



Volunteer in Camden

Your contribution to better the local community

Volunteer Safety & Information Handbook

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WELCOME FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Thank you for volunteering with us. We recognise the role of volunteers, their value and the contribution they make to the organisation and more importantly, the community.

Volunteers play a key role in the provision of a diverse range of community services within Camden. The involvement of volunteers in programs and services is a practical expression of Council engaging the community in working together to meet local needs.

Camden Council supports the concept of volunteerism and encourages the recruitment and training of volunteers to assist in the planning, promotion and operation of services, facilities and programs.

This handbook provides you with general information relevant to all of Council's volunteer programs. If you have any specific questions that relate to the duties that you are undertaking, or the program that you are in, please ask your Supervisor.

Council would like to acknowledge the vital role that volunteers play in our community.

Whatever your reason for volunteering, your efforts will have a direct impact on the vitality of the Camden Community.

We hope that your time with us is enjoyable and rewarding.

General Manager

1. INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides information and guidance in relation to Camden Council's (Council) policies and procedures, specific legislation and the Australian National Standards for Volunteering. It should be read in conjunction with documentation that is provided during the corporate orientation and program specific induction. Printed copies of documents referred to in this handbook can be obtained by contacting your Supervisor.

Value

At Camden Council volunteering:

- is a legitimate way for residents to participate in Community activities;
- is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs;
- is an activity that respects the rights, dignity and culture of others;
- promotes human rights and equality;
- is an opportunity to learn new skills and meet new people; and
- services are provided in designated volunteer positions only.

Definition

Volunteer An individual who is registered with, and has the approval of Council, to undertake activities in designated volunteer positions that are of benefit to Council, the local community and the individual. The individual provides services of their own free will, without coercion and for no financial reward, except for reimbursement for approved out of pocket expenses. Volunteer activities complement, but do not replace the services provided by paid staff. Volunteers will work no more than 18 hours each week except for event-based activities.

2. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

Statement of Commitment

Council is committed to the health, safety and welfare of its employees, volunteers, contractors and all persons visiting its workplaces and worksites. Where injuries do occur that arise out of volunteering activities, Council is committed to effective injury management.

Contractors and sub-contractors engaged to perform work on Council's premises or workplaces are required to comply with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) (WHS Act), and Council's Work Health and Safety policies and procedures.

What is Work Health and Safety?

The management of Work Health and Safety is for the purpose of protecting workers (which includes volunteers) and other persons against harm to their health, safety and welfare through the elimination or minimisation of risks arising from work or from specified types of substances or plant.

Work, Health and Safety legislation protects the rights of employees, volunteers, contractors and all persons visiting Council's workplaces and worksites, or workplaces that are influenced by Council.

Whether a person is an employee, a volunteer, a paid worker, a work experience student or a contractor they have the right to have their health and safety protected at a workplace or worksite. Any other persons who may be affected by any Council work or activity, have the right to have their health and safety protected or not put at risk by the work being carried out.

Council has the right to expect that all workers (including volunteers) and visitors to their workplaces will take care and co-operate with work health and safety rules.

WHS Legislation

The main objective of WHS Act 2011 and *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017* (NSW) (WHS Regulation 2017) (collectively, WHS Legislation) is to provide a balanced and consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces. Volunteers are classified as ‘workers’ under WHS Legislation. Some of the ways the laws do this is by:

- Protecting workers from harm by requiring duty holders to eliminate or minimise risks associated with work, whether that work is paid or unpaid;
- Providing for fair effective representation, consultation, cooperation and issue resolution in relation to work health and safety at work;
- Promoting the provision of advice and education about work health and safety; and
- Providing a framework for continuous improvement and progressively higher standards of work health and safety.

Work Health and Safety legislation require Council to implement control measures to ensure its workers (and other persons), are provided the highest level of protection against harm to their health, welfare and safety at work, so far as is reasonably practicable.

What you need to do – The Work Health & Safety Policy

As a worker you also have a duty under the WHS Act to take reasonable care for your own health and safety.

