Your ref

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Richard Clay
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3 September 2003

Dear

IIP: Proposed amendments to the RIGS for the speed of telephone response

Thank you for your letter of 31 July 2003 requesting our comments on the proposed amendments to the RIGS for the speed of telephone response. I am writing on behalf of both Northern Electric Distribution Limited (NEDL) and Yorkshire Electricity Distribution plc (YEDL).

The key change within the proposals is to change the basis of the "speed of response" measure to calls answered by an agent rather than total calls answered. Whilst this measure is possible we remain concerned that such a measurement does not fully reflect the overall performance of the DNO call centre because it ignores the contribution from the messaging systems.

Changes to current reporting systems will be required to enable NEDL and YEDL to be able to meet the new reporting requirements and, subject to clarification on a few issues, we believe that the financial costs associated with such changes will not be significant.

However, we believe that the proposed RIGS are still open to interpretation and would welcome clarification on the following:

- The terminology is not consistent between the diagrams and the text within appendix 1 and, as such, the "total calls on specified lines" can be interpreted either as external telephony operator performance or DNO performance. The diagrams contained in the paper clearly show that we must count these calls as delivered by the external telephony operator, however the accompanying notes state that calls should be counted within the DNO's system. It is therefore not clear whether the information required is that to monitor the external operator's performance or the DNO's performance. We believe that it should be the DNO's performance.

- The diagrams also show the "optional answering device" (which we interpret as external telephony operator managed answering services and select links) to be within the DNO's telephony system. However, this is not the case with both YEDL

and NEDL, where these systems are on the BT platform. The diagram should therefore show the “optional answering device” to be on the PTO System side of the line in figure A1.1 and A1.2.

- The proposals introduce a new requirement to report the longest wait calls (KM5c). The RIGS should state whether there would be any adjustments for exceptional events.

Finally, the proposals still refer to the “speed of response” being measured as the “average time to answer”. We believe that, during this review of the RIGS, it would be appropriate to also consider the measure based on “percentage of calls to be answered within a required time” as a potential alternative. This measurement is a common performance indicator within the call centre industry.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Julie Thompson, our customer service manager, on 0191 333 7403.

Yours sincerely

ANDREW SPENCER
Regulatory Affairs