

9 April 2018

Utilities Disputes
PO Box 5875
Wellington 6140

By email: submissions@utilitiesdisputes.co.nz

**SUBMISSION on
Consultation Paper for Round 1**

1. Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the consultation paper on the independent review of Utilities Disputes Limited. This submission is from Consumer NZ, New Zealand's leading consumer organisation. It has an acknowledged and respected reputation for independence and fairness as a provider of impartial and comprehensive consumer information and advice.

Contact: Aneise Gawn
Consumer NZ
Private Bag 6996
Wellington 6141
Phone: 04 384 7963
Email: aneise@consumer.org.nz

2. Comments

At this stage, we only wish to comment on questions 1 and 2.

We support the recommendation that:

The Board should consider following the example of the Electricity Authority and name the relevant providers in case notes.

Publishing the names of providers in case notes would help to promote openness and transparency. Openness and transparency are important aspects of any effective dispute resolution scheme.

In our view, naming providers would increase consumer confidence in the scheme and is also likely to result in better standards for consumers. Publicity about complaints helps raise industry standards and increases consumers' awareness of their rights.

We also support the recommendation that Utilities Disputes name providers that breach scheme rules and guidelines.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the consultation paper. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Aneise Gawn
Consumer Advocate