

OFGEM

GAS DISTRIBUTION PRICE CONTROL REVIEW

CONSUMER RESEARCH

FINAL REPORT



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CONSUMER RESEARCH
FINAL REPORT**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND AND AIMS

This report presents the findings of the research commissioned by Ofgem as part of the Gas Distribution Price Control Review (GDPCR).

This research aimed to identify and provide an understanding of:

- the aspects of Gas Distribution Networks' (GDNs') quality of service which are valued by consumers;
- consumers' expectations and satisfaction with GDNs' performance; and
- key areas for improvement identified by consumers.

METHOD

FDS International was appointed to undertake both a qualitative and quantitative assessment of consumers' views of GDNs and the quality of service they provide.

The qualitative stage consisted of focus groups and in-depth interviews with a range of domestic and business consumers, completed during October 2006. This was followed by a large scale quantitative telephone survey throughout November and December 2006.

KEY FINDINGS

Awareness of GDNs

Both the qualitative and quantitative research showed that domestic and smaller business consumers have very low awareness of the identity and role of GDNs. Some much larger organisations also had only a limited understanding of the structure of the industry and the responsibilities of GDNs.

Consumers also had low awareness of the Priority Services Register (PSR). Of those eligible for the PSR only 13% were aware of it and a quarter of these actually signed up to it.

Four in ten domestic and business consumers were aware of the GDNs' Mains Replacement Programme.

Awareness of service standards

Most domestic and business consumers were unaware of the scope or details of any of the existing service standards that apply to GDNs. The vast majority could not specify a single service standard and only a third had any idea that standards were in place. Where existing standards are in place, people's expectations generally lagged behind GDNs' actual performance.

Once the subject of service standards was broached, some people expressed a desire to be informed about these 'rights' and saw their gas bill, or websites, as the most convenient way to inform them. Both domestic and business consumers also expressed a preference to be informed of relevant service standards when works were being planned in their area.

Compensation

Awareness of entitlement to compensation was low. Only one in eight domestic and one in six business consumers are aware of their entitlement of compensation when GDNs fail to meet certain service standards.

There was little agreement among consumers as to how compensation could or should work. However, a common expectation was that a bill reduction was an appropriate form of compensation.

Some business consumers may face demands for compensation from their own consumers as a result of a gas interruption and this is likely to encourage them to look for something to recompense them. Business consumers were therefore more likely than domestic consumers to suggest that compensation levels should match any financial loss they may have experienced.

Domestic consumers were mostly satisfied with levels of compensation available in the event of standards not being met. Business consumers, however, were less satisfied and suggested levels of compensation between three and five times greater than current payment amounts. As noted above, this would indicate an expectation that these payments should cover all the businesses 'out-of-pocket' costs.

Consumer satisfaction with GDN performance

Consumers' experiences of interruptions to their gas supply had generally been good. When such events were planned, people were given sufficient notice and work was done within the advised timescales. The main criticisms related to the quality and timing of associated reinstatement works.

Whilst consumers' satisfaction with GDNs' performance in the event of interruptions was high, it was less so for new connections and alterations to supply.

Overall, consumers and businesses were generally satisfied with existing service standards with eight in ten finding most of them very good or reasonable.

The most important services standards for consumers and businesses alike were:

- attending uncontrolled gas leaks within an hour;
- answering emergency calls within 30 seconds;
- provision of alternative heating and cooking facilities to priority consumers (domestic consumers only);
- prompt restoration of supply in the event of an unplanned interruption;
- prior notice of a planned interruption; and
- requested works being completed on time.

Whilst satisfaction was generally high, a quarter of business consumers suggested some improvements to the existing standards. These included:

- providing information about unplanned interruptions within 6 hours instead of 12;
- completing reinstatement after works within 2 working days instead of 10; and
- responding to complaints in full within 4-6 working days instead of 10.

GDNs' social and sustainability duties

Finally, twice as many domestic and business consumers believe GDNs make a positive contribution to the environment than not and most of those experiencing recent events believe GDNs take their social responsibilities seriously.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The most important requirement is for GDNs to keep consumers informed, and try to resolve problems as quickly as possible.
- GDNs need to be more proactive during an ‘event’, in particular improving their communication and notifying consumers of any changes to an announced or agreed programme of work.
- GDNs should consider providing an additional ‘imminent’ notification to consumers just before a planned interruption to compliment the earlier notice provided.
- Improve the reliability of schedules, timing and cost for work involving new connections and alterations.
- Endeavour to complete reinstatement works more quickly after the conclusion of gas-related works.
- Consider introducing more exacting standards for businesses with regards to giving information about unplanned interruptions, reinstating property and fully answering complaints.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Ofgem is currently undertaking the Gas Distribution Price Control Review (GDPCR). Price control reviews are the process through which Ofgem seeks to regulate energy network monopolies effectively both in terms of price and quality of service to protect the interests of consumers.

GDPCR will set new limits on the revenue that may be recovered by a Gas Distribution Network (GDN) from its consumers in relation to the five years from April 2008. It will also set appropriate levels of outputs and standards of service that each of the GDNs will be required to deliver.

There are eight GDNs in Great Britain. The recent sale by National Grid Gas of four of its GDNs changed the ownership structure of the industry and has enabled more comparative analysis to be carried out. Appendix A provides a brief introduction to each of the GDNs.

The GDPCR can now take account of comparative measures of quality of service from the different GDN operators. This means it may be possible to introduce new targets and incentives, with the intention of securing appropriate service levels for consumers.

As part of this review, Ofgem is reviewing the existing quality of service and output arrangements to ensure that:

- GDNs continue to be provided with incentives to deliver an appropriate quality of service to consumers;
- the scope and coverage of quality of service outputs are appropriate, relevant and important to consumers; and
- any gaps or room for improvement in the existing arrangements are identified.

Ofgem commissioned FDS International to undertake a programme of qualitative and quantitative consumer research to help understand which aspects of service are valued by different categories of domestic and business consumers.

In particular, the research was designed to understand consumer satisfaction with GDN performance and consumers' views on necessary improvements.

This report presents the findings from both the initial exploration qualitative stage and the subsequent quantitative survey.

The main objectives of this research were to:

- understand consumer experiences and satisfaction in terms of the quality of service provided by GDNs; and
- understand where GDNs need to improve, by demonstrating
 - what consumers' expectations are;
 - where, if at all, the current service falls short; and
 - if any of the current standards need to be revised.

2 APPROACH

FDS International undertook a two stage research programme: initial exploratory qualitative work, followed by large scale quantitative surveys.

The qualitative research took place between 16 and 26 October 2006, and covered both domestic and business consumers.

The quantitative surveys consisted of 2,100 Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) which were conducted with domestic and business consumers between 13 November and 6 December 2006.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Domestic Consumers

Eight focus groups were conducted with domestic consumers, one in each GDN area. The focus groups were structured to include a mix of age ranges and socioeconomic backgrounds. Further information on the structure of each of the focus groups can be found in Appendix B.

Recruitment for these groups was carried out by acefieldwork and Facts International. In all the groups, approximately half those taking part were recruited from lists of people who had experienced a recent interruption to their gas supply, the other half consisting of respondents who were “free found”.

In each of these eight areas, we also conducted a face to face interview with someone who was classified as a priority consumer because of either their age or disability.

The focus groups lasted approximately an hour and a half. They were all audio recorded and subsequently transcribed. Two focus groups were also video recorded. The depth interviews with priority consumers lasted from half an hour to an hour. They took place in the consumers’ homes and were audio recorded.

Because of the perceived low awareness of GDNs by all groups, we followed one of two courses for each group. We either:

- explained the distinction between a ‘supplier’ (responsible for billing consumers for their gas usage) and a ‘distributor’ (responsible for the gas pipes which deliver gas to their premise up to the meter); or
- allowed them to express their experiences and views without that prior explanation, and discerned for ourselves when they were talking about distributors’ responsibilities.

To encourage discussion we used a ‘thought-bubble’ self-completion exercise as a stimulus to understanding respondents’ expectations if they found themselves without gas, with a gas leak, or obtaining a new connection or service alteration. Respondents were asked to use their own words to suggest how they would *feel* and what they would *do* in these circumstances.

