

11 May 2007

Review of DEUS Developer Charges Guidelines  
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal  
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Thank you for inviting EWON to provide a submission to the Tribunal's *Review of DEUS Developer Charges Guidelines for Water Supply, Sewerage and Stormwater* (April 2007).

As you are aware, EWON is the approved dispute resolution body for NSW electricity and gas customers but only for some water customers. The current review involves non-metropolitan water providers, only one of which (Country Energy's water business in Broken Hill) falls within the jurisdiction of my office. For this reason we are not in a position to provide a formal response to the *Review*.

Nevertheless, I would like to take the opportunity to emphasise the importance of independent dispute resolution being available for all NSW water customers. At present, if there was a complaint regarding the application of a developer charge in Sydney or the Hunter area, EWON would be able to offer specialist assistance to the customer and provider to resolve the dispute. We have found that our involvement in these kinds of matters has been to the benefit of both parties and has helped to improve services to metropolitan customers. Unlike Victoria (where the Energy & Water Ombudsman has state-wide jurisdiction), in NSW there is no equivalent for non-metropolitan providers.

The *Review* refers in section 3.6 to the dispute resolution and arbitration powers of DEUS (now DWE) to settle disputes between local water authorities and developers. We note that independent dispute resolution through an Ombudsman scheme has been very valuable in resolving such disputes efficiently and effectively.

If you would like to discuss this letter further, please contact me or Brendan French, Deputy Ombudsman, on 82185250.

Yours sincerely



**Clare Petre**  
Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW