

friends OF THE LAKE DISTRICT

Paul O'Donovan
OFGEM,
9 Millbank,
London
SW1P 3GE

8th April 2005

Dear Mr O'Donovan,

Assessment of the Distribution Price Control Review Process

Friends of the Lake District are pleased that OFGEM is undertaking a review of the consultation process for the Distribution Price Control Review.

Overall, we feel that ample opportunity was given to us to put forward our views. The timetable for the consultation was useful as was receiving the receiving a hard copy of each document following publication. However, often it felt like many of our comments were totally ignored. It would be very useful to receive an explanation of why OFGEM made certain decisions or to receive a response to specific suggestions or questions put to them. Although we received invitations to the workshops in London to discuss issues involved, due to the industry bias at these it made our presence there seem irrelevant.

On the positive side, we specifically found the meetings held between ourselves and other environmental groups with the appropriate OFGEM individuals, very beneficial. However, the initiative to organise such meetings always came from ourselves. Perhaps in the future, OFGEM could consider organising a workshop for those outside the industry or one with specific focus on consumer led issues. With reference to the consultation documents, it might be beneficial to provide a Plain English Summary version to explain the main issues for those outside the industry who would like to respond. A cover page listing all the various anachronisms used and giving an explanation of each would also prove useful, as would an appendix with the contact details of all the DNOs and other respondents involved.

It appears that your assessment is not including looking at the process following the publication of the Distribution Price Control Review Final Proposals. We feel that further attention should be given to this ongoing work as there is still the need to include those that have been involved in the process. It would have been helpful to have a timetable of relevant consultations taking place in the near future and any further guidance that would be published. Unfortunately we have missed the Quality of Service Regulatory Instructions and Guidance consultation that appears to have taken place in a very short period of time. We very much hope we are given further opportunity to comment on these issues during the preparation of the Environmental Action Plan.

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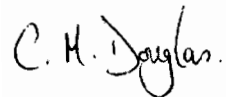
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Friends of the Lake District now has concerns regarding the implementation of some of the proposals made in the final document. We had hoped that more detailed guidance would be produced relating to the proposals made for undergrounding overhead lines in areas of outstanding natural beauty. There appears to be no clear way forward to encourage companies to undertake a strategic programme of undergrounding for landscape reasons. Obviously there is a need to keep the public informed of any developments that take place regarding consumer issues such as these. However, with no specific reporting criteria required it is unclear how this will be achieved.

Friends of the Lake District shall not be attending the workshop to assess the DPCR process. However, we would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to put forward our comments and hope that we shall work further with you in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. H. Douglas." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'D'.

Carol Douglas
Project Officer
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