Business Consumers

30 in-depth telephone interviews were undertaken with business consumers, as follows:

- 11 with large companies/organisations, including three with recent experience of an interruption to their gas supply;
- 13 with smaller organisations, including five with experience of a recent interruption;
- 3 with building contractors; and
- 3 with energy consultants.

Organisations contacted and subsequently interviewed covered a range of manufacturing, industrial and commercial sectors, and were spread across several GDN areas. The sample design for the qualitative stage was designed to be 'inclusive' rather than statistically robust.

Contractors and consultants are increasingly important in this area. Those interviewed were chosen for their knowledge and experience.

Business consumers who had experienced a recent interruption were recruited by telephone from lists provided. The remaining business consumers were contacted by telephone from a general sample of businesses.

As with the domestic consumer research, all interviews with the business consumers were recorded and transcribed.

Informing the Quantitative Stage

Results from this initial qualitative stage were fully analysed before the quantitative fieldwork commenced. Learning from this initial stage helped to inform the subsequent quantitative research, particularly which details to include and terminology to use.

Throughout the qualitative research phase, the moderators were in close contact, not only to ensure that participants were responding well to the topic guide and stimulus material, but also to incorporate learning from the first round of groups.

Once all the focus group and interview tapes had been transcribed rigorous and thorough analysis of all qualitative data was undertaken. Matrices on key variables were completed to look at responses in aggregate and by key groups.

Teams worked together with regular face-to-face meetings to discuss emerging and final conclusions arising from the qualitative stage.

The qualitative findings confirmed support for the existing GDN standards, but suggested an improvement to the standard on notification of planned works resulting in an interruption to gas supply. This suggested change was included in the quantitative research.

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

The quantitative research comprised 2,100 Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews. Both consumer and business samples were stratified to ensure inclusion of robust samples of priority domestic consumers and smaller and larger business consumers respectively.

With both, a boosted sample of consumers who had recently experienced an interruption to their gas supply (during the last 12 months) was obtained using lists supplied by the GDNs.

Consumer sample

A total of 1,400 interviews with domestic consumers were completed. 894 interviews were conducted with a random sample of consumers and 506 with consumers from households who had recently experienced an interruption.

It was necessary to skew the original interview sample targets, as half the interrupted consumers initially interviewed from the booster sample did not recall experiencing a recent event. In order to obtain robust bases of consumers experiencing gas events additional interviews were undertaken from the booster sample. Accordingly, the number of interviews from the random sample was adjusted downwards but still yields robust samples by GDN and for priority consumers.

Table 2.1: Consumer sample structure

GDN Area	Random sample				Booster sample			
	Domestic consumers		Priority domestic consumers (pensioners/disabled)		Recently interrupted		Recalled recent event	
	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Yes	No
NGG East	100	80	25	35	25	65	29	36
NGG London	100	76	25	23	25	46	23	23
NGG North West	100	83	25	34	25	79	42	37
NGG West Midlands	100	83	25	30	25	55	27	28
SGN Scotland	100	81	25	26	25	69	27	42
SGN South	100	96	25	28	25	54	27	27
NGN	100	84	25	29	25	71	41	30
WWU	100	76	25	30	25	67	39	28
Total	800	659	200	235	200	506	255	251

Business sample

700 interviews were completed with business consumers. 524 random interviews (against a target of 600) and 176 interviews with ‘interrupted’ consumers (against a target 100) were conducted.

As with the domestic samples, the business sample contains more interviews with interrupted consumers from the booster sample than originally anticipated due to the lack of recall of the recent event (half of business consumers from the booster sample).

Despite the reduction in interviews completed from the random sample, sufficient numbers were obtained for each GDN and amongst smaller and larger business consumers for comparisons to be made.

