



# Financial Inclusion Action Plan



## A message from our CEO Andy Vesey

Energy is fundamental to the everyday lives of Australians and as an essential service provider, we take seriously our role and responsibility to provide secure and affordable energy supplies to households and businesses.

AGL recognises that every household is different and that situations change. A range of responses are likely to be required to support customers through periods of financial hardship. We are focused on ensuring appropriate support is provided to vulnerable customers at the right time and improving the financial resilience of our customers.

We see financial resilience as much about the everyday tools available to our customers – like simple and accessible products, easy to understand bills, flexible payment options and digital resources for understanding consumption patterns and energy spend – as about more targeted support in difficult times. For those times, AGL's hardship program *Staying Connected* offers more personalised assistance, including tailored payment plans, access to financial counselling, energy efficiency advice and information on concessions and other government support.

We are committed to continuously improving the services and support available. Through our \$6.5m *Affordability Initiative* we are pursuing a range of integrated delivery models for community outreach and improving access to affordable energy supplies, and our *A Fairer Way* package involves the introduction of tailored products specifically for vulnerable consumers who are struggling to make ends meet.

Developing our plan has allowed us to bring together and build on the work we have already undertaken and focus our efforts in the promotion of financial inclusion and resilience amongst all our customers, our people and the communities in which we operate. AGL recognises that social and economically inclusive societies are happier, healthier and more productive.

**Andy Vesey**  
Chief Executive Officer  
AGL Energy

# About AGL

AGL was created in 1837 to light the streets of Sydney. We're proudly one of Australia's oldest companies and, from the beginning, we have always asked the question, 'What next'?

What new technologies can be developed to provide safe, sustainable and reliable energy to more people? What new ways can we support the communities we operate in? What can we do to help our customers reduce their energy usage and their environmental footprint?

Today, AGL is one of Australia's leading energy companies and we're committed to helping shape a sustainable energy future for Australia. We operate the country's largest electricity generation portfolio, we're its largest ASX-listed investor in renewable energy, and we have more than 3.6 million customer accounts. Proudly Australian, with more than 180 years of experience, we believe in providing sustainable, secure and affordable energy for our customers.

From lighting the first gas street lamp in Sydney in 1841 to helping shape a sustainable energy future for Australia, we have a track record of leading change.

## TRANSFORMATION

As Australia's biggest energy provider, we believe we can make the biggest change.

Our aim is to prosper in a carbon-constrained world and build customer advocacy as our industry transforms. That's why we have committed to exiting AGL's coal-fired generation beginning in 2022 and ending in 2048, why we will continue to develop innovative solutions, and why we're investing more than anyone else in building new supply to bring more affordable, reliable and sustainable energy to our customers.

It's almost two years since we began our journey of transformation to meet the new future of energy. A future that's about moving from carbon to more sustainable technologies, and anticipating the changing expectations of our customers.



## Products and services

We will continue to develop a diversity of products and services with features to suit the differing needs and preferences of our customers and communities, including those experiencing or at risk of financial hardship.

We will promote awareness and accessibility of products and services to support those at risk of financial exclusion, with an emphasis on early intervention.

Committed action statement	Output	Outcome	Responsibility	Timeframe
<b>Customers stakeholder group</b>				
Continue to evolve products and pricing to address the financial circumstances of all AGL customers.	A broad suite of products and pricing tailored to different financial situations.	Customers have greater choice in products and can select those that best meet their individual needs.	Product and pricing	Ongoing
Increase transparency and simplify products and pricing.	Products and the associated pricing are easier to understand and easier to compare.	Customers can make more informed decisions about the products they select.	Product and pricing	Ongoing
Provide tailored payment plan solutions and research a formal debt relief and payment incentive model for customers experiencing payment difficulties.	A revised payment arrangement framework. A publicly available debt relief and payment incentive framework for hardship customers.	Vulnerable customers have a reliable framework in which they can partner with AGL to reduce their energy debt and get back on track.	Customer Operations	September 2018
Continue to provide solutions to enable customers to be more engaged with their energy.	Implement Energy Insights.	Customers are more empowered to engage with and manage their energy costs.	Customer Operations	June 2018





## Capabilities, attitudes and behaviours

We will continue to work with our community partners to provide customers and community support organisations with resources and tools which enable them to engage more confidently in the energy market and achieve greater levels of financial resilience.

We will ensure our customer support staff are provided with appropriate training and resources to equip them to effectively and empathetically assist customers experiencing financial difficulties.

