Energy & Water Ombudsman WA

Annual Report 2025-26

20 NOVEMBER 2026



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ISSN (Print): 2205-8974
ISSN (Online): 2205-8982

ACN: 109 054 426

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of this land. We recognise the continuing connection to land, waters, culture and community of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and recognise the strength, resilience and diversity of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across this land.

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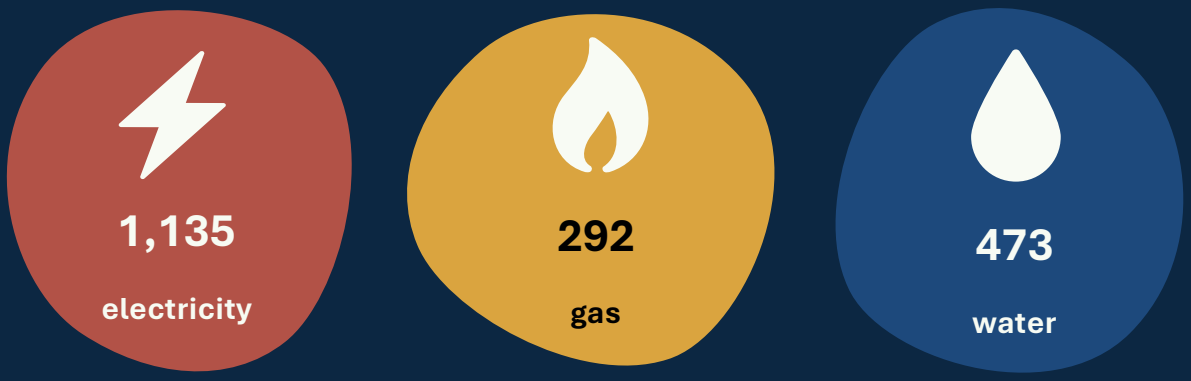
Instagram: ewo_wa

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Highlights for 2025-26

We received 1,900 complaints, a 19% increase



21% of complaints that we conciliated or investigated were resolved with an outcome for the complainant.

We achieved 148 remedies, including financial remedies totalling nearly $100,000.

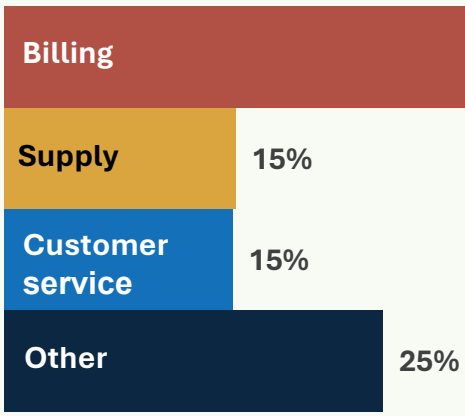
Timeliness

99.7% of complaints we referred to providers were finalised within two business days of first contact.

Complaints finalised
in less than 30 days.....88%
in less than 90 days.....91%
in less than 180 days.....96%

Issues raised

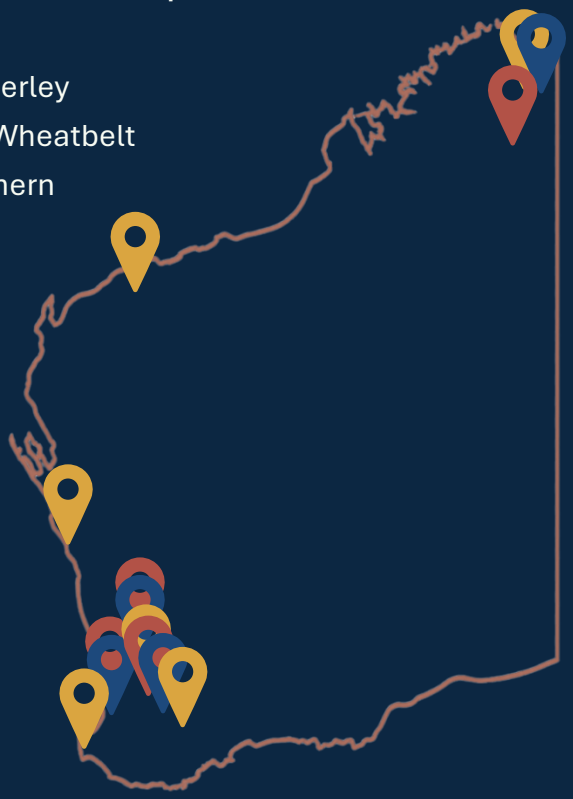
Most complaints involved concerns about **billing (45%)**, **customer service (15%)** and the **supply** of electricity, gas and water services **(15%)**.



Connecting with community

15 events and presentations across the metropolitan area, **14 regional towns** visited:

- Kununurra, Wyndham and Warmun in the Kimberley
- Narrogin, Beverley, Northam and Wagin in the Wheatbelt
- Katanning and Gnowangerup in the Great Southern
- Bunbury and Margaret River in the South West
- Geraldton in the Mid West
- Karratha in the Pilbara
- Pinjarra in the Peel



We launched a **new website**, fresh visual identity, and expanded our social media reach.

Chairperson's Overview

I am pleased to present the Energy and Water Ombudsman Western Australia Annual Report for 2025-26.

The Energy and Water Ombudsman Scheme continues to play an important role in providing free, fair and independent dispute resolution services for Western Australian residential and business customers. Throughout the year, the Scheme continued to support consumers and Members against a backdrop of ongoing change across the energy and water sectors, while maintaining its focus on accessible and effective complaint resolution.

The Board closely monitored Scheme performance during the year, including increases in complaint volumes across parts of the jurisdiction and emerging issues affecting consumers. I am pleased that the Ombudsman's office continued to meet these challenges while maintaining strong relationships with Members, regulators and key stakeholders. Effective stakeholder engagement remains fundamental to ensuring the Scheme continues to respond to changing customer needs and industry developments.

A significant focus during 2025-26 was preparation for the implementation of the Alternative Electricity Services (AES) framework. This reform represents the most substantial expansion of the Scheme's jurisdiction since its establishment and will extend access to on-site power supply providers from February 2027 and single property network (SPN) providers from July 2027. The Ombudsman's office and Board worked closely to ensure appropriate governance, funding and operational arrangements are in place to support this future expansion. This included amendments to the Constitution and Charter designed to support future growth and ensure the Scheme remains fit for purpose in a changing regulatory environment. Consultation with Members has been an important part of this process and will continue as reforms progress.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our Members for their continued support of the Scheme and acknowledge the professionalism and commitment of the Ombudsman, management team and staff. Their efforts ensure that Western Australian consumers continue to have access to an independent and effective dispute resolution service.

As we look ahead to 2026-27, the implementation of the AES framework, continued growth in scheme activity and evolving consumer expectations will present new opportunities and challenges. The Board remains committed to ensuring the Scheme is well positioned to meet these demands while continuing to deliver high quality outcomes for consumers and Members alike.



Dr Michael Schaper
CHAIRPERSON

Ombudsman's Report

As I complete my first full year as Energy and Water Ombudsman, I am pleased to present the 2025-26 Annual Report.

During the year, we continued to provide free, independent and fair dispute resolution services to residential and small-use electricity, gas and water customers across Western Australia. We helped customers resolve problems with their providers, while also identifying emerging issues and trends that can help improve outcomes for consumers and Members.

Demand for our services continued to grow. Complaint numbers increased for the third consecutive year, including a significant 19% increase in 2025-26. Common concerns included billing, credit and customer service issues. This continued growth highlights both the importance of accessible, effective dispute resolution and the need for us to continue adapting our services to meet changing demand.

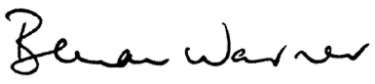
Improving accessibility was a particular focus this year. In June 2026, we launched a new website and refreshed visual identity, designed around plain language, accessibility and simple navigation. These changes make it easier for customers to understand what we do, find the information they need and lodge a complaint.

We also continued to build awareness of the Energy and Water Ombudsman through stakeholder engagement, regional outreach and participation in industry forums. I was particularly pleased to host colleagues from across Australia and New Zealand through the Australian and New Zealand Energy and Water Ombudsman Network. This provided a valuable opportunity to share experiences, discuss emerging issues and showcase our work.

At the same time, we continued preparing for the future. Significant work was undertaken in readiness for the implementation of the Alternative Electricity Services framework and the anticipated growth of the Scheme. Throughout this work, our priority remained providing customers with a high-quality dispute resolution service.

I would like to thank our staff for their resilience, professionalism and dedication over the past year. The results in this report reflect only part of the work they do every day. I also acknowledge the contribution of our Members, Board and stakeholders, whose cooperation and support are important to the successful operation of the Scheme.

As we look ahead to 2026-27, we will continue to adapt to growing demand while remaining focused on what matters most: providing Western Australians with an accessible, independent and effective service when they experience problems with their energy or water provider.



Bevan Warner
OMBUDSMAN

About us

This section explains who we are as an organisation and how we work.

Our role

Our organisation

We are an independent, impartial body that investigates and resolves complaints about electricity, gas and water providers.

Mission and values

Our mission: To receive, investigate and facilitate the resolution of complaints about electricity, gas and water providers who are Members of the Energy and Water Ombudsman Scheme.

Our values:

- Independence
- Access
- Effectiveness
- Natural Justice
- Equity
- Community Awareness

The role of the Energy and Water Ombudsman

Our role is principally to do three things:

- Investigate and resolve complaints about a Member of the Energy and Water Ombudsman Scheme (**Member**);
- From complaints, to identify systemic and emerging issues, as well as monitor the outcomes of complaints and report these issues and outcomes to the Economic Regulation Authority (**ERA**) and in other relevant forums; and
- Undertake outreach, education, liaison and other activities to ensure awareness of, and access to, our services, particularly for under-represented Western Australians (in terms of complaints to us compared to representation in the general population).

Structure and governance

Background of the Energy and Water Ombudsman

The Gas Industry Ombudsman Scheme was established on 31 May 2004. The Electricity Ombudsman Scheme was established on 22 September 2005, and at that time, the two schemes were combined under the title of Energy Ombudsman.

When the Water Services Ombudsman Scheme commenced on 1 January 2014, the existing Energy Ombudsman expanded to become the Energy and Water Ombudsman.

The Energy and Water Ombudsman is the external dispute resolution scheme approved by the ERA under relevant legislation.[1]

Our governing instruments

The Energy and Water Ombudsman Scheme is established as a Company limited by guarantee. The Company is governed by the Energy and Water Ombudsman (Western Australia) Limited Constitution (**Constitution**) and the Charter of Energy and Water Ombudsman (Western Australia) Limited (**Charter**).

The Board

The governing body is the Board of Energy and Water Ombudsman (Western Australia) Limited (**the Board**). It comprises seven directors:

- an independent chair
- three customer representative directors
- a gas industry representative director
- an electricity industry representative director
- a water industry representative director.

The Board in 2025-26

During 2025-26, the Board held four meetings as well as a Budget Committee meeting.

In addition to receiving reports from the Ombudsman's office, the Board also received briefings from Members and policy units within the Government of Western Australia on current and likely future technical and regulatory changes.

Director Role	Name
Chairperson	Michael Schaper
Customer Representative	Grant Cucel Phillip Kemp Kathryn Lawrence
Gas Industry Representative	Kylie Wilkie
Electricity Industry Representative	Lesley Walker
Water Industry Representative	Karen Willis
Alternate[2]	
• Gas	Jessica Dyer (appointed 20/4/2026)
• Electricity	Samantha Torrens
• Water	Jason Ducie (resigned 7/4/2026) Meredith Copping (appointed 8/4/2026)

[1] *Energy Coordination Act 1994*, *Electricity Industry Act 2004*, and *Water Services Act 2012*.

[2] Alternate industry directors are appointed by a director to act in their place if they are absent.

Members of the Energy and Water Ombudsman Scheme

The Members of the Scheme as at 30 June 2026:

Electricity Industry Members

- Alinta Sales Pty Ltd
- Amanda Energy Pty Ltd
- Change Energy Pty Ltd
- CleanTech Energy Pty Ltd (Delorean Energy Retail)
- Eglinton Village Energy Pty Ltd
- Electricity Generation and Retail Corporation (Synergy)
- Electricity Networks Corporation (Western Power)
- Ocean Reef Renewable Energy Pty Ltd
- Peel Renewable Energy Pty Ltd
- Perdaman Energy Retail Pty Ltd
- Perth Energy Pty Ltd
- Regional Power Corporation (Horizon Power)
- Rottnest Island Authority
- Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas Pty Ltd

Gas Industry Members

- AGL Sales Pty Ltd
- Alinta Sales Pty Ltd
- Amanda Energy Pty Ltd
- ATCO Gas Australia Pty Ltd
- Electricity Generation and Retail Corporation (Synergy)
- IPower Pty Ltd and IPower2 Pty Ltd (ENGIE)
- Origin Energy Retail Limited
- Perth Energy Pty Ltd
- Supagas Pty Ltd
- Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas Pty Ltd

Water Industry Members

- Aqua Ferre (Muchea) Pty Ltd (Muchea Water)
- Aquasol Pty Ltd
- BHP Iron Ore Pty Ltd
- BHP Nickel West Pty Ltd
- BWater Pty Ltd (ABCO Water Systems)
- Bunbury Water Corporation (Aqwest)
- Busselton Water Corporation
- City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- Gascoyne Water Co-operative
- Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd
- Lancelin South Pty Ltd
- Ord Irrigation Cooperative
- Robe River Mining Co Pty Ltd
- Rottnest Island Authority
- South West Irrigation Management Co-operative Limited (Harvey Water)
- TMC Witchcliffe Pty Ltd
- Water Corporation
- Water West North Dandalup Pty Ltd

The Ombudsman

The Western Australian Ombudsman performs the functions of the Energy and Water Ombudsman under a service agreement with the Board. The Ombudsman is not affiliated with any electricity, gas or water providers or consumer organisations and therefore acts impartially in the investigation and resolution of complaints.

Operational structure

The Energy and Water Ombudsman is located within the office of the Western Australian Ombudsman and utilises its governance structures, including an Audit and Risk Management Committee.

This provides the opportunity to achieve significant benefits through scale and scope economies that would not be available to a small stand-alone scheme. It also creates the opportunity for improved quality service delivery through the highly developed, specialised expertise existing in the office of the Western Australian Ombudsman.

Direct operational dispute resolution services are provided by a team of staff directed by the Principal Assistant Energy and Water Ombudsman reporting to the Ombudsman.

