer's request and they will provide the data in whatever way it is preferred.

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## Granularity of data that customers can access

*What granularity of data can customers access i.e. summary data, half-hourly data etc?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
Half-hourly data	10
Daily consumption	2
Monthly data	2
Depends on customer request	2

Base: All respondents

Note: Multiple response question

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### 3.1.2 Number of consumption data requests since code changes

Number of customers accessing consumption data through any automated avenues your organisation has set up

Some respondents stated it was difficult to evaluate how many customers had accessed consumption data through automated avenues. A few retailers said that each of their customers has access to this information since they could log into their account via the retailer website and access the data. A few larger retailers indicated they received over a thousand requests for consumption data via this automated avenue.

#### Number of requests since code changes (2016-2018) – Overall

*How many customers and agents have sought access to consumption data since the code changes? – Overall*

	2016-2018
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Overall requests - All types of requests (via automated avenues, email or letter, and from agents)</b>	
Less than 100	3
100-499	2
500-999	1
1,000-1,999	2
2,000 or more	2
Unsure (across all types of requests)	3

Base: All respondents

Number of customers who have specifically requested consumption data (e.g. via email, telephone or letter)

Some respondents indicated that there was crossover with how they record consumption data requests via email, telephone or letter, and requests via automated avenues. This was due to the retailers' call centre responding to customer requests. If these organisations received a request via email or telephone, the requests were then processed via the automated avenue as this was considered the most efficient way to provide the data to their customers. This meant it was difficult to differentiate the number of consumption data requests via email or telephone versus those provided through the automated process.

Of the respondents who could provide an estimate, most had received less than 500 requests via email, telephone or letter since the code changes.

## Number of requests since code changes across different avenues (2016-2018)

*How many customers and agents have sought access to consumption data since the code changes?*

	Number of customers accessing consumption data through any automated avenues you have set up	Number of customers who have specifically requested consumption data (e.g. via email, telephone or letter)	Number of requests agents make (number of customers the agents are requesting data for)
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>
Less than 100	-	4	1
100-499	-	3	1
500-999	-	-	-
1,000-1,999	2	-	1
2,000 or more	1	1	-
Unsure	10	5	8
No requests	-	-	2

Base: All respondents

### Number of agents who have requested consumption data on behalf of customers

There was limited demand for consumption data requests from agents. Some respondents did not record these requests separately, so were unable to provide a breakdown of these specific requests. For smaller retailers who received a modest number of requests it was not worth the added cost to classify these requests separately.

Two respondents indicated they have not received any requests for consumption data from agents since the code changes. Of those who could provide an estimate (four respondents), they received less than 100 requests since the code changes. In total seven respondents were unable to provide an estimate of the number of requests via agents.

### Number of requests by individual customers (via an agent)

This was a difficult variable for respondents to estimate. Two of the four respondents who provided an estimate of the number of agents who requested consumption data stated they record these requests per ICP. These two respondents have granularity of the number of customers using an agent.

The remaining two were able to provide an estimate of the number of agents who requested consumption data but were not sure about the number of customers the agents were acting on behalf of. Therefore, they were unable to provide an estimate for this variable.

One respondent indicated they recorded the number of requests by individual customers via an agent (per ICP) but was unsure of the number of individual agents those requests came from.

Overall eight respondents could not provide an estimate of the number of customers the agents are requesting data for.

### 3.1.3 Authorisation process

#### Process of authorisation for agents

Most respondents indicated that they need written or verbal consent via telephone from their customers to allow an agent to access consumption data on the customer's behalf. Each respondent stressed the importance of ensuring written or verbal consent before processing an agent's request for consumption data.

Some respondents went into more detail about the process and the information they require to authorise an agent. The information required included, the ICP number, date of birth, account name and customer number. A few respondents mentioned having an authorisation form or spreadsheet to fill out as part of their process of authorising agents.

A few respondents outlined sophisticated systems that link an agent to their customer's account. One required the agent to register in their system, where they were given agent identification number (ID) and login which was linked to the customer they were acting on behalf of. Other respondents just made a note of an authorised agent on their customer's account. Varying lengths of authorisation also impacted on the requirements for authorisation.

#### Variations to authorisation process

The authorisation process was heavily dependent on what the customer requests. Factors that impacted on the authorisation process were; the length of authorisation granted to agents, the method of requests, and the level of demand for consumption data via agents.

The variation in the length of authorisation granted to agents flowed into the authorisation process. Some customers only requested a short time period of authorisation and others were happy to have an agent act on their behalf for an extended period. Respondents stated they were happy to meet customer's needs and so would alter their systems to match the length of authorisation based on the customer's request.