Table 2.2: Business sample structure

GDN Area	Random sample				Booster sample			
	Smaller businesses (1-49 employees)		Larger businesses (50+ employees)		Recently interrupted		Recalled recent event	
	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Yes	No
NGG East	50	42	25	19	12	27	10	17
NGG London	50	44	25	19	13	23	7	16
NGG North West	50	44	25	23	12	20	7	13
NGG West Midlands	50	42	25	21	13	25	11	14
SGN Scotland	50	45	25	23	12	18	8	10
SGN South	50	40	25	19	13	30	25	5
NGN	50	47	25	24	12	17	12	5
WWU	50	48	25	24	13	16	4	12
Total	400	352	200	172	100	176	84	92

The survey examines consumers' and businesses' views with regard to existing service standards and compensation levels. A summary of the existing service standards is included at Appendix C. It also looks at how consumers with recent experiences were served and whether their expectations are changed in any way as a result of their experience.

Robust bases were obtained for all events among domestic consumers. Care should be taken when looking at results for businesses experiencing an unplanned interruption or making a complaint as these sample sizes were small. Despite this, the results obtained are not unexpected when looked at in comparison with other service standards and between consumers and businesses.

**Table 2.3: Numbers of consumers and businesses experiencing events
Random and interrupted samples combined**

Event experienced**	Consumers	Businesses	Applicable Standards (See Appendix C)
Gas emergency	142	70	OS1, OS5
Unplanned interruption	41	16*	GS1, GS3, OS3
Planned interruption	98	32	OS2
New gas connection/service alteration	88	41	GS2, GS4-6, GS9-11
Digging up of property	129	46	GS2
Making a complaint	58	15*	OS4

** These events are not mutually exclusive

* Small bases

3 QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

PART A – DOMESTIC CONSUMERS

UNDERSTANDING OF THE GAS INDUSTRY

This section of the report summarises the key findings from the qualitative focus groups with domestic consumers and the in-depth interviews completed with priority consumers.

Domestic consumers knew little or nothing of the role or identity of their GDNs. They were, however, generally aware who their supplier was.

Several people spoke of ‘the Gas Board’ as the body responsible for gas pipes, indicating that domestic consumers generally have limited knowledge of the current industry structure.

Among domestic consumers, we found no prior awareness of any of the current gas distribution companies. ‘Transco’ was mentioned spontaneously on just three occasions and ‘Fulcrum’ on one.

Those consumers who had recent experience of dealing with their GDN had a clearer appreciation of their role and of the other organisations in the industry. However, even then, their understanding was limited.

UNPLANNED INTERRUPTIONS

Unplanned interruptions to consumers' gas supplies are a relatively rare event and only a few respondents had actually experienced one.

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL?

In the event of an unplanned interruption, respondents advised that a typical reaction would be annoyance at the inconvenience caused by loss of their central heating, hot water, or facilities for cooking.

Because unplanned interruptions are quite rare, and people have concerns regarding gas safety, some people thought they would feel alarmed, especially if they suspected that the loss of supply meant there was a leak nearby or in the home.

Several people's first reaction would be to wonder whether they have been cut off for non-payment, or lack of credit on a pre-payment meter.

Consumers felt that the degree and nature of their concerns would vary depending on the season when the unplanned interruption occurred and how long it would last. Many domestic consumers identified that heating was more important than cooking. Therefore, an unplanned interruption during winter would have a greater impact than during warmer, summer months.

Domestic consumers identified that using alternative energy types, especially for heating, and substituting takeaway meals for cooking, would prove expensive if required for any appreciable length of time, for example more than a day. Many saw their microwave oven as an obvious substitute for their gas hob or oven but noted that alternatives for space and water heating were more difficult to arrange.

It was thought that some of the older respondents might have greater access to alternatives for heating, including coal fires. However, some priority consumers interviewed had no alternative heating facilities despite having a condition which meant that keeping warm was vital. They indicated that a loss of supply would be a major inconvenience for them.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

In the event of an unplanned interruption, consumers said their first step would be to check if their neighbours had also been interrupted. If so, this would indicate the problem was not caused by non-payment or by an escape within their own home. Several felt that if other homes had also lost gas, they would do nothing further, relying on their neighbours to call for help or information and to keep them informed.

Consumers advised they would typically first call their supplier as they knew who they were and how to contact them. Consumers felt they could easily find their suppliers' number on their gas bills, in the Phone Book or on their website.

