



## **AECT Calls for Greater Transparency in Electricity Customer Communication** *Welcomes Electricity Authority Inquiry*

**Auckland, 6 March 2014** – the Auckland Energy Consumer Trust (AECT), New Zealand's largest consumer trust and majority owner of infrastructure group Vector Limited, today called for greater transparency in communication with retail electricity customers, and welcomed the recently announced Electricity Authority enquiry.

Representing more than 313,000 electricity account holders in Auckland\*, AECT Chairman William Cairns says the trust is disappointed with the information provided to electricity customers by power retailers to justify price increases.

“Retail power bills are made up of many components, including transmission charges, lines charges and retailer charges. It's time that more information was provided to consumers so that they can clearly see and understand all of the factors influencing their electricity bill.

“We welcome the involvement of the Electricity Authority to investigate the public statements made by retail power companies to justify higher power bills.

“This is an area where customer communications could be improved and we look forward to the outcome of the enquiry.”

### **Ends**

For more information contact

Ian Ward, CEO, Auckland Energy Consumer Trust, 021 500 665

\*parts of Auckland, Manukau and the northern parts of Papakura

### **About the AECT**

The AECT was created in 1993, to ensure that the power lines (or electricity network) remained in the control of electricity consumers.

The AECT was set up under a trust deed for 80 years (the maximum time permitted under NZ trust law) on behalf of electricity consumers in the area that used to be served by the Auckland Electric Power Board.

### **Who are the Trustees?**

Five publicly elected officials – elections are held every three years – the Trustees are people with broad backgrounds in law, the energy industry, finance, engineering and business. Full details on [www.aect.co.nz](http://www.aect.co.nz)

The Trustees are responsible for managing and protecting the Trust's investment in Vector Limited, the lines company that is 75% owned by the Trust.

In practice, the Trustees:

- Set and distribute the dividend to the Trust's beneficiaries
- Propose and with other shareholders, appoint Vector's board of directors.
- Approve all major transactions undertaken by Vector
- Manage the Trust's funds
- Communicate with beneficiaries and the general public on the Trust's activities
- Monitor and address regulatory issues affecting Vector, the Trust and AECT beneficiaries
- Get involved in energy matters in the interests of Vector, our consumers and beneficiaries
- Take a proactive role in ensuring security of supply for our customers and require Vector to provide an expert report on the state of the lines annually which, amongst other things, includes assessment of security risks to the network security
- Monitor prices of Vector Electricity services in the Trust district and ensure these do not exceed the agreed pricing policy