Communications and outreach services are provided by the Engagement, Education and Communications team jointly with the Western Australian Ombudsman. Corporate services, such as information management and technology, and human resources, are provided by the office of the Western Australian Ombudsman.

At 30 June 2026, the Energy and Water Ombudsman had 11.65 full time equivalent employees as shown below.

Bevan Warner
Energy and Water Ombudsman

Investigations and scheme management

- **Marcus Claridge**, Principal Assistant Energy and Water Ombudsman
- Principal Investigating Officer
- Senior Investigating Officer
- Systemic Issues and Investigating Officer
- Investigating Officers
- Administrative Support Officer

Complaint Services

- **Brianna Lonnie**, Principal Assistant Ombudsman Complaint Resolution

First contact team

- Enquiry and Investigating Officers

Reviews of complaints

- Director Integrity Investigations

Shared service with the office of the Western Australian Ombudsman

Corporate Services

- **Sharon Basini**, Executive Director Corporate Development

Communication & Engagement

- Manager Engagement, Education and Communications
- Communications & Engagement Coordinator
- Cultural Safety Advisor

Corporate services

- Human Resources
- Information Management & Technology
- Finance & governance

Our services

We receive, investigate and resolve complaints and disputes from residential and small business customers about their electricity, gas or water provider. The following are the main examples of matters we can and cannot investigate.

What we CAN investigate

- Provision or supply of services as required by a licence or agreement under legislation;
- Billing, the administration of credit and payment services and the recovery of debts;
- Disconnection and restriction of supply, and refundable advances;
- Payments for breaches of prescribed electricity and water service standards;
- Marketing of gas, electricity or water for sale;
- A Member's exercise of its powers in relation to land, neighbouring land or property;
- Complaints and disputes relating to a Member or an agent referred by a Member or an agent; and
- Complaints by a person affected by the provision of a water service.

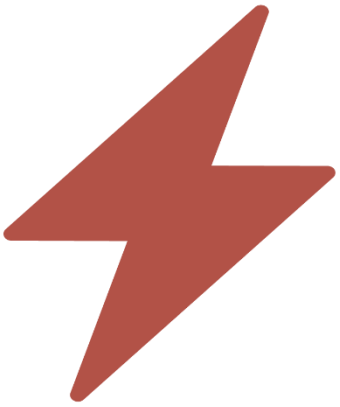
What we CANNOT investigate

- The setting of prices or tariffs or determining price structures;
- Commercial activities outside the scope of the electricity, gas or water service licence;
- The content of Government policies; and
- Complaints under consideration by, or previously considered by, any court or tribunal, or the Ombudsman considers should be dealt with by a court or tribunal.

Our objectives

The primary objectives of EWO are to:

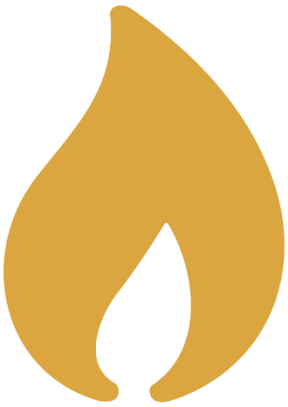
- Resolve disputes between Members and their customers in a timely, independent, cost effective and efficient manner;
- Reduce the number of investigations by the Ombudsman through:
- Ensuring Members are fully informed about costs of investigations; and
- Working collaboratively with Members to achieve satisfactory internal resolutions;
- Ensure the appropriate level of consumer awareness of, and access to, our services; and
- Develop and actively foster effective stakeholder relations.

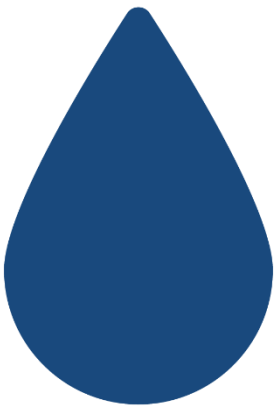


Strategies to achieve our objectives

During 2025-26, we focused on the following key strategies to achieve our objectives and our Mission in accordance with our Values:

- Ensuring the Scheme is valued by consumers and Members by deploying independent, efficient and effective complaint management practices and applying industry best practice alternative dispute resolution;
- Based on information gathered during the complaints management process, identify systemic and emerging issues and reporting on these issues to the ERA and other relevant stakeholders; and
- Develop and undertake outreach, education, liaison and other programs with a focus on under-represented Western Australians.





Our complaint resolution process

Consistent with other industry ombudsman schemes, our focus is on the resolution of complaints by the electricity, gas or water provider and asks people making a complaint to try to resolve the matter with the provider first. We investigate complaints that remain unresolved after referral to a higher level contact with the electricity, gas or water provider.

When resolving complaints, we pursue them in a fair, reasonable, just, informal and expeditious manner, having regard to the law and licences, industry codes, deemed contracts and good industry practice applicable to the relevant Member.



No previous contact with energy/water provider

Complainant referred to provider's complaints process.

If not satisfied, complainant can come back to us.

Previous contact with energy/water provider and no resolution

Complainant referred to higher level contact at the provider.

If still not satisfied, complainant can come back to us.

Referral to higher level contact and no resolution

We attempt to facilitate a resolution. If no resolution, we investigate the complaint.

If the complaint is not resolved and we uphold the complaint, we decide an appropriate remedy.

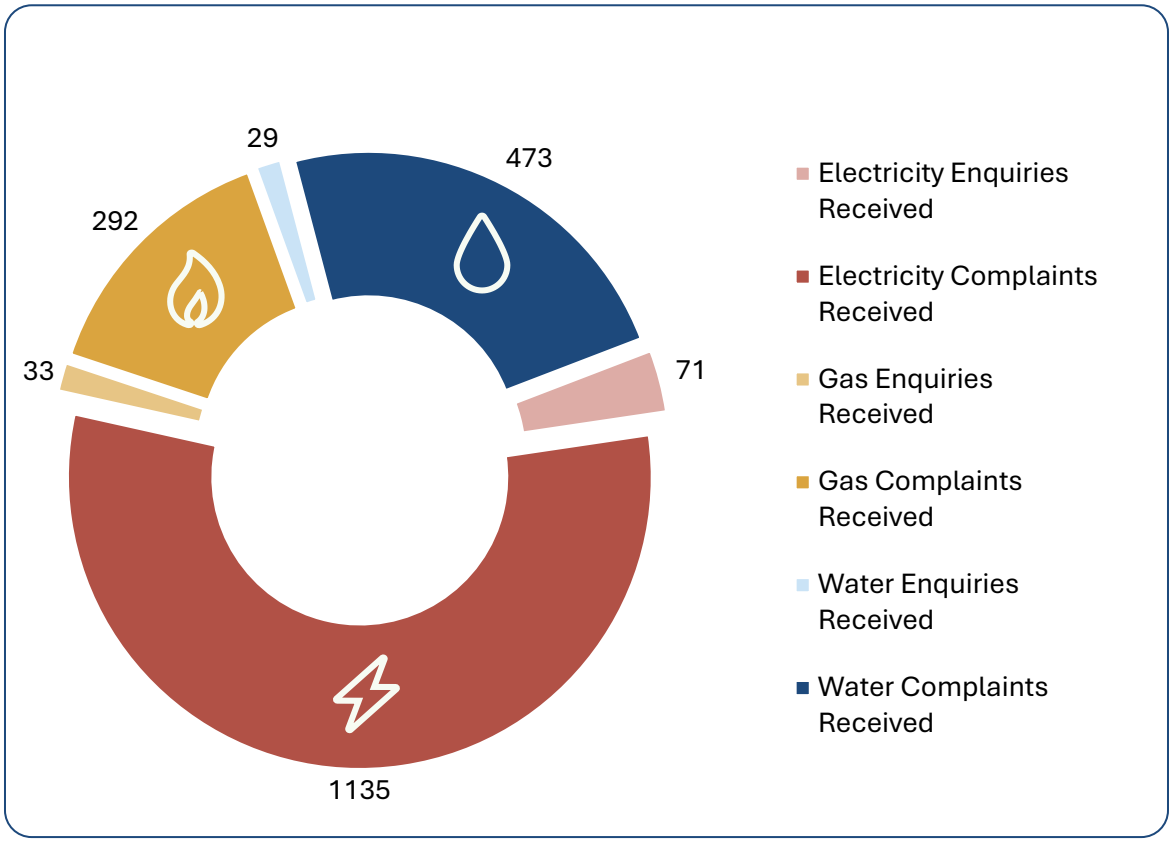
Complaints in 2025-26

This section outlines the complaints we received and investigated.

Complaints and enquiries received

Over the 12 month period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, we received 1,900 complaints and finalised 1,887 complaints. In addition, 133 enquiries were received. The following chart shows the breakdown of complaints and enquiries received for gas, electricity and water in 2025-26.

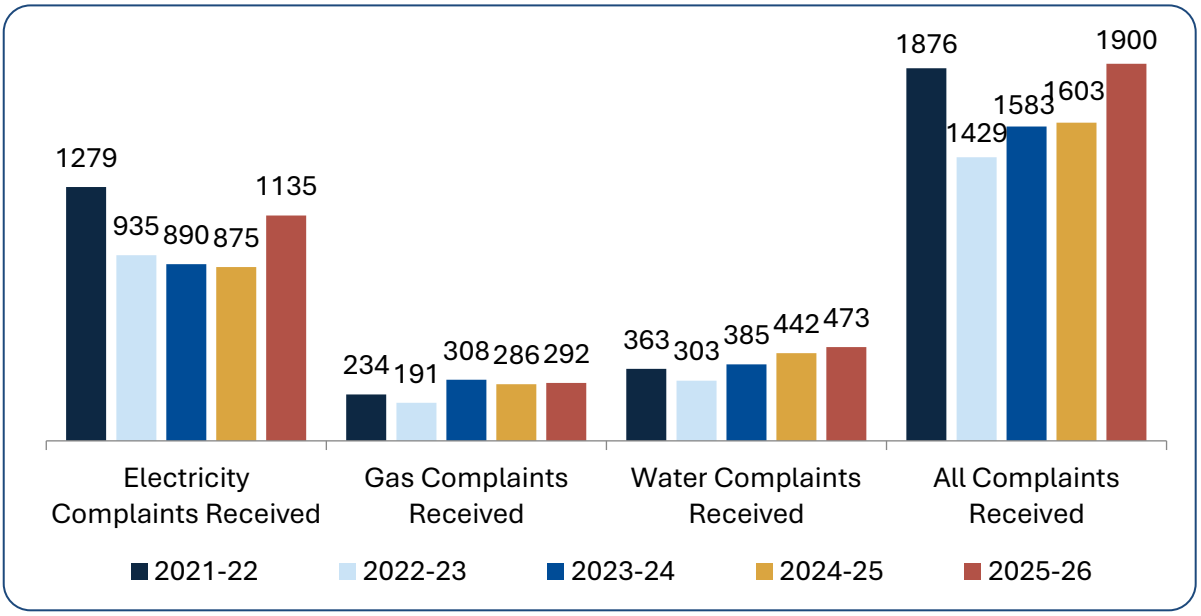
Complaints and Enquiries Received in 2025-26



Trends in Complaint Numbers

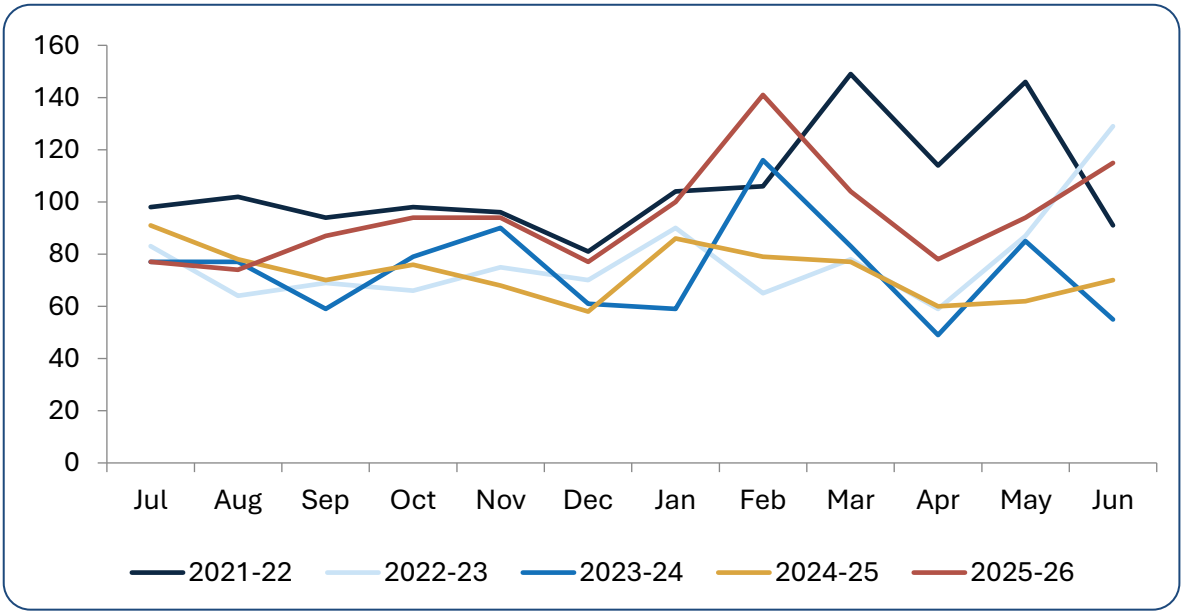
The following chart shows the trend in complaint numbers over the last five years for electricity, gas and water complaints.

Complaints Received from 2021-22 to 2025-26



Further details of the trends in electricity complaints over the last five years are shown in the following chart.

Electricity Complaints Received by Month 2021-22 to 2025-26



Complaints Finalised

In 2025-26, there were 1,887 complaints finalised, comprising 1,118 electricity complaints, 292 gas complaints and 447 water complaints.

Complaints are finalised through resolution by the electricity, gas or water provider where possible and, if the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the complaint is investigated. The complaint stages and action we take at each stage are shown below.

Stage 1 Complaints	The person has not been to their provider, so we give them the provider's contact details.
Stage 2 Complaints	The person has been to the provider and the complaint is not resolved. We send the complaint to a senior contact at the provider for resolution within 10 business days.
Facilitated Resolution	The person's complaint is not resolved to their satisfaction within 10 business days and they come back to the Ombudsman. We work with the provider for a final chance to offer a resolution before we investigate.
Investigated Complaints	We ask the provider for documentation to help us determine the complaint, such as bills, account and meter records, customer interactions, and an explanation for the provider's position. We speak to the complainant to get more information as required.

Timeliness of Complaint Handling

We have maintained high levels of timeliness in 2026-26.

