

Directlink and Murraylink

Ring Fencing

Information Sharing Protocol

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1 Purpose

Directlink Joint Venture (Directlink) and Murraylink Transmission Company Pty Ltd (Murraylink) are Transmission Network Service Providers (TNSPs) and provide transmission services under the National Electricity Law (NEL).

Directlink and Murraylink must therefore comply with the Australian Energy Regulator's (AER) Ring-fencing Guideline for Electricity Transmission (Version 5) that was published by the AER on 24 February 2025 (the Guideline).

Clause 4.2.3(d) of the Guideline requires a TNSP to establish an information sharing protocol that sets out how and when it will make the information referred to in clause 4.2.3(a) available to other legal entities and must make that protocol publicly available on its website.

This document sets out Directlink and Murraylink's information sharing protocol in compliance with Clause 4.2.3(d) of the Guideline.

2 Definitions

For convenience, the following definitions have been extracted from the Guideline:

- **affiliated entity**, in relation to a TNSP, means a legal entity:
  a) which is a direct or indirect shareholder in the TNSP or otherwise has a direct or indirect legal or equitable interest in the TNSP;
  b) in which the TNSP is a direct or indirect shareholder or otherwise has a direct or indirect legal or equitable interest; or
  c) in which a legal entity referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) is a direct or indirect shareholder or otherwise has a direct or indirect legal or equitable interest.
- **contestable electricity services** means services for the supply of electricity or that are necessary or incidental to the supply of electricity, other than prescribed transmission services, negotiated transmission services or direct control services.
- **electricity information** means information about electricity networks, electricity customers or electricity services, other than:
  a) aggregated financial information; or
  b) other service performance information;
  that does not relate to an identifiable customer or class of customer.
- **law** means any law, rule, regulation or other legal obligation (however described and whether statutory or otherwise).
- **legal entity** means a natural person, a body corporate (including a statutory corporation or public authority), a partnership, or a trustee of a trust, but excludes staff in their capacity as such.
- **related electricity service provider** means, in relation to a TNSP, includes:
  a) any affiliated entity of the TNSP; and
  b) the part of the TNSP, that provides contestable electricity services, but excludes a part of an affiliated entity that provides prescribed transmission services, negotiated transmission services or direct control services.
- **ring-fenced information** means electricity information, acquired or generated by a TNSP in connection with its provision of prescribed transmission services, that is not already publicly available, and includes electricity information:
  a) that the TNSP derives from that information; or
  b) provided to the TNSP by or in relation to a customer or prospective customer of prescribed transmission services.

3 Information Sharing Protocol

Under clause 4.2.2 of the Guideline, Directlink and Murraylink must not disclose ring-fenced information to any person, including a related electricity service provider, unless:

a) the TNSP has first obtained the explicit informed consent of the relevant customer, or prospective customer, to whom the ring-fenced information relates;
b) the disclosure is required by, or for the purpose of complying with, any law;
c) the disclosure is necessary to enable the TNSP to provide transmission services or (if authorised in accordance with the waiver process set out in clause 5 of this Guideline) other services (including by acquiring services from other legal entities);
d) the information has been requested by or on behalf of a customer, or potential customer, of another legal entity, and the disclosure is necessary to enable the legal entity to provide non-regulated transmission services or other services to the customer or potential customer;
e) the disclosure is solely for the purpose of providing assistance to the extent necessary to respond to an event (such as an emergency) that is beyond a Network Service Provider's reasonable control;
f) the disclosure is solely for the purposes of research by a legal entity other than a related electricity service provider of the TNSP;
g) a related electricity service provider of the TNSP has requested the disclosure and the TNSP complies with clause 4.2.3 in relation to that ring-fenced information; or
h) another legal entity, other than a related electricity service provider of the TNSP, has requested the disclosure.

3.1 When we will disclose ring-fenced information

Clause 4.2.3 of the Guideline outlines the circumstances under which Directlink and Murraylink will share ring-fenced information with competitors and potential competitors on an equal basis.

Directlink and Murraylink are only required to provide information to another legal entity where:

a) the legal entity has requested that the information be included on the information register; and
b) the legal entity is competing, or seeking to compete with a related electricity service provider in relation to the provision of contestable electricity services; and
c) the information was not provided to the related electricity service provider in the circumstances outlined in 3(a) to 3(e) above.

3.2 Accessing ring-fenced information

To request access to ring-fenced information, please apply by sending an email to ringfencing@apa.com.au.

To help us provide the ring fenced information you are seeking, your email should clearly:

- identify the name of the legal entity seeking the ring-fenced information;
- include contact details of the person making the request;
- explain why the legal entity is entitled to access the information;
- outline what information you are seeking in sufficient detail to allow us to respond to your request.

We will respond to your request within five business days. If we require further information we will contact you via return email to seek that information.

If the circumstances outlined in 3.1(a) to 3.1(c) of this protocol are met we will share the ring fenced information with you subject to certain terms and conditions set out in the clause 4.2.3(e) of the Guideline, which include that you:

- keep the information confidential; and
- only use the information for the purpose for which it was acquired; and
- not disclose the information to any person, including a related party, unless one of the exemptions in clauses 4.2.2(a) to (d) of the Guideline apply.

If we are unable to provide you with the ring fenced information, we will contact you to explain why.

3.3 Information register

We will maintain an information register which is available on the APA website.

In accordance with clause 4.2.4 of the Guideline, the register will record:

- the names of the related electricity service providers and other legal entities that have requested access to ring-fenced information; and
- the kind of information requested in sufficient detail to enable other legal entities to make an informed decision about whether to request that kind of information from Directlink and Murraylink.

If you have any questions about the information register or requesting ring fenced information, please email ringfencing@apa.com.au.