Some respondents stated that the authorisation process could vary by the avenue of requests e.g. email versus telephone contact. There were small variations in authorisation requirements for customers to provide either written signed authorisation or verbal consent depending on how the request was received.

*"All we want is to be comfortable to know that the customer is happy for the data to go through. So however the customer or agent reaches out, we will work to their request – we don't force them to go through a certain hoop."*

A few respondents also noted that some agents at the beginning of the code changes did not have the knowledge of what was required for authorisation. This delayed the process somewhat as retailers needed to recontact agents to assess if they met the requirements for authorisation.

Some respondents stated that they did not have a rigid and formalised process since they received such a small number of requests. Therefore, the authorisation process was worked through depending

on the individual request, and this meant it was very dependent on how the agent requested the consumption data.

*“Because of the volume that we have it is not “hard coded” into the system, and also because the authority didn’t actually get clear about the legal position in respect of the Privacy Act. The EIEP13 process is hardly being used because it is not an effective way for agents to get data. And that meant we haven’t put a whole lot of effort into putting systems around it. Therefore, yes it does vary because it is highly manual.”*

### Length of authorisation granted to agents

Three respondents stated authorisation is granted ‘one time only for any one ICP’. Five respondents had a default length of authorisation granted to agents for any one ICP. Although these respondents did mention being flexible in terms of the length of time based on customer’s requests.

Four retailers specifically mentioned providing indefinite authorisation if a customer appointed a trusted advisor to get this information whenever they want. Only two respondents stated that they would provide indefinite authorisation for an agent regardless of ICP.

### Length of authorisation granted to agents

*How long is authorisation granted for agents?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
One time only for any one ICP	3
Set period of time for any one ICP	5
Indefinite if a customer appoints a trusted advisor to get this information whenever they want	4
Indefinite authorisation for an agent regardless of ICP	2
Depends – will match what the customer requests	2

Base: All respondents

Note: Multiple response question

Generally, when respondents provided a response to this question they clarified by mentioning that it came down to the customer’s wishes. Most respondents stated they could match whatever the customer requests.

*“It would depend on what the customer is wanting. So, if the customer wants them to have unlimited access to it then I would just make a note on their account and send it whenever they request it.”*

### 3.1.4 Refusal to provide consumption data to any agent

Seven of the 11 respondents who had received consumption data requests from agents indicated they have had to refuse to provide consumption data. Four respondents had not refused any agents and two respondents indicated they had not received requests from any agents.

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#### Refused to provide consumption data to any agent

*Have you ever refused to provide data to any agent (as defined above, i.e. they claimed to have the customers consent)?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
Yes	7
No	4
Not applicable – haven't had any requests	2

Base: All respondents

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The seven respondents who had refused an agent's consumption requests were asked how many times this took place and reasons why they refused the request.

The majority of these respondents indicated the refusals were mainly due to inadequate authorisation. For example, missing or incorrect information, expired authorisation, or data requested that related to another provider. These refusals were generally worked through with the agents who mainly needed to provide more information to meet the authorisation criteria.

*"Usually because the written authorisation didn't meet our minimum criteria. E.g. authorisation might have expired or didn't include all the information required (ICP number etc.), it's too old, or it pertained to another retailer."*

One respondent mentioned refusing data due to teething problems during the early stages of the code changes, which had since been rectified.

### 3.1.5 Automated procedures for consumption data requests from agents

Five of the 11 respondents who had received consumption data requests from agents stated they had set up automated procedures to deal with these consumption data requests. Six respondents had not set up any automated systems and two respondents were yet to receive any requests from agents.

#### Automated procedures to deal with consumption data requests from agents

*Have you set up any automated procedures or systems to deal with requests for consumption data from agents?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
Yes	5
No	6
Not applicable – haven't had any requests	2

Base: All respondents

All but one of the respondents who had set up automated procedures to deal with consumption data requests from agents were using both EIEP13 format A and B to respond to consumption requests. The one respondent who was not using this format mentioned using an internal process to respond to the consumption requests instead.

#### Automated procedures to deal with consumption data requests from agents – EIEP13 format

*Does your automated procedure use the EIEP13 format (A or B) to respond to the consumption request?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>5</b>
Yes, EIEP13 format A	-
Yes, EIEP13 format B	-
Yes, both	4
No	1
Unsure	-

Base: Respondents who had set up automated procedures to deal with consumption requests from agents

## Barriers to setting up automated procedures to deal with consumption data requests from agents

For the seven respondents who had not set up automated procedures to deal with consumption requests from agents a significant barrier was seen to be the lack of demand.

