Remote Services Code

May 2018

Australian Energy Council
ABN 98 052 416 083

Level 14, 50 Market Street
Melbourne 3000
GPO Box 1823
Melbourne Victoria 3001

P +61 3 9205 3110
E info@energycouncil.com.au
W energycouncil.com.au

ABN 926 084 953 07

PREFACE

The Remote Services Code (**Code**) is a code of practice developed by the Australian Energy Council (**AEC**) in conjunction with the Competitive Metering Industry Group (**CMIG**).

The Code's primary objective is the utilisation of remote services in a safe and efficient way to maintain a positive consumer experience and the promotion of safe practices in the provision of remote de-energisation and remote re-energisation services (**remote services**).

The purpose of this document is to set out the approach that retailers and metering providers take in relation to the provision of remote services. The Code applies to the extent that it is consistent with all existing state and federal legislation and regulation. Where the Code is found inconsistent with any existing state or federal legislation or regulation, that regulatory obligation will take precedence to the extent of the inconsistency.

The Code has been developed and written in simple and transparent language with a focus on outcomes to provide the necessary flexibility in the delivery of remote energisation services. This technology neutral approach is consistent with the broader approach to the delivery of energy and metering and related services where the focus is the delivery and provision of improved services and the resulting benefits to customers.

Appendix 1 of the Code contains a list of risk mitigation considerations identified in an independent assessment of the risks associated with the provision of remote services.

A copy of the Code is available on the AEC website www.energycouncil.com.au.

The Code will be subject to periodic review by the AEC every three years. Suggestions for improvements or amendments should be sent to:

Policy Manager
Australian Energy Council
GPO Box 1823
Melbourne VIC 3001

info@energycouncil.com.au

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PART 1: PRELIMINARY

1.1 Title

The Code may be cited as the Remote Services Code.

1.2 Application

This Code is a code of practice and has no legal effect, unless incorporated as a mandatory standard of the provision of remote services by retailers and metering providers in a particular jurisdiction by a regulator or relevant government authority.

Jurisdictional regulators may require compliance with this Code via legislative instruments.

1.3 Purpose

The Code outlines standards of best practice for the provision of remote services by retailers and metering providers.

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of the Code are to –

(a) promote and enable the provision of remote services by retailers and metering providers in a safe and efficient and technology neutral way;

(b) define minimum requirements of retailers and metering providers in the provision of remote services to customers; and

(c) protect customers through the mitigation of the risks associated with the provision of remote services.

1.5 Interpretation

(a) Headings and notes are for convenience or information only and do not affect the interpretation of the Code or any term or condition set out in the Code.

(b) Words importing the singular include the plural and vice versa.

(c) An expression importing a natural person includes any company, partnership, trust, joint venture, association, corporation or other body corporate and any governmental agency and vice versa.

(d) A reference to a document or a provision of a document includes an amendment or supplement to, or replacement of or novation of, that document or that provision of that document.

(e) A reference to a person includes that person's executors, administrators, successors, substitutes (including, without limitation, persons taking by novation) and permitted assigns.

(f) Other parts of speech and grammatical forms of a word or phrase defined in the Code have a corresponding meaning.

1.6 Definitions

In the ***Code***, unless the contrary intention appears –

"AEC" or **"Australian Energy Council"** means the Australian Energy Council, ABN 98 052 416 083;

"Code" means this Remote Services Code as published and amended by the AEC.

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"disconnection" has the meaning given to that term in NER.

"life support equipment" has the meaning given to that term in the National Energy Retail Rules.

"meter" has the meaning given to that term in the NER.

"metering installation" has the meaning given to that term in NER.

"metering coordinator" has the meaning given to that term in the NER.

"metering provider" has the meaning given to that term in NER.

"minimum specification requirements" means the requirements of the minimum services specification for metering installations under the NER, or in Victoria the minimum requirements for metering installations under the Minimum AMI Functionality Specification.

"MSATS" has the meaning given to Market Settlement and Transfer Solution Procedures in the NER.

"National Energy Retail Rules" means the Rules made by the Australian Energy Market Commission under the National Energy Retail Law.

"NEL" means the National Electricity Law set out in the Schedule to the *National Electricity (South Australia) Act 1996* of South Australia;

"NER" means the National Electricity Rules as in force from time to time under the NEL;

"**NMI**" means the national metering identifier as defined in the NER.

