
Aurora Energy Information Disclosure Policy

1 August 2019



1 The Policy

Aurora Energy considers access to information a key component of effective participation and engagement with all stakeholders. Aurora Energy recognises that there is a positive correlation between effective and responsive stakeholder engagement and the high performance of its business.

As an Energy Company under the Local Government Act 2002, Aurora Energy is exempt from the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA). However, as a regulated monopoly providing an essential infrastructure service, Aurora Energy is required to make a range of public information disclosures that cover in detail the company's financial performance and associated levels of services delivered to customers (compliance statement), long term investment plans and details of the health and condition of network assets and pricing schedules and methodologies applied to network services.

The regulated disclosure requirements are designed to give all interested parties, including electricity customers, confidence that our pricing is fair, quality standards are being met and ensure that our network planning is transparent. All published disclosures are available on our website www.auroraenergy.co.nz.

From time to time the company receives requests for additional information, not captured by formal disclosures.

To the extent that much of Aurora Energy's information is already available to the public through various means, this Policy sets out our approach for responding to other requests for information that Aurora Energy may receive. Our policy is consistent with our responsibilities as a legally defined Energy Company providing essential infrastructure services and as a Council-owned organisation.

For the purposes of this Policy, information is defined as printed or electronic materials that provide knowledge about Aurora Energy's activities.

Compliance with this Policy shall be the responsibility of the CEO and Executive Management Team of Aurora Energy.

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2 Principles

This Policy is based on the following four principles:

Principle 1: Commitment to transparency. Aurora Energy affirms its commitment to transparency in its activities and therefore seeks to not unreasonably restrict access to any information that it produces nor to information in its possession that is not on the list of exceptions as set out in Appendix 1 of this Policy.

Principle 2: Simple and broad access to information. Aurora Energy will endeavour to facilitate access to information, maximise access to such information, and use clear and cost-effective procedures and timelines for processing requests.

Principle 3: Explanations of decisions and right to review. When denying access to information on request, Aurora Energy will provide an explanation for its decision. Requesters who believe they have been denied access to information can seek a formal review of the decision by the Board of Aurora Energy.

The Board of Aurora Energy will review whether the decision was made in accordance with the principles set out in this Policy and determine whether to uphold the decision or request the management of Aurora Energy release the information requested (in whole or in part).

On a regular basis, the Aurora Energy Board will report to Dunedin City Holdings Limited (Aurora Energy's shareholder) on the number and nature of information requests received and corresponding decisions, in response to disclosure requests, made by the company. This report will be made publicly available. Following receipt of the report, Dunedin City Holdings may request Aurora Energy to reconsider decisions to withhold information.

Principle 4: Consistency with Customer and Stakeholder Charter commitments. Our Customer Charter affirms our commitment to provide customers and stakeholders with a courteous, prompt and professional service. It states our commitment to ensuring that customers have comprehensive and relevant information about the supply of electricity to their properties. It outlines what customers can expect from us, and what we in turn require from them in order to meet service expectations and provide and maintain a safe and reliable electricity supply. Service related queries will be responded to in accordance with our Customer Charter and fall outside this Policy.

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3 Process

Aurora Energy's application of this Policy is underpinned by the following process.

3.1 Receipt of requests

Aurora Energy will assess requests for information on receipt. An initial decision will be made as to whether the information request is most appropriately processed in accordance with this Policy. Aurora Energy will advise the requester of this and at the same time make a copy of this Policy available to the requester.

Requests do not need to specifically reference this Policy in order to be processed according to this Policy.

Aurora Energy will aim to acknowledge requests for information within 2 working days and respond within 20 working days. Where the time frame for response cannot be met, Aurora Energy will communicate this to the requester, and will provide an expected time frame for response.

Aurora Energy may refer the requester to another company within the Dunedin City Holdings group, Dunedin City Holdings Limited or Dunedin City Council if it believes the information being requested is held by that organisation. If Aurora Energy does not hold the information requested, Aurora Energy will advise the requester.

3.2 Responding to requests

Aurora Energy will make information available to requesters in accordance with principles set out in this Policy, unless there are valid reasons for withholding information (refer Appendix 1).

If the information is already publicly available, Aurora Energy will refer the requester to the public source.

The format of any response will depend on the type of information requested. For example, an appropriate response might be, provision of a document, an invitation to view the information in person, and / or an excerpt or summary of the information.

In the event that Aurora Energy withholds information we will:

- Inform the requester of our decision to withhold information
- Inform the requester of the reason/s for withholding information
- Advise the requester that they have the option to refer the decision to the Board of Aurora Energy and to seek a review of the decision.

3.3 Review of decisions

Principle 3 of this Policy applies. Should a requester be dissatisfied with a decision to withhold information, made by Aurora Energy, the requester can seek review of the decision by the Board of Aurora Energy. On a regular basis, the Aurora Energy Board will report to Dunedin City Holdings Limited on the number and nature of information requests received and corresponding decisions, in response to disclosure requests, made by the company. This report will be made publicly available. Following receipt of the report, Dunedin City Holdings may request Aurora Energy to reconsider decisions to withhold information.

