

October 2001

**Gas and Electricity Codes of Practice
Guidance for Domestic Suppliers**

Executive summary

Standard licence conditions require domestic gas and electricity supply licensees to publish codes of practice or statements on a range of issues, including prepayment meters, payment of bills, services for vulnerable customers, energy efficiency, complaint handling and accessing customers' properties.

This document sets out guidance to enable domestic gas and electricity suppliers to prepare these codes of practice. The guidance is modelled on previous code of practice guidance issued to public electricity suppliers and enhanced guidance published under the Social Action Plan in May 2000.

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1. Introduction

1.1 This document provides guidance for electricity and gas suppliers to use when preparing codes of practice and statements required under the standard licence conditions. It is modelled on previous guidance provided to electricity and gas licensees and has been updated in line with the standard licence conditions determined on 27 September 2001.

1.2 The standard licence conditions require domestic electricity and gas suppliers to prepare and submit the following codes of practice or statements (unless specified, where a single licence condition number is given, this applies to both electricity and gas):

- ◆ standard licence condition 24: Code of Practice on Procedures with Respect to Site Access (electricity)
- ◆ standard licence condition 24: Arrangements in Respect of Powers of Entry (gas)
- ◆ standard licence condition 25: Efficient Use of Electricity
- ◆ standard licence condition 25: Efficient Use of Gas
- ◆ standard licence condition 35: Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty
- ◆ standard licence condition 36: Code of Practice on the Use of Prepayment Meters
- ◆ standard licence condition 37: Provision of Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick
- ◆ standard licence condition 38: Provision of Services for Persons who are Blind or Deaf
- ◆ standard licence condition 39: Complaint Handling Procedure

1.3 Where they are licensed for both fuels, licensees may, if they wish, prepare single documents in respect of each standard licence condition covering both electricity and gas.

- 1.4 Attention is also drawn to the following licence conditions which concern codes of practice and statements:
- ◆ standard licence condition 26: Record of and Report on Performance
 - ◆ standard licence condition 27: Preparation, Review of and Compliance with [Statements and] Customer Service Codes
- 1.5 The guidance sets out a number of detailed points which electricity and gas suppliers must consider when they are preparing the content of their codes of practice or statements. It is not exhaustive, but rather describes a minimum level of service on which licensees may wish to build further. As described below, the effectiveness of the codes and statements will depend amongst other things, on:
- ◆ how they are prepared;
 - ◆ arrangements for publicising the existence of the codes;
 - ◆ the extent to which the services described are made available; and
 - ◆ arrangements for monitoring compliance.

Preparation of codes or statements

- 1.6 As set out in standard licence condition 27, before submitting codes or statements to Ofgem, licensees are required to consult with energywatch and have regard to its representations about the content or the manner in which they are likely to be operated (see section 9). The codes and statements should state that they have been subject to consultation with energywatch and approved by Ofgem.
- 1.7 Each code and statement should advise customers of the role of energywatch in providing free independent advice and dealing with complaints. They should provide the central telephone/minicom numbers and the addresses of energywatch offices for customers to contact if they have any queries or complaints about the codes or statements, or their implementation, which the licensee has been unable to resolve.
- 1.8 Each code or statement should clearly specify its objectives and the target groups it is intended to reach. It should be written in plain English and set out in a way that it is easy to follow and understand. Codes and statements should be available in the ethnic

minority languages predominant in the supplier's areas of business. Licensees should make arrangements to deal with enquiries and complaints from customers whose first language is not English.

- 1.9 Ofgem encourages licensees operating in Wales to provide Welsh language services. Where appropriate, licensees should at least ensure that they comply with the Welsh Language Act 1993, which established the principle that, in public business and the administration of justice in Wales, Welsh and English should have equal treatment.
- 1.10 Licensees should be aware that under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 there is a duty on service providers to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people, such as providing extra help or making changes to the way they provide their services. The code of practice under this Act indicates that providing information in alternative formats, such as Braille or large print to customers with visual impairments, is likely to be a reasonable step for the Utility company to take. It would be appropriate for licensees to make their codes and statements available in various formats.

Publicity and distribution

- 1.11 Standard licence condition 27 requires licensees to:
- ◆ give or send, free of charge, copies of the codes or statements to any person who requests them;
 - ◆ draw the attention of customers at least once a year to the existence of the codes or statements, in such a manner as in the reasonable opinion of the licensee will give them adequate publicity.
- 1.12 In order that customers are aware of the provisions of the codes, the licensee may wish to provide a copy of the codes, or a summary version, as part of a "welcome pack" to all new customers, including customers moving home. The licensee should make information about the codes available to potential customers and to advice agencies and care organisations.

Compliance and Review

- 1.13 Customers should receive a service that is consistent with all codes of practice and statements. Failure by a licensee to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that it

complies with the codes or statements is potentially a matter for the exercise of the Authority's legal enforcement powers. The Authority may request a review of the codes or statements at that time (paragraph 9 of standard licence condition 27 refers). All representatives of the licensee (including third-party agents) dealing directly with customers must therefore be familiar with the content of the codes and statements and arrangements should be in place to ensure that appropriate training is provided.

- 1.14 Standard licence condition 26 deals with monitoring and reporting arrangements. Licensees should be able to demonstrate that the aims and requirements of the codes and statements are properly reflected in operational procedures and keep a record of the general operation of the arrangements set out in the standard licence conditions. Arrangements should be made to carry out effective internal monitoring to ensure compliance of staff or agents and highlight any deficiencies that need to be addressed.
- 1.15 Each licensee is required to keep statistical records of its performance, to report to Ofgem and energywatch, and to publish a report on performance annually. Ofgem has designated the information it wishes to be collected and published in a separate document, 'Monitoring domestic electricity and gas suppliers' performance' (February 2001).
- 1.16 The provision of information under designation by Ofgem does not preclude the provision of additional or more frequent information where requested.

2. Procedure with Respect to Site Access/Powers of Entry

- 2.1 Each relevant electricity licensee is required to prepare and submit to Ofgem for its approval a code of practice setting out the principles and procedures it will follow in respect of any person acting on its behalf who requires access to customers' premises.
- 2.2 Each relevant gas licensee is required to prepare and submit to Ofgem for its approval a statement of its proposed arrangements in respect of powers of entry.
- 2.3 The code or statement should clearly state its objectives and purpose, as set out in the standard licence condition. It should provide customers with details of:
- ◆ the nature and frequency of access likely to be required;
 - ◆ the steps taken to ensure that its representatives are fit and proper persons to visit customers' premises;
 - ◆ the measures in place to enable customers to recognise and establish that visits are made by bona fide representatives, for bona fide purposes; and
 - ◆ the special services and provisions available to customers – including the use of passwords for vulnerable customers.

Visits to customers' premises:

- 2.4 The code or statement should indicate that customers will be informed:
- ◆ of any organisations likely to request access on the licensee's behalf;
 - ◆ of the normal working hours during which such access will usually be requested;
 - ◆ that, wherever possible, access will be sought at times convenient to customers.
- 2.5 Customers should be notified of any subsequent changes of organisations used by the licensee or to the normal working hours during which access will usually be requested.
- 2.6 The code or statement should specify how the above information will be provided to customers.

2.7 The code or statement should set out the licensee's policy regarding appointments, for example whether specific timed or time-banded appointments will be offered. Details of relevant Guaranteed, Overall or internal Standards should also be given. When a fixed appointment is made, the customer should be given prior notice of the date and time together with a clear explanation of the purpose of the visit. When no appointment has been made, the representative of the licensee must tell the customer who s/he is and explain clearly at the start of the conversation the purpose of the visit.

Selection and training of personnel

2.8 The code or statement should contain a commitment that the licensee will ensure that persons visiting customers' premises on its behalf:

- ◆ are aware of, and comply with the provisions of the code or statement;
- ◆ are fit and proper persons – it is important that suppliers should, as part of their assessment, have regard for relevant information about criminal offences, subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 ;
- ◆ have been adequately trained and possess the necessary skills to perform the required duties. Where appropriate, details of such training should be provided;
- ◆ are able to inform customers, on request, of a contact point for help and advice that they may require in relation to the supply of electricity and gas; including a telephone number (or numbers) to enable customers to confirm the purpose of the visit and for reporting safety and security of matters;
- ◆ are calm and courteous without showing undue familiarity. The representative should have full regard to the needs and concerns of customers and use appropriate and sensitive language;
- ◆ give explanations and information on matters relevant to the purpose of their visit, which are accurate, clear and straightforward;
- ◆ take due care and respect with customers' property and premises.

2.9 The code or statement should set out the procedures for ensuring that the above requirements are met and the action that a customer should take if s/he wishes to

complain about any failure by a representative to follow the correct procedure or meet the necessary requirements.

Identification of personnel and protection against bogus callers

2.10 Suitable arrangements should be made to ensure that customers can have full confidence that all visits are made by bona fide representatives for bona fide purposes. Representatives visiting customers' premises should recognise that customers might be reluctant to provide access. The code or statement should describe the steps taken to help overcome such concerns and fears by ensuring that representatives are easily identifiable to members of the public. Such measures should include a requirement for representatives to carry, and show, without requiring to be asked, an identity card which includes:

- ◆ the trading name of the company by which they are employed or represent;
- ◆ the name and signature, colour photograph and reference number for the representative;
- ◆ an expiry date for the validity of the card and a clearly visible contact number for the verification of the representative's identity (the code or statement should encourage customers to contact the number provided when a representative calls, should they require such verification).

The licensee should describe the arrangements in place to ensure that identity cards are handed back on expiry or when a representative leaves the company.

Steps should also include, where practicable, the wearing of clothing which identifies the company for which they are employed or represent and vehicles used for visits carrying the trading name of the licensee or its agent.

Additional services

2.11 The code or statement should also set out the additional services available relating to visits to customers' premises for persons who are visually impaired, of pensionable age, disabled, chronically sick, or who might otherwise be uneasy about allowing access to their homes. Such services should include

- ◆ a password scheme; and
- ◆ where practicable, the provision of Braille and large print substitutes for identity cards to be used in the case of customers who are visually impaired.

2.12 Where such special arrangements are agreed between the licensee and the customer, the details should be held securely by the licensee and only provided to those of its representatives requiring them for site access purposes. Any agreed password must be quoted by the representative when seeking access to customers' premises.

Arrangements should be made to enable passwords to be changed at the customer's request and as often as reasonably necessary to reduce the risk of bogus callers.

2.13 The code of practice or statement should also refer to the relevant provisions of the code of practice for customers who are blind or deaf and the code of practice for customers who are of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick.

3. Codes of Practice on the Efficient Use of Electricity or Gas

- 3.1 Each relevant electricity and gas licensee is required to prepare and submit to Ofgem for its approval a code of practice setting out the ways in which it will make available to its customers guidance on how to improve the efficient use of electricity or gas.
- 3.2 This guidance relates to the code of practice for domestic customers. Ofgem provides separate guidance relating to codes of practice for non-domestic customers. However, if suppliers prefer, they may, where appropriate, publish one joint code for domestic and non-domestic customers.
- 3.3 The code should clearly state its objectives and purpose, as set out in the standard licence conditions. It should provide customers with details of:
- ◆ information and advice, given or prepared by a suitably qualified person, on the efficient use of electricity or gas;
 - ◆ arrangements, including a telephone information service, whereby customers may obtain further information;
 - ◆ sources outside the supplier's own organisation from which customers can obtain further information and assistance (e.g. Energy Efficiency Advice Centres);
 - ◆ information on financial assistance available towards the cost of energy efficiency measures, including assistance from the supplier under the Energy Efficiency Standards of Performance (to be known as Energy Efficiency Commitment from April 2002) and assistance available under Warm Front (formerly the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme) (Warm Deal in Scotland).
- 3.4 The information provided in the code should be technically correct and up to date, and presented in a format which will be understood by customers.
- 3.5 Licensees should consult organisations with recognised expertise on energy efficiency when drawing up their code, for example the Energy Saving Trust (EST) and National Energy Action (NEA).

