



Media Release
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ENERGY IN TASMANIA REPORT 2019-20

The Tasmanian Economic Regulator today publishes its annual performance report for Tasmania's energy sector, the *Energy in Tasmania Report 2019-20*.

Mr Joe Dimasi, the Tasmanian Economic Regulator, noted that the total number of residential and small business electricity customers in Tasmania increased by 1.5 per cent and 0.4 per cent respectively in 2019-20, while the number of large business customers decreased by 7.9 per cent or almost 200.

Despite the overall growth in electricity customers of around 1.2 per cent, electricity consumption in Tasmania was 1.5 per cent lower than in 2018-19 due to reduced consumption in the first three quarters of 2019-20.

In the fourth quarter of 2019-20, when restrictions were imposed as a result of COVID-19 pandemic and the proportion of employees working from home increased sharply, electricity consumption was greater than in the same quarter in 2018-19.

In 2019-20, competition increased in the Tasmania's electricity retail market, with two new retailers commenced operation in Tasmania, taking the total number of electricity retailers to seven.

Mr Dimasi noted that more electricity customers were on payment plans in 2019-20 and the proportion of residential customers repaying a debt nearly doubled from 2018-19 to 2019-20. The proportion of small business customers repaying a debt more than doubled in the same period. The report states that this was most likely the result of reduction in income of some residential and business customers due to the restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr Dimasi also noted that there were no disconnections by any electricity retailers in Tasmania during the fourth quarter of 2019-20.

Electricity output was unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Hydro generated electricity, which accounts for over 80 per cent of on-island generation, was almost unchanged from 2018-19.

Wind generation increased by 18.8 per cent on 2019-20, taking its share of total on-island generation from just below 10 per cent in 2018-19 to 11.7 per cent last year. The growth in

wind generation can largely be attributed to the commencement of the commissioning of turbines at two large wind farms, Granville Harbour and Cattle Hill, during 2019-20.

In 2019-20, gas consumption by distribution customers increased by 35.7 per cent to the highest level in more than ten years due to increased consumption by business customers.

As with electricity, the number of residential and business gas customers entering into a payment plan increased in 2019-20 and to the highest level in five years in some cases. Again, this can be attributed, at least in part, to the restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For further information contact:
Chris Lock
Director, Office of the Tasmanian Economic
Regulator
Tel: (03) 6166 4422 or
office@economicregulator.tas.gov.au

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