Other consumers indicated they would call:

- ‘the Gas Board’;
- ‘Transco’ (a name that a few had heard of, mostly it seemed because they had been in touch with Transco in the past or had seen it on a van);
- ‘British Gas boiler maintenance service’ as a consumer had a contract with them;
- a rural consumer suggesting calling the local police.

People were generally clear about what they would seek to get from such a phone call, and felt it should include the following:

- safety advice and reassurance, for example, on how to make safe pilot lights on boilers and cookers; and
- timing for restoration of supply, including how long the interruption was expected to last; whether the cause of the interruption was known; what was being done about it; and what the consumer can expect and from whom.

PLANNED INTERRUPTIONS

Some respondents had experience of interruptions required as part of mains replacement activities undertaken by GDNs. In such cases, consumers are informed in advance of these scheduled interruptions to their gas supply.

People understand that sometimes work will mean their gas supply needs to be interrupted and are prepared to accept this provided that certain standards are adhered to. In particular, consumers indicated that it was important to be given sufficient notice of the expected interruption and that the work should be completed within the agreed timescale.

Where consumers had experienced this type of interruption, we found they had received notice at least one month in advance and in several cases the notice given was considerably longer. The works and associated interruption to supply had also generally been carried out within the advised schedule.

For any interruption, GDNs will always attend a premises in order to first isolate the supply and then to complete a 'purge and relight' to safely restore the consumer's supply. Despite this, some consumers could not recall GDN staff visiting their premises to restore their gas supply. They advised that if such a visit was required, they would like to be advised in advance and have the appointment arranged smoothly and efficiently.

In general, when consumers experienced a planned interruption few problems arose. There were some exceptions to this however; these tended not to be about the interruption itself, but were to do with the outdoor work associated with the interruption. In particular, several people raised concerns over the quality or timing of reinstatement work, with perceived damage to their gardens, footpath or street paving remaining after the work had been completed.

Some consumers told of reinstatement work not being completed and requiring several call-backs over an extended period of weeks:

“[After the mains work was completed, it was] well over a week with a great big hole at the top of my garden. They were going to bring soil to fill it in. And I had to ring them 3 times to find out where the soil was. This hole could have been quite dangerous.”

Changes to the timing or schedule of work in particular seemed to cause problems for some, and in other cases they were advised about a project too far in advance and were not reminded nearer the time.

Some consumers were concerned about the way that work seemed to proceed in fits and starts, rather than in what seemed to them to be an obviously planned progression.

In general, consumers were less tolerant or 'forgiving' of problems that arose from planned work than they were in the context of 'emergency' work.

LEAKS

Although gas leaks rarely occur, most people felt confident that they knew how to deal with them.

Almost everybody interviewed knew that there is a specific emergency telephone number they should contact. They also knew they could find this number in the Phone Book, on their gas bill, or on a label attached to their gas meter.

There was little consensus about precisely who operates that emergency number; some felt it was British Gas or their supplier or Transco.

Some people mentioned they would call the local council (as their landlord) for advice and instructions, if the incident happened during office hours.

There was awareness of associated safety issues. Roughly half of the participants felt that they would turn off the gas supply at the meter. Some consumers also mentioned avoiding the use of light switches, etc.

Those consumers who had previously called the emergency number had all been reassured and impressed by the speed of response – both that the telephone was answered immediately (in contrast to their experience with suppliers); and that GDN staff arrived on site within the hour.

Respondents' expectations of calling the gas emergency number (0800 111 999) were higher than their expectations of the service from their supplier. They expected that their call would be answered quickly and by an operator, not a recorded message.

A small number of those who had no previous experience of a gas leak or of contacting the emergency services said they would call their supplier if they smelt gas and would be concerned that they may have

to wait a long time for their call to be answered.

Some people were dissatisfied with the outcome of the emergency response, as in order to make the gas escape safe, the GDN had to disconnect an appliance or the gas supply to the premises. The consumer then had to make other arrangements for repair or replacement of the faulty appliance. Some had thought the people that had been called out would be there to fix the problem, rather than only eliminate the gas escape.

Some priority consumers who had contacted the emergency number advised that the response team had taken some additional steps to repair the fault rather than simply making the gas escape safe. Other consumers were left a leaflet or list, explaining that to repair