Information and advice on the efficient use of electricity or gas

- 3.6 The code should include a statement containing practical information and advice for customers on:
- ◆ how they can use electricity or gas more efficiently, including specific examples of the steps customers can take (including on a DIY basis) to achieve improvements, the costs and energy savings of different measures, energy efficient appliances, low energy lighting, improved insulation, and the use of controls and timers;
 - ◆ how they can obtain practical help with the installation and financing of energy saving measures and other measures available to help customers;
 - ◆ the cost of using electrical or gas appliances and information about the energy labelling of appliances; and
 - ◆ day/night tariffs
- 3.7 The code is not intended to provide commercial information or to support electricity or gas marketing by the licensee. However, it can include tariff and other information on electricity or gas supply charges relevant to the efficient use of electricity or gas, such as the availability of energy services packages combining the provision of electricity and gas with energy efficiency measures, and details of Suppliers' schemes under the Energy Efficiency Standards of Performance (to be known as the Energy Efficiency Commitment from April 2002).

Arrangements for obtaining further information

- 3.8 The code should:
- ◆ explain how the company will provide and maintain sources of information about the efficient use of energy, including the maintenance of a telephone advice service;
 - ◆ describe the arrangements for providing advice on the efficient use of electricity or gas to customers who request additional advice to that contained in the code;
 - ◆ indicate the scope of the additional advice which it has arranged to provide and the terms on which it is available to customers. It is open to licensees to arrange for this further information to be provided either in-house by the

licensee itself or by an external organisation, though in either case the licensee will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirement that its customers should have access to further information;

- ◆ specify whom customers should contact for further information. The licensee's arrangements for providing such information should include a telephone advice service either operated in-house or contracted out to another qualified organisation, such as an Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (EEAC) or the EST.

3.9 Licensees should pay special attention to the way in which telephone advice lines can best be operated. Companies should take steps to ensure that they can quickly distinguish calls, where the caller wants energy efficiency advice, from other calls. This may require a telephone line dedicated to energy efficiency advice and companies should ensure that customer enquiries are not used as an opportunity for sales promotion.

3.10 Advice on energy efficiency can be particularly important for customers who are having difficulty in paying their bills. Companies should therefore ensure that staff who deal with account queries are trained to recognise when the caller might benefit from energy efficiency advice and are able to offer to refer such cases to the advice service. Licensees have an obligation to offer energy efficiency advice to customers having difficulty paying their bills.

3.11 The potential benefits of computerised enquiry handling systems should be carefully considered for dealing with telephone enquiries. The use of a freephone number or charging calls at local rates should be considered.

A statement of sources of further information and assistance

3.12 The code should include:

- ◆ details of sources outside the licensee's organisation from which customers can obtain further information or assistance in relation to measures that improve the efficient use of electricity or gas. To meet this requirement, the licensee need not enter into any special arrangements with the external sources, but it needs to ensure that the statement, which it gives to customers, is kept up to date;

- ◆ contact details of EEACs, and of local energywatch and central government agencies, as well as other relevant organisations, such as NEA, the Energy Action Grants Agency (EAGA), HEES Managing Agents, the EST and Energy Action Scotland;
- ◆ basic information, which is publicly available, on financial assistance which is available to customers from central or local government or from government funded bodies in connection with measures to promote the efficiency of energy use. This should include information on Warm Front (Warm Deal in Scotland).

Home Visits

- 3.13 The licensee should set out its policy on providing home visits, where such visits are offered for providing advice on the efficient use of electricity or gas, in particular for customers on the Priority Service Register. It should confirm whether there are any charges for such visits.

Training

- 3.14 Staff giving or preparing energy efficiency advice should have appropriate qualifications: for example, a Certificate in Energy Awareness from the City and Guilds of London Institute in conjunction with NEA or the equivalent, and have received appropriate regular refresher training. Other staff who may receive energy efficiency enquiries should be trained to recognise when advice is required and to refer such enquiries to trained staff. Licensees should include in their code information on the qualifications of those who provide advice to customers.

Dissemination and promotion

- 3.15 In addition to the requirements for dissemination of the codes outlined in the Introduction to the Guidance Notes, the licensee should take appropriate steps to promote its energy efficiency advice service. It should also actively target advice at specific groups of customers likely to benefit, such as those on its Priority Service Register and those in payment difficulties. Customers moving home might particularly welcome advice on how to save energy, especially if they are undertaking work which provides the opportunity for enhancing their efficient use of energy. Specific points for promoting the advice service might therefore be:

- ◆ on the back of bill
- ◆ with descriptions of tariff structures
- ◆ in all publications
- ◆ with 'welcome packs' for new customers
- ◆ when customers change address
- ◆ reminders concerning non-payment of fuel bills
- ◆ customer requests for assistance with managing debt
- ◆ meter reading

3.16 The licensee should observe those other licence conditions that require it to provide information on the efficient use of electricity or gas to customers in payment difficulty and customers who are elderly, disabled or chronically sick.

4. Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty

- 4.1 Each relevant electricity and gas licensee is required to prepare and submit to Ofgem for its approval a code of practice for domestic customers on the payment of bills, including guidance for customers who may have difficulty in paying such bills.
- 4.2 Ofgem may require the licensee to give it additional information about the operation of the code, concerning the company's internal debt policies and procedures, which will not form part of the published code of practice.
- 4.3 The code should clearly state its objectives and purpose, as set out in the standard licence condition. It should set out:
- ◆ the arrangements for ensuring that a variety of payment methods are available;
 - ◆ the arrangements for identifying customers in difficulty and distinguishing such customers from others in default; and
 - ◆ the procedures for dealing with customers having difficulty paying and the options available for these customers so as to avoid disconnection of supply.
- 4.4 The code should also cover in sufficient detail relevant matters required under other licence conditions, including:
- ◆ Standard licence condition 40: Information Given to Domestic Customers
 - ◆ standard licence condition 43: Contractual Terms – Methods of Payment
 - ◆ standard licence condition 44: Notification of Terms
 - ◆ standard licence condition 45: Security Deposits

Payment methods

- 4.5 The code should explain that a range of payment methods will be available for customers and explain that its contracts will set out the details and draw attention to any additional charges or savings associated with each method so that customers can make an informed choice about the most suitable method.

4.6 The code should set out the payment methods available and should include payment:

- ◆ by prepayment through a prepayment meter;
- ◆ by different methods, including:
 - ◆ by cash, at such places and to such persons as are reasonable in all the circumstances; and
 - ◆ by cheque, and
- ◆ at a reasonable range of different intervals, including:
 - ◆ paying fortnightly or more regularly, such sums as agreed;¹
 - ◆ paying monthly a predetermined sum; and
 - ◆ paying quarterly in arrears.

4.7 Other means of paying, and at different intervals, provided by the licensee, should also be included, for example, payment by direct debit or standing order on a monthly or quarterly basis, or by savings stamps.

4.8 Before installing a prepayment meter, companies must ensure that they are appropriate to a customer's circumstances. Where customers move into premises which already have prepayment meter, companies should describe how they will establish the suitability of that method of payment for the customer.

4.9 The code should also set out arrangements covering:

- ◆ where cash payments may be made, together with any additional commission charges if these apply; and
- ◆ where prepayment meter keys may be recharged or tokens purchased and the means of advising customers of the opening hours of such places, including over holiday periods such as Christmas and New Year (whilst the code need not provide a list of outlets, it should give information about how such a list might be obtained).

¹ 'such sums as agreed' include the flexible payment arrangements offered by some suppliers where the sum is not predetermined.

Security against non-payment of future bills

- 4.10 The code should contain a clear statement of the licensee's policy on securing the payment of future bills. It should also state if and how this policy differs for new and existing customers and what, if any, credit vetting procedures are applied. The code should explain that security may take the form of a requirement to pay by direct debit or standing order (monthly or quarterly), the nomination of a guarantor or a monetary deposit. The code should also indicate the steps that a customer who is required to provide some form of security needs to take to improve his or her credit worthiness, and state what a customer must do in order for security to no longer be required.
- 4.11 The code should confirm that a monetary security deposit is not required where the customer is prepared to be supplied through a prepayment meter and it is reasonably practicable in all the circumstances to do so.
- 4.12 The code should state that where a monetary deposit has been paid (unless it is otherwise reasonable in all the circumstances for the deposit to be retained) it will be repaid (with interest) by the licensee:
- ◆ within 14 days where, in the previous 12 months the customer has paid all charges for electricity or gas supplied within 28 days of each written demand being made; or
 - ◆ as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any event within 1 month, where the licensee has ceased to supply the customer and the customer has paid all the charges for electricity or gas supplied.
- 4.13 The code should indicate:
- ◆ how the amount of a monetary deposit will be calculated. The amount may be 1.5 times the value of the average quarterly consumption of electricity or gas reasonably expected at the relevant premises, or more if that is reasonable in all the circumstances; and
 - ◆ that interest shall be paid, at Barclays Bank Base Rate, on every sum of 50p deposited for every 3 months during which that sum is held.

- 4.14 The code should explain how customers may challenge licensee's requests for security deposits and their level; energywatch's role in helping to resolve such disputes; and the powers of Ofgem in relation to such matters. Information about this appeals mechanism should also be included in any correspondence sent to customers which requests such security deposits.

Disputed accounts

- 4.15 The licensee should state clearly the steps it will take in dealing with a disputed account. The code should: inform customers how to query or dispute an account; specify the action that will be taken by the company to resolve the dispute; and describe any Standards of Performance that may apply.

Arrangements for identifying and dealing with customers in difficulty

- 4.16 The licensee is required to describe the procedures for distinguishing customers in difficulty from others in default. The code should set out:
- ◆ the steps taken to identify customers in difficulty;
 - ◆ the time-scale for follow-up action; and
 - ◆ the attempts which will be made to make appropriate contact, either by letter, telephone or visit, with customers who fall into arrears or fail to keep to agreed payment arrangements.
- 4.17 The code should confirm that customers with repayment difficulties who contact the licensee will be made to feel that their case will be heard sympathetically and that offers of repayment will be carefully considered. Licensees should be sympathetic to the welfare of the family as a whole; for example where there are young children. Accounts, requests for payment and other correspondence should encourage the customer to contact the licensee at an early stage to discuss the options available. Staff who have telephone contact with customers and those who make visits to customers as part of follow-up action should be suitably trained and be empowered to agree payment arrangements which reflect the customer's circumstances.
- 4.18 The code should also set out the action that will be taken when the licensee knows that the Benefits Agency or Social Services are involved in assisting or advising a customer in

difficulty, the steps that will be taken to liaise with such organisations or other agencies and any additional time that will be allowed in the follow-up procedure to enable such organisations to make appropriate arrangements on behalf of customers.

4.19 The code should include details of the procedures for dealing with customers in difficulty and should:

- ◆ indicate that information will be provided to customers on how they might reduce their bills in future by the more efficient use of electricity or gas, including sources of financial help such as Warm Front or the companies' work under the Energy Efficiency Standards of Performance (to be known as the Energy Efficiency Commitment from April 2002), and state how that information will be provided;
- ◆ set out the payment arrangements available, which should include repayment of any debt over an agreed period of time at agreed intervals; the provision of a prepayment meter; and, in relevant cases payments deducted at source from social security benefits (Fuel Direct);
- ◆ state that the licensee will take account of the customer's ability to pay when agreeing any repayment arrangement, or calibrating a prepayment meter, and confirm with the customer that arrangements are manageable. It should also say that an appropriate rate for repayment of debt will depend on individual circumstances, but as a general guide, the debt recovery rate should not normally be set above the minimum Fuel Direct level (currently set at £2.70 as at April 2001) where the household is in receipt of benefits², unless the customer offers more or there is clear evidence to suggest that a higher figure would be appropriate. Where a customer has multiple debts and information is provided in the form of an income and expenditure statement submitted by an acknowledged money advice agency, the rate of debt repayment should be on a pro rata basis with other creditors. Where information may be available from other persons or organisations to assist in agreeing the level of repayment, that information should be taken into account.

² Such benefits are Income Support and Job Seekers Allowance

- ◆ refer to the separate code of practice for prepayment meter customers and summarise its purpose; and
- ◆ refer to the help and advice that may be available from advice agencies. A number of examples should be given, such as Citizens Advice Bureaux and Money Advice Agencies or debt counselling services. Details of how to contact these agencies should be provided to the customer. In addition, the code should confirm that the company will offer, with the customer's written consent, to ask the appropriate agency to contact the customer.

4.20 Licensees should provide a copy of this code or a summary version to customers at an early stage during the follow-up action for non-payment of an account or for failure to keep to an agreed payment arrangement.

Disconnection

- 4.21 The code should set out the circumstances when it will be necessary to disconnect a customer's supply and provide information about the powers of the licensee or its agent to carry out such action and, where necessary, gain right of entry. The code should cover the information that will be left with all disconnected customers, explaining how they may be reconnected, any costs of disconnection or reconnection, and details of any Standards of Performance that apply.
- 4.22 Licensees are required, so far as is practicable, to avoid disconnection of customers who are of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick during winter months. Gas licensees cannot disconnect pensioner households during this period (refer to gas suppliers' standard licence condition 37A: 'Pensioners Not to Have Supply of Gas Cut Off in Winter'). The code should explain these requirements.

5. Code of Practice on the Use of Prepayment Meters

- 5.1 Each relevant electricity and gas licensee is required to prepare and submit to Ofgem for its approval a code of practice detailing the services available to customers wishing to pay by prepayment meter.
- 5.2 The code should clearly state its objectives and purpose, as set out in the standard licence condition. It should provide customers with details of:
- ◆ the licensee's policy on the installation of prepayment meters, including safeguards to prevent the inappropriate installation of prepayment meters.
 - ◆ general information on the operation, usefulness, advantages and disadvantages of prepayment meters.
 - ◆ its policy for the calibration of meters to recover debt and procedures for removal of such meters.

Specific considerations

- 5.3 The code should include information about prepayment meters, including:
- ◆ the usefulness of such meters for both budgeting purposes and as a mechanism for collecting debt, together with information about the advantages and disadvantages of prepayment meters (including disadvantages in terms of price).
 - ◆ the licensee's policy on when it will insist on the installation of such a meter and the grounds on which customers can challenge this;
 - ◆ the conditions, procedure and timescale associated with the removal of such meters;
 - ◆ the policy on calibrating meters to collect any outstanding debt which must be consistent with paragraph 5.5 below;
 - ◆ the policy on providing emergency credit and any flexible arrangements to protect customers' needs;

- ◆ how the licensee will contact such customers on a regular basis, for example annually, to enable them to make comparisons between the cost of prepayment and other payment methods; this might involve including information on a customer's bill, or writing separately to prepayment meter customers to invite them to consider changing payment method;
- ◆ the procedure (where appropriate) for re-calibrating meters after a price change or after a debt has been cleared, and the target timescale within which such re-calibration will take place;
- ◆ the arrangements for making payments to customers for failing to meet any relevant Guaranteed Standards of Performance or company targets, relating to services for prepayment meter customers;
- ◆ arrangements for moving meters free of charge to more suitable locations for elderly, disabled and chronically sick customers; the policy on moving meters for other customers to enable a prepayment meter to be installed or where the present site is inconvenient;
- ◆ the policy on refunding credit balances;
- ◆ the licensee's arrangements for ensuring that prepayment meter customers stay on supply when switching from one supplier to another or when moving into premises with an existing prepayment meter;
- ◆ how the licensee will assess a customer's circumstances to ensure that a prepayment meter is safe and appropriate.

Information

- 5.4 The code should list the additional information that will be provided separately to prepayment meter customers which may include as a minimum, and in addition to the code of practice on the use of prepayment meters:
- ◆ an explanation of what a prepayment meter is and how it operates;
 - ◆ full details of the charges (unit price and any standing charge) and any other additional costs associated with prepayment meters, including any installation

cost or call out charges, and the circumstances in which such costs will be met by the licensee; and a comparison of the costs of alternative payment methods;

- ◆ a statement, provided when the meter is installed, giving details of:
 - ◆ the date the meter was fitted;
 - ◆ the total amount of any debt and how this has been calculated;
 - ◆ the rate at which the meter has been calibrated to recover any debt;
 - ◆ the fixed standing charge per week;
 - ◆ the total amount the meter is calibrated to collect each week, whether or not any electricity or gas is used, i.e. the weekly debt collection and the standing charge;
 - ◆ the amount of emergency credit and an explanation of how it works;
 - ◆ the telephone number(s) for advice and emergency service;
 - ◆ circumstances in which visits to homes are free; the circumstances in which there will be a charge including a list of such charges;
 - ◆ circumstances in which charges will be made for replacement of lost cards or keys and the amount of such charges;
 - ◆ the frequency and content of statements or bills which the licensee will issue;
 - ◆ details of token outlets or charging facilities in the customer's area, including the location and hours available, and any facilities for recharging cards or keys or purchasing tokens by post; and
 - ◆ the nearest token outlet or charging facility; generally, Ofgem expects customers to be no more than one mile from the nearest such outlet.

Dealing with customers in difficulty

5.5 The code should include details of the procedures for dealing with customers in difficulty and should:

- ◆ indicate that information will be provided to customers on how they might reduce their bills in future by the more efficient use of electricity and gas and state how that information will be provided;
- ◆ state that the licensee will take account of the customer's ability to pay when calibrating a prepayment meter, and confirm that with the customer that arrangements are manageable. It should also say that an appropriate rate for repayment of debt will depend on individual circumstances, but as a general guide, the debt recovery rate should not normally be set above the minimum Fuel Direct level (currently set at £2.70 as at April 2001) where the household is in receipt of benefits,³ unless the customer offers more or there is clear evidence to suggest that a higher figure would be appropriate. Where a customer has multiple debts and information is provided in the form of an income and expenditure statement submitted by an acknowledged money advice agency, the rate of debt repayment should be on a pro rata basis with other creditors. Where information may be available from other persons or organisations to assist in agreeing the level of repayment, that information should be taken into account;
- ◆ refer to the help and advice that may be available from other advice agencies. A number of examples should be given, such as Citizens Advice Bureaux and Money Advice Agencies or debt counselling services. Details of how to contact these agencies should be provided to the customer. In addition, the licensee will offer, with the customer's written consent, to ask the appropriate agency to contact the customer.

The elderly, disabled and chronically sick

5.6 The code should also refer to measures and provisions that relate to customers who are of pensionable age or disabled, including the blind or deaf, or chronically sick, including recognition that prepayment meters may not be suitable for such customers. The code should explain that wherever possible alternative arrangements will be offered. Where there is no option but to fit a prepayment meter the licensee should give

careful attention to the level of emergency credit provided and the nearest charging point.

Levels of service

5.7 Where they are not already doing so, suppliers will be expected to make arrangements to work towards levels of service for prepayment meter services. The areas suggested and possible levels of service are outlined below. Those licensees that are already providing services at a level above those suggested will be expected to continue to do so. Where licensees are not already providing comparable or better services they should include a description of what arrangements they are making to improve them and over what timescale. All licensees should describe in the code of practice the present level of services provided to prepayment meter customers.

- ◆ **Distance to token vending/key charging points:** customers should have reasonable access to facilities 7 days a week. In this respect, reasonable access is defined as a distance of no more than 1 mile, unless this is considered to be unreasonable in particular circumstances, e.g. rural areas.
- ◆ **Repair of token vending/key charging point:** Licensees, or their agents, should attend within 6 hours of being notified of failure, and repair within 12 hours.
- ◆ **Faulty cards/keys/tokens:** provision of a freephone or local rate service to deal with malfunctions; and the facility to repair or replace faulty items.
- ◆ **Repair of meter:** respond to prepayment meter faults within 3 hours on weekdays and 4 hours at weekends (in line with the Guaranteed Standards applying to supply licensees).
- ◆ **Emergency credit:** provision to be sufficient to cover, as a minimum, average usage over a 3 day weekend.
- ◆ **Self-disconnection:** arrangements for contacting customers where there is concern about the pattern of charging keys/cards or purchasing tokens.

³ Such benefits are Income Support and Job Seekers Allowance

6. Code of Practice for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick

- 6.1 Each relevant electricity and gas licensee is required to prepare and submit to Ofgem for its approval a code of practice detailing the special services available for its domestic customers who are of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick.
- 6.2 The code should clearly state its objectives and purpose, as set out in the standard licence conditions. It should provide customers with details of:
- ◆ the services provided to assist customers who are of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick, including those who are blind or deaf; and bring customers' attention to the separate code of practice for blind and deaf customers;
 - ◆ the register it maintains of such customers (to be known as the 'Priority Service Register' in all publications and contact with customers); and
 - ◆ for gas suppliers: explain the supplier's obligation to provide, on request, to eligible customers a free annual safety check for gas appliances and other gas fittings.
- 6.3 The code should be presented in a customer friendly style using appropriately sensitive language. The licensee should state that it will interpret the definition of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick such that any customer who reasonably expects to be included is covered by its provisions.

Services available

- 6.4 The code should set out the services available for customers who are of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick. It shall include the arrangements, where reasonably practicable and appropriate,⁴ and in each case free of charge, for:
- ◆ providing special controls and adapters for electrical and gas appliances and meters, including prepayment meters;
 - ◆ repositioning a meter - so as to make it more accessible to the customer;

⁴ If the customer so requests and if eligible.

- ◆ providing special means of identifying persons acting on behalf of the licensee, by means of special passwords, etc;
- ◆ providing advice on the use of electricity or gas (and, in the case of gas, gas appliances and other gas fittings). The code should recognise that such customers may particularly benefit from energy efficiency advice if they spend a lot of time at home. Licensees should therefore state that they will take the initiative and make efforts to contact such customers (particularly those on a Priority Service Register). Advice could be contained in the code which should also indicate how further advice relating to the efficient use of electricity and gas could be obtained (home visits might be of particular benefit for these customers);
- ◆ redirecting bills to a nominated third party - either instead of, or as well as, sending them to the customer;
- ◆ providing, where neither the customer nor anyone living with him/her is able to read the meter, for the meter to be read once in each quarter and for the customer to be informed of the readings; and the company's policy for exchanging difficult-to-read meters where that would assist customers to read their own meter;
- ◆ limiting, on request, the hours between which meter readers will call; and
- ◆ arranging safety checks by gas suppliers of gas appliances and other fittings; where appliances are not considered safe for use following a safety check, the supplier should be able to advise the customer on options for repairing or renewing the appliance, including access to charitable organisations.

Register of customers with special needs

- 6.5 The licensee should set up and maintain a Priority Service Register, to promote and provide a focus for the services available for persons who are of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick.
- 6.6 The code should describe the arrangements for inclusion on the Priority Service Register, and should:

- ◆ draw customers' attention to the Priority Service Register and describe which customers might benefit from being included;
- ◆ explain how the licensee will publicise the Priority Service Register and notify its customers at least once a year of its existence (suppliers should seek the assistance of relevant organisations representing pensioners or disabled people to publicise the Priority Service Register and the services offered); and
- ◆ explain how it will provide customers on the Priority Service Register with information about the special services available.

Arrangements for liaising with distribution/transportation licensees

6.7 The code should describe the arrangements for transferring customer details to gas transportation/electricity distribution licensees, where appropriate. The code should explain how the licensee will obtain information about whether such customers:

- ◆ would be vulnerable in the event of a supply interruption (this would include instances where customers require alternative cooking and heating facilities in the case of gas, and special medical equipment in relation to electricity);
- ◆ require special means of identifying persons acting on behalf of the licensee by means of a special password; and
- ◆ have any special communication needs.

6.8 The code should explain how the licensee will ensure that such customers' details are passed onto the relevant gas transportation/electricity distribution licensee.

Advance notice of interruptions of electricity supply

6.9 Electricity licensees should ensure that reasonable steps are taken to provide customers on the Priority Service Register with information and advice about planned supply interruptions and the code should explain how this will be done.

6.10 Arrangements in electricity may involve providing more notice than that required under the Guaranteed Standards of Performance. In any event, arrangements in electricity should extend to providing information as quickly as possible to such customers in the

event of unplanned outages, including the likely restoration time and any help that may be provided whilst the customer is without supply.

Provision of alternative cooking and heating facilities

- 6.11 Gas licencees should describe arrangements for providing, via the transporter, adequate heating and cooking facilities to vulnerable customers where the supply of gas has been disconnected for safety reasons.

Other provisions

- 6.12 The code should refer to other measures and provisions that may relate to customers who are of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick, including:
- ◆ provisions of the codes of practice on site access - (electricity supplier's standard licence condition 24) and the arrangements in respect of powers of entry (gas supplier's standard licence condition 24) - and the arrangements for joining any password scheme and making representatives of the licensee easily recognisable;
 - ◆ the use of prepayment meters - the licensee should recognise that prepayment meters may not be suitable for such customers, especially those that are housebound. The code should explain that, wherever possible, alternative arrangements will be offered. Where there is no option but to fit a prepayment meter, the licensee should give careful attention to the level of emergency credit provided and the distance to the nearest token outlet or re-charging point;
 - ◆ the steps that will be taken to prevent the disconnection of such customers during the winter months, as required by the code of practice on payment of bills for electricity, and standard licence condition 37A in gas (Pensioners Not to Have Supply of Gas Cut Off in winter).
 - ◆ Provision of services for persons who are blind or deaf.
- 6.13 Suppliers should liaise with and provide information to relevant advice agencies.

7. Code of Practice on the Provision of Services for Persons who are Blind or Deaf

- 7.1 Each relevant electricity and gas licensee is required to prepare and submit to Ofgem for its approval a code of practice detailing the special services available for its domestic customers who are blind or deaf.
- 7.2 The code should refer to the separate 'Code of Practice for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick'.
- 7.3 The code should clearly state its objectives and purpose, as set out in the standard licence condition. It should provide customers with details of the services provided to assist customers who are blind or deaf with information about their bills or any service provided by the licensee.
- 7.4 The code should be presented in a customer friendly style using appropriately sensitive language. The licensee should state that it will interpret the definition of blind or deaf such that any customer who reasonably expects to be included is covered by its provisions.

Specific considerations

The code should include details about services which the licensee will make available free of charge to:

- ◆ its blind and partially sighted customers about electricity and gas bills, in a manner suitable for such customers (this might include information in large print, in Braille or on audio tape) and a suitable facility for enquiry or complaint about a Licensee's bill or any service; and
- ◆ assist its deaf and hearing impaired customers to enquire or complain about a bill or any other services provided by the licensee by making available facilities such as minicom and/or textphone.

Services available

7.5 The code should set what other services are available for customers who are blind or deaf including the arrangements, where reasonably practicable and appropriate,⁵ and in each case free of charge, for:

- ◆ providing special controls and adapters for electrical and gas appliances and meters, including prepayment meters;
- ◆ repositioning a meter - so as to make it more accessible to the customer;
- ◆ providing special means of identifying persons acting on behalf of the licensee, by means of special passwords, etc;
- ◆ providing advice on the use of electricity or gas (and, in the case of gas, gas appliances and other gas fittings). The code should recognise that such customers may particularly benefit from energy efficiency advice if they spend a lot of time at home. Licensees should therefore state that they will take the initiative and make efforts to contact such customers (particularly those on a Priority Service Register). We would expect advice to be contained in the code which should also indicate how further advice relating to the efficient use of electricity and gas could be obtained (home visits might be of particular benefit for these customers);
- ◆ redirecting bills to a nominated third party – either instead of, or as well as, sending them to the customer;
- ◆ providing, where neither the customer nor anyone living with him/her is able to read the meter, for the meter to be read once in each quarter and for the customer to be informed of the readings;
- ◆ limiting, on request, the hours between which meter readers will call; and
- ◆ arranging safety checks by gas licensees of gas appliances and other fittings; where appliances are not considered safe for use following a safety check, the licensee should be able to advise the customer on options for repairing or renewing the appliance, including access to relevant charitable organisations.

Register of customers with special needs

⁵ If the customer so requests and if the customer is eligible

7.6 The code should state that the licensee will bring to the attention of blind and deaf customers the Priority Service Register, describe the arrangements for inclusion on the Priority Service Register and provide details of the services available for customers who are included on the Priority Service Register. Licensees should seek the assistance of relevant organisations representing disabled people to publicise the Priority Service Register and the services offered.

Other provisions

7.7 The code should refer to other measures and provisions that may relate to customers who are blind and deaf, including:

- ◆ the provisions of the code of practice covering Site Access (electricity supplier's standard licence condition 24) and of the arrangements in respect of powers of entry (gas suppliers' standard licence condition 24); and the arrangements for joining any password scheme and making representatives of the licensee easily recognisable;
- ◆ the use of prepayment meters – the code should recognise that prepayment meters may not be suitable for such customers, especially those that are housebound. The code should explain that, wherever possible, alternative arrangements will be offered. Where there is no option but to fit a prepayment meter, the licensee should give careful attention to the level of emergency credit provided and the distance to the nearest token outlet or re-charging point;
- ◆ the steps that will be taken to prevent the disconnection of such customers during the winter months, as required by the code of practice on payment of bills for electricity and gas, and standard licence condition 37A in gas (Pensioners Not to Have Supply of Gas Cut Off in Winter).

8. Complaint Handling Procedure

- 8.1 Each relevant electricity and gas licensee is required to prepare and submit to Ofgem for its approval a code of practice detailing its procedure for handling complaints from domestic customers.
- 8.2 The code should clearly state its objectives and purpose, as set out in the standard licence condition. It should set out the licensee's procedures for handling complaints and describe the complaints' procedure with respect to distribution/transportation matters.
- 8.3 The code should provide a definition of a complaint and specify the periods within which it is intended that different descriptions of complaints should be processed and resolved.
- 8.4 The complaint handling procedure should aim to deal with complaints fairly and efficiently in the shortest possible time. The licensee should also make use of its complaint handling procedure as a means of obtaining information about issues of concern to customers and any shortcomings in the service so as to make improvements. The procedure set out in the code should be:
- ◆ effective, aimed at solving the problem and providing at the very least a satisfactory explanation, an apology or some form of redress;
 - ◆ readily accessible to users of the service;
 - ◆ simple to operate, with clearly set out procedures and responsibilities;
 - ◆ speedy, with time limits for dealing with complaints;
 - ◆ objective, with provision for an independent means to investigate complaints if necessary
 - ◆ confidential – the privacy of the individual should be protected;
 - ◆ integrated with the organisation's management information systems.

Specific considerations

8.5 The code should include the following:

- ◆ details of how to contact the licensee to make a complaint, including any special arrangements for customers who are of pensionable age, disabled or chronically sick, and those whose first language is not English;
- ◆ the procedure for reviewing complaints at a more senior level if the customer remains dissatisfied, including a named individual or job title with overall responsibility;
- ◆ timescales for each stage of complaint handling and investigation with clear commitments as to response times and details of any company standards and payments for failure to respond within the set time;
- ◆ details of how energywatch can assist in resolving complaints which the licensee has not resolved to the customer's satisfaction and how energywatch can be contacted;
- ◆ details of any relevant Standards of Performance;
- ◆ the arrangements for making payments to customers following a failure by the distributor/shipper/transporter to meet a Guaranteed Standard – including details when such payments may be due and the time limit in which the customer should receive payment;
- ◆ details of advice agencies and other organisations able to help the customer pursue his/her complaint.

8.6 The licensee should also set out its policy on providing home visits, where such visits are offered for dealing with complaints.

9. Approval Process

- 9.1 Before submitting the codes or statements to Ofgem for final approval, the applicant must consult energywatch. Licensees or prospective licensees should contact energywatch at the earliest opportunity to discuss the arrangements for consultation.
- 9.2 To avoid delays licensees should copy any correspondence or emails sent to energywatch to Ofgem at the email address shown below. Ofgem will provide the licensee and energywatch with its initial comments on the draft codes or statements within 14 days.
- 9.3 Licensees are required to have regard to any of energywatch's representations about the codes or statements or the manner in which they are likely to be operated. Only after doing so should the applicant formally submit its codes or statements to Ofgem for approval. Ofgem will not be able to approve the codes or statements until energywatch has been consulted. Codes or statements should be emailed to Ofgem's Social Obligations Manager at sap@ofgem.gov.uk. Business energy efficiency codes should be sent to Ofgem's Environmental Affairs Manager at efficiency.cop@ofgem.gov.uk.
- 9.4 If, at the approval stage, Ofgem believes that the codes or statements are not sufficient for the purposes of meeting the requirements of the licence it will notify the licensee within thirty days of receipt. The licensee must then make the necessary changes and re-submit the codes or statements forthwith. Ofgem will formally approve the codes or statements when it is satisfied that they meet all the requirements of the licence.
- 9.5 Any questions about the process set out above or the content of the codes or statements should be addressed to the Social Obligations Manager at the email address shown above or on telephone 0207 901 7237. Questions regarding business energy efficiency codes should be direct to the Environmental Affairs Manager at the email address shown above or on telephone 0207 901 7488.

Appendix 1 Standard licence conditions

1.1 The following licence conditions referred to in this guidance are included in this appendix:

- ◆ Condition 24: Code of Practice on Procedures with Respect to Site Access (electricity)
- ◆ Condition 24: Arrangements in Respect of Powers of Entry (gas)
- ◆ Condition 24A: Authorisation of Officers (gas)
- ◆ Condition 24B: Exercise of Powers of Entry (gas)
- ◆ Condition 25: Efficient Use of Electricity
- ◆ Condition 25: Efficient Use of Gas
- ◆ Condition 26: Record of and Report on Performance
- ◆ Condition 27: Preparation, Review of and Compliance with [Statements and] Customer Service Codes
- ◆ Condition 35: Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty
- ◆ Condition 36: Code of Practice on the Use of Prepayment Meters
- ◆ Condition 37: Provision of Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick
- ◆ Condition 37A: Pensioners Not to Have Supply of Gas Cut Off in Winter
- ◆ Condition 38: Provision of Services for Persons who are Blind or Deaf
- ◆ Condition 39: Complaint Handling Procedure
- ◆ Condition 40: Information Given to Domestic Customers
- ◆ Condition 43: Contractual Terms – Methods of Payment

- ◆ Condition 45: Security Deposits

Condition 24. Code of Practice on Procedures with Respect to Site Access (electricity)

1. The licensee shall prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice setting out the principles and procedures the licensee will follow in respect of any person acting on the licensee's behalf who requires access to customers' premises.

2. The code of practice shall include procedures calculated to ensure that persons visiting customers' premises on behalf of the licensee:
 - (a) possess the skills necessary to perform the required duties;

 - (b) are readily identifiable to members of the public;

 - (c) use passwords provided for vulnerable customers;

 - (d) are appropriate persons to visit and enter customers' premises;

 - (e) are able to inform customers, on request, of a contact point for help and advice they may require in relation to the supply of electricity; and

 - (f) comply with the provisions of the Rights of Entry (Gas and Electricity Boards) Act 1954.

3. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Customer Service Codes).

Condition 24. Arrangements in Respect of Powers of Entry (gas)

1. The licensee shall, in respect of both domestic and non-domestic premises, prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a statement of its proposed arrangements in respect of the steps mentioned in standard condition 24A (Authorisation of Officers).
2. In the case of an extension of this licence, the licensee shall ensure that the arrangements remain sufficient for the purposes of satisfying standard condition 24A (Authorisation of Officers), and shall make, subject to paragraph 4, any necessary changes.
3. The licensee shall use its best endeavours to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that it conducts itself in conformity with the arrangements made in pursuance of paragraph 1.
4. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Statements and Customer Service Codes).

Condition 24A. Authorisation of Officers (gas)

1. The arrangements referred to in standard condition 24 (Arrangements in Respect of Powers of Entry) shall provide for the taking of all reasonable steps-
 - (a) for the purpose of securing compliance with paragraph 28(1) of Schedule 2B to the Act;
 - (b) for the purpose of securing that any officer authorised for the purpose of any provision of Schedule 2B to the Act possesses appropriate expertise to perform the particular tasks that he will be required to undertake under the provision in question;
 - (c) for securing that a member of the public may readily confirm the identity or authority of an officer so authorised;
 - (d) for securing that identity cards, uniforms, liveried vehicles and other things carried, worn or used by an officer so authorised which confirm or suggest that he may be such an officer are not misused;
 - (e) for securing that all officers so authorised by the licensee comply with the provisions of the Rights of Entry (Gas and Electricity Boards) Act 1954; and
 - (f) for securing that where, in relation to any premises -
 - (i) a power of entry would be conferred on the licensee by Schedule 2B to the Act but for the fact that the premises in question are secondary sub-deduct premises, but
 - (ii) the licensee has obtained such power as is mentioned in paragraph 2(a),
the licensee complies, in relation to that power, with the requirements imposed on gas suppliers by paragraph 28(1) of the said Schedule 2B, and the requirements of subparagraphs (b) to (d) are complied with in relation to any officer authorised by the licensee to exercise any such power as if the officer were authorised for the purposes of the appropriate provision of that Schedule.
2. In the circumstances mentioned in paragraph 1(f)(i) the licensee shall use reasonable endeavours to obtain by contract -
 - (a) powers of entry that are, as nearly as may be, the same powers of entry that would have been conferred on it by Schedule 2B; and
 - (b) such rights as will provide, as nearly as may be, for the relevant shipper and relevant transporter to enter the premises in question on the same basis as where powers of entry would have been conferred on them by Schedule 2B.

3. If, in respect of any premises, any officer authorised for the purpose of any provision of Schedule 2B to the Act or for the purpose of entering premises in accordance with any right or power mentioned in paragraph 2, is an officer or servant of an agent of the licensee, or if the licensee is notified by the relevant transporter or shipper that any officer so authorised by that transporter or shipper is an officer or servant of an agent thereof, the licensee shall take reasonable steps to inform and keep informed each of its customers in respect of those premises, naming the agent in question, and shall give that information in a verifiable and authoritative manner.

4. It shall be a sufficient compliance with paragraph 3 for the information to be given on or with a bill in respect of the supply of gas to the premises in question which is rendered within 4 months of the appointment of an agent being made or varied by the licensee or, as the case may be, within 4 months of the licensee being notified of such an appointment or variation by the relevant transporter or shipper.

5. For the purposes of paragraphs 3 and 4, where, in respect of any premises, the holder of this licence is the relevant shipper, it shall be deemed to have been notified as mentioned in paragraph 3 -
 - (a) in respect of any officer or servant of an agent of the relevant shipper; and
 - (b) where the relevant transporter has notified the relevant shipper in accordance with paragraph 2 of standard condition 19A (Authorisation of Officers) of the standard conditions of gas transporters' licences as incorporated in its licence, in respect of any officer or servant of an agent of the relevant transporter.

Condition 24B. Exercise of Powers of Entry (gas)

1. As respects the powers of entry conferred on its authorised officers by Schedule 2B to the Act or which the licensee has obtained in accordance with paragraph 2(a) of standard condition 24A (Authorisation of Officers), the licensee shall use its reasonable endeavours to avoid undue disturbance to owners or occupiers of premises as a result of visits being made to their premises by authorised officers of different licence holders exercising powers of entry for like purposes.
2. Subject to paragraphs 3 and 5, the licensee shall not, in connection with the supply of gas to any premises, by contract acquire for any of its officers powers of entry additional to those enjoyed by its authorised officers under Schedule 2B to the Act or act in any manner calculated to suggest that any of its officers have such powers.
3. Paragraph 2 shall not apply -
 - (a) in the case of a contract which relates exclusively, or to the extent to which it relates, to the provision of a gas meter or other gas fitting of which the licensee remains the owner; or
 - (b) so far as the Authority so consents in cases, or descriptions of cases, specified by it.
4. Any question arising under paragraph 2 as to whether a power of entry is in connection with the supply of gas shall be determined by the Authority.
5. Paragraph 2 shall not apply in relation to any secondary sub-duct premises as respects such a power of entry as is mentioned in paragraph 2 of standard condition 24A (Authorisation of Officers).

Condition 25. Efficient Use of Electricity

1. The licensee shall prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice setting out the ways in which the licensee will make available to customers such guidance on the efficient use of electricity, in each case given or prepared by a suitably qualified person, as will, in the opinion of the licensee, enable such customers to make informed judgements on measures to improve the efficiency with which they use the electricity supplied to them.

2. The code of practice shall include, but shall not be limited to:
 - (a) the preparation and making available free of charge to any customer who requests it of a statement, in a form approved by the Authority, setting out information and advice for the guidance of customers in the efficient use of electricity supplied to them;

 - (b) the making of arrangements for maintaining sources from which customers may obtain further information about the efficient use of electricity supplied to them, including the maintenance of a telephone information service; and

 - (c) the preparation and making available free of charge to any customer who requests it of a statement or statements of sources (to the extent that the licensee is aware of the same) outside the licensee's organisation from which customers may obtain additional information or assistance about measures to improve the efficiency with which they use the electricity supplied to them, such statement or statements to include basic information which is publicly available on financial assistance towards the costs of such measures available from central or local government or through bodies in receipt of financial support from Government in connection with measures to promote the efficiency of energy use.

3. Where the Authority (who may have regard to the need for economy, efficiency and effectiveness before giving directions under this paragraph) gives directions to do so, the licensee shall:
 - (a) review and prepare a revision of the code of practice;

 - (b) take steps to bring to the attention of customers information on the efficient use of electricity supplied to them; and

 - (c) send to each customer a copy of any information in relation to the efficient use of electricity published by the Authority pursuant to section 48 of the Act,

in such manner and at such times as will comply with those directions.

4. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Customer Service Codes).

Condition 25. Efficient Use of Gas

1. The licensee shall prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice setting out the ways in which the licensee will make available to its customers such guidance on the efficient use of gas, in each case given or prepared by a suitably qualified person, as will, in the opinion of the licensee, enable customers to make informed judgements on measures to improve the efficiency with which they use the gas supplied to them.

2. The code of practice shall include, but shall not be limited to:
 - (d) the preparation and making available free of charge to any customer who requests it of a statement, in a form approved by the Authority, setting out information and advice for the guidance of customers in the efficient use of gas supplied to them;

 - (e) the making of arrangements for maintaining sources from which customers may obtain further information about the efficient use of gas supplied to them, including the maintenance of a telephone information service; and

 - (f) the preparation and making available free of charge to any customer who requests it of a statement or statements of sources (to the extent that the licensee is aware of the same) outside the licensee's organisation from which customers may obtain additional information or assistance about measures to improve the efficiency with which they use the gas supplied to them, such statement or statements to include basic information which is publicly available on financial assistance towards the costs of such measures available from central or local government or through bodies in receipt of financial support from government in connection with measures to promote the efficiency of energy use.

3. Where the Authority (who may have regard to the need for economy, efficiency and effectiveness before giving directions under this paragraph) gives directions to do so, the licensee shall:
 - (a) review and prepare a revision of the code of practice;

 - (b) take steps to bring to the attention of its customers information on the efficient use of gas supplied to them; and

 - (c) send to each customer a copy of any information in relation to the efficient use of gas published by the Authority pursuant to section 35 of the Act,

in such manner and at such times as will comply with those directions.

4. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Statements and Customer Service Codes).

Condition 26. Record of and Report on Performance (electricity)

1. The licensee shall keep a record of its general operation of the arrangements mentioned in standard conditions 24 (Code of Practice on Procedures with Respect to Site Access) and 25 (Efficient Use of Electricity) and (where a Domestic Supply Direction has been issued to the licensee) in standard conditions 35 (Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty), 36 (Code of Practice on the Use of Prepayment Meters), 37 (Provision of Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick), 38 (Provision of Services for Persons who are Blind or Deaf) and 39 (Complaint Handling Procedure) and if the Authority so directs in writing, of its operation of any particular cases specified, or of a description specified, by the Authority.
2. The licensee shall, where a Domestic Supply Direction has been issued to the licensee, keep a statistical record of its performance in relation to the provision of electricity supply services to its domestic customers.
3. The licensee shall, from time to time as required by the Authority, provide to the Authority and to the Consumer Council such of the information contained in the records prepared in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 as the Authority may request in writing.
4. As soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of each calendar year, the licensee shall submit to the Authority and the Consumer Council a report dealing with the matters mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 in relation to that year and shall:
 - (a) publish the report so submitted in such manner as will in the reasonable opinion of the licensee secure adequate publicity for it; and
 - (b) send a copy of it free of charge to any person requesting one,except that, in performing its obligations under sub-paragraphs (a) and (b), the licensee shall exclude from the report such information as appears to it to be necessary or expedient to ensure that, save where they consent, individual customers referred to therein cannot readily be identified.

The report shall be presented, so far as is reasonably practicable, in a standard form designated by the Authority for the purposes of this condition generally.

