

## Minutes

### Customer Advisory Panel

**When:** 2:30pm – 4:30pm, Thursday, 7 June 2018

**Where:** Boardroom meeting room - Orion - 565 Wairakei Road

**Attendees:** **Leeann Watson**, CEO, Canterbury Employers’ Chamber of Commerce; **Caroline Shone**, CEO Community Energy Action; **Simon Templeton**, CEO Age Concern, **Tania Wati**, CEO of Mahaanui Kurataiao, **Tim Baker**, Burwood and Coastal Community Board; **Pat McEvedy**, Selwyn District Councillor and farmer; **Harry Gates**, Orion Master’s Energy Scholarship recipient

*Orion:* **Rob Jamieson**, CEO; **David Freeman-Greene**, GM Commercial; **Steve Macdonald**, GM Infrastructure; **Linda McGregor**, Communications and Engagement Manager; **Dave Brannigan**, Infrastructure Lifestyle Manager; **Jennifer Dale**, Lifecycle Engineer; **Dayle Paris**, Regulatory Manager; **Jessalee MacLean** (*Minutes*)

**Apologies:** **Danny Wilson**, Acting GM Retail at Meridian

| Item  | Item overview   |
|---|---|
| Welcome and Introduction                    | Orion CEO Rob Jamieson welcomed everyone to the meeting including new members, thanked them for their attendance and talked about the importance of the panel to Orion.   |
| Recap on last meeting and cover off actions | The panel confirmed that all of their questions raised at the last meeting had been addressed in the document circulated with the Agenda.   |
| Reliability                                 | <p>Orion outlined all the factors affecting reliability of its network and research confirming the importance of reliability to customer satisfaction.</p> <p><b>Commerce Commission on reliability</b></p> <p>Orion outlined how it is regulated by the Commerce Commission and the targets set by the Commission for reliability: which are based on frequency and duration of outages. The Commission has asked the electricity industry to look at establishing additional measures for quality of service, such as customer satisfaction.</p> <p><b>Communication for planned and unplanned outages</b></p> <p>Orion’s recent customer research identified improvements in communications around planned and unplanned outages would improve perceptions of reliability.</p> <p>Panel members were asked for their thoughts on reliability, and made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraged Orion to communicate planned outages better, particularly in terms of advanced notification through a variety of sources to ensure the information reaches customers and up to date information on any changes</li> </ul> |

- Even though retailers have the responsibility to inform customers on planned outages at present they would like to see double communication, one from retailer and one from Orion, to ensure the message is received
- Communications should tell people why the power is out and what are the benefits, for example, will it mean fewer power cuts in the future
- Notification by txt would be good
- Selwyn Gets ready app, is a good way to communicate notices to the public. Orion could link into this and other community Facebook groups and other apps
- Christchurch City Council has good social media links into the community that could be tapped into
- Price changes are communicated in technical jargon. When explaining them people are likely to be more receptive when told what the benefits are

### How reliable is Orion's network?

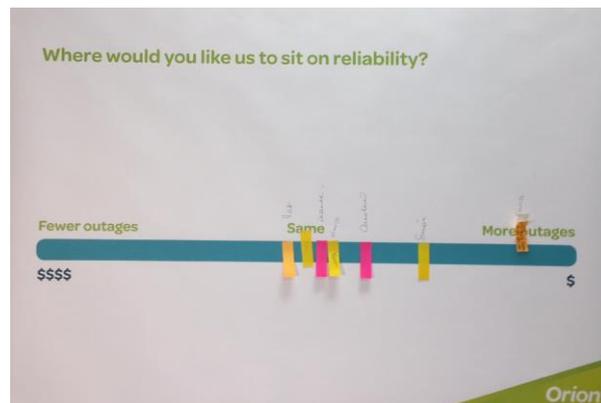
Orion outlined its historic and projected levels of reliability, for urban and rural customers. It was noted that Orion had met the limits set by the Commission for reliability since FY15. However future projections show that targets for number of outages in rural, and duration of outages in combined rural and urban will be difficult to meet.

FY18 reliability achievements:

- For urban customers, less than one outage per year, per customer
- For combined urban and rural reliability has improved from 100 down to 80 minutes of power cuts over the last four years
- Rural customers experienced on average three to four outages per year, per customer. Generally unplanned power outages are more common for rural customers because of more overhead lines, trees near power lines, and sometimes there is only one line into an area

### Sticky notes on the board exercise

Each member of the panel was given a sticky note to place on a board on behalf of the groups they represent. Where would you like Orion to sit on reliability?



Most panel members were around 'same' and 'moving towards more outages for less money.'

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|                          | <p>Orion outlined an issue with possums causing outages on its rural network by now learning to climb up concrete poles and touching the power lines which causes a power outage. Orion is now putting possum guards on wooden and concrete poles, specifically installations where possums are more likely to be living.</p> <p>The general consensus from the panel was satisfaction with Orion's current level of reliability and it encouraged Orion to proactively communicate more around planned outages. It was noted that there was no appetite for increasing reliability if that meant increasing the cost to the consumer.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Orion will commence a project to review communications around planned outages.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Orion to look into the Selwyn Gets ready app, and make contact with Council communications to explore utilising their channels.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> What was the percentage of the lines company portion of the power bill 10 years ago? Currently 26%, has that changed?</p>   |
| Temporary disconnections | <p>Orion sought the panel's views on proposed changes to how it approaches requiring a consent and a contractor to temporarily disconnect the power when painting or repairing boards around the electrical connection to their homes or business premises.</p> <p>Currently contractors charge for this service. It was found that, of the other lines companies in New Zealand questioned, they include the cost of providing this service to their overall charge to ensure this work is undertaken safely as opposed to charging individuals. Orion doesn't want the cost to be a barrier for people not applying for a disconnection/isolation and putting themselves at risk.</p> <p>Panel members were asked for their thoughts, points were made as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel members thought that there was not high public awareness for people to apply for a temporary disconnection</li> <li>• The cost would be prohibitive for many, a number would be tempted to risk it</li> <li>• Could Orion consider subsidising it instead of no specific charge? Individual customers could cover \$50-\$100 dollars</li> <li>• They thought most people would be happy to absorb some cost</li> <li>• Asked if Orion had considered subsidising for every disconnection i.e. renovations, not just painting</li> </ul> <p>Orion thanked the members for their feedback and will consider the points raised.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Orion to report back on progress with temporary disconnections review.</p> |
| Wrap-up and close        | <p>Everyone was thanked for making the commitment to be there for the afternoon and representing their respective organisations.</p> <p>Panel members were asked to email David Freeman-Greene with any ideas for the next meeting's agenda. The next meeting to be in three to four months' time.</p> <p>Orion asked panel members if they were happy to complete a short survey following the meeting, to get feedback on the overall importance of the panel and if there is anything Orion can improve or change for the next meeting. Members were happy for a survey to be sent out to them.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Orion to establish the agenda and timing for the next meeting.</p>   |

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|  | <b>ACTION:</b> Orion to send a short survey to members |
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