Some respondents had already automated their systems to increase the ease of providing consumption data to their customers. This meant that providing the same information to agents required less work, so they had not set up a fully automated system to specifically deal with agent requests.

*“We have tried to automate the process as much as we can for anyone who requests it. Someone has to manually email it out, but the data is automatically pulled in the background for us – so we are not having to manually pull the data each time, if there is a request from the website then that triggers the process, or the same thing will happen if it is requested from the registry.”*

A few respondents who had not set up any automated systems stated the cost-benefit analysis indicated it was not worthwhile; with the costs involved in implementing this change to their systems considered a major barrier. Furthermore, since there was seen to be relatively low demand for this service these respondents have chosen to focus on improvements elsewhere in their business.

*“It is actually quite big. We would need to contract a billing provider to create that option. So, it is a big deal. We would presumably want to offer time of use data over some fairly flexible way of accessing data, in terms of how far back. I would say that would be a pretty big project, several hundreds of thousands of dollars of expenditure on our part. We aren’t very big, so it would be a very material barrier.”*

One respondent indicated their organisation was currently working on an automated process but given their size this will take a significant time to get up and running.



### 3.1.6 Delayed consumption data requests

Most of the respondents indicated that some requests for consumption data have been delayed beyond the five-business day timeframe.

#### Delayed consumption data requests

*The code specifies that requests for consumption data have to be completed within five business days (once retailers have all the required information to verify the identity and authorisation of the consumer to which the request applies) – have requests for consumption data been delayed beyond this timeframe for any reason?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
Yes	8
No	5
Unsure	-

Base: All respondents

The eight respondents who stated there were delays in requests for consumption data indicated that the majority of delays were experienced in the early stages of the code changes. These were considered minor teething problems around educating both staff, customers and agents about the process.

*“There was some internal confusion with the team at times as to what the expectation is in line with the code, so some people had a better idea of what the code mandate was than other people.”*

*“Staff knowledge in terms of the code obligations and the timeframe that it requires.”*

Some respondents noted they received poor quality information or that the information requests were provided in a variety of formats. This required retailers to communicate with the agents or customers to fill in the gaps before they could provide the consumption data.

A few respondents mentioned technical errors in terms of The Authority registry hub/portal requests not correctly emailing or notifying their team of these requests. There were also a couple of respondents who mentioned delays flowing through from metering companies.

### 3.1.7 Barriers to providing data

The majority of respondents did not see any barriers to providing data.

#### Barriers to providing consumption data

Do you see any barriers to providing data?	
	Count
Base: n=	13
Yes	4
No	9
Unsure	-

Base: All respondents

Although a few did mention that there were sometimes limitations to the data they could provide. For example, the request may not be possible due to the customer's metering system or that the format of EIEP13 was not customer friendly.

*"The only barrier would be if a customer wants half-hourly data, but their metering set up doesn't actually have that level of data."*

*"We have always understood and been keen that customers should be able to see their consumption data and potentially agents. Our objection to the EIEP13 was that it was limiting how you could deliver it. And it was sold as a benefit for the customer but in fact it never was, it was always for third party agents and if they had just been honest and said, "this is a way we want agents to have this consistency across the market", then they wouldn't have had the pushback they got. Because they identified that there was a problem where retailers weren't providing customer data to consumers but that wasn't the case. I'm not aware of any retailer who wouldn't give their customer their data if they were asked for it."*

One respondent mentioned there were barriers to providing data in a timely manner when authorisation was not requested in the most efficient and appropriate way.

*"There are potentially barriers to efficiently providing data, one element of that is managing the risk in relation to agent authorisation, the quicker and easier that is, the easier it is to process these requests in a streamlined way."*

Only four respondents indicated they saw barriers to providing data. Three of these respondents mentioned that the cost to provide the data was a key barrier as it was currently a manual process that required significant staff resource.

*"Other than the fact that it can be quite manual at the moment, in line with the code we don't have a choice. So, it's just man hours really. Sometimes it can take a huge amount of man hours to get the data that is required."*

One respondent specifically mentioned the lack of clarity from The Authority in terms of the implication of the Privacy Act impacting on retailers' ability to provide consumption data.