Condition 26. Record of and Report on Performance (gas)

1. The licensee shall keep a record of its general operation of the arrangements mentioned in standard conditions 24 (Arrangements in Respect of Powers of Entry) and 25 (Efficient Use of Gas) and (where a Domestic Supply Direction has been issued to the licensee) in standard conditions 35 (Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty), 36 (Code of Practice on the Use of Prepayment Meters), 37 (Provision of Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick), 38 (Provision of Services for Persons who are Blind or Deaf) and 39 (Complaint Handling Procedure) and its compliance with paragraph 3 of standard condition 35 (Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty) and standard condition 37A (Pensioners not to have Supply of Gas Cut Off in Winter) and if the Authority so directs in writing, of its operation of any particular cases specified, or of a description specified, by the Authority.
2. The licensee shall, where a Domestic Supply Direction has been issued to the licensee, keep a statistical record of its performance in relation to the provision of gas supply services to its domestic customers.
3. The licensee shall, from time to time as required by the Authority, provide to the Authority and to the Consumer Council such of the information contained in the records prepared in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 as the Authority may request in writing.
4. As soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of each calendar year, the licensee shall submit to the Authority and the Consumer Council a report dealing with the matters mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 in relation to that year and shall:
 - (a) publish the report so submitted in such manner as will in the reasonable opinion of the licensee secure adequate publicity for it; and
 - (b) send a copy of it free of charge to any person requesting one,except that, in performing its obligations under sub-paragraphs (a) and (b), the licensee shall exclude from the report such information as appears to it to be necessary or expedient to ensure that, save where they consent, individual customers referred to therein cannot readily be identified.
5. The report shall be presented, so far as is reasonably practicable, in a standard form designated by the Authority for the purposes of this condition.

Condition 27. Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Customer Service Codes (electricity)

1. This condition applies to any code of practice required to be prepared by the licensee pursuant to standard conditions 24 (Code of Practice on Procedures with Respect to Site Access) and 25 (Efficient Use of Electricity) and (where a Domestic Supply Direction has been issued to the licensee) pursuant to standard conditions 35 (Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty), 36 (Code of Practice on the Use of Prepayment Meters), 37 (Provision of Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick), 38 (Provision of Services for Persons who are Blind or Deaf) and 39 (Complaint Handling Procedure) of this licence.
2. In first preparing such a code the licensee shall, prior to submitting that code to the Authority, consult the Consumer Council and shall have regard to any representations made by the Consumer Council about such code or the manner in which it is likely to be operated.
3. Where before the expiry of 30 days of the licensee first submitting such code to the Authority for its approval the Authority notifies the licensee that the Authority considers the code is not sufficient for the purposes of meeting the requirements of this licence, the licensee shall forthwith make such changes as the Authority may require.
4. The licensee shall, whenever requested to do so by the Authority, review such code and the manner in which it has been operated, with a view to determining whether any modification should be made to it or to the manner of its operation.
5. In carrying out any such review the licensee shall consult the Consumer Council and shall have regard to any representations made by the Consumer Council about such code or the manner in which it is likely to be or (as the case may be) has been operated.
6. The licensee shall submit any revision of such code which, after consulting the Consumer Council in accordance with paragraph 5, it wishes to make, to the Authority for its approval and following its approval in writing shall then revise the code.
7. The licensee shall:
 - (a) as soon as practicable following the preparation of any code or any revision made to it, send to the Authority and the Consumer Council a copy of such code or such revision (in each case in the form approved by the Authority);

- (b) at least once in each year, draw the attention of those of its customers to whom such code applies to the existence of the code and of each substantive revision of it and to the means by which they may inspect a copy of such code in its latest form; and
 - (c) give or send free of charge a copy of such code (as from time to time revised) to any person who requests it.
8. No changes may be made to any code otherwise than in accordance with the above procedures.
9. The licensee shall ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that it complies with such arrangements or procedures (as the case may be) as are contained in or described by any code to which this condition applies and approved by the Authority or any revision to such code approved by the Authority.

Condition 27. Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Statements and Customer Service Codes (gas)

1. This condition applies to any statement or code of practice required to be prepared by the licensee pursuant to standard conditions 24 (Arrangements in Respect of Powers of Entry) and 25 (Efficient Use of Gas) and (where a Domestic Supply Direction has been issued to the licensee) pursuant to standard conditions 35 (Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty), 36 (Code of Practice on the Use of Prepayment Meters), 37 (Provision of Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick), 38 (Provision of Services for Persons who are Blind or Deaf) and 39 (Complaint Handling Procedure) of this licence.
2. In first preparing such statement or code the licensee shall, prior to submitting the statement or code to the Authority, consult the Consumer Council and shall have regard to any representations made by the Consumer Council about such statement or code or the manner in which it is likely to be operated.
3. Where before the expiry of 30 days of the licensee first submitting such statement or code to the Authority for its approval the Authority notifies the licensee that the Authority considers the statement or code is not sufficient for the purposes of meeting the requirements of this licence, the licensee shall forthwith make such changes as the Authority may require.
4. The licensee shall, whenever requested to do so by the Authority review such statement or code and the manner in which it has been operated, with a view to determining whether any modification should be made to it or to the manner of its operation.
5. In carrying out any such review the licensee shall consult the Consumer Council and shall have regard to any representations made by the Consumer Council about such statement or code or the manner in which it is likely to be or (as the case may be) has been operated.
6. The licensee shall submit any revision of such statement or code which, after consulting the Consumer Council in accordance with paragraph 5, it wishes to make, to the Authority for its approval and following its approval in writing shall then revise the statement or code.
7. The licensee shall:
 - (a) as soon as practicable following the preparation of any statement or any code or any revision made to it send to the Authority and the Consumer Council a copy of such statement or code or such revision (in each case in the form approved by the Authority);

- (b) at least once in each year, draw the attention of those of its customers to whom such statement or code applies to the existence of the statement or code and of each substantive revision of it and to the means by which they may inspect a copy of such statement or code in its latest form; and
 - (c) give or send free of charge a copy of such statement or code (as from time to time revised) to any person who requests it.
- 8. No changes may be made to any statement or code otherwise than in accordance with the above procedures.
- 9. The licensee shall ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, it complies with such arrangements or procedures (as the case may be) as are contained in or described by any statement or code to which this condition applies and approved by the Authority or any revision to such statement or code approved by the Authority.

Condition 35. Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty (electricity)

1. The licensee shall, no later than the date on which this condition takes effect pursuant to the provisions of standard condition 2 (Application of Section C (Domestic Supply Obligations)), prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice concerning the payment of electricity bills by its domestic customers, including appropriate guidance for the assistance of such customers who, through misfortune or inability to cope with electricity supplied on credit terms, may have difficulty in paying such bills.

2. The code of practice shall include procedures by which the licensee can distinguish, so far as is reasonably practicable, customers in such difficulty (the “relevant customers with payment difficulties”) from others in default and by which the licensee can:
 - (a) provide general information as to how relevant customers with payment difficulties might reduce their bills in the future by the more efficient use of electricity;
 - (b) where such a facility is available, accept in payment for electricity supplied sums which are deducted at source from social security benefits payable to relevant customers with payment difficulties;
 - (c) detect failures by relevant customers with payment difficulties to comply with arrangements entered into for paying by instalments charges for electricity supplied;
 - (d) make such arrangements so as to take into account the customers’ ability to comply with them;
 - (e) ascertain, with the assistance of any information provided by other persons or organisations, the ability of customers to comply with such arrangements; and
 - (f) provide for customers who have failed to comply with such arrangements, or procure for them the provision of, a prepayment meter (where safe and practicable to do so).

3. In formulating the procedures for the code of practice referred to at paragraph 2 the licensee shall have particular regard:
 - (a) to the purpose of avoiding, in so far as is practicable, the disconnection of premises occupied by relevant customers with payment difficulties otherwise than following compliance by the licensee with such procedures; and

- (b) to the interests of relevant customers with payment difficulties who are of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick and to the purpose of avoiding, in so far as is practicable, the disconnection of premises occupied by such customers with payment difficulties during the winter months of each year, (that is to say the months of January, February, March, October, November and December in each year),

and the procedures shall be designed for the achievement of such purposes.

- 4. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Customer Service Codes).

Condition 35. Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty (gas)

1. The licensee shall, no later than the date on which this condition takes effect pursuant to the provisions of standard condition 2 (Application of Section C (Domestic Supply Obligations)), prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice concerning the payment of gas charges by its domestic customers, including appropriate guidance for the assistance of such customers who, through misfortune or inability to cope with gas supplied on credit terms, may have difficulty in paying such bills.

1. The code of practice shall include procedures by which the licensee can distinguish, so far as is reasonably practicable, customers in such difficulty (the “relevant customers with payment difficulties”) from others in default and by which the licensee can:
 - (a) provide general information as to how relevant customers with payment difficulties might reduce their bills in the future by the more efficient use of gas;
 - (b) where such a facility is available, accept in payment for gas supplied sums which are deducted at source from social security benefits payable to relevant customers with payment difficulties;
 - (c) detect failures by relevant customers with payment difficulties to comply with arrangements entered into for paying by instalments charges for gas supplied;
 - (d) make such arrangements so as to take into account the customers’ ability to comply with them;
 - (e) ascertain, with the assistance of any information provided by other persons or organisations, the ability of customers to comply with such arrangements; and
 - (f) provide for customers who have failed to comply with such arrangements, or procure for them the provision of, a prepayment meter (where safe and practicable to do so).

2. In the case of a relevant customer with payment difficulties, the licensee shall not cut off the supply of gas at such a customer’s premises for non-payment of charges otherwise than following compliance by the licensee with such procedures referred to in paragraph 2 above.

3. In formulating the procedures for the code of practice referred to at paragraph 2 the licensee shall have particular regard to –

- (a) the interests of relevant customers with payment difficulties who are of pensionable age (except those pensioners who fall within the description set out in sub-paragraph 1(a) of standard condition 37A (Pensioners Not to Have Supply of Gas Cut Off in Winter)) or disabled or chronically sick, and
- (b) to the purpose of avoiding, in so far as is practicable, the disconnection of premises occupied by such customers during the winter months of each year (that is to say the months of January, February, March, October, November and December in each year),

and the procedures shall be designed for the achievement of such purpose.

- 5. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Statements and Customer Service Codes).

Condition 36. Code of Practice on the Use of Prepayment Meters (electricity)

1. The licensee shall, no later than the date on which this condition takes effect pursuant to the provisions of standard condition 2 (Application of Section C (Domestic Supply Obligations)), prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice concerning the use of prepayment meters by its domestic customers, including appropriate guidance for the assistance of its prepayment meter customers who wish to take a supply of electricity on other terms.

2. The code of practice shall set out the licensee's policy on the installation of prepayment meters and shall include procedures by which the licensee will where appropriate:
 - (a) provide general information for customers on the operation, usefulness, advantages and disadvantages of prepayment meters, including details of:
 - (i) token outlets and card or key charging facilities within the areas supplied with electricity by the licensee;
 - (ii) the actions available to customers on the malfunction of a prepayment meter or a prepayment card or key; and
 - (iii) any standards of performance (and associated payments) applying to the licensee in relation to premises supplied by it through prepayment meters;
 - (b) arrange for the calibration of any prepayment meter provided in accordance with sub-paragraph 2(f) of standard condition 35 (Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty) so as to take into account, having due regard to all information available to the licensee (including any information provided by other persons or organisations), the relevant customer with payment difficulties' ability to pay any charges due from him under the arrangements contemplated by that standard condition in addition to the other charges lawfully being recovered through the prepayment meter;
 - (c) arrange for the recalibration of prepayment meters:
 - (i) in the case of an individual customer, at the conclusion of any such arrangements applying to that customer; and

- (ii) generally, following changes in the price at which the licensee supplies electricity to prepayment meter customers; and
 - (d) remove prepayment meters, setting out the timescale and the conditions under which such removal might take place.
- 3. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Customer Service Codes).

Condition 36. Code of Practice on the Use of Prepayment Meters (gas)

1. The licensee shall, no later than the date on which this condition takes effect pursuant to the provisions of standard condition 2 (Application of Section C (Domestic Supply Obligations)), prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice concerning the use of prepayment meters by its domestic customers, including appropriate guidance for the assistance of its prepayment meter customers who wish to take a supply of gas on other terms.

2. The code of practice shall set out the licensee's policy on the installation of prepayment meters and shall include procedures by which the licensee will where appropriate-
 - (a) provide general information for customers on the operation, usefulness, advantages and disadvantages of prepayment meters, including details of-
 - (i) token outlets and card or key charging facilities within the areas supplied with gas by the licensee;
 - (ii) the actions available to customers on the malfunction of a prepayment meter or a prepayment card or key; and
 - (iii) any standards of performance (and associated payments) applying to the licensee in relation to premises supplied by it through prepayment meters;

 - (b) arrange for the calibration of any prepayment meter provided in accordance with sub-paragraph (2)(f) of standard condition 35 (Code of Practice on Payment of Bills and Guidance for Dealing with Customers in Difficulty) so as to take into account, having due regard to all information available to the licensee (including any information provided by other persons or organisations), the relevant customer with payment difficulties' ability to pay any charges due from him under the arrangements contemplated by that condition in addition to the other charges lawfully being recovered through the prepayment meter;

 - (c) arrange for the recalibration of prepayment meters-
 - (i) in the case of an individual customer, at the conclusion of any such arrangements applying to that customer; and

- (ii) generally, following changes in the price at which the licensee supplies gas to prepayment meter customers; and
 - (d) remove prepayment meters, setting out the timescale and conditions under which such removal might take place.
- 3. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Statements and Customer Service Codes).

Condition 37. Provision of Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick (electricity)

1. The licensee shall, no later than the date on which this condition takes effect pursuant to the provisions of standard condition 2 (Application of Section C (Domestic Supply Obligations)), prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice detailing the special services the licensee will make available for its domestic customers who are of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick.

2. The code of practice shall include arrangements by which the licensee will on request of such customers, where reasonably practicable and appropriate, and in each case free of charge:
 - (a) provide special controls and adapters for electrical appliances and meters (including prepayment meters) and reposition meters;
 - (b) provide special means of identifying persons acting on behalf of the licensee;
 - (c) give advice on the use of electricity;
 - (d) send bills in respect of the supply of electricity to any such customer to any person who is willing to be sent such bills and is nominated by that customer (without prejudice, however, to the right of the licensee to send such bills both to the customer and to the nominated person where that appears appropriate to the licensee); and
 - (e) provide, where neither the customer nor anyone living with him is able to read the electricity meter, for the meter to be read once in each quarter and for the customer to be informed of the readings so obtained.

3. The code of practice shall further include arrangements whereby the licensee will:
 - (a) establish a list (the "Priority Service Register") of those of its domestic customers who, by virtue of being of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick, require:
 - (i) information and advice in respect of the matters set out at paragraph 2; or
 - (ii) (where they have special communication needs or depend on electricity for medical reasons) advance notice of planned interruptions to the supply of electricity;

- (b) notify its customers at least once each year of the existence of the Priority Service Register and of how domestic customers may be included on it;
- (c) maintain the Priority Service Register, comprising the relevant details of each of its domestic customers who requests his inclusion on it, or on behalf of whom such a request is received from any third party; and give to those customers so registered:
 - (i) in respect of the matters set out at paragraph 2; and
 - (ii) in respect of interruptions to the supply of electricity,

such information and advice as may be appropriate and is of such nature as shall be set out in the code of practice, provided that where the licensee is reliant on the relevant distributor for any such information, the licensee shall use all reasonable endeavours to obtain such information from the relevant distributor as soon as is practicable; and

- (d) provide the relevant distributor with such information in the Priority Service Register relating to the matters mentioned in paragraphs 2(a) and (b) and 3(a)(ii), in such form and at such intervals, as is relevant to the distributor's licence obligations.

4 This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Customer Service Codes).

Condition 37. Provision of Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick (gas)

1. The licensee shall, no later than the date on which this condition takes effect pursuant to the provisions of standard condition 2 (Application of Section C (Domestic Supply Obligations)), prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice detailing the special services the licensee will make available for its domestic customers who are of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick.

2. The code of practice shall include arrangements by which the licensee will, on request of such customers, and in each case free of charge-
 - (a) except in the case of a customer living with another person and such person is neither a pensioner nor a disabled or chronically sick person nor under 18 years of age, provide for the examination by a person possessing appropriate expertise at intervals of not less than 12 months of the safety of gas appliances and other gas fittings on the customer's side of the meter at his premises, other than a fitting for the annual inspection of which a landlord of the customer is responsible in pursuance of regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;

 - (b) where reasonably practicable and appropriate-
 - (i) provide special controls and adapters for gas appliances and meters (including prepayment meters) owned by the licensee or the relevant transporter;

 - (ii) reposition meters; and

 - (iii) provide for the transmission through the relevant shipper (or, if the holder of this licence is that shipper, direct) to the relevant transporter of any request by the customer for the relevant transporter to reposition any gas meter and (except where the holder of this licence is the relevant shipper) for the relevant shipper to be reimbursed by the licensee any payments made by it in respect of any reasonable expenses incurred by the relevant transporter in complying with the request;

 - (iv) provide special means of identifying persons acting on behalf of the licensee;

 - (v) give advice on the use of gas, gas appliances and other gas fittings;

- (vi) send bills in respect of the supply of gas to any such customer to any person who is willing to be sent such bills and is nominated by that customer (without prejudice, however, to the right of the licensee to send such bills both to the customer and to the nominated person where that appears appropriate to the licensee); and
- (vii) provide, where neither the customer nor anyone living with him is able to read the gas meter, for the meter to be read once in each quarter and, without prejudice to paragraph 1 of standard condition 40 (Information Given to Domestic Customers), for the customer to be informed of the readings so obtained.

3. The code of practice shall further include arrangements whereby the licensee will-

- (a) establish a list (the "Priority Service Register") of those of its domestic customers who, by virtue of being of pensionable age or disabled or chronically sick, require information and advice in respect of the matters set out at paragraph 2;
- (b) notify its customers at least once each year of the existence of the Priority Service Register and of how domestic customers may be included on it;
- (c) maintain the Priority Service Register, comprising the relevant details of each customer who requests his inclusion on it and where requested, give to those of its own customers so registered, in respect of the matters set out at paragraph 2, such information and advice as may be appropriate and is of such nature as shall be set out in the code of practice; and
- (d) secure that the relevant transporter is provided with the information in the Priority Service Register in an appropriate form and at appropriate intervals.

4. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Statements and Customer Service Codes).

Condition 37A. Pensioners Not to Have Supply of Gas Cut Off in Winter

1. This condition shall apply in the case of any of the licensee's domestic customers who, to the knowledge or reasonable belief of the licensee -
 - (a) is of pensionable age and lives alone or with other persons all of whom are also of pensionable age or under 18 years of age;
 - (b) is supplied with gas at domestic premises; and
 - (c) is in default of his obligation to pay for gas so supplied through misfortune or inability to budget to meet bills for gas supplied on credit terms.

1. Notwithstanding that sub-paragraph (3) of paragraph 7 of Schedule 2B to the Act (including that sub-paragraph as extended by sub-paragraph (4) thereof) applies by virtue of sub-paragraph (1) of the said paragraph 7 (or would so apply but for the fact that the premises in question are secondary sub-deduct premises), and notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3(j) of standard condition 32 (Duty to Supply Domestic Customers) the licensee shall not under the said sub-paragraph (3) or (in the case of secondary sub-deduct premises) in exercise of any analogous right cut off the supply of gas to such a customer's premises during any winter period, that is to say, a period beginning with 1st October in any year and ending with 31st March in the next following year.

Condition 38. Provision of Services for Persons who are Blind or Deaf (electricity)

1. The licensee shall, no later than the date on which this condition takes effect pursuant to the provisions of standard condition 2 (Application of Section C (Domestic Supply Obligations)), prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice detailing the special services the licensee will make available for its domestic customers who are disabled by virtue of being blind or partially sighted, or deaf or hearing impaired.

2. The code of practice shall include arrangements by which the licensee will, on request, in each case free of charge:
 - (a) make available to its blind and partially sighted customers, by telephone or other appropriate means, information concerning the details of any bill relating to the supply of electricity to them and a facility for enquiring or complaining in respect of any such bill or any service provided by the licensee; and

 - (b) make available to its deaf and hearing impaired customers, being in possession of appropriate equipment, facilities to assist them in enquiring or complaining about any bill relating to the supply of electricity to them or any service provided by the licensee.

3. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Customer Service Codes).

Condition 38. Provision of Services for Persons who are Blind or Deaf (gas)

1. The licensee shall, by 1 November 2001 or the date on which this condition takes effect in this licence, whichever date is later, pursuant to the provisions of standard condition 2 (Application of Section C (Domestic Supply Obligations)), prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice detailing the special services the licensee will make available for its domestic customers who are disabled by virtue of being blind or partially sighted, or deaf or hearing impaired.

2. The code of practice shall include arrangements by which the licensee will, on request, in each case free of charge-
 - (a) make available to its blind and partially sighted customers, by telephone or other appropriate means, information concerning the details of any bill relating to the supply of gas to them and a facility for enquiring or complaining in respect of any such bill or any service provided by the licensee; and

 - (b) make available to its deaf and hearing impaired customers, being in possession of appropriate equipment, facilities to assist them in enquiring or complaining about any bill relating to the supply of gas to them or any service provided by the licensee.

3. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Statements and Customer Service Codes).

Condition 39. Complaint Handling Procedure (electricity)

1. The licensee shall, by 1 November 2001 or the date on which this condition takes effect in this licence, whichever date is later, pursuant to the provisions of standard condition 2 (Application of Section C (Domestic Supply Obligations)), prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice detailing the procedure for handling complaints from domestic customers about the manner in which the licensee conducts its supply business. Such code shall also establish a procedure for handling complaints from domestic customers which relate to matters associated with the distribution of electricity or any other activity connected with the supply of electricity not forming part of the supply business.
2. Any such procedures established in accordance with this condition shall specify the periods within which it is intended that different descriptions of complaint should be processed and resolved.
3. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Customer Service Codes).

Condition 39. Complaint Handling Procedure (gas)

1. The licensee shall, by 1 November 2001 or the date on which this condition takes effect in this licence, whichever date is later, pursuant to the provisions of standard condition 2 (Application of Section C (Domestic Supply Obligations)), prepare and submit to the Authority for its approval a code of practice detailing the procedure for handling complaints from domestic customers about the manner in which the licensee conducts its supply business. Such code shall also establish a procedure for handling complaints from domestic customers which relate to any activity connected with the supply of gas not forming part of the supply business.
2. Any such procedures established in accordance with this condition shall specify the periods within which it is intended that different descriptions of complaint should be processed and resolved.
3. This condition is subject to the provisions of standard condition 27 (Preparation, Review of and Compliance with Statements and Customer Service Codes).

