



MEDIA RELEASE

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Retailers Call for Balance in Victorian Energy Ombudsman Report

The Energy Retailers Association of Australia said today a more balanced debate was needed following the release of figures by the Victorian Energy and Water Ombudsman.

Executive Director, Deane Russell, said the figures released today claimed that there were 7,419 cases received by the Ombudsman in the six months to June 2004. These were actually phone calls taken by their call centre.

Of these 7,419 there were 1,559 complaints, of which only 32 were not resolved with the retailers in the statutory time.

This is a very small number when compared to the 3 million electricity and gas consumers in Victoria.

All 32 complaints were eventually resolved with the retailers. There were no notices of direction issued by the Ombudsman. 96% of complaints were conciliated. 77% of all cases were resolved within 2 days.

“Retailers do not want to see any consumer suffer as a result of hardship circumstances,” Mr Russell said. “I urge customers to call their retailer if they are having difficulties in paying their bills.”

“Energy retailers have an eight step process that is taken before anyone is actually disconnected and retailers have been working with the Victorian Government and the community groups to further improve services to hardship cases.”

For further information

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