You must also:

- Take reasonable care to ensure that your acts don’t adversely affect the health and safety of others, for example other volunteers/workers, members of the public or clients you may be assisting;
- Carry out your tasks in a safe way and consult with others on safety;
- Follow the reasonable work health and safety instructions given to you by Council;

- Co-operate with Council's Work Health and Safety policies and procedures;
- Conduct Risk Assessments for activities you are carrying out;

Taking Reasonable Care

In taking 'reasonable care', you should:

- Follow all reasonable instructions given to you by Council as far as you can.
- Read, understand and cooperate with the policies, procedures, safe work method statement and safe work procedures provided to you by Council.
- Talk to your supervisor if you have any concerns about your health and safety, or the health and safety of others in relation to your work.
- Not do tasks that you do not have the skills and training to undertake.
- Don't do anything that would be obviously unsafe.

What if a safety incident happens?

If a safety incident or near miss occurs, you must notify your immediate Supervisor straight away.

A safety incident relating to the carrying out of work at Council involves:

- the death of a person;
- the serious injury or illness of a person – this will usually require immediate medical treatment;
- a dangerous incident that exposes people to a risk, for example the collapse of a structure or the accidental release or spill of a dangerous chemical;
- any other matter that resulted in, or had the potential to result in an adverse effect on the health and safety of a Council worker, or other person.

Any accidents resulting in injury or property damage may require Drug and Alcohol Testing as contained in Council's Prohibited Substance and Alcohol Policy.

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment is to be used to prioritise hazards or hazardous tasks for remedial action and to determine the appropriate control activity. When required risk assessments are undertaken in accordance with Councils WHS Risk Management Procedure P3.0201.2.

Risk Control

Where hazards have been identified in a risk assessment, the next step is to determine the most appropriate control for the risk. Control measures should consider both immediate and long-term control.

In implementing controls, you must always aim to eliminate the risk, which is the most effective control. If this is not reasonably practicable, you must minimise the risk by working through other alternatives.

3. GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

For additional detail regarding any of the below guidelines please ask your Supervisor for the relevant policy and/or procedure document.

Induction

Induction into your volunteer role at Council involves the following:

- information on various corporate policies that apply to everyone at Council.
- information of specific Work Health and Safety policies and procedures;
- a site-specific induction based around your work activities.

Volunteer Induction Checklist

The Induction Checklist is a tool for Supervisors to use prior to a volunteer engaging in any activities on behalf of Council. The checklist will ensure all relevant information has been communicated, including this Handbook. Both the volunteer and Supervisor are required to sign off on the checklist to confirm that the Handbook has been received and read.

Site Specific Induction

Before commencing any volunteer activities, you are required to undertake a site-specific induction which will be provided by your Supervisor. This will ensure that you understand the risks associated with the site as well as the work being performed.

Mobile Phones

Mobile Phones are not to be used whilst working unless in a safe location.

Accidents and Incidents

You must report all incidents, injuries, near misses or hazards that you witness or identify immediately to your Supervisor. If a hazard is identified and requires

immediate attention, you should report the hazard to your Supervisor for immediate action and then complete the Accident/Incident Report form. Your Supervisor will then record all details in Councils WHS Incident Management Reporting System

Behaviour

Running and throwing of objects in the workplace is not allowed. Horseplay, skylarking and practical jokes will not be tolerated.

Bullying

Council identifies workplace bullying as an unacceptable risk to health and safety. Council is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all workers/volunteers that is free from bullying or harassment.

Consultation

Consultation provides an opportunity to share relevant information and participate in meaningful discussion on work health and safety matters. Using the knowledge and experience of everyone helps to achieve safer and healthier workplaces as well as better decision making. Consultation is mandatory under the WHS Act for persons conducting a business or undertaking.

Council is required, as far as is reasonably practicable, to consult with all relevant workers who carry out work and who are likely to be directly affected by a health and safety matter. Consultation may need to involve contractors, sub-contractors, agency staff, volunteers and other parties who work for or are caused to be engaged by Council and are directly affected by a health and safety matter.

Council will consult with its workers about work health and safety matters. Consultation will give you the opportunity to provide ideas about how to make you and others as safe as possible while carrying out work. Consultation can be done in various ways such as through toolbox meetings, noticeboards and electronic media among others.