Committed action statement	Output	Outcome	Responsibility	Timeframe
<b>Customers stakeholder group</b>				
Make it easier for customers to access support	Deliver a new online portal housing Concessions and Grants information to educate and link customers to support.	Customers are more educated and can easily access a broad range of support options.	Customer Operations	April 2018
Provide training to all frontline people to ensure needs based conversations are happening with all customers.	All AGL people have received training.	Frontline staff are better equipped to have personalised conversations and provide personalised outcomes for customers	Customer Operations	December 2018
<b>Internal stakeholder group</b>				
Continued promotion of AGL's Family and Domestic Violence policy and offer training and awareness sessions to all people.	Continue to promote the AGL Family and Domestic Violence Support policy including access to 10 paid leave days to impacted people, offer training and awareness sessions to all people including introduction of a new Domestic Violence Hotline through EAP.	AGL people impacted by family violence are provided with additional leave provisions and continued employment whilst working through their situation. Our people will be offered training to raise awareness, to change behaviours and attitudes towards this issue, to continue to foster an environment where people feel safe to speak up and ask for help, and to ensure we can recognise the signs of someone who may need support and confidently respond in a caring and inclusive way.	People and Culture	December 2018

## Awareness and understanding of culture and diversity

We will continue to promote policies and practices which seek to overcome barriers that may hinder the participation and financial inclusion of culturally and ethnically diverse communities.

Embracing and valuing diversity and inclusion leads to a better understanding of, and engagement with, the people we work with, the customers we serve and the communities in which we operate.

Committed action statement	Output	Outcome	Responsibility	Timeframe
<b>Internal stakeholder group</b>				
Contribute to the wellbeing of our people experiencing financial stress.	Investigate the provision of a hardship grant for our people experiencing financial hardship.	A proposed grant framework intended to support our people in reaching financial stability.	People and Culture	December 2018
Continue to participate as a member of the Australian Veterans Employment Coalition.	A specialised recruitment process for veterans.	Veterans are more likely to be successfully employed in the private sector.	People and Culture	Ongoing
Continue to promote policies and practices which seek to overcome the barriers experienced by diverse communities.	Increased promotion and the continued evolution of AGL diversity programs such as the Equality Program, Shine and NAIDOC.	AGL people are more aware and have increased confidence to bring their true self to work and achieve their full potential, bridging the gap to financial inclusion.	People and Culture	Ongoing

## Economic participation and status

We will seek to deepen our understanding of social and economic inclusion issues and their intersection with affordable energy supply, including through original research and data analysis.

We will continue to promote organisational awareness of the various circumstances and life events that can lead to financial vulnerability and exclusion, such as mental health, or family and domestic violence, and ensure policies are in place to support AGL people and customers through these times.

Committed action statement	Output	Outcome	Responsibility	Timeframe
<b>Customers stakeholder group</b>				
Advocate for policy and regulatory frameworks that do not result in social and economic exclusion, both within and outside of the energy sector.	Submissions into regulatory and policy changes that focus on financial inclusion. Engagement with regulators and policy makers to highlight the importance of financial inclusion.	Regulation and policy that results in financial inclusion.	Economic Policy and Sustainability	Reviewed annually
<b>Community and local supplier stakeholder group</b>				
Design processes to support the sustainability of our small business partners in local communities.	Change the accounts payable process to reduce payment timeframes for local suppliers.	Healthier cash flow for suppliers through processes that meet their operational needs.	Procurement	June 2018
Support and identify the local businesses likely to be impacted by AGL transitioning away from the community.	A segmentation model which highlights the local businesses which are most vulnerable to the change.	Local businesses who will require support are identified and in future, a mitigation plan can be designed to support businesses through the transition.	Procurement	December 2018
Where AGL is transitioning out of local communities such as Latrobe Valley and Hunter Valley, we will contribute to the sustainability of the local economy.	Evolve and implement the Transition Plans for Hunter and La Trobe and ensure coverage across: - Education - Community - Local business	Local economies are better equipped and less impacted by AGL's transition away from the community.	Community Relations	Ongoing



## Statement by the FIAP Partnership Group

On behalf of the FIAP Partnership Group, I would like to acknowledge and congratulate AGL for your ongoing public commitment to financial inclusion and financial resilience.

Together we are embarking on a journey to explore, learn and grow – both as a program through this Foundation FIAP and as Trailblazers undertaking the important process of reducing inequalities and promoting inclusive growth in our communities.

Financial hardship can impact us all, at any stage in our lives – through the FIAP, our hope is that every organisation will be able to respond in time and every time to ensure financial hardship can be identified early, managed and overcome. By building capacity, awareness and greater access to appropriate products and services, organisations will see the social and economic benefits in their engagement, outcomes and prosperity of customers and our people.

The FIAP Partnership Group exists to support the growing community of practice to identify opportunities to better respond to financial risks, develop meaningful actions across key stakeholders and measure the social and economic impact. Drawing on our individual expertise the FIAP Partnership Group will provide implementation, evaluation and quality assurance support to ensure key actions you have identified are (i) on track to achieve the intended impact and (ii) engaging those stakeholders in most need of support. We are proud to be on this important journey with AGL.

At the heart of the FIAP program is the belief that together we can achieve more. AGL joins the growing community of organisations that understand they play a critical role in Australia's financial future – together we can reduce inequalities and realise inclusive growth for all Australians.

Sincerely,

**Vinita Godinho**  
General Manager, Advisory  
Good Shepherd Microfinance  
On behalf of the FIAP Partnership Group



Supported by



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