

Consumer Issues Working Group

Note of the Consumer Issues Working Group meeting held 15 December 2010	From Date and time of Meeting Location	Dorothy Eke 15 December 2010 at 1:30 to 4pm Ofgem, 9 Milbank, London SW1P 3GE	17 December 2010
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1. Present

Ofgem

James Veaney
Scott Flavell (Consultant)
Stephen Perry
Dorothy Eke

DNOs

Alison Sleightholm (Western Power Distribution)
David Gill (CE Electric)
John Blythe (Scottish & Southern)
Kate Quigley (Electricity Northwest)
Lorraine Reddington (Central Networks)
Matt Ruddling (UK Power Networks)
Jeremy Blackford (SP Power Systems)
Vicky Kelsall (SP Power Systems) – By telephone

Energy Network Association

Louise Banbury

2. Update on actions from previous CIWG meeting

2.1 The meeting commenced with a round table introduction of attendees from the different DNO groups, followed by an update of actions from the previous CIWG meeting held on 17 November 2010 by Ofgem. The following actions were agreed and confirmed by all as completed:

- Ofgem to circulate DNOs' completed complaints template across all DNOs;
- Ofgem to send blank complaint template to be completed by DNOs with data for the first two quarters of 2010 (April to June/July to September). Deadline for submission of data was 8th December 2010;
- Ofgem to email DNOs the speed of telephone response data (tables/graphs) used at the CIWG meeting;
- Ofgem to consider an audit of telephony practices across all DNOs and give an update at next CIWG meeting;

- A WPD representative to confirm the treatment of complaints reporting in two areas where the RIGs are currently silent on:
 - the treatment of complaints that are open across a reporting period
 - the reporting of Ombudsman complaints that are referred to the Ombudsman but are resolved without a final decision from the energy Ombudsman as Mutually Acceptance Settlement (MAS) cases

3. Complaints Handling

- 3.1 Ofgem gave an update on the complaints information provided by the DNOs for Quarters 3 & 4 of 2009/10 and Quarters 1 & 2 of 2010/11.
- 3.2 It was agreed that a further set of graphs would be circulated electronically illustrating across the DNOs for Q1 & Q2 for both regulatory years. This would allow the DNOs to analyse and compare their results without the disruption of any seasonal changes. Feedback on this data is to be provided by Monday 20th December 2010.

4. Telephony

- 4.1 Ofgem gave an update on the speed of telephone response reporting. Due to inconsistencies in reporting across the DNOs, Ofgem have decided to contract a consultant to carry out an audit/investigation of DNOs' telephone systems and data reporting under the relevant telephony key measures (KM1 to KM5). The purpose of this visit/audit is to identify and resolve any key issues with regard to the reporting requirements to ensure accurate reporting of the telephony data across the DNOs going forward.
- 4.2 Ofgem plans to finalise arrangements before Christmas and propose that the audit visits would be carried out in January (giving the DNOs enough time to prepare for the consultant's arrival).

5. Customer Satisfaction Survey

- 5.1 Ofgem gave an update on the customer satisfaction survey. A tender document has been drafted to adapt the strawman for the customer satisfaction survey into a pilot questionnaire that could be trialled by the DNOs. Only one tender response was received from Accent.
- 5.2 DNOs confirmed that there were no conflicts of interest with regard to the consultant (Accent).
- 5.3 Accent's proposal was accepted by the DNOs and will cost £9000.
- 5.4 A teleconference has been arranged for 3pm Monday 20th December 2010 to confirm survey contract and a work plan.
- 5.5 WPD and CE representatives offered to share their preliminary surveys with Ofgem and Accent.

6. Customer Service Reward Scheme

- 6.1 Ofgem gave an update on the 2010/11 Customer Service Reward Scheme. Following feedback from the 2009/10 panel and from the DNOs, Ofgem will provide clearer guidance on the corporate social responsibility category. Ofgem will update the relevant documents (guidance notes, entry forms, panel score sheet) before publication in the New Year.
- 6.2 Ofgem also intends to trial stakeholder engagement as part of the 2010/11 customer service reward scheme, alongside the corporate social responsibility and wider communication categories. The purpose of this exercise is to provide DNOs an opportunity to develop engagement strategies based on a genuine understanding of their customers and identify best practices prior to the introduction of financial rewards in 2013. There will be no reward attached to the stakeholder engagement component of the customer service reward scheme this year, and the question and answer session with the panel on the day will also not include stakeholder engagement. Submissions under the stakeholder engagement component will be paper based. The panel will assess DNOs' stakeholder engagement submissions separately and will have a separate meeting with Ofgem to give feedback on DNOs' submissions. The group agreed that Ofgem will meet with DNOs on an individual basis to give feedback on their stakeholder engagement submissions.
- 6.3 DNO representatives were keen to have a first glance of the 2010/11 draft guidelines. It was agreed that Ofgem would email the guidance notes in draft format to DNOs. Ofgem however warned that the information provided is subject to change.

Action:

- Ofgem to circulate draft guidance notes to DNOs for comments

7. Other Business

- 7.1 The DNOs discussed the definition of a "general enquiry" and agreed that the "general enquiry" category would exclude all connections enquiries and include those that require the DNOs to deliver a service.
- 7.2 The DNOs agreed that they need to agree the type of customers questioned.
- 7.3 Date of next meeting to be arranged in the New Year.