99.7% off Stage 1 and Stage 2 Complaints were finalised within two business days.

The following table shows the timeliness of all complaints:

Timeframe	<30 days	<90 days	<180 days
Target	86%	90%	98%
Electricity	85%	88%	95%
Gas	95%	98%	99%
Water	90%	93%	97%
All	**88%**	**91%**	**96%**

At 30 June 2026, only three complaints on hand were over 180 days old.

Issues Raised in Complaints

Issues raised in electricity, gas and water complaints fall into the following categories:

Category	Description
Billing	Complaints about bills including alleged errors and disputes over meter readings and fees and charges.
Credit	Complaints about payment arrangements, debt collection issues and payment difficulties.
Customer Service	Complaints about alleged poor customer service.
Supply	Complaints about the quality and reliability of supply of electricity, gas or water.
Provision	Complaints about connection issues.
Land	Complaints about the way a provider has exercised its powers in relation to land.
Service Standard Payments	Complaints about regulated payments for poor service.
Transfer	Complaints about transfers from one provider to another.
Marketing	Complaints about the marketing activities of providers.
Drainage, Irrigation or Sewerage	Complaints about the supply of drainage, irrigation or sewerage.
General	Complaints not covered by other categories, including complaints by a person affected by a water service.

Most Common Issues Raised

As for previous years, during 2025-26, billing remained the most common issue raised for electricity, gas and water complaints. Billing issues were raised in 45% of complaints received (41% of electricity complaints, 62% of gas complaints and 44% of water complaints):

- The decrease in electricity billing complaints over the past few years coincided with temporary cost-of-living relief measures by the State and Commonwealth Governments to credit the electricity accounts held by residential and business customers. Consequently, there has also been a corresponding decrease in credit-related complaints.
- There has been a 34% increase in gas billing complaints from the previous year, which had previously decreased by 20% compared to 2023-24. Gas billing complaints remain elevated when compared to historical averages. This sustained increase over the past two years is largely due to alleged bill errors such as incorrect customer details and addresses and issues surrounding the closure and payment of accounts.
- Water billing complaints remained at a similar level to the previous year but have increased significantly when compared to earlier years, largely due to an increase in high bill complaints.

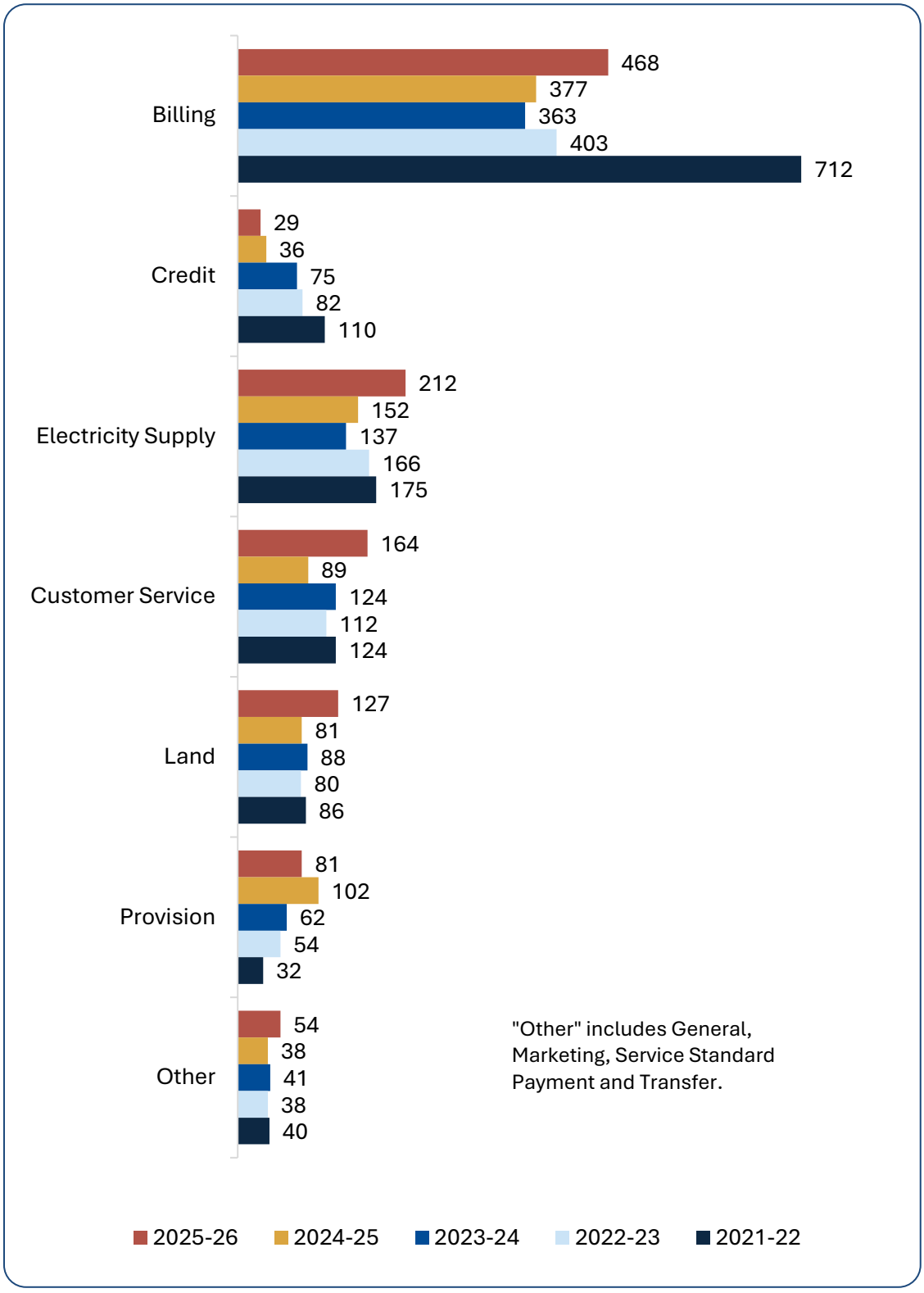
Customer service for electricity, gas and water services were also common issues for complaints, with customer service raised in 15% of complaints received (14% of electricity complaints, 7% of gas complaints and 21% of water complaints).

Complaints relating to electricity supply and service provision remain elevated, collectively accounting for 26% of all electricity complaints received:

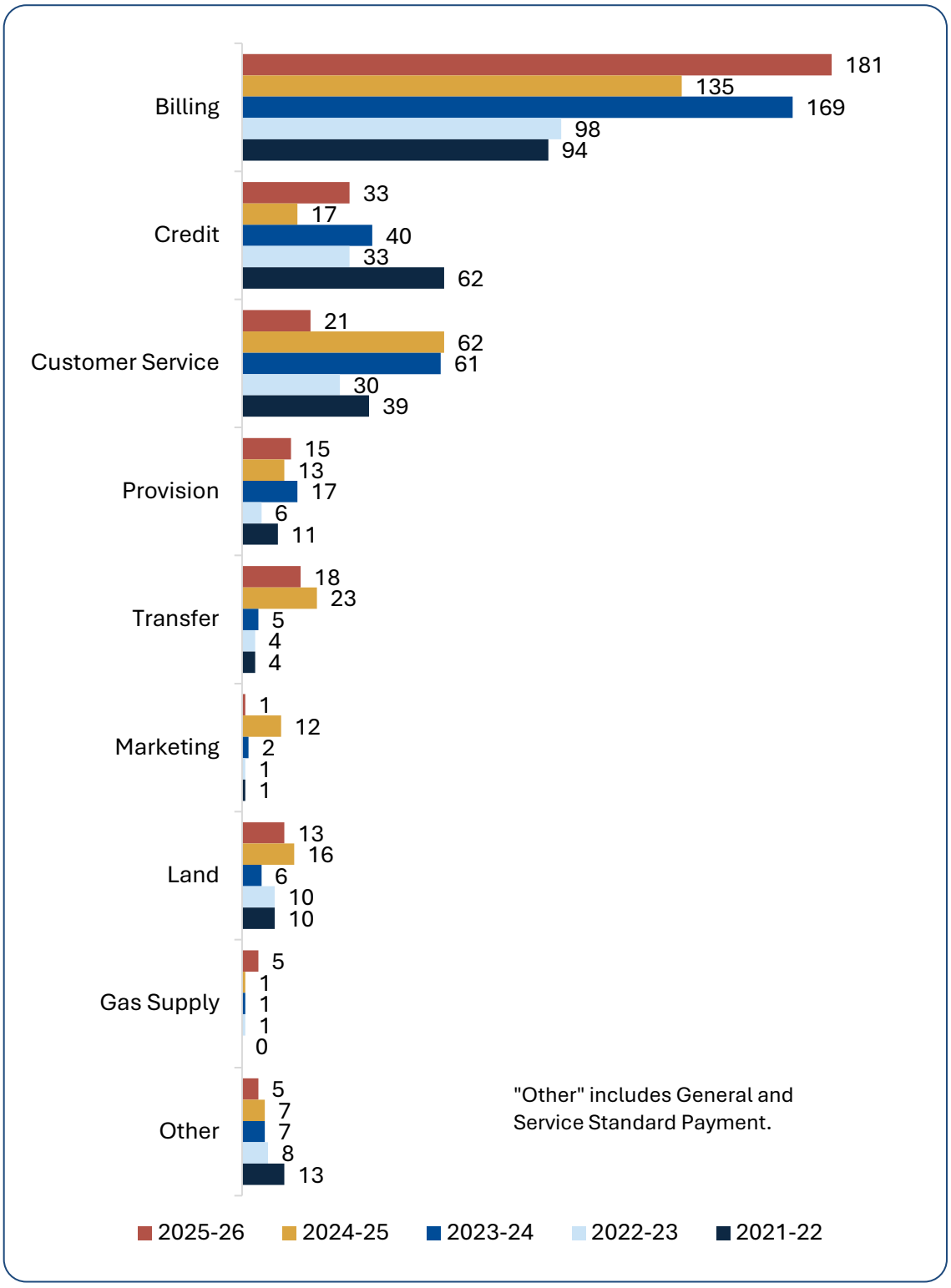
- Supply complaints typically involve planned and unplanned outages impacting the distribution network and were raised in 19% of electricity complaints received.

The following charts show the trends in issues raised in complaints over the last five years for each industry.

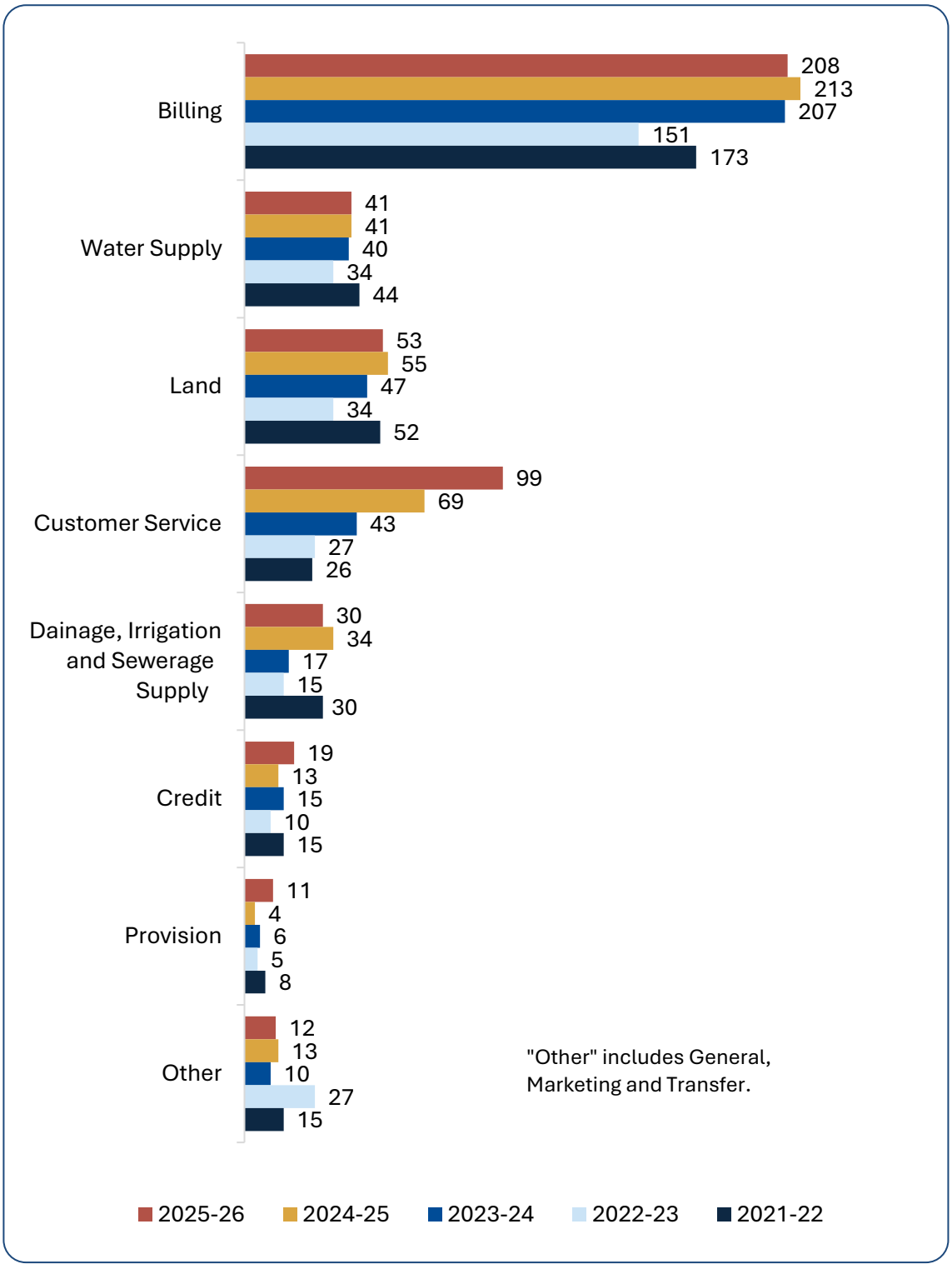
Electricity Issues
2021-22 to 2025-26



Gas Issues
2021-22 to 2025-26



Water Issues
2021-22 to 2025-26



Reasons for Billing and Credit Complaints

Complaints about billing and credit issues may be made for a range of reasons. The main types of billing and credit issues are:

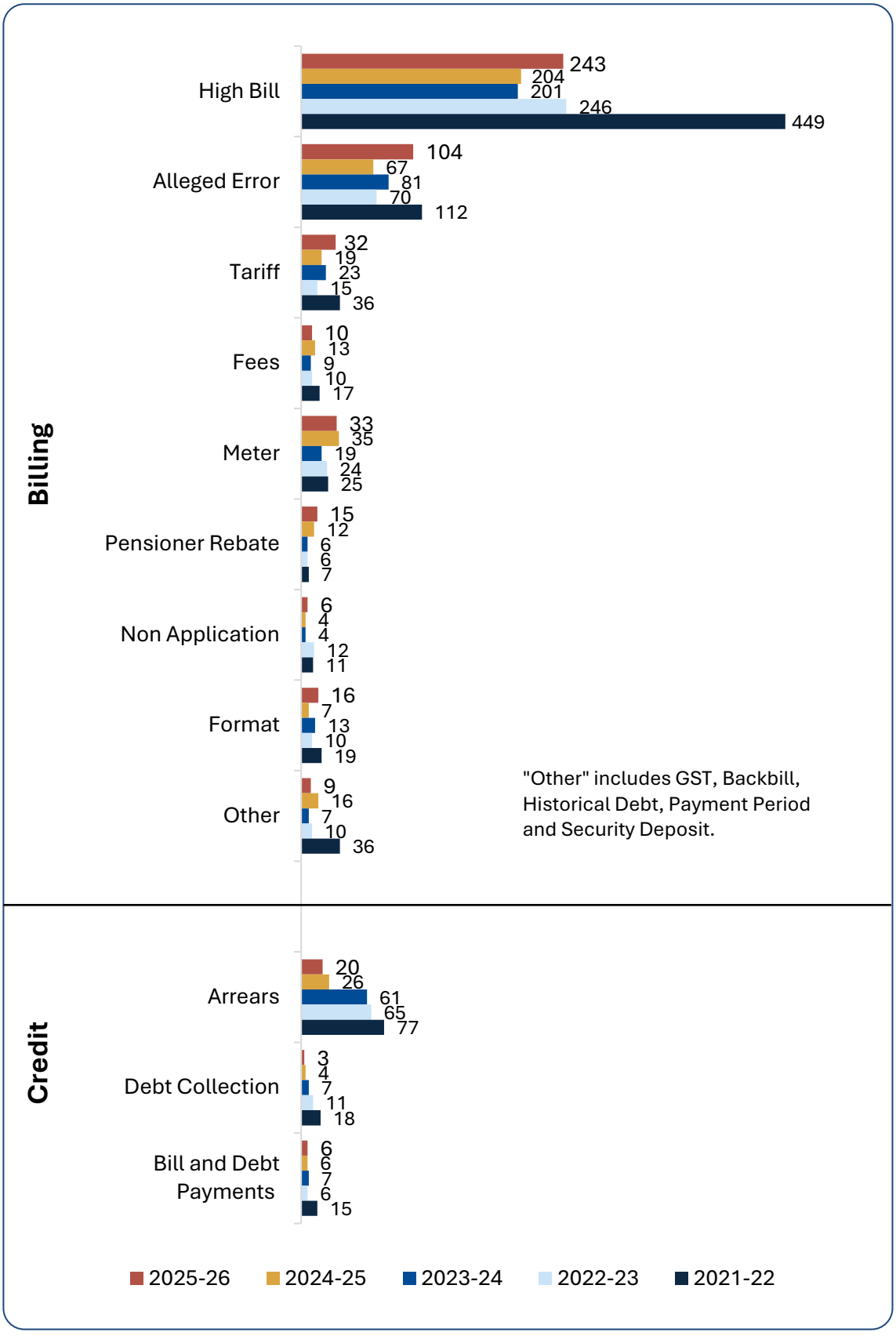
Types of billing issues	
High Bill	Bill higher than expected.
Alleged Error	Alleged billing errors.
Meter	Metering issues.
Non Application	Disconnections due to the customer not applying for an account.
Tariff	Incorrect rates or lack of information about tariffs.
Fees	Fees and charges.
Pensioner Rebate	Rebate has not been applied or has been incorrectly applied.
Format	Format or lack of adequate information on bill.
Other	Includes backbills, GST, historical debt, payment periods and security deposit.

Types of credit issues	
Payment of Arrears	Payment of arrears from previous bills, including extensions and payment plans.
Debt Collection	Credit rating or debt collection issues.
Bill and Debt Payments	Customer has received a high bill and has difficulty in payment, has difficulty paying debts or problems with payment arrangements.

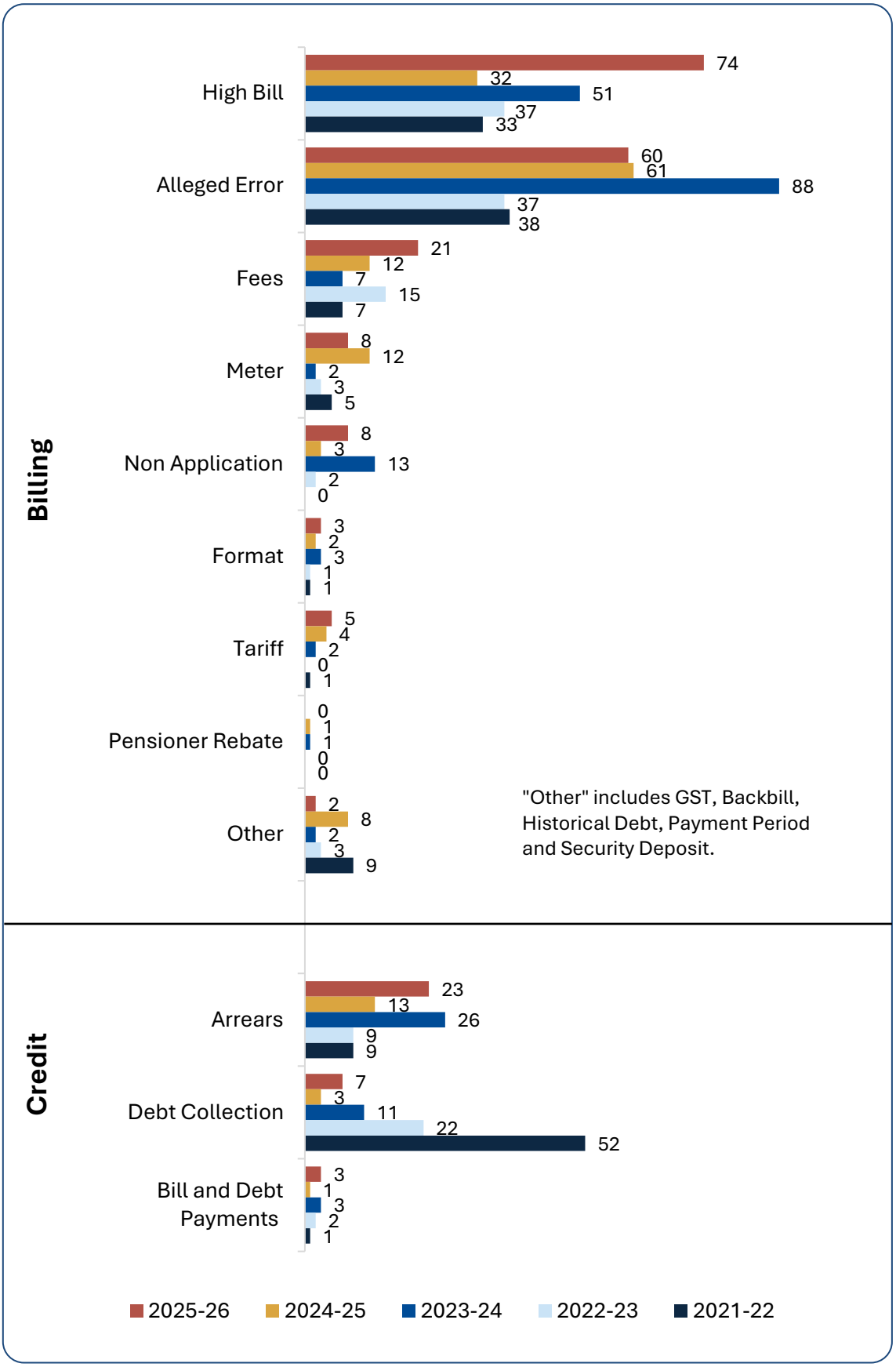
In 2025-26, the main reasons for billing complaints were high bills and alleged errors. The main reason for credit complaints was payment of arrears.

The trends over the last five years in the different types of billing and credit issues are highlighted in the following charts for each industry.

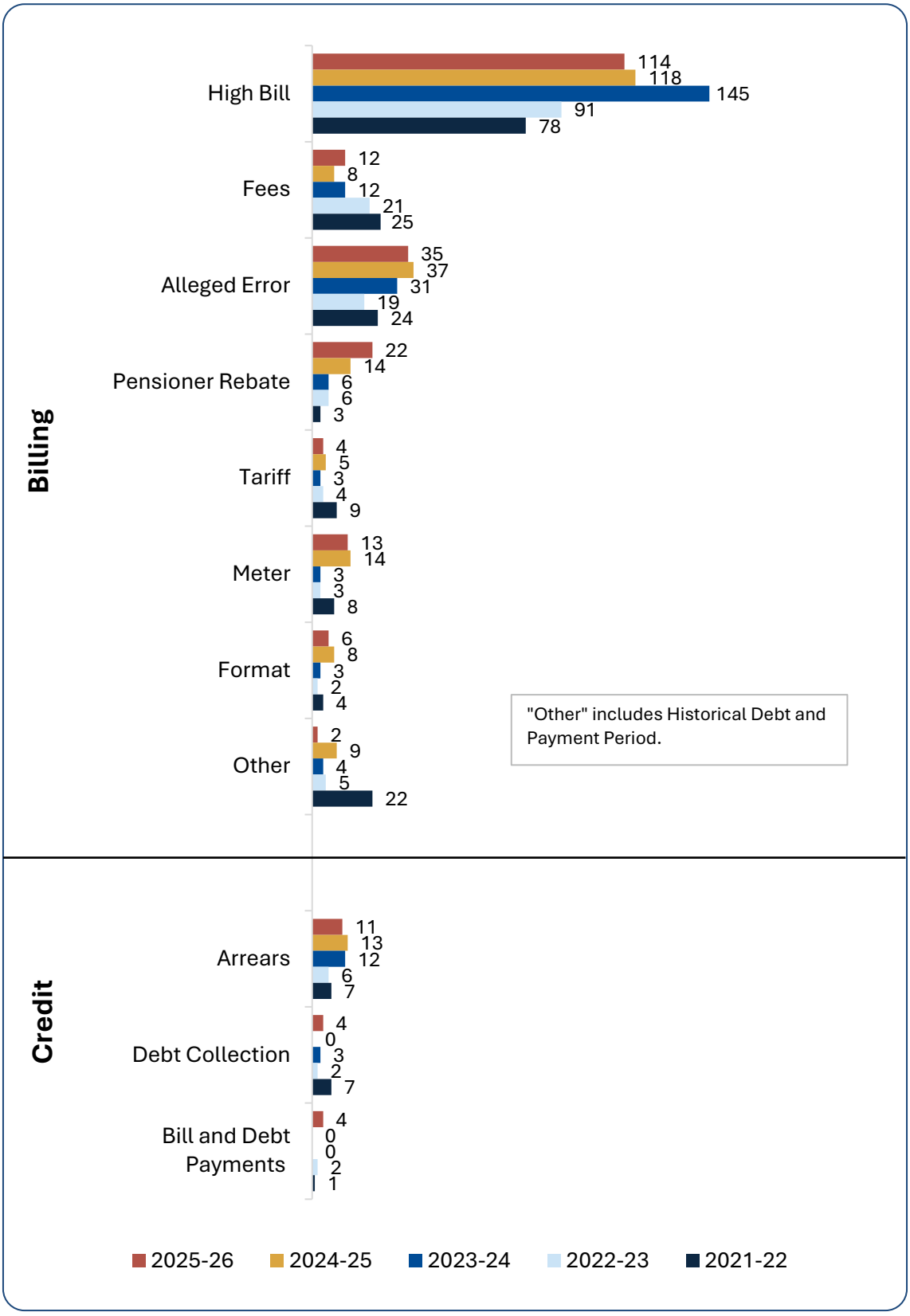
Types of Billing and Credit Issues for Electricity 2021-22 to 2025-26



Types of Billing and Credit Issues for Gas
2021-22 to 2025-26



Types of Billing and Credit Issues for Water 2021-22 to 2025-26



Disconnections

Gas and electricity retailers sometimes disconnect supply when a customer has failed to pay their bill or has not applied for an account when they take up a new residence. Before disconnecting, a reminder notice and then a disconnection warning should be sent. Complaints about reminder notices and disconnection warnings are recorded by EWO as impending disconnections. Complaints about a disconnection that has already occurred are recorded as actual disconnections. Water providers typically restrict water supply, rather than disconnect, when a customer has failed to pay their bill.

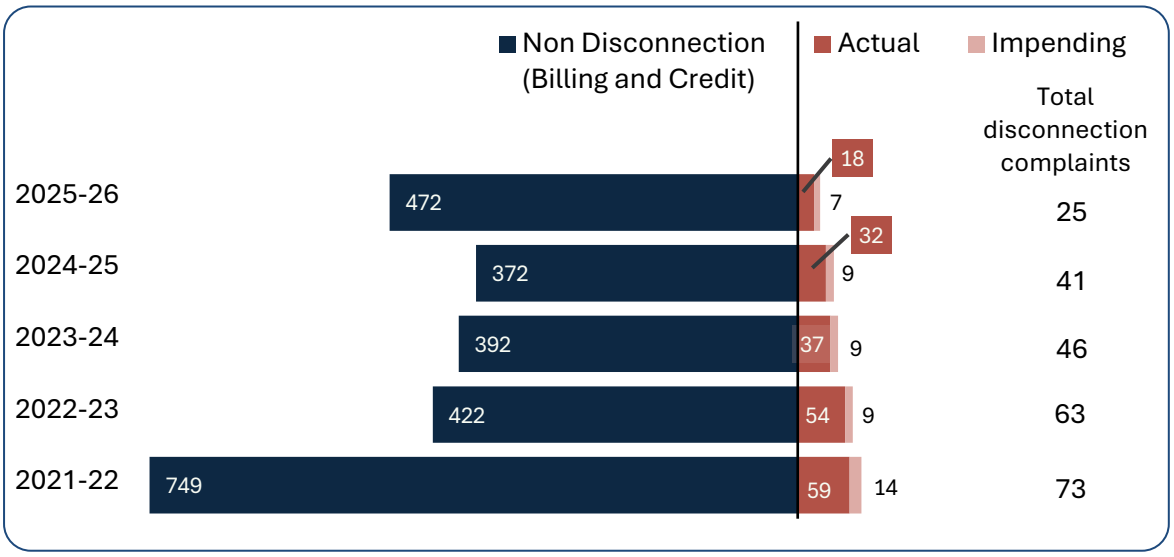
During 2025-26, there were:

- 497 electricity complaints involving billing and credit issues and, of these, 18 involved actual disconnection and seven involved an impending disconnection;
- 214 gas complaints involving billing and credit issues and, of these, 26 involved actual disconnection and eight involved an impending disconnection; and
- 227 water complaints involving billing and credit issues and, of these, seven involved actual or impending water restriction.