*“The Authority hasn’t been clear about the implication of the Privacy Act in respect of retailers providing data. We do not have a standard functioning system, that means there is no incentive to invest in it, to automate it for the industry, so it has been a regulatory failure.”*

### 3.1.8 Suggestions to make it easier to provide consumption data to agents

#### Education

A number of respondents thought The Authority should focus on educating both agents and consumers on the most efficient way to request data under the RDP. For agents this would help them to request the data in the most efficient way for themselves and the retailers. This also put the responsibility for correct information back onto the agents, which would reduce the burden on retailers. If agents were requesting the information in a way that reduced the number of interactions between themselves and the retailer this would make the process more efficient for everyone involved.

*“Some organisations already send us a pre-signed form by the customer authorising them and that usually makes it quite easy for us to just quickly give the data, rather than trying to get a hold of a customer because that can take time. So that puts some of the responsibility back on the agent.”*

*“It can be quite frustrating that we have to follow the code to the letter, so when agents come in that don’t actually know about the code we can have issues back and forth because we are arguing the point that we can’t actually give them the information they are asking for or we are restricted in a certain way because of the mandate. Sometimes we have had to refer agents to the EA because we are just in a place where we can’t negotiate with them, it is actually out of our hands. To be an agent you have to have a code for the registry, so it would be helpful if they had an overview of what the process was that would make our jobs easier because they would know what to expect coming in.”*

*“We struggle because the information isn’t actually anything that a customer can understand. So, under the code we are not allowed to change any of that data or the format that it is in any way, so we are providing data that basically from a customer’s perspective doesn’t mean anything. If they request it, we have to send it, but they can’t use it for anything.”*

In addition, a few respondents suggested that the EIEP13 formats were not very customer friendly and that The Authority could educate consumers, so they understood the information provided.

*“There is a lot of information that the EIEP13s give that customers don’t need, and we have even had to write up a paper we give to customers on how to interpret the EIEP13 file. So, we have given an explanation of what all of the different codes are, it is pretty industry-centric to be honest. But that was the intent of it right, it wasn’t intended for customers, it was intended for agents.”*

*“In a recent catch up with EA and other retailers they were also saying the number of requests were pretty low and we concurred. EA need to listen to retailers. We all said this is pretty much a failure; it’s a failure in numbers and it’s a failure in customer communication,*

*because it wasn't made very clear to the public that they could get their data and it comes back to whether the customer is engaged or not."*

### The Privacy Act

A few respondents indicated they would like The Authority to provide clarity on the application of the Privacy Act in terms of provision of data under the RDP. Respondents want to be sure they were acting within the legal framework of the Privacy Act. A clear statement from The Authority would help to make sure all parties were complying with both the requirements of the RDP and the Privacy Act.

*"They could provide clarity on the application of the Privacy Act."*

### Central data management system

One respondent suggested that the industry would benefit from establishing one single source of information for consumption data. They noted that other countries have central data management systems so that all consumption data could be accessed from a single point. This would eliminate or at least minimise some of the issues with missing or incomplete metering information.

## 4.1 Provision of tariff data

### 4.1.1 Automated procedures for tariff data

The majority of respondents had not set up any automated procedures to deal with requests for tariff data from third party providers. Only one respondent had set up automated procedures to deal with requests for tariff data from third party providers and two had not received any requests from agents.

#### **Automated procedures to deal with requests for tariff data from third party providers**

*Have you set up any automated procedures or systems to deal with requests for tariff data from third party providers?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
Yes	1
No	10
Not applicable – haven't had any requests	2

Base: All respondents

The one respondent that had set up automated procedures to deal with requests from third party providers stated that their automated procedure uses the EIEP14 format to respond to those tariff requests.

#### **Automated procedures to deal with requests for tariff data – EIEP14 format**

*Does your automated procedure use the EIEP14 format to respond to the tariff requests?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>1</b>
Yes	1
No	-
Unsure	-

Base: Respondents who had set up automated procedures to deal with requests for tariff data

Those who had not set up automated procedures to deal with requests for tariff data from third party providers were asked if they used EIEP14 to respond to these requests. Three respondents used the EIEP14 for sending tariff data to third party providers while three did not. Two claimed to have had no requests from a third party provider, three were unsure, and one said they did not provide tariff data.

## Use of EIEP14 for sending tariff data to third party providers

Do you use EIEP14 for sending tariff data to third party providers? If no – why not?

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>12</b>
Yes	3
No	3
Unsure	3
Haven't had any requests	2
Do not provide tariffs	1

Base: Respondents who have not set up automated procedures to deal with requests for tariff data

Those who did not use EIEP14 were asked why they chose not to use this format. Each respondent stated they already had formats or processes in place to respond to these requests and the cost of implementing the use of EIEP14 far outweighed the benefits to these retailers.

*“We already had formats in place to provide tariff information. Also, the cost/benefit to changing our tools just doesn’t stack up.”*

*“It was getting quite complex for us to try and meet that format; the format is quite prescriptive... I believe it is one we can meet but we haven’t had the numbers of requests to really warrant the work to go down that road of us building something. What we have been sending to date has been sufficient for their needs. We have a couple of different formats depending on what they want.”*

#### 4.1.2 Price comparison websites

The majority of respondents provide tariff data to Powerswitch. Seven respondents also mentioned providing tariff data to Switchme and a smaller number stated that they provided data to Glimp.

There were only a few that chose not to provide data to price comparison websites.

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#### Price comparison websites

*Which price comparison sites do you provide tariff data for?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
Powerswitch	11
Switchme	7
Glimp	4
None	2

Base: All respondents

Note: Multiple response question

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Respondents were asked what tariffs they provide to these sites. The majority of respondents stated they provided their commonly available standard published tariffs. A few indicated they provided their acquisition tariffs.

### 4.1.3 Accuracy of price comparison websites

Generally, most respondents think that tariffs were accurately reflected on price comparison websites. As a high-level comparison, the tariff data on these sites were seen as a reasonably good measure to compare standard pricing as long as the data was kept up to date.

Several respondents did have concerns that price comparison websites were unable to take other factors unrelated to tariffs into account. This meant that the tariff data representing their organisation on these sites did not accurately reflect their whole product offering and failed to present non-financial benefits to consumers. These respondents indicated that there was more to a package than just the pricing and these websites did miss these factors.

*“It reflects the tariffs, but it doesn’t reflect how the tariff applies based on the customer’s consumption. So, it can be where a customer has specific needs and tariffs are only one component, so there could be other benefits to the product we actually sell that is not related to the price.”*

Some respondents mentioned that it could be confusing for consumers comparing pricing across these sites. This was because the price comparison sites use different algorithms and so provided slightly different results for any given consumer.

Another potential source of confusion was seen to be consumers’ lack of understanding about metering configurations. A couple of respondents mentioned that most consumers were not aware of their metering system. This would impact on the correct application of tariffs for a particular consumer and may distort the comparison being made.

*“Switchme is a little bit simpler than Powerswitch. Switchme will say the average meter in this area is this and actually there are absolutely lots of metering configurations. To be fair the end customer, Mr and Mrs Smith will not know what a metering set up is, and they could care less. What they care about is the final result and I would love to educate them, but it is actually quite complex. We have some customers who have 13 different meters on one ICP, so it does get quite complex and at the end of the day do they know what an inclusive meter is? Or a control meter and what it does? The answer is probably not. So, there are quite a lot of meter combinations in the market.”*



## 5.1 Connection data API

### 5.1.1 Connection data API on the EMI website

Close to half of respondents use the ICP connection data API hosted on EMI. Five said they did not use it and two were unsure if it was used in their organisation.

#### ICP connection data API

*Do you use the ICP connection data API hosted on EMI?*

	Count
<b>Base: n=</b>	<b>13</b>
Yes	6
No	5
Unsure	2

Base: All respondents

There were a few respondents who were not aware of the API but showed interest in seeing if it would be useful for their organisation.

### 5.1.2 Reasons for using connection data API

Respondents who did use the connection data API were asked what they use it for. Most of these six respondents mentioned using it for market analytics and general monitoring.

These six respondents were also asked if they had any issues with the accuracy of the connection data API. Most did not see any issues with the data. A few mentioned that overall the data is accurate since the API data was sourced from The Authority registry.

### 5.1.3 Suggested data to add to the connection data API

Most respondents found the EMI website to be very comprehensive and there were only a few suggestions for additional data.

Suggested information to be added included:

- ANZSIC codes (commercial customers)
- Address\_Property\_Name (Business name vs trading name)
- ICP\_Status\_Reason
- ICP\_Creation\_Date
- Profiles
- Metering\_Component\_Type
- Settlement Indicator

There was one suggestion to provide more information specifically in relation to metering.

*“EMI is a really comprehensive site, I would like to see more data about metering on this site. So, there is a lot of data at the ICP level, but I would like to see more information about how many meters per ICP, what kind of meters are there per region etc. For example, what is the most common type of metering set up in each region by customer type (residential/commercial).”*

Another respondent mentioned optimising the searching capacity to return a greater number of results.

*“We sometimes feel it is difficult to search for an address in API. E.g. Units and other numbers. If there are more than 50 or 100 then it limits the results (Limitation of results). So, we sometimes don’t see the data we registered for, so if they can extend the number of outcomes then it would make it easier for us to search the customer’s address.”*