Fitness for Work

You may have completed a medical assessment prior to you being offered your role. Maintaining fitness to carry out your activities is an important responsibility. Council may require you to undertake a fitness assessment after a long absence, medical episode or incident.

You must inform your Supervisor and/or inform Council if:

- your health significantly changes in any way that may affect your ongoing volunteer activities; you have undergone any major surgery;
- you have begun to take any medication which may impact upon your ability to carry out volunteer activities; and/or
- your capability to undertake any tasks related to your volunteer activities may be impacted because of a change in your circumstances.

Drugs and Alcohol

Workers/volunteers and others are not permitted to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst conducting work on any Council worksite. Any person who is required to take medicine that may affect their ability to work safely must inform their Supervisor and alternative duties may be allocated.

Emergency Response

Access to all firefighting equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire hose reels must be kept clear. All passageways to emergency exits must be kept clear of stored material, rubbish etc. Nothing is to be stored in any area marked by painting on the floor.

Each workplace will have an Emergency Warden to manage emergency situations and direct people at the workplace to safety. Evacuation drills will be conducted annually to evaluate procedures and train workers/volunteers on the appropriate evacuation procedures.

Workers/volunteers should make themselves familiar with the location of the fire protection and first aid equipment as well as the evacuation route and

assembly area for their workplace. An Evacuation Diagram will be displayed at your workplace or worksite.

Workers/volunteers working outdoors will be briefed on the emergency response for the site during the daily toolbox talk or site risk assessment.

Fatigue

The individual is responsible for managing their own fatigue level as you know yourself the best and therefore be responsible for knowing when to take a break. You should not work more than 5 hours without a 10-minute break, but your activity will determine what you require. Please raise with your Supervisor at any time if you are feeling usually tired or if you think you need another break.

First Aid

First Aid Kits, defibrillators and trained First Aid Officers are available throughout Council's workplaces. Please make yourself familiar with the location of your first aid equipment and those who can provide first aid should it be required.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Workers/volunteers will be provided with any PPE that is necessary for work activities they will undertake. A range of PPE is available depending on the activities you will undertake. Please discuss your requirements with your Supervisor.

Electrical Distribution Panels

Only approved electrical contractors are to access the interior of electrical distribution panels where there are exposed electrical connections.

Electrical Leads and Equipment

No electrical leads or extensions should be left lying on floors where they can form a trip hazard or could be subject to damage from trolleys, vehicles or dropped objects.

You should only use electrical leads and/or equipment that has been tested and tagged and is in date.

Testing and tagging can only be performed by Council approved contractors.

Guarding on Machinery

Protective guards placed on plant are not to be disabled, removed or interfered with for any reason except as part of a documented maintenance program undertaken by qualified staff for that plant.

Hazard and Risk Management

Any person who identifies any potential danger or hazard in the work site is to correct the situation IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO, or warn nearby persons of the danger. If it is safe to do so, consider highlighting the danger in some way or isolating it. If the hazard is an electrical hazard, it should be reported to the Supervisor of Councils Electronic Incident Management System as soon as possible.

Hazardous Substances

Any person, including volunteers, contractors or sub-contractors, who bring any hazardous substance on site is to provide in advance a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for that substance to their Supervisor or the relevant site management and seek approval for the use of that substance. Any person using or storing a hazardous substance on site is to do so in accordance with all information supplied in the relevant SDS for that substance.

Isolation of Power and Plant

When any maintenance or set-up task is being performed on any plant, or when plant is unsafe to turn on or operate, it must be isolated by disabling its power supply and where possible by barricading the plant to prevent access.

When isolating a piece of plant, the operating key should be removed and an authorised isolation tag should be placed over the operating controls. The isolation tag is to be filled in and signed and dated. Any electrical, fluid or mechanical power source should be blocked or unplugged. The reason for the isolation and the person who placed the tag are to be clearly identified. Only the person who has placed the isolation tag is authorised to remove it. Refer to Danger and Isolation Procedure P3.0215.2 for additional information.

Manual Handling Assistance

Any person who feels that a load they are required to lift or otherwise move is either too heavy or too awkward for them to move, is to seek assistance from other persons for a two person lift or other mechanical aids such as a forklift or trolley. Any person asked for such assistance is to co-operate as far as practicable with this request. Any task that is believed by any person to be a manual-handling hazard is report it their Supervisor so that a risk assessment can be undertaken.

Noise

Council will strive, where reasonably practicable to eliminate or minimize the effects of excess noise and associated risks to hearing. Volunteers should ensure that they identify situations that may involve excess noise levels and take reasonable steps to avoid exposure. This could involve isolating themselves from that noise source or wearing appropriate ear protection.

When carrying out work activities that have the potential to result in damage to your hearing, you must use ear protection. Work activities that have the potential to result in damage to any person's hearing should not be carried out without those people wearing ear protection. Refer to Noise Management Procedure P3.0213.2 for additional information.

Plant and Equipment

Only persons who are trained by or hold a High-Risk Work Licence or a relevant/current certificate of competency are permitted to operate any fixed/mobile plant, forklifts or equipment. This restriction applies to any worker, contractor, visitor, or volunteer.

Workers/volunteers are responsible for ensuring that plant and equipment is operational by conducting and documenting a daily pre-start check. If breakdowns occur on site your Supervisor must be advised. You should not attempt to fix plant/or equipment yourself.

Plant and equipment service and repair documentation is to be provided to Council as soon as it is provided.

Signage

All workers/volunteers must comply with the requirements of any safety signs on a worksite. Damage to any safety sign is to be reported without delay to your Supervisor. Temporary signage should be displayed to warn the public of work activities occurring at a workplace.

Sharps

Sharps waste is a form of biomedical waste composed of used "sharps", which includes any device or object used to puncture or lacerate the skin such as broken glass or blades. Sharps waste is classified as biohazardous waste and must be carefully handled and placed in a SHARP container. SHARP containers once used should be returned to the Depot Store for disposal and to collect a replacement container.

Smoking

Council is a smoke free workplace and there will be no smoking in any Council buildings, outbuildings, roofed enclosures or vehicles. Smoking is permitted in designated smoking areas.

Traffic Control

Traffic control on a worksite must be planned, managed and undertaken by staff who are suitably qualified. All directions of those assigned Traffic Controller responsibilities must be followed.

Working Alone

On occasions you may find yourself in your workplace alone for a variety of reasons. If so, advise your Supervisor if they are unaware and agree how you will manage and relevant risks as per Council's Working Alone, Remotely or in Isolation Procedure P3.0242.1

Working at Heights

Where access to high shelves or tops of cupboards is required, persons are not to use chairs but are to use an approved platform ladder for the task.

Workplace Inspections

Inspections of volunteer workplaces are undertaken twice a year by Council. Workplace staff/volunteers may be asked to participate in these inspections to support Council management and any relevant independent representatives that may be attending the inspection. It is important that if given an opportunity to participate that you provide positive input to the inspection. This allows for any workplace safety issues to be resolved.

Housekeeping

All workplace areas are always to be kept clear of accumulated rubbish. Oil and water leaks are to be reported and absorbent material should be used to remove any leaked fluid. No unreasonable collection of combustible material should be allowed to accumulate. All accessways to fire doors, emergency equipment and egress paths must be kept clear.

4. BEING A VOLUNTEER FOR CAMDEN COUNCIL

Attendance

Your contribution helps to support many of our programs, services and activities. When making a commitment to volunteer it is important to be punctual and reliable. As a courtesy to volunteer colleagues, staff, clients and customers, please let your Volunteer Supervisor know as soon as possible if you are running late or are unable to attend.

It is a mandatory Work Health and Safety requirement that you sign on when you arrive to undertake your duties and sign off at the end of your roster. This assists us in knowing where you are in case of an emergency and to make sure that we record your attendance for insurance purposes.

Your Supervisors will collate the number of volunteer hours you have undertaken to recognise your contribution and for annual reporting to Council by the Volunteering Coordinator.

Taking holidays is encouraged and is considered an important part of looking after yourself. Supervisors need to know preferably one month in advance when volunteers intend to be absent from their role, so a replacement can be found if required.

Code of Conduct

The general duty of volunteers at Council is to act honestly and with reasonable care and diligence, and to behave in a way that upholds Council values, integrity and good reputation.

You will be given a copy of Council's Code of Conduct to read and sign during the corporate induction session. You are encouraged to familiarise yourself with the Code on an annual basis.

Supervision and Support

Each volunteer team has a Volunteer Supervisor who is responsible to guide and oversee volunteers in their work programs.

Volunteers are supervised by Team Leaders Coordinators and Managers or, in some cases, volunteers are supervised directly by other volunteers such as 355 Committee members.

Volunteer Supervisors provide support by:

- giving encouragement and constructive feedback
- organising meetings to discuss performance and development and issues of concern
- offering meetings and training with other volunteers who may be working in a similar role
- sharing feedback from customers or other stakeholders on aspects of service delivery
- considering your interest in decisions that affect you
- Inviting you to team meetings, special events and social functions
- celebrating your achievements & efforts and
- where appropriate, provide a Statement of Service or act as a referee to your prospective employer.

Communicating with the Media

Volunteers must refrain from making any comments regarding the Council or Council projects and initiatives with the print media, radio or digital social media.

If you are approached by media with requests to discuss matters relating to Council, please inform the media to contact the Council Public Affairs staff who will assist them with their query.

This will remove the possibility that you are misquoted by the media and placed in a situation that may compromise you or the Council.

Confidentiality

It is paramount that volunteers maintain appropriate confidentiality about dealings they have with the people they provide services to. Volunteers should maintain the confidentiality of any information they obtain and under no circumstances should this information be placed on social media.

The *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, 1998* (PPIPA) provides for the protection of personal information, and for the privacy of individuals. Personal information provided to Council is protected under the PPIPA. Health information is as defined in section 6 of the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* (HRIPA). Any personal and health information you provide to Council is being collected for administrative and assessment purposes. It will be used by Council staff and shared with emergency services (if required) for those purposes.

You may at any time apply to Council for access to or amendment of the information in writing by email at mail@camden.nsw.gov.au. It is your responsibility to ensure that any information provided to Council is up-to-date. If you do not provide the requested information, you may not be able to volunteer with Council. For further information about how Council collects, uses and stores the information you provide, visit the website at <https://www.camden.nsw.gov.au/council/policies/> to view Council's Privacy Management Plan.

Police Check

Volunteer applicants may be required to undergo a National Police Check. The purpose of the check is to verify the identity of potential volunteers and to minimise possible risk arising from engaging volunteers inappropriately.

If required, your Supervisor will initially, and again every three years provide, you with the application form and guidance on how to complete the form. The cost of the check is covered by Council.

Working with Children

Some volunteering positions within Council may involve working with children, and/or young persons. Council aims to establish a safe and caring environment for children, which meets the legislative requirements of Child Protection legislation.

If a volunteering position is deemed to be child-related, you may be required to undertake a Working with Children Background Check.

Working with Children Checks are provided by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian. There is no cost for a Volunteer Check. For more information or to make an application please visit: www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au

Dress Code and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Neat, clean casual dress that is suitable to the volunteer role is encouraged. Where a uniform is supplied, the uniform must be worn with a name badge. Closed-in shoes must always be worn at nominated work locations.

Expenses

Volunteers will be reimbursed for pre-approved work-related expenses.

Fair Treatment and Grievances

Everyone has the right to be treated fairly and undertake their role without fear of harassment, discrimination, bullying or victimisation.

We make every effort to maintain an atmosphere of trust and open communication, so grievances are resolved promptly and in a constructive, informal and respectful manner. All Council workers/volunteers should be guided by the Respect and Dignity in the Workplace Policy.

If you have a concern you should contact your Supervisor in the first instance. If you are not satisfied with the result of any informal discussions, you are

encouraged to contact Council's People and Learning Team who will outline the formal internal and external options available.

All grievances will be dealt with as soon as possible, confidentially, impartially and with sensitivity. All formal avenues for handling of grievances will be fully documented and the volunteer's wishes will be considered in the determination of appropriate steps and actions.

All complaints and questions will receive thoughtful consideration in a timely manner and will be discussed with the individual who raises them.

Family Volunteering

Family volunteering for specific roles is open to people under the age of 18 who are accompanied and supervised by a parent or guardian while undertaking the volunteering role.

Gifts and Benefits

Occasionally volunteers may be offered a thank you gift from a customer. Volunteers should not accept gifts or benefits of more than token value and must inform their Supervisor about any gift they accept for inclusion in the Gift Register.

If you have any queries or concerns regarding this, please discuss with your Supervisor.

Insurance

It is Council's responsibility to ensure that appropriate insurance cover is provided to protect volunteers and the organisation, against damage, loss and injury.

Council has the following insurances to cover volunteers while working with us:

Personal Accident Insurance provides specified benefits for registered volunteers following accidental injury,

disability or death while carrying out their duties on behalf of Council;

Public Liability Insurance

to cover Council for its legal liability to third parties for personal injury or property damage caused by Council's business activities;

Professional Indemnity Insurance

to cover Council for professional negligence claims (e.g. caused by incorrect specialist advice);

Motor Vehicle Comprehensive Insurance

to cover Council vehicles driven by volunteers or staff, for damage to the vehicle or to third party property;

Council does not provide insurance for personal effects and travel.

Personal Health

In the interest of volunteer well-being and to minimise personal strain or injury, volunteers must report relevant health and/or disability issues to their Supervisor before commencing duties or as soon as practicable after any change or injury occurs.

To prevent the spread of influenza or other communicable illnesses we encourage volunteers to take time off from volunteering whilst recovering.

Personal Information and Property

Volunteer information such as name, address, contact information, emergency contact details and the program they volunteer in, is stored in a database which has restricted access to authorised staff only.

Volunteer's personal items are not covered by Council's insurance whilst undertaking volunteer activities. Volunteers are encouraged not to bring or wear items of any significant value (including jewellery).

All attempts should be taken to secure personal property against theft or damage.

Use of Council Equipment and Resources

Volunteers may be provided with equipment to assist in performing various activities. If a licence or qualification is required to operate equipment, the volunteer is required to provide evidence of a current qualification or licence prior to operating the equipment. It is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure that equipment is used correctly and within the guidelines or instructions provided by the Supervisor.

If equipment is damaged, your Supervisor should be notified immediately so appropriate repairs can be made.

Volunteers must not use Council property for their own private purposes.

Any court imposed fine or infringements received because of the actions or omissions of a volunteer will be the responsibility of the volunteer. They include, but are not limited to, fines related to parking, speeding, littering, and red-light cameras.

Council Paid Employment

Volunteering with Council will not lead to paid employment.

Permanent, casual or part-time job vacancies with Council are advertised on Council's website. www.camden.nsw.gov.au. Applicants must address the selection criteria and assessment is based on merit.

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program allows you to feel comfortable knowing that you or your immediate family members, can confidentially discuss any work or personal issues that are an inevitable part of life.

Registered volunteers can access this free confidential 24/7 counselling service paid for by Council, to help identify, explore and manage any issues impacting your life, which can include conflict and communication, stress and anxiety, relationship issues, grief and bereavement and elder care issues.

Call 1300 361 008 from anywhere in NSW for the price of a local call and you will be connected to your nearest counselling centre.

Visit www.lifeworks.com and enter the access code aucamden

5. CONTACT INFORMATION

In case of emergency contact **EMERGENCY SERVICES** on **000**

Camden Council	
Phone:	02 4654 7777
Fax:	02 4654 7829
Postal Address:	PO Box 183, Camden NSW 2570
Street Address:	70 Central Ave, Oran Park, NSW 2570
Email:	mail@camden.nsw.gov.au
First Aid Officer	
Building Warden/s:	

Local Services		
Hospitals	Camden and Campbelltown	02 4634 3000
Police	Narellan Police Station	02 4632 4499 or 131 444 (Non-Emergency)
NSW Fire & Rescue	Narellan Fire Station	02 4647 7266
Rural Fire Brigade (RFS)	Narellan	02 4648 2324
Environmental Protection Agency	EPA NSW	131 555
NBN Co	NSW	1800 626 762
Poison Information Centre	NSW Open 24 hours	131 126
SafeWork NSW		131 050
Electricity	Endeavour Energy	131 003
Gas	Jemena Energy	131 909