The following charts highlight trends for electricity and gas complaints relating to billing and credit issues involving, and not involving, disconnections.

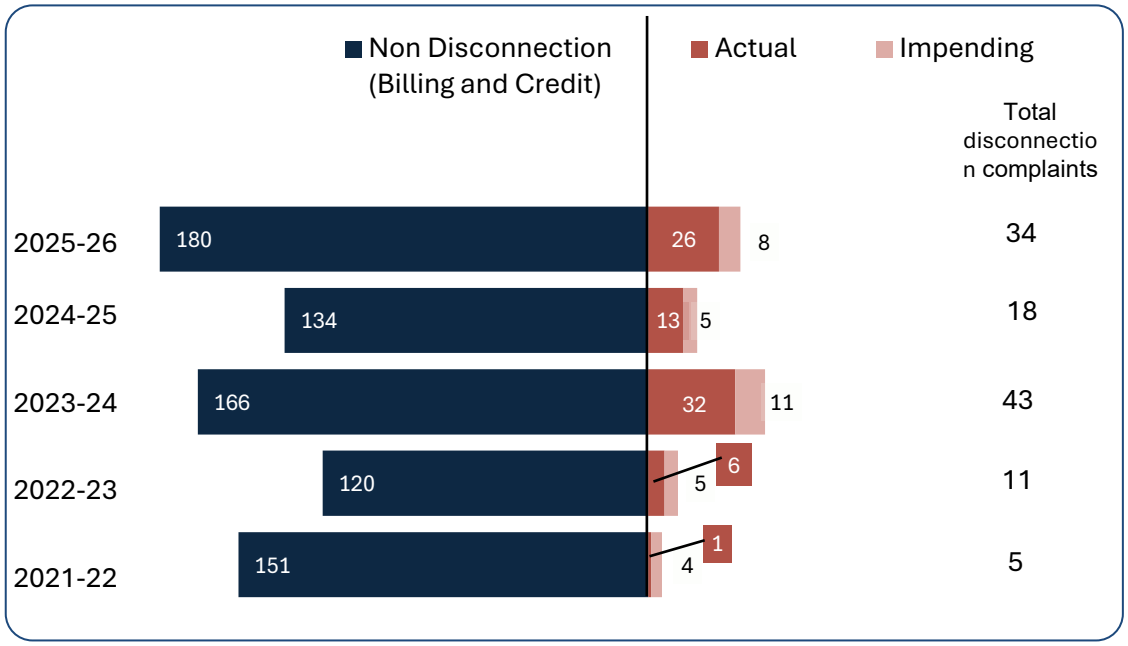
Electricity, complaints relating to actual and impending disconnections since 2020-21 are significantly lower than previous years, largely attributable to a general moratorium on disconnections during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as an overall subsequent reduction in debt levels due to government credits being applied to electricity accounts for cost-of-living relief.

Complaints about Electricity Disconnections 2020-21 to 2025-26



For gas, complaints about actual and impending disconnections in 2025-26 were higher than in the previous year and broadly consistent with post-COVID-19 pandemic disconnection trends

Complaints about Gas Disconnections
2021-22 to 2025-26

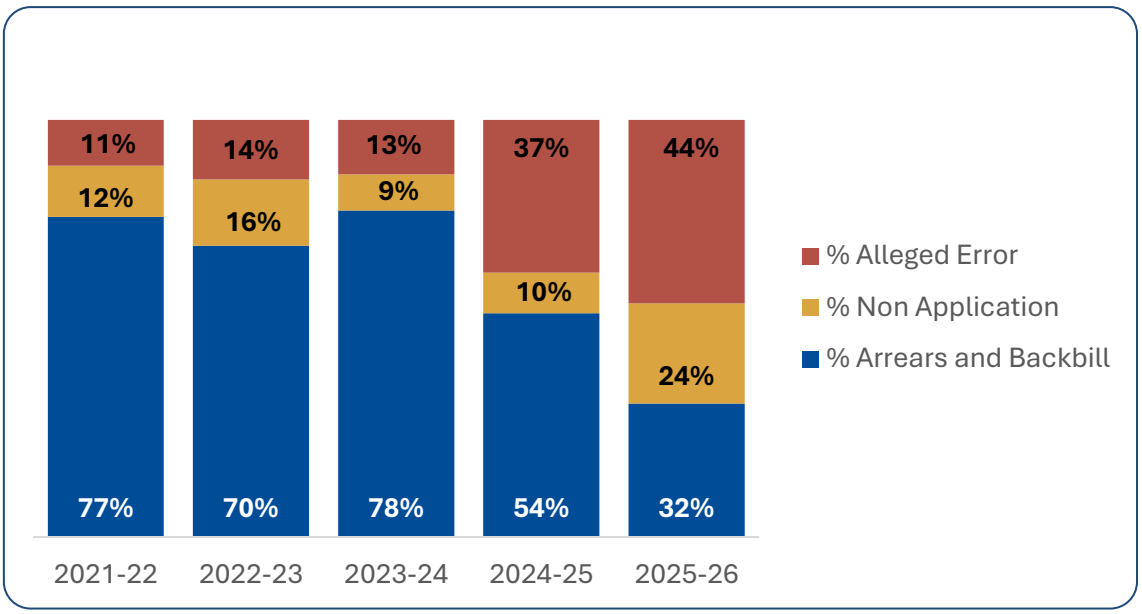


Actual or impending disconnections can occur for the following reasons:

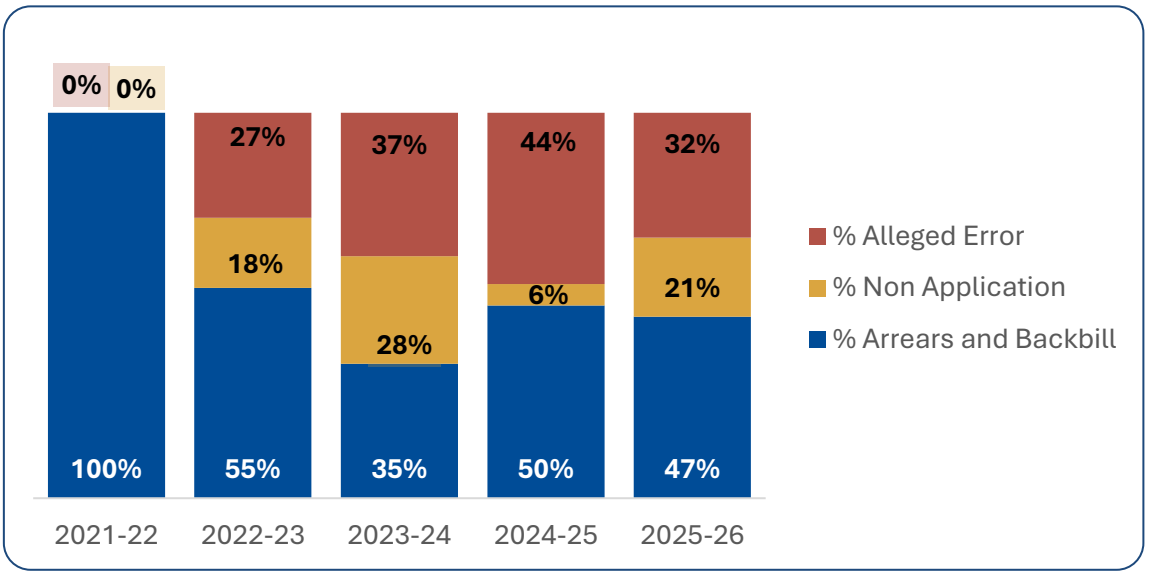
Reasons for disconnection	
Arrears and Backbills	Customer has not paid their bill or a backbill for a previous period.
Non Application	The customer has moved into or acquired a property and not applied to their retailer for an account to be established.
Alleged Error	Customer claims that they have been, or are about to be, disconnected due to an alleged error by the retailer.

For both electricity and gas, most complaints received about disconnections relate to arrears in bill payments. The following charts show trends in the reasons for all disconnections (actual and impending) over the last five years.

Reasons for Electricity Disconnections
2021-22 to 2025-26



Reasons for Gas Disconnections
2021-22 to 2025-26



Note: percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Investigated Complaints

We refer complaints to the electricity, gas or water provider to resolve the matter in the first instance and most complaints are resolved directly between the customer and the provider. If the customer does not consider the matter is resolved, they can bring their complaint back to us for investigation.

Facilitated resolution prior to investigation

Prior to investigation, where appropriate, we attempt to facilitate a resolution between the customer and the provider before commencing an investigation.

The facilitated resolution process involves EWO contacting the provider to allow them a further two business days to try to resolve the complaint and working with both the customer and the provider to facilitate a resolution. We monitor the process to ensure the matter is resolved. If the provider does not wish to attempt a further resolution or there is not a resolution in a reasonable timeframe, the complaint is investigated by EWO.

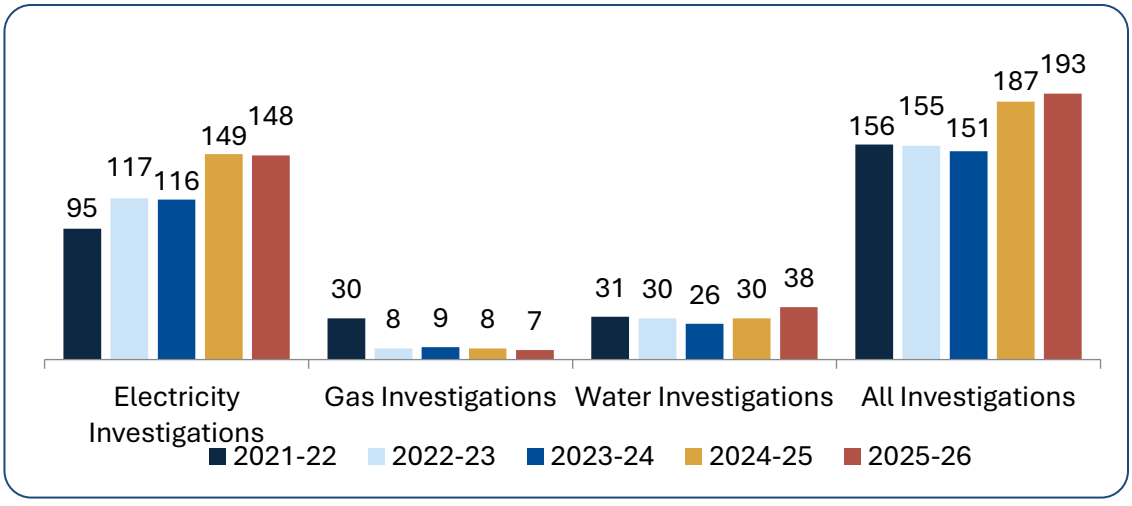
In 2025-26, there were 276 complaints finalised after being referred back by the customer for investigation, of which 52 (19%) were finalised through a facilitated resolution prior to investigation: 24 for electricity, 17 for gas and 11 for water. A further 31 complaints were finalised prior to investigation as they were out of jurisdiction, withdrawn, there was no further contact or further investigation was not warranted.

Investigations finalised

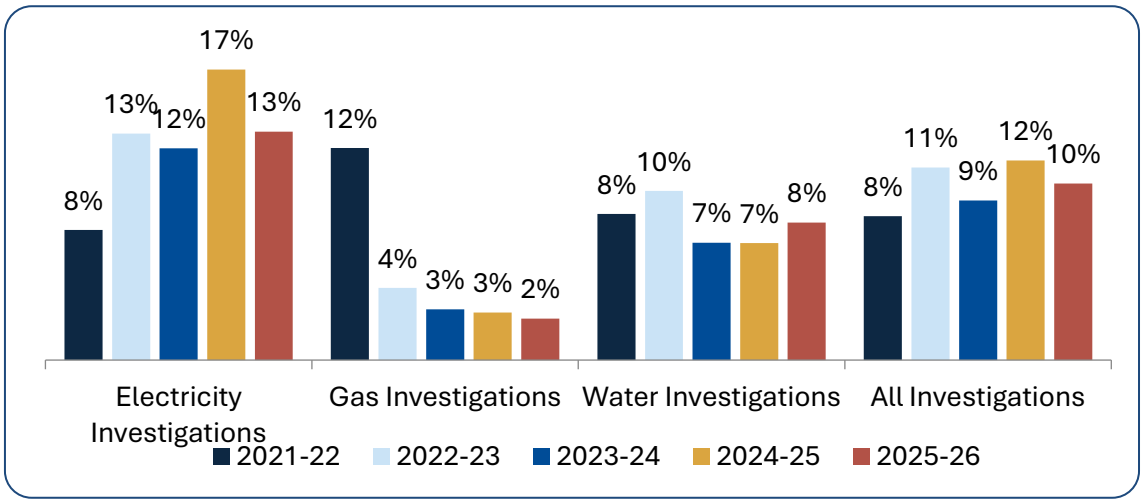
In addition to the 83 complaints finalised prior to investigation, there were 193 complaints finalised in 2025-26 following an investigation by EWO: 148 for electricity, seven for gas and 38 for water.

Trends in the numbers and proportion of investigated complaints over the last five years are highlighted in the following charts.

Number of Investigations Finalised
2021-22 to 2025-26



Investigations Finalised as Percentage of Complaints Finalised 2021-22 to 2025-26



Outcomes of complaints referred back for investigation

Complaints that are referred back by a customer to EWO for investigation may be finalised for the following reasons:

- We facilitate a resolution prior to the commencement of an investigation;
- We facilitate a resolution during the investigation;
- Investigation of the matter highlights that it is out of jurisdiction;
- The investigation highlights the complaint is not sustained;
- The investigation highlights the matter is sustained and we make a binding determination, including an appropriate remedy; or
- Further investigation is not warranted for a range of reasons.