"permitted hours" means any jurisdictional time limitations on the performance of remote de-energisation services.

"remote de-energisation" means the remote disconnection of a supply address via the metering installation;

"remote re-energisation" means the remote reconnection of a supply address via the metering installation;

"remote services" means remote de-energisation and remote re-energisation.

"restricted period" means any period of time specified by any regulator or government authority relating to a period of de-energisation of a supply address after which remote re-energisation is prohibited in the relevant jurisdiction.

"retailer" has the meaning given to that term in NEL, except in relation to Victoria where the term means a person holding an licence to sell electricity pursuant to the *Electricity Industry Act 2000* (Vic).

"supply address" means the address at which customer connection services are provided to the customer.

1.7 Retailer Review of Processes and Procedures

Retailers shall undertake to review processes, procedures and staff training in relation to the provision of remote services on a regular basis.

1.8 Amendment & Review

The Code may be amended at any time by the AEC. The Code will be subject to periodic review at least every three years and will be kept current through the issue of amendments and the publication on new versions.

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PART 2: REMOTE DE-ENERGISATION

2.1 Remote de-energisation of a customer's supply address may be requested by a retailer only if:

(a) the customer has a metering installation that meets the minimum specification requirements;

(b) the retailer is able to confirm the customer can understand the requirements and consent to the provision of the service being performed remotely;

(c) the retailer has used reasonable endeavours to inform itself of, and assess any, identified hazards or risks associated with the service being performed remotely;

(d) the retailer is satisfied that there are reasonable measures available to the customer to mitigate the hazards or risks to ensure it is safe for the customer's supply address to be de-energised;

(e) the retailer has verified the supply address is not registered for life support equipment;

(f) the retailer has confirmed with the customer no planned electrical work is currently underway or scheduled to occur; and

(g) no jurisdictional restrictions on the de-energisation of the customer's supply address apply.

2.2 Retailers are responsible for assessing and ascertaining a customer's capacity and ability to participate and access remote services and determining in each individual circumstance which risk mitigation measures to adopt to ensure all of the criteria in clause 2.1 is satisfied.

2.3 A metering provider who receives a retailer initiated request for the remote de-energisation of a NMI must:

(a) reject the service order request if it is not the metering provider for the NMI; and

(b) confirm the retailer or other market participant is authorised to make that request in respect of the NMI under the NER.

2.4 A metering provider who receives a retailer initiated request for the remote de-energisation of a customer's supply address, may only action a request for remote de-energisation if:

(a) there are no conflicting pending service orders in the queue for the NMI;

(b) the metering provider can confirm the life support equipment registration status of the supply address from the service order or another source;

(c) the requested time for the remote de-energisation is within the permitted hours; and

(d) the supply address is currently energised and where applicable is reflected in MSATS.

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2.5 A metering provider is prohibited from performing a remote de-energisation request if:

(a) if the NMI has a conflicting pending service order in queue.

(b) the metering provider cannot confirm that no life support equipment is registered at the supply address from the service order or another source ;

(c) the requested time for de-energisation is not within permitted hours; or

(d) the supply address is not currently energised, and where applicable the NMI status is in MSATS is not active and meter status is not current, the request for remote de-energisation must be rejected and the metering provider must validate with the retailer the requirements for the NMI.

2.6 Where a metering provider is prohibited from performing a remote de-energisation request under clause 2.5, the request must be rejected and the metering provider must notify the retailer, and may notify the metering coordinator and/or other relevant parties that the request is rejected.

2.7 A metering provider must generate and provide a completion notification to the retailer and may generate and provide a completion notification to the metering coordinator and other relevant parties following a remote de-energisation.

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PART 3: REMOTE RE-ENERGISATION

3.1 Remote re-energisation of a customer's supply address may be requested by a retailer only if:

(a) the customer has a metering installation that meets the minimum specification requirements;

(b) the retailer is able to confirm the customer can understand the requirements and consent to the provision of the service being performed remotely;

(c) the retailer has used reasonable endeavours to inform itself of, and assess any, identified hazards or risks associated with the service being performed remotely;

(d) the retailer is satisfied that there are reasonable measures available to the customer to mitigate the hazards or risks to ensure it is safe for the customer's supply address to be re-energised;

(e) the retailer is satisfied that the customer is capable of taking any action required to effect the re-energisation;

(f) the retailer has confirmed with the customer no planned electrical work is currently underway or scheduled to occur; and

(g) no jurisdictional restrictions on the re-energisation of the customer's supply address apply.

3.2 Retailers are responsible for assessing and ascertaining a customer's capacity and ability to participate and access remote services and determining in each individual circumstance which risk mitigation measures to adopt to ensure all of the criteria in clause 3.1 is satisfied.

3.3 A metering provider who receives a retailer initiated request for the remote re-energisation of a NMI must:

(a) reject the service order request if it is not the metering provider for the NMI; and

(b) confirm the retailer or other market participant is authorised to make that request in respect of the NMI under the NER.

3.4 A metering provider who receives a retailer initiated request for the remote re-energisation of a customer's supply address may only action a request for remote re-energisation if:

(a) there are no conflicting pending service orders in the queue for the NMI;

(b) the supply address or NMI has been de-energised for a period that is less than any applicable restricted period in the relevant jurisdiction; and

(c) the supply address is energised and where applicable the NMI status in MSATS is active or the meter status must be in current or de-energised status.

3.5 A metering provider is prohibited from performing a remote re-energisation request:

(a) if the NMI has a conflicting pending service order in queue.

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(b) if the supply address or NMI has been de-energised for a period that is longer than any applicable restricted period in the relevant jurisdiction; or

(c) if the supply address is already energised and where applicable the NMI status in MSATS is not active.

(d) if the supply address is already energised and where applicable NMI status is active and the meter status is not current or de-energised in MSATS.

3.6 If a metering provider is prohibited from performing a remote re-energisation request under clause 3.5, the request must be rejected and the metering provider must notify the retailer, and may notify the metering coordinator and/or other relevant parties that the request is rejected.

3.7 A metering provider must generate and provide a completion notification to the retailer and may generate and provide a completion notification to the metering coordinator and other relevant parties following a remote re-energisation.

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APPENDIX 1: Identified Risk Management Considerations

The below list of risk management considerations that have been identified is included for information purposes only:

1. **Confirmation of life support status** – confirm the status of the supply address in relation to life support prior to requesting remote services are performed. Previous records of life support status should not be relied upon in case the customers circumstances have changed.

2. **Service order monitoring** – monitor and maintain precedence logic when multiple service orders are received for remote services to avoid unexpected changes in supply state.

3. **Service order validation** – ensure remote services are only provided when service orders are correctly formed and reliably identify the life support status of the premise.

4. **Access to meter position** – potential risks or barriers associated with the customer approaching the meter or premise switch board prior to provision of the remote services should be identified.

5. **Customer competence** – determine the capability of the customer to physically participate in the provision of the remote service and establish if the customer may require assistance for the service to be provided remotely (e.g. operating the installations main switch or operating the button on the meter).

6. **Premise status** – use a decision tree to guide the outcomes from retailer scripts to assess the suitability of the premise for a remote service or a site visit is required (e.g. has recent electrical work been done, age of building, type of building, location of meter and switchboard).

7. **Customer confirmation** – obtain customer confirmation that the re-energisation method does not have to be restricted to a main switch operation or meter button press.

8. **Prequalify customers** – assess and record if the customer should not be asked to participate in the remote re-energisation or remote de-energisation of the premise by interacting with the meter or switchboard.

9. **Customer follow-up** – check the status of the supply address following the provision a remote re-energisation through communications with the customer.

10. **Training** – provide training to staff on scenarios and interactions with customers related to the provision of remote de-energisation or re-energisation services. (e.g. approaching a meter, operating a main switch, pressing the button on the meter).

11. **Customer acceptance** – confirm that the customer accepts responsibility to locally re-energise the customer's supply address via the main switch of meter button when local re-energisation is chosen.

12. **Meter condition monitoring** – metering providers may monitor the premise post de-energisation or re-energisation to identify any unexpected energy flows and alert the retailer to any exceptions (e.g. current flows when main switch off, unexpected high current flows).

For further information refer to GHD Risk Assessment: Remote Services with Smart MetersSemi Quantitative Risk Assessment (SQRA), published at Australian Energy Council website. www.energycouncil.com.au/

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DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date of Amendment	Description
May 2018	Initial Remote Services Code published

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