3.4 Record keeping and reporting

Aurora Energy will maintain a register of all information requests received and keep adequate records of the management of, and response to, these requests.

Aurora Energy will report to Dunedin City Holdings Limited on a regular basis the number of requests received, how those requests were answered, and whether any requests for reviews of decisions to withhold information were received.

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3.5 Responding to large or complex information requests

In relation to information requests of wide ranging nature, being very large and / or complex, Aurora Energy may consider:

- Consulting / meeting with the requester to amend or clarify the request to make the request more specific, or
- Charging for collating the information requested.

In considering charging for collation of information, Aurora Energy will apply the charges in accordance with the Dunedin City Council's Policy on Charging for LGOIMA requests dated 30 November 2009.

3.6 Shareholder information requests

Dunedin City Council and Dunedin City Holdings (DCHL) have agreed a protocol that all shareholder correspondence with the DCHL group of companies will be channelled through DCHL, including information requests. Accordingly, information requests from Dunedin City Council elected members (Mayor, Councillors and Community Board members) or staff should be directed to DCHL in the first instance.

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4 Exceptions

Declining information requests and principles of confidentiality. While Aurora Energy is committed to have an open and transparent disclosure system in place, there are legal, operational and practical considerations that are necessary to preserve the organisation's interests, as well as those of its staff, various partners and the public at large.

The types of information which normally would not be disclosed and / or some reasons why information may be withheld are summarised in Appendix 1.

5 Review and reporting

The Policy was first introduced and approved by the Aurora Energy Board on 9 June 2018. A review of the policy was undertaken after its first year of operation in July 2019 and will be reviewed every two years thereafter. An annual performance report will be prepared by Management for the Aurora Energy Board, summarising Aurora Energy's performance against the policy. The findings of annual performance report and periodic policy reviews will be made publicly available.

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Appendix 1

Example of exceptions to the policy and information that may be withheld and not disclosed.

- a. If the making available of the information would likely prejudice the maintenance of law, including the prevention, investigation and detection of offences, and the right to a fair trial
- b. If the making available of the information would likely endanger the safety of any person
- c. To protect the privacy of natural person(s), including that of deceased persons
- d. To protect information where the making available of the information would disclose a trade secret or would likely unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information
- e. To protect information where the making available of the information would likely prejudice the commercial position of Aurora Energy in conducting its business
- f. In the case only of an application for a consent or order under the Resource Management Act 1991, to avoid serious offence to tikanga Maori, or to avoid the disclosure of the location of wāhi tapu
- g. To protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence, or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information
 - i. would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied, or
 - ii. would be likely otherwise to damage the public interest
- h. To avoid prejudice to measures protecting the health or safety of members of the public
- i. To avoid prejudice to measures that prevent or mitigate material loss to members of the public
- j. To maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through
 - i. the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to members of officers or employees of Aurora Energy, in the course of their duty
 - ii. the protection of such members, officers, employees and persons from improper pressure or harassment
- k. To maintain professional privilege
- l. To enable Aurora Energy to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities
- m. To enable Aurora Energy to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations)
- n. To prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage
- o. If the making available of the information requested would
 - i. be contrary to the provisions of a specified enactment

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- ii. constitute contempt of court or the House of Representatives
- p. If the information requested is, or will soon, be publicly available
- q. If the request is more appropriately made under the Criminal Disclosure Act 2008.
- r. That the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist, or despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found
- s. That the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research, and Aurora Energy has not been able to reach agreement with the requester to one of the avenues set out in section 3.5.
- t. That the information requested is not held by Aurora Energy and the person dealing with the request has no grounds for believing the information is held by another company within the Dunedin City Holdings group, Dunedin City Holdings Limited or Dunedin City Council
- u. That the request is frivolous or vexatious or the information requested is considered trivial
- v. To protect information that could expose Aurora Energy or the author of the information to civil or criminal proceedings or regulatory action or that is subject to current or potential legal proceedings or regulatory review or enforcement including but not limited to the Commerce Commission, Electricity Authority and complaints before Utilities Disputes
- w. If the information requested was produced in the process of considering or responding to the request
- x. Where Aurora Energy would likely be prejudiced by the disclosure of the existence or non-existence of information relating to any of the preceding exclusions. In such cases Aurora Energy will advise the requester that it neither confirms nor denies the existence or non-existence of that information.

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Appendix 2

Examples of publicly available information relating to Aurora Energy normally available to the public through the Aurora Energy website.

- Annual reports
- Statement of Intent
- Asset Management Plans
- Annual compliance statement (default price-quality path)
- Annual performance statement (information disclosure)
- Pricing schedules and pricing change disclosures
- Pricing methodologies applied to network services.

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