Condition 40. Information Given to Domestic Customers (gas)

1. The licensee shall keep each of its domestic customers informed as to the quantity or amount of gas shown in its records -
 - (a) as having been registered by the meter through which the customer is supplied with gas, or
 - (b) as having been estimated to have been supplied to the customer where a bill based on such an estimate has been rendered to him.

2. It shall be a sufficient compliance with paragraph 1 if the information required by the paragraph in question is given on or with each bill or statement which is sent to a domestic customer in relation to the supply of gas or annually where the customer does not receive such a bill or statement.

3. The licensee shall inform the domestic customer of the most recent meter reading if so requested.

4. Where a bill or statement given to a domestic customer in relation to the supply of gas is expressed in terms of the amount of gas supplied, the licensee shall inform the customer in writing -
 - (a) of the basis on which that amount is calculated from the quantity of gas supplied, and
 - (b) if in making that calculation adjustments are made in respect of a temperature and pressure conversion factor within the meaning of regulations from time to time in force under section 12 of the Act, particulars of any such adjustments,by giving such information on or with each such bill or statement.

5. The licensee shall keep each of its domestic customers informed -
 - (a) that the Consumer Council can provide assistance in resolving complaints which the licensee has not resolved to the customer's satisfaction; and
 - (b) how the relevant office of the Consumer Council can be contacted,by giving that information on, or with, each bill rendered or statement provided in respect of the supply of gas to such customers, and annually to each such customer to whom no such bills or statement are given.

Condition 40. Information Given to Domestic Customers (electricity)

1. The licensee shall keep each of its domestic customers (save, insofar as the customer receives an unmetered supply) informed of the amount of electricity which, since the customer was last informed, its records show as having been consumed by that customer:
 - (a) according to the meter through which the customer is supplied; or
 - (b) where no meter reading is available, according to the estimate of the licensee.
2. It shall be a sufficient compliance with paragraph 1 if the information required by the paragraph in question is given on or with each bill or statement which is rendered in respect of the supply of electricity to a domestic customer in relation to the supply of electricity or annually, where the customer does not receive such a bill or statement.
3. The licensee shall inform any of its domestic customers of the most recent meter reading if so requested.
4. The licensee shall keep each of its domestic customers informed:
 - (a) that the Consumer Council can assist in resolving complaints which the licensee has not resolved to the customer's satisfaction; and
 - (b) how the relevant office of the Consumer Council can be contacted,by giving that information on or with each bill rendered or statement provided in respect of the supply of electricity/gas to such customers and annually to each domestic customer to whom no such bills or statements are given.

Condition 43. Contractual Terms - Methods of Payment (electricity)

1. Where the licensee offers to supply electricity to domestic customers under a domestic supply contract, it shall have available forms of domestic supply contract which provide for the payment of charges for electricity supplied to domestic premises:
 - (a) by prepayment through a prepayment meter;
 - (b) by different methods, including:
 - (i) by cash, at such places and to such persons, as are reasonable in all the circumstances; and
 - (ii) by cheque, and
 - (c) at a reasonable range of different intervals, including:
 - (i) paying twice-monthly or fortnightly or more regularly, such sums as agreed;
 - (ii) paying monthly a predetermined sum; and
 - (iii) paying quarterly in arrears.
2. Where the licensee supplies electricity to domestic premises under a deemed contract, the terms of that contract shall include terms in respect of all the ways of making payments mentioned in sub-paragraph 1(b) and the frequencies mentioned in sub-paragraph 1(c). The foregoing shall not apply to deemed contracts made following a direction under paragraph 1 of standard condition 29 (Supplier of Last Resort).
3. Before entering into any domestic supply contract (other than through a prepayment meter) the licensee shall inform the customer of and offer to enter into domestic supply contracts which comply with sub-paragraphs 1(b) and (c).
4. The licensee shall process all requests for a supply of electricity to domestic premises without undue preference or undue discrimination.

5. The licensee shall send copies of each of the forms of domestic supply contract (as revised from time to time) under which it supplies or offers to supply electricity:
 - (a) on receipt of a request, to any person; and
 - (b) not later than the date on which it first offers to supply electricity under each such form of domestic supply contract (or revision thereof), to the Authority and the Consumer Council.

6. The licensee shall prepare, in respect of each form of domestic supply contract:
 - (a) a document which sets out an accurate summary of the principal terms of that form of domestic supply contract; and
 - (b) particulars of any inducements offered to any person entering into such a domestic supply contract which might reasonably be expected materially to influence the decision whether or not to enter into it.

7. The licensee shall publish the documents and particulars referred to at paragraph 6 in a manner that will in the opinion of the licensee secure adequate publicity for them, and shall send copies of them to the Authority and the Consumer Council no later than the date on which they are published.

Condition 43. Contractual Terms - Methods of Payment (gas)

1. Where the licensee offers to supply gas to domestic customers under a domestic supply contract, it shall have available forms of domestic supply contract which provide for the payment of charges for gas supplied to domestic premises:
 - (a) by prepayment through a prepayment meter;
 - (b) by different methods, including:
 - (i) by cash, at such places and to such persons as are reasonable in all the circumstances; and
 - (ii) by cheque, and
 - (c) at a reasonable range of different intervals, including:
 - (i) paying twice-monthly or fortnightly or more regularly, such sums as agreed;
 - (ii) paying monthly a predetermined sum; and
 - (iii) paying quarterly in arrears.
2. Where the licensee supplies gas to domestic premises under a deemed contract, the terms of that contract shall include terms in respect of all the ways of making payments mentioned in sub-paragraph 1(b) and the frequencies mentioned in sub-paragraph 1(c). The foregoing shall not apply to deemed contracts made following a direction under paragraph 1 of standard condition 29 (Supplier of Last Resort).
3. Before entering into any domestic supply contract (other than through a prepayment meter) the licensee shall inform the customer of and offer to enter into domestic supply contracts which comply with sub-paragraphs 1(b) and (c).
4. The licensee shall process all requests for a supply of gas to domestic premises without undue preference or undue discrimination.
5. The licensee shall send copies of each of the forms of domestic supply contract (as revised from time to time) under which it supplies or offers to supply gas-

- (a) on receipt of a request, to any person; and
 - (b) not later than the date on which it first offers to supply gas under each such form of domestic supply contract (or revision thereof), to the Authority and the Consumer Council.

- 6. The licensee shall prepare, in respect of each form of domestic supply contract-
 - (a) a document which sets out an accurate summary of the principal terms of that form of domestic supply contract; and
 - (b) particulars of any inducements offered to any person entering into such a domestic supply contract which might reasonably be expected materially to affect the decision whether or not to enter into it.

- 7. The licensee shall publish the documents and particulars referred to in paragraph 6 in a manner that will in the opinion of the licensee secure adequate publicity for them, and shall send copies of them to the Authority and the Consumer Council no later than the date on which they are published.

Condition 45. Security Deposits

1. The licensee shall not, in respect of the supply of electricity to any domestic customer, require a deposit-
 - (a) where the domestic customer is prepared to be supplied through a prepayment meter and it is reasonably practicable in all the circumstances (including in particular the risk of loss or damage) for the licensee to provide such a meter; or
 - (b) where it is otherwise unreasonable in all the circumstances to do so.
2. Any deposit required of such a domestic customer may be 1½ times the value of the average quarterly consumption of electricity reasonably expected at the relevant premises, or more if that is reasonable in all the circumstances.
3. Where the licensee requires a deposit from such a domestic customer it shall at the same time inform him of the effect of paragraphs 5 and 7.
4. Where the licensee holds any deposit for more than a month, it shall pay the domestic customer simple interest on the deposit, at the rate which is from time to time equivalent to the base rate of Barclays Bank plc or, if there is no such base rate, not less than such base rate as the Authority may designate for the purposes thereof.
5. Subject to paragraph 6, any deposit given by a domestic customer shall be repaid (with interest) by the licensee-
 - (a) within 14 days where, in the previous 12 months, the domestic customer has paid all charges for gas supplied within 28 days of each written demand made; or
 - (b) as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any event within 1 month, where the licensee has ceased to supply the domestic customer and he has paid all charges for electricity supplied.
6. Sub-paragraph 5(a) shall not apply where it is reasonable in all the circumstances for the licensee to retain the deposit.
7. Any dispute arising under this condition between the licensee and a domestic customer may be referred by either party to the Authority. The Authority shall determine any such dispute, following such practice and procedure as it considers appropriate.

Condition 45. Security Deposits

1. The licensee shall not, in respect of the supply of gas to any domestic customer, require a deposit-
 - (a) where the domestic customer is prepared to be supplied through a prepayment meter and it is reasonably practicable in all the circumstances (including in particular the risk of loss or damage) for the licensee to provide such a meter; or
 - (b) where it is otherwise unreasonable in all the circumstances to do so.
2. Any deposit required of such a domestic customer may be 1½ times the value of the average quarterly consumption of gas reasonably expected at the relevant premises, or more if that is reasonable in all the circumstances.
3. Where the licensee requires a deposit from such a domestic customer it shall at the same time inform him of the effect of paragraphs 5 and 7.
4. Where the licensee holds any deposit for more than a month, it shall pay the domestic customer simple interest on the deposit, at the rate which is from time to time equivalent to the base rate of Barclays Bank plc or, if there is no such base rate, not less than such base rate as the Authority may designate for the purposes thereof.
5. Subject to paragraph 6, any deposit given by a domestic customer shall be repaid (with interest) by the licensee-
 - (a) within 14 days where, in the previous 12 months, the domestic customer has paid all charges for gas supplied within 28 days of each written demand made; or
 - (b) as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any event within 1 month, where the licensee has ceased to supply the domestic customer and he has paid all charges for gas supplied.
6. Sub-paragraph 5(a) shall not apply where it is reasonable in all the circumstances for the licensee to retain the deposit.
7. Any dispute arising under this condition between the licensee and a domestic customer may be referred by either party to the Authority. The Authority shall determine any such dispute, following such practice and procedure as it considers appropriate.

8. Paragraphs 9 and 10 shall apply where one gas supplier (“the transferor”), with the agreement of another gas supplier (“the transferee”), assigns to that other supplier its rights and liabilities under contracts for the supply of gas to particular domestic customers whose contracts allow of such assignment (“assignment” and “the transferred customers”).
9. Where this paragraph applies and the licensee is the transferor, if it so elects, paragraph 5 shall not have effect in relation to a deposit on the licensee ceasing to supply a transferred customer by reason of a deposit assignment but it shall pass the deposit to the transferee, together with interest thereon calculated as provided in paragraph 4.
10. Where this paragraph applies and the licensee is the transferee, paragraphs 4 and 5 shall have effect, in relation to any deposit passed to it by the transferee, as if the transferee were the same person in law as the transferor.
11. For the purposes of this condition, any reference to a deposit is, except where the context otherwise requires, a reference to so much of the deposit as, from time to time, has not been applied to meet charges in respect of the supply of gas.
12. Notwithstanding the definition of the expression “deposit” in standard condition 31 (Interpretation of Section C), the provisions contained in this condition shall not apply in relation to a payment which is not a deposit; but, in relation to a payment of any class or description which serves the like purpose as a deposit by way of security for the payment of charges, this condition shall have effect as if they contained such provisions, if any, as are designated by the Authority, for the purposes of this condition generally, as having, in the case of payments of that class or description, as nearly as may be and having regard to their nature, an effect corresponding to that of the said paragraphs in their application in relation to deposits.