The most common outcomes for the 276 complaints finalised in 2025-26 after being referred back for investigation were as follows:

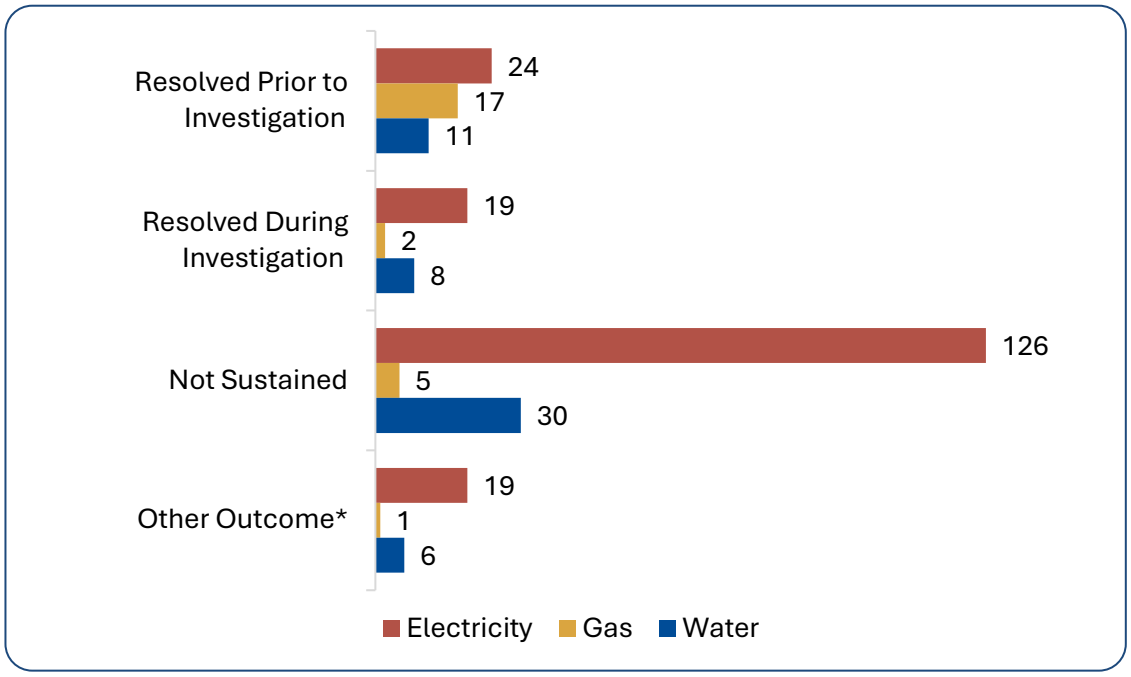
- In 52 (19%) of the 276 complaints, a resolution between the customer and the provider was facilitated prior to commencing an investigation;
- In 30 (11%) of the 276 complaints, a resolution between the customer and the provider was facilitated during the investigation; and
- In 161 (58%) of the 276 complaints, the investigation showed the complaint was not sustained.

In 2025-26, smaller proportions of complaints were finalised prior to or following an investigation because they were found to be out of jurisdiction (three), further investigation was not warranted (18), complaint withdrawn (one), and there was no further contact (11).

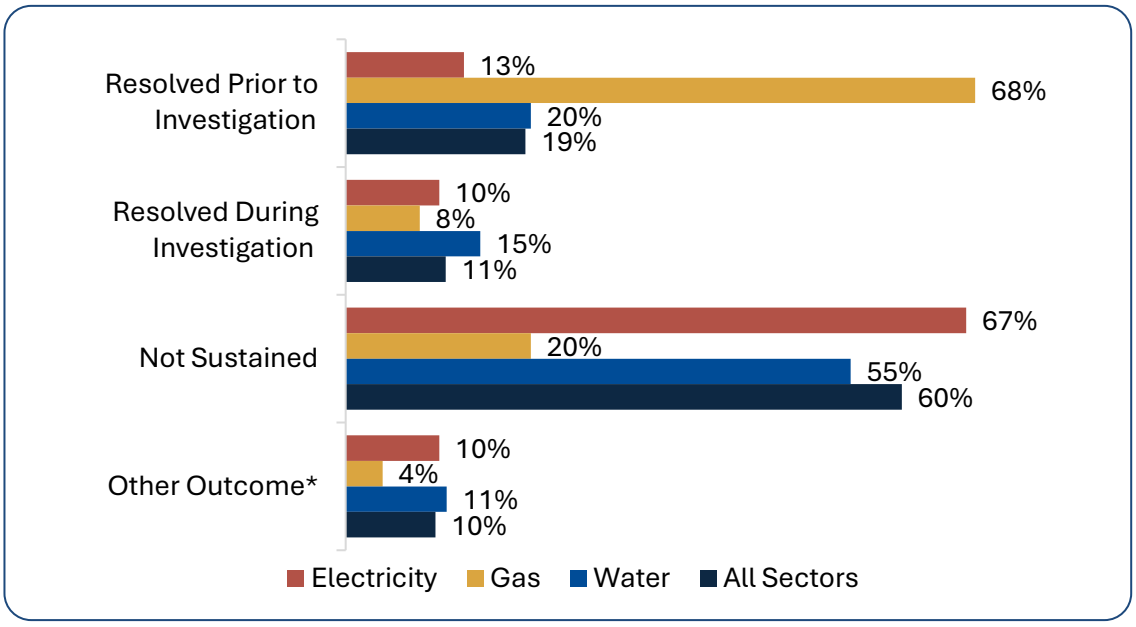
There were no binding determinations by EWO in the 2025-26 reporting period.

The following chart shows the outcomes, in 2025-26, of the complaints referred back for investigation, broken down by electricity, gas and water.

Outcomes of Complaints Referred Back for Investigation in 2025-26



Outcome of Complaints as Percentage of Complaints Referred Back for Investigation in 2025-26



* Other Outcome includes out of jurisdiction, further investigation not warranted, no further contact or withdrawn.

Resolutions for Complaints

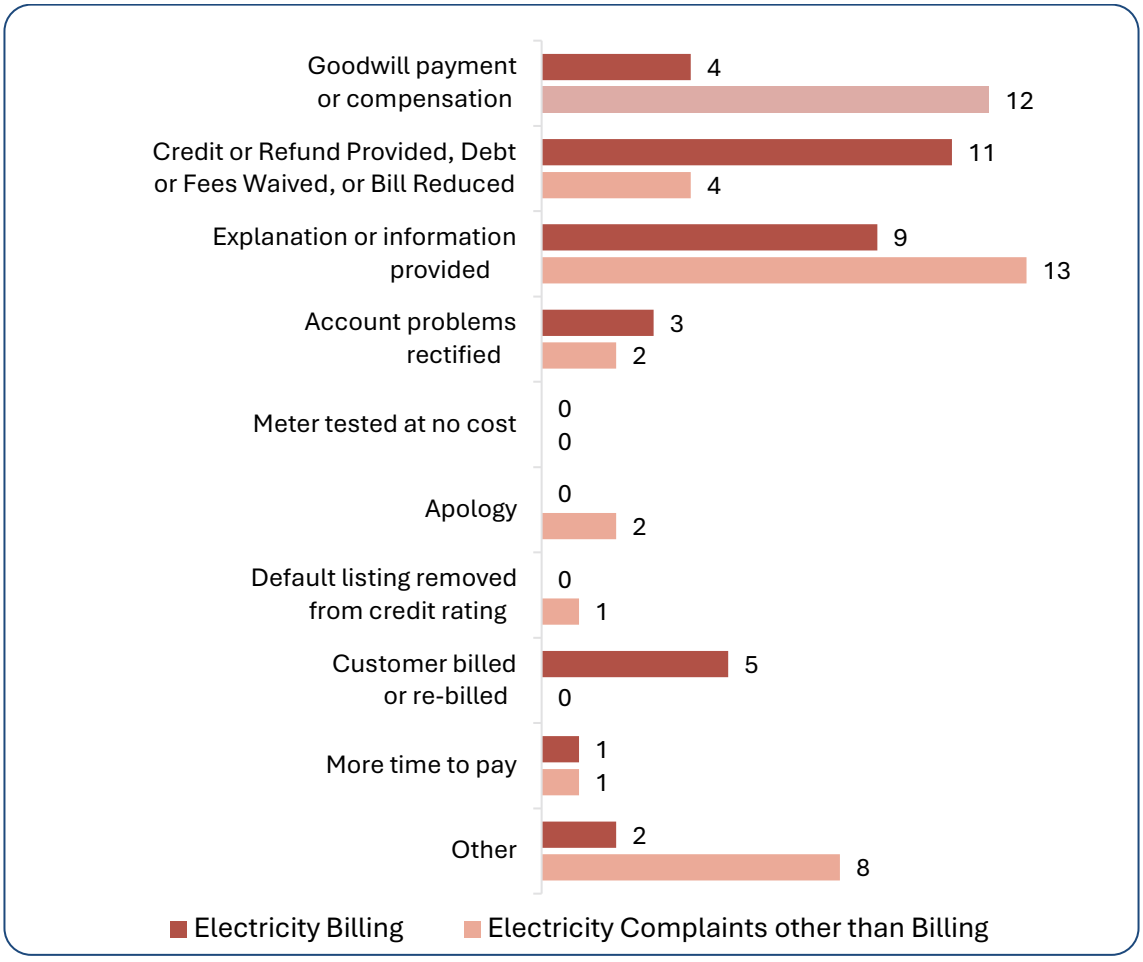
Electricity, gas and water providers may offer a range of actions to resolve a complaint including reducing bills, correcting or removing credit listings, providing the complainant with more time to pay, or providing compensation, an explanation or an apology. Bills may be reduced for a variety of reasons including correction of errors (for example, payment of rebate entitlements). Compensation may be paid where a customer has suffered a loss or damage due to the actions of their electricity, gas or water provider.

Resolutions for electricity complaints

In 2025-26, there were 78 actions offered by electricity providers for the 43 electricity complaints that were resolved after being referred back by the customer to EWO for investigation. The number of actions undertaken is higher than the number of complaints resolved as there is often more than one action taken by the provider to resolve the complaint. For example, the retailer may reduce the bill and offer an apology.

The following chart provides the breakdown of the actions offered in 2025-26 to resolve electricity complaints, for billing complaints and complaints about other issues.

Resolutions for Electricity Complaints in 2025-26



Resolutions for gas complaints

In 2025-26, there were 38 actions offered by gas providers for the 19 gas complaints that were resolved after they were referred back for investigation, including:

- Explanation or information provided (11);
- Credit or refund provided, debt or fees waived or bill reduced (9);
- Goodwill payment or compensation (8);
- Customer billed or re-billed (3);
- HUGS/Financial hardship assessment or advice provided (2);
- Default listing removed from credit rating (1);
- Account problems rectified (1);
- More time to pay (1); and
- Other remedies (2).

Resolutions for water complaints

In 2025-26, there were 32 actions offered by water providers for the 19 water complaints that were resolved after they were referred back for investigation, including:

- Explanation or information provided (9);
- Goodwill payment or compensation (8);
- Credit or refund provided, debt or fees waived or bill reduced (4);
- Account problems rectified (1)
- HUGS/Financial hardship assessment or advice provided (1);
- More time to pay (1);
- Pensioner concession paid (1); and
- Other remedies (7).

The following case studies illustrate the outcomes of complaints and, where appropriate, the resolutions offered by providers.

Case book

This section includes case studies – real stories about people who were assisted by the Energy and Water Ombudsman.

Electricity

Ombudsman intervention results in reduced debt for small business owner

A small business owner contacted the Energy and Water Ombudsman after receiving a large, backdated electricity bill. The customer had previously attempted to establish an account for an adjoining tenancy, but an account was not opened by the retailer and electricity continued to be supplied for over a year.

The Energy and Water Ombudsman investigated the actions of the retailer and network operator and identified administrative and metering-related factors that contributed to the delayed billing. The investigation also established that the customer had continued to consume electricity at the property with no account.

Following the Energy and Water Ombudsman's investigation, the network operator and retailer agreed to waive a third each of the arrears, together with all interest and late payment fees being refunded. The customer remained responsible for the balance, due to the electricity having been consumed. The investigation achieved a substantial reduction in the customer's debt while recognising that the customer should pay for some of the electricity consumed.

Water

Ombudsman helps financial counsellor get financial assistance for their client

A customer experiencing financial hardship complained to the Energy and Water Ombudsman about charges that had been deferred on their water account after their payment arrangement was reduced.

The customer said they had not agreed to the deferment and had not been advised that reducing their payments could result in charges being deferred. The deferred charges also affected their ability to seek financial assistance through the Hardship Utility Grant Scheme.

Working with the customer's financial counsellor, we clarified the customer's concern and obtained a plain-language explanation of the deferment process. We also asked the provider to consider a resolution that addressed the deferred charges. The provider acknowledged that it had missed an opportunity to explain the effect of reducing the payment arrangement. It then removed the deferred charges and applied a further allowance, leaving only the current bill payable. The customer accepted the resolution.

Gas

Gas distributor reimburses customer following damage to gas supply by third party

A residential customer complained they had incurred costs after water entered the gas network and affected the gas lines inside their property. The household was without gas-powered hot water and cooking facilities while the network and their own gas lines were repaired. The gas distributor declined to reimburse the customer, saying that the water came from the water provider's infrastructure and so the customer should pursue their claim with them.

The Energy and Water Ombudsman's investigation looked at the cause of the incident, the work done to restore the network and the reason for declining the requested reimbursement. The gas distributor acknowledged that its processes could be improved and that the incident had caused inconvenience to the customer. To resolve the complaint, the distributor reimbursed the customer's gas-fitting costs.

Electricity

Pole placement concerns resolved through tree removal

A customer complained about a power pole that an electricity distributor had relocated near established trees on their property. The customer said they had raised concerns before the pole was installed and were now expected to meet the ongoing cost of keeping the trees clear of the electricity network.

The customer complained to the Energy and Water Ombudsman after the distributor decided that the customer was now responsible for managing the vegetation.

The Energy and Water Ombudsman's investigation confirmed the tree was established before the pole was installed in its current location. The pole had been relocated as part of works associated with a nearby development.

The distributor agreed to remove the affected tree at its cost, removing the need for the customer to fund future pruning near the pole.

Did you know...

Owners and occupier of land are encouraged to reference the WA Government's vegetation-management guidelines which addresses who is responsible for pruning vegetation according to whether it is planted/cultivated or naturally occurring, and whether it is on a street verge, adjoining property, farm, Crown land or reserve.

Gas

Ombudsman assists in getting credit listing removed

A customer contacted the Energy and Water Ombudsman about a credit default listing for a gas account for a property they had previously sold. The customer said the default listing shouldn't have occurred as they had sold the property.

Appropriately, the retailer asked for evidence showing the date the customer ceased responsibility for the property before it could adjust the account. However, the customer initially provided documents that did not establish the relevant date.

With the assistance of the Energy and Water Ombudsman, the customer was then able to provide evidence confirming the date of property settlement.

The retailer agreed to use this date to finalise the account and recalculate the final charges and recovered the debt from the external debt purchaser, removing the credit default listing.

Electricity

Large electricity bill reduced after account review

A residential electricity customer received a large 'catch-up' bill after several months of estimated charges which put the customer in financial hardship. The retailer initially maintained that the estimates were due to the meter being inaccessible. The customer disputed this explanation, stating that the meter was outside the property and was not obstructed.

Following the Energy and Water Ombudsman's involvement, the retailer found that the estimates were caused by a communications fault, not a meter access issue. Their further review identified that part of the 'catch-up' bill may have included consumption at the property prior to the customer occupying the residence.

The retailer applied credits to the customer's account, which substantially reduced the outstanding balance. The retailer also offered an extended payment arrangement for the remaining balance.

Did you know...

A disputed account with a utility does not need be paid until it has been reviewed by the utility or investigated by the Energy and Water Ombudsman. However, customers are still required to pay the bills not in dispute. Failure to do so may lead to debts accumulating and further financial hardship.

Electricity

Power pole relocation proceeds without a second application fee

A residential customer applied to an electricity distributor to relocate a power pole near their property and paid the relevant fee. The customer then cancelled the project but later decided to reinstate it. The distributor said that the cancelled project could not be reinstated and that a new application would be required with the relevant fee.

The Energy and Water Ombudsman's investigation considered the circumstances of the cancellation; how much work had been completed before the project was cancelled and the applicable terms and conditions. The Energy and Water Ombudsman asked the distributor to consider whether the original fee could be refunded, or if a new application could proceed without the customer paying a second application fee.

The distributor agreed that the customer could submit a new application and have the second fee refunded. We presented the available options to the customer, and the pole relocation project was able to proceed without the customer paying two application fees.

Water

Customer receives compensation for plumbing issue

A resident experienced recurring wastewater overflows on their property. They disputed a water service provider's decision not to reimburse them for plumbing expenses they incurred trying to fix the problem. The customer complained to the Energy and Water Ombudsman, saying that the source of the problem was the provider's sewer network.

The provider initially said there was insufficient evidence of fault; however, the Energy and Water Ombudsman's review of records, photographs and information from both parties identified gaps in the provider's position. The Energy and Water Ombudsman found that the sewer main had probably contributed to the blockages.

Following the Energy and Water Ombudsman's intervention, the service provider agreed to make a goodwill payment, which the customer accepted.

Did you know...

Landowners are responsible for maintaining their internal plumbing up to the sewer mains and are reminded to ensure the overflow relief gully (the outdoor grated drain designed to release wastewater safely outside) is not blocked, otherwise sewage can back up and overflow directly inside the property through lower plumbing fixtures like showers, floor drains, and toilets during a blockage.

Electricity

Regional customer receives compensation following large catch-up bill

A regional electricity customer contacted the Energy and Water Ombudsman after receiving several adjusted bills showing significantly higher electricity consumption than usual.

The investigation considered the customer's historical metering and billing data. The retailer had the meter tested and it was found to be accurate; however, there had been a communication fault which resulted in the retailer issuing estimated bills. As further meter readings became available, it resulted in multiple rebills for the same period. This had made the customer concerned about the accuracy of the billing.

Following the Energy and Water Ombudsman's investigation, the retailer agreed to allow the customer to return to be a 'self-reader'. The customer also received credits for late payment fees, overdue notice charges and other costs incurred while the dispute remained unresolved. The retailer also explained to the customer the circumstances that had led to the repeated rebilling.

Did you know...

Retailers are allowed to issued bills based on estimated meter readings where a meter reading was not obtained, or where the meter reading failed validation as it appeared inaccurate. These estimated readings are clearly marked on bills. While these bills are legitimate, several consecutive estimated bills can sometimes result in a large 'catch-up' bill.

Electricity

Large electricity bill reduced after multiple estimated bills

A customer received five consecutive estimated bills based on substituted meter readings. They then received several re-bills resulting a large 'catch-up' account. The new bills were based on an actual metering reading that reflected the customer's true electricity consumption in the previous billing periods.

The Energy and Water Ombudsman's investigation found that the meter had accurately recorded the electricity consumed. However, the distributor had substituted five consecutive readings because the recorded consumption was considered significantly higher than the previous occupants' usage.

Distributors are permitted to provide substituted readings to electricity retailers. Significantly the electricity billed had been consumed by the customer. However, the Energy and Water Ombudsman considered that repeated substituted readings had meant that the customer had not been given an earlier opportunity to identify their high electricity usage and change their consumption behaviour. As a result, the distributor agreed to provide a credit to the customer's account, which resolved the complaint.

Did you know...

When an account is re-billed, the invoices originally issued are 'reversed', or in other words, cancelled, with re-bills issued in their place for the identical supply period and reflecting the updated and accurate meter readings. These re-bills can be confusing for customers, but it ensures the customer is billed correctly. Any consumption previously not billed for is charged and any overpayment is credited back to the customer.

Connecting with community and stakeholders

This section outlines our engagement with stakeholders such as industry, regulators, other ombudsman and the wider Western Australian community.

Effective engagement with key stakeholder groups is essential to achieving effective complaint resolution, increased awareness of our services and identifying and addressing systemic issues.

We do this through:

- Continuous liaison and communication with key stakeholders including Members (electricity, gas or water providers), regulators and industry-based ombudsmen.
- Ensuring ongoing access to our services for residential and small use customers, and community groups who represent them.

In November 2021, the Board approved a revised *Communications Strategy 2022-2026*. This strategy identifies activities designed to enhance the promotion of, and access to, our services.

Industry stakeholders

We regularly liaise with a number of key stakeholders including industry and regulators. This continuous communication and feedback process allows us to better understand relevant industry issues and to encourage best practice and leadership in dispute resolution.

Members

To achieve effective dispute resolution, we liaise closely with Members. We were involved in regular meetings and updates with Members:

- In November 2025, each Member was emailed a copy of the Annual Report 2024-25 along with a tailored Member Report. The Member Report provided Members which had complaints in the previous financial year with more details about complaints to their organisation and comparisons with the sector as a whole.
- In March 2026, the Principal Assistant Energy and Water Ombudsman, Marcus Claridge, liaised with senior representatives from the eight Members with the greatest number of complaints, to discuss complaint trends and projections as part of EWO's budget planning for 2026-27.
- In April 2026, Marcus met with representatives of Western Power to discuss ongoing liaison and complaints.

The Economic Regulation Authority and other regulators

During 2025-26, we were involved with meetings and liaison with the ERA and other regulators as outlined below:

- Throughout 2025-26, we met with Energy Policy WA and the ERA, to discuss the Alternative Electricity Services (**AES**) framework being introduced by the Western Australian Government. The AES framework represents the most significant expansion of the Energy and Water Ombudsman's jurisdiction since the Scheme was established. The framework will extend consumer protections and access to independent external dispute resolution for customers of emerging electricity services, including On-site Power Supply (**OPS**)

services and Single Property (embedded) Networks (**SPN**). Subject to the passage of legislation, complaints from OPS customers can be received from 2 February 2027 and from SPN customers from 1 July 2027. We undertook significant preparatory work to support implementation of the expanded jurisdiction, including:

  - Monitored consultation and regulatory developments associated with the AES framework and future jurisdictional arrangements.
  - Commenced planning for OPS and SPN services to be included in the Scheme, which included amendments to the Constitutional and Charter, governance arrangements and funding model.
  - Planning for changes to systems, processes, membership arrangements and stakeholder communications associated with implementation of AES.
  - Participated in discussions and information sharing with regulators and industry stakeholders regarding emerging electricity services and consumer protection arrangements.
- In September and December 2025, and March 2026, Marcus attended liaison meetings with senior staff of the ERA.
- In January 2026, Marcus attended a meeting with the ERA's Consumer Consultative Committee.

We also met with the following Minister and advisor:

- In October 2025, the Energy and Water Ombudsman Bevan Warner met with the Hon Don Punch, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs; Water; Climate Resilience; South West.
- In November 2025, the Energy and Water Ombudsman, Bevan Warner, and Chair of the Board, Michael Schaper, meet with an official from the office of the Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson, Minister for Energy and Decarbonisation; Manufacturing; Skills and TAFE; Pilbara.

Industry ombudsman offices

Liaison and collaboration with other industry-based ombudsman offices provides an opportunity for us to benchmark our performance and stakeholder communication activities against other similar agencies, and to identify areas for improvement through the experience of others.

A summary of the liaison with these industry bodies is outlined below:

- In July and October 2025, and March, April and June 2026, Marcus attended an Australian and New Zealand Energy and Water Ombudsman Network (**ANZEWON**) meeting.

  ANZEWON provides a forum for utility industry ombudsmen in Australia and New Zealand to enhance effectiveness, efficiency and appropriate consistency of complaint handling across the jurisdictions. Members can share appropriate information and jointly consider emerging consumer issues.
- In September, October and December 2025, and June 2026 Marcus attended, via videoconference, an ANZEWON liaison meeting to discuss jurisdictional and membership issues.
- In November 2025, the Marcus attended, via teleconference, an Energy and Water Ombudsman meeting to discuss complaints concerning solar systems.
- In April 2026, Marcus attended, via teleconference, an Energy and Water

Ombudsman Senior Dispute Resolution meeting.

- In March and June 2026, the communications team attended the Australian and New Zealand Ombudsman Association's Public Relations and Communications Interest Group meeting via video conference.

Connecting with the WA community

Reaching out and connecting with the people we serve in WA is a key initiative to help people find out about our services and access us. We do this online and through public events in metropolitan Perth and across regional WA.

As the need for our services increases, we have increased our outreach and engagement, with more visits to the regions and maintaining ongoing relationships in the regions we have been to.

All our community engagement is done collaboratively with Ombudsman Western Australia, which provides value for the community and efficiencies for the Energy and Water Ombudsman Scheme. We regularly partner with other complaint handling organisations, providing a one-stop-shop model for complaints.

Out and about around Perth

Attending community events and meeting with local organisations provides meaningful conversations and advice to those who need more information about how we can assist people. Helping service providers understand our role is also fundamental, as they seek ways to help vulnerable people in times of stress or hardship.



Images: Harmony Day stalls in Belmont and Katanning.



Harmony Day

In March we joined the Health and Disability Service Complaints Office at the Belmont Harmony Day. The very busy day of festivities drew a big crowd who took away bags of information and resources.

Together with the Katanning Harmony festival we also attended this year, these community events are wonderful celebrations and opportunities bringing together the rich cultural diversity of our community, and an opportunity for our staff to chat with local residents and organisations about our services.

NAIDOC Week

Recognising and celebrating NAIDOC Week aligns with our commitment to inclusion, equity and respect. The week is an important event on our calendar every July, where we attended festivals in Armadale and Mirrabooka which bring together local residents to connect with and celebrate Aboriginal culture. These events offered valuable opportunities for staff to engage with local community members and service organisations to listen, learn and build meaningful relationships.

Financial Counselling WA conference

In October we were part of the Financial Counsellors' Association of Western Australia Conference 2025, themed “Honouring the Past, Shaping the Future”. Connecting with financial counsellors shares information about how we help resolve energy and water complaints and support their vital work across the community.

WA Seniors Week

In November, we joined two fantastic events for seniors: Have a Go Day in Burswood Park, and Ballardong Elders and Seniors Day in Northam. Both free events for seniors, in Northam it was the first event of its kind, hosted by the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation.



Images: NAIDOC stalls in Mirrabooka and Armadale





Above: Justin O'Malley, Director Energy and Water, presents to electorate office staff.

Below: Bevan Warner, Ombudsman, presents at the Office of Multicultural Interests' Forum



Pridefest

In November, we proudly participated in PrideFest Fairday at the Supreme Court Gardens with the vibrant, diverse and unique LGBTQIA+ community.

Aboriginal Justice Open Day

In February we participated in the Aboriginal Justice Open Day held at Marangaroo. The Department of Justice led initiative is a culturally safe one-stop-shop for official documentation and administrative services that can often take months to resolve, especially in regional areas.

Presentations

We delivered a series of presentations through the year, such as:

- In August 2025, we presented to Consumer Protection's regional officers at their annual regional officers' conference.
- In September 2025, we presented to law students at the University of Western Australia on the role of the Energy and Water Ombudsman. We also had staff at UWA's Beyond Commercial Law careers day on the same day.
- In November 2025, we returned to the Lorikeet Centre to talk about our services with community members in Leederville.
- In November 2025, we presented to staff of The Nationals WA Party at Parliament House. This was a unique opportunity to explain to their regional electorate officers our role, different types of complaints and how we can assist with their constituents' enquiries.
- In November 2025 and June 2026, Marcus attended as an observer, the Western Australian Advocacy for Consumers of Energy which brings together energy consumer advocates to share consumer views and contribute to Western Australia's

energy debate. The meeting in June 2026 also included a presentation on our role.

- In December 2026, we presented to financial counsellors on the role of the Energy and Water Ombudsman as part of their professional development series.
- In June 2026, Ombudsman Bevan Warner presented to Community Leaders at the Office of Multicultural Interests' Forum, which brought together representatives of new and emerging communities who play an important role in sharing information through their networks.

Reaching out to the regions

Our Regional Awareness and Accessibility Program helps ensure awareness and provide access to regional and Aboriginal Western Australians.

To ensure our visits are as helpful as possible to Aboriginal Western Australians and those living and working regionally, we coordinate them with other consumer protection and complaint handling agencies. This is a highly successfully program that benefits the communities we go to by having several providers to talk to at the same time.

This year we coordinated with the Equal Opportunity Commission, Health and Disability Services Complaints Office, Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman, the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (Consumer Protection), Aboriginal Legal Service of WA, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Australian Financial Complaints Authority and Australian Financial Security Authority.

East Kimberley

The year of regional visits began in July 2025 in the far north of our state talking with organisations and communities in Kununurra, Wyndham and Warmun.

Events included co-hosting a networking event with the East Kimberley Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Consumer Protection's 'Community Connect' event in Kununurra, hosting a Lunch & Learn event for the community at the Ngnowar Aerwah Community Centre in Wyndham and meeting with community in Warmun.

In March 2026 we returned to Kununurra to reconnect with stakeholders following our visit last year. Principal Assistant Ombudsman Complaint Resolution Brianna Lonnie spoke at the International Women's Day breakfast hosted by the East Kimberley Chamber of Commerce.

South West

In November we went to the South West. Events included Consumer Protection's 'Community Connect' in Margaret River, the 'Smart2Ask Community Expo' at the South West Sport Centre in Bunbury, and 'Bring Your Bills' at the Eaton Recreation Centre. These provided opportunities for residents to talk about billing issues, consumer and legal advice, and how to resolve problems with a wide range of services.

The team met with local organisations including the South West Community Legal Centre to discuss how our services can help their clients, as well as the City of Augusta-Margaret River and the City of Bunbury.

We spoke with local service providers, lawyers and financial counsellors at the 'Supporting Consumers Sundowner' co-hosted with the South West Law Society in Bunbury.



Images: Above: Staff at Smart2Ask Bunbury.
Below: Staff at Community Connect Margaret River



Pilbara

In November, we were also in Karratha at the AGM of the Puutu Kunti Kurrama and Pinikura Aboriginal Corporation.

The AGM is an important gathering of community and a valuable place to have conversations.

Wheatbelt

In March, we teamed up with the Telecommunications Ombudsman for the 'Ombudsman Small Business Forum' hosted by the Narrogin Chamber of Commerce. As part of the Chamber Connect series, the event was an opportunity for small businesses to understand when they can contact an ombudsman, what issues we can help resolve, clarity on how the complaints process works.

A stand for two days at the Wagin Woolorama, our state's largest agricultural show outside the metropolitan area, was a key opportunity for our staff to speak with local residents in the heart of the Wheatbelt.

Later in June our team returned to the Wheatbelt at the Beverley Community Resource Centre. Together with Consumer Protection WA and Equal Opportunity Commission WA, we talked with community members about how we can help with complaints.

Great Southern

Later in March we engaged with local community at an information session at the Gnowangerup Community Resource Centre.

We then held a stall at the Katanning Harmony Day festival, a significant multicultural event in one of the towns with the highest migrant work force.

Mid West

In June we visited Geraldton to talk directly with a range of community organisations and agencies about how we can help with complaints in the Mid West.

The team met with the Bundiyarra Aboriginal Corporation and Geraldton Streetwork Aboriginal Corporation (known locally as Streeties) at the Bundiyarra offices. We discussed how we assist the community as the Energy and Water Ombudsman.

By attending the Financial Counsellors Association of WA Forum held in Geraldton the same week, we were able to talk with financial counsellors in the region and put a strong focus on ways we can support communities in regional WA experiencing financial hardship. The Forum also provided insightful sessions for our team.

In Geraldton we also met with the Regional Alliance West and Legal Aid WA, and discussed how financial counsellors and community legal services can refer clients to us.

Peel

In June, on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, we teamed up with Consumer Protection WA and the Equal Opportunity Commission, at the Shire of Murray's 'Purple Pickleball' event in Pinjarra talking with community members about how we can help with complaints.



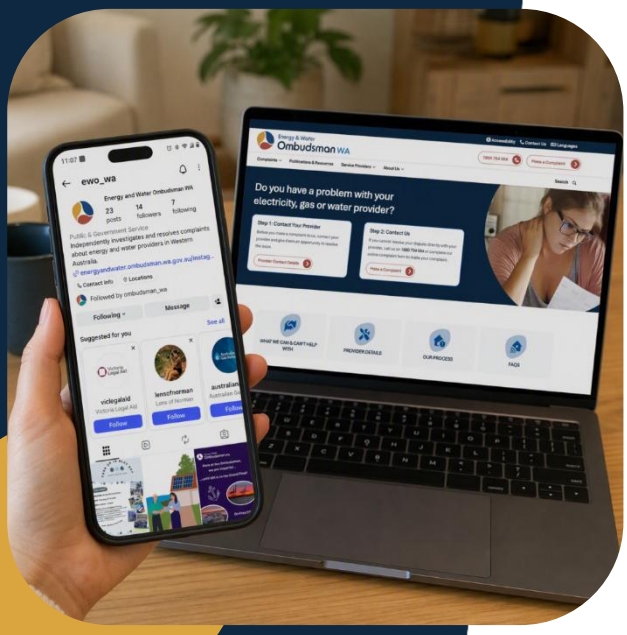
Images: Above: Staff at the Wagin Woolorama with Consumer Protection and the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman. Below: Staff at Beverley Community Resource Centre. Bottom: staff at the Financial Counselling WA 2025 Regional Forum in Geraldton.







Images: Above: We sponsored a Reconciliation Week banner in Forrest Place.
Below: Our website and Instagram.



Raising awareness

In May, we sponsored the National Reconciliation Week banner program in four locations: Forrest Place in Perth, Midland, Karratha and Bunbury. This year's banner featured the artwork of Melissa Sunfly, a proud Kukatja/Ngardi woman and emerging artist, with Warlayirti Artists in the East Kimberley, who creates contemporary visual art rooted in powerful stories, deep cultural knowledge, and strong connections to Country.

Online accessibility

We launched a new website in June this year to make it easier for people to find information and use our services.

The new site focuses on accessibility and clear, simple language. It has been designed to meet accessibility standards so more people can use it with ease. The language and the appearance can be changed with the Userway toolbar.

The website is easier to use, with clear menus and simple navigation. You can quickly find key services like how to make a complaint. We have also made our online forms easier to use and more secure.

The new website includes:

- A Publications and Resources section where you can search our reports and publications.
- A News section with updates about our work
- A 'case studies' section with real examples of how we help people
- Support for different languages, including translated information.

Later in the year we expanded our social media presence from Facebook to Instagram, to reach other demographics in the community.

Company particulars and financial statements

Company particulars as at 30 June 2026.

Energy and Water Ombudsman (Western Australia) Limited ACN 109 054 426	
Registered address	c/- Kennerlys 37 Ord Street West Perth WA 6005
Postal address	c/- Kennerlys PO Box 1125 West Perth WA 6872
Board	**Chairperson:** Michael Schaper **Directors** Customer Representative: Grant Cucel Customer Representative: Phillip Kemp Customer Representative: Kathryn Lawrence Gas Industry Representative: Kylie Wilkie Electricity Industry Representative: Lesley Walker Water Industry Representative: Karen Willis **Alternative Directors** Gas Industry Representative: Jessica Dyer (Appointed 20/04/2026) Electricity Industry Representative: Samantha Torrens Water Industry Representative: Jason Ducie (Resigned 07/04/2026) Meredith Copping (Appointed 08/04/2026)
Company Secretary	Leendert Johan Ouwendyk
Accountants	Kennerlys, PO Box 1125, West Perth WA 6872

	Directors' Meeting	Budget Committee
Number of meetings held:	**4**	**1**
Number of meetings attended:		
Michael Schaper	4/4	N/A
Grant Cucel	4/4	1/1
Phillip Kemp	3/4	N/A
Kathryn Lawrence	4/4	N/A
Kylie Wilkie	4/4	1/1
Lesley Walker	3/4	N/A
Karen Willis	2/4	N/A

Energy and Water Ombudsman (Western Australia) Limited ACN 109 054 426	
Auditor	Horizon Nexia Partners GPO Box 2570 Perth WA 6000
Members	**Gas Industry** • AGL Sales Pty Ltd • Alinta Sales Pty Ltd • Amanda Energy Pty Ltd • ATCO Gas Australia Pty Ltd • Electricity Generation and Retail Corporation (trading as Synergy) • IPower Pty Ltd and IPower2 Pty Ltd (trading as ENGIE, formerly Simply Energy) • Origin Energy Retail Limited • Perth Energy Pty Ltd • Supagas Pty Ltd • Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas Pty Ltd **Electricity Industry** • Alinta Sales Pty Ltd • Amanda Energy Pty Ltd • Change Energy Pty Ltd • CleanTech Energy Pty Ltd (trading as Delorean Energy Retail) • Eglinton Village Energy Pty Ltd • Electricity Generation and Retail Corporation (trading as Synergy) • Electricity Networks Corporation (trading as Western Power) • Ocean Reef Renewable Energy Pty Ltd • Peel Renewable Energy Pty Ltd • Perdaman Energy Retail Pty Ltd • Perth Energy Pty Ltd • Regional Power Corporation (trading as Horizon Power) • Rottnest Island Authority • Wesfarmers Kleenheat Gas Pty Ltd **Water Industry** • Aqua Ferre (Muchea) Pty Ltd (trading as Muchea Water) • Aquasol Pty Ltd • BHP Iron Ore Pty Ltd • BHP Nickel West Pty Ltd • BWater Pty Ltd (trading as ABCO Water Systems) • Bunbury Water Corporation (trading as Aqwest) • Busselton Water Corporation • City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder • Country Heights Water Pty Ltd • Gascoyne Water Co-operative • Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd • Lancelin South Pty Ltd • Ord Irrigation Cooperative • Robe River Mining Co Pty Ltd • Rottnest Island Authority • South West Irrigation Management Co-operative Limited (trading as Harvey Water) • TMC Witchcliffe Pty Ltd • Water Corporation • Water West North Dandalup Pty Ltd

Independent Audit Opinion

Horizon Nexus Partners
Horizon Nexus (WA) Audit Pty Ltd (ACN 145 447 105)
Level 4, 88 William Street, Perth WA 6000 | GPO Box 2570, Perth WA 6001
horizonnp.com.au

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of Energy and Water Ombudsman (Western Australia) Ltd

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Energy and Water Ombudsman (Western Australia) Ltd ("the Company"), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2026, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and the cash flow statement for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Company is in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001*, including:

(a) giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30 June 2026 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and

(b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report.

We are independent of the Company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001* and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* ('the Code') that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Company's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2026 but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, we consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Liability Limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report (other than the consolidated entity disclosure statement) that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Corporations Act 2001;* and the consolidated entity disclosure statement that is true and correct in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001*, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report (other than the consolidated entity disclosure statement) that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and the consolidated entity disclosure statement that is true and correct and is free of misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our

opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Horizon Nexus (WA) Audit Pty Ltd

Justin Mulhair
Director

Perth, Western Australia
14 September 2026

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

Energy and Water Ombudsman (WA) Ltd
For the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026	2025
	$	$
Revenue		
Complaint/Dispute Revenue	3,094,094	3,082,528
Total Revenue	**3,094,094**	**3,082,528**
Other Income		
Interest Income	24,714	7,943
Total Other Income	**24,714**	**7,943**
Total Income	**3,118,808**	**3,090,471**
Expenses		
Accounting Expense	41,534	34,842
Amortisation	-	9,685
Bank Fees	120	120
Directors Fees	99,451	85,039
Dispute Costs	2,811,794	2,801,942
Filing Fee	254	744
Insurance	5,267	4,991
Professional Fees	49,326	34,295
Recruitment Costs	10,986	12,390
Statutory Review Fees	-	8,920
Superannuation	11,934	9,779
Training/Conference Expenses	6,002	5,177
Travel & Accommodation	8,978	8,186
Total Expenses	**3,045,646**	**3,016,110**
Profit/(Loss) before Taxation	**73,162**	**74,361**
Income Tax Expense		
Income Tax Expense	18,290	18,590
Total Income Tax Expense	**18,290**	**18,590**
Net Profit After Tax	**54,872**	**55,771**
Total Comprehensive Income for the year	**54,872**	**55,771**

Statement of Financial Position

Energy and Water Ombudsman (WA) Ltd
As at 30 June 2026

	30 JUN 2026 $	30 JUN 2025 $
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank	1,250,054	1,197,243
Trade Debtors	760	-
Prepayments	1,335	101,262
Current Tax Receivables	-	5,321
Total Current Assets	**1,252,149**	**1,303,826**
Non-Current Assets		
Intangibles	100,000	-
Total Non-Current Assets	**100,000**	**-**
Total Assets	**1,352,149**	**1,303,826**
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Current Tax Liabilities	3,714	-
Trade Creditors	3,809	14,072
Total Current Liabilities	**7,523**	**14,072**
Total Liabilities	**7,523**	**14,072**
Net Assets	**1,344,626**	**1,289,754**
Equity		
Retained Earnings	1,344,626	1,289,754
Total Equity	**1,344,626**	**1,289,754**

Statement of Changes in Equity

Energy and Water Ombudsman (WA) Ltd
For the year ended 30 June 2026

	$ RETAINED EARNINGS	$ TOTAL
Equity		
Balance at 1 July 2024	**1,233,983**	**1,233,983**
Profit after income tax expense for the year	55,771	55,771
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	**55,771**	**55,771**
Balance at 30 June 2025	**1,289,754**	**1,289,754**
Profit after income tax expense for the year	54,872	54,872
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	**54,872**	**54,872**
Balance at 30 June 2026	**1,344,626**	**1,344,626**

Statement of Cash Flows

Energy and Water Ombudsman (WA) Ltd
For the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026	2025
Operating activities		
Cash receipts from operating activities		
Interest Received	24,714	7,943
Complaint/Dispute Revenue	3,090,116	3,087,150
Joining Levy	-	6,600
Annual Levies	301,750	303,417
Total Cash receipts from operating activities	**3,416,580**	**3,405,110**
Cash payments used in operating activities		
Corporate Secretarial	(23,661)	(20,543)
Accounting Expense	(45,072)	(39,073)
Auditing Expense	(11,000)	(10,450)
Dispute Costs	(3,092,973)	(3,082,136)
Filing Fee	(254)	(744)
Insurance	(5,267)	(4,991)
Legal Expenses	(11,678)	-
Travel and Accommodation	(8,978)	(8,895)
Bank Fees	(120)	(120)
Project Costs	-	(6,732)
Recruitment Costs	(12,084)	(13,629)
Statutory Review Fees	-	(8,920)
Directors Fees	(99,451)	(85,039)
Superannuation	(11,934)	(9,779)
GST Payable	(16,442)	(19,538)
ATO Integrated Client Account	4,716	(7,023)
Prepaid Insurance	(73)	(57)
Training/Conference Expenses	(6,602)	(5,350)
Strategic Planning	(7,920)	_
Total Cash payments from operating activities	**(3,348,793)**	**(3,323,019)**
Income tax paid		
Income tax paid	(14,976)	(23,344)
Total Income tax paid	**(14,976)**	**(23,344)**
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities	**52,811**	**58,748**
Investing activities		
Website development costs paid	-	(100,000)
Net Cash Flows used in Investing Activities	-	(100,000)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash	**52,811**	**(41,252)**
Cash and cash Equivalents		
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	1,197,243	1,238,496
Net change in cash for period	52,811	(41,253)
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	1,250,054	1,197,243

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Energy & Water Ombudsman WA

Energy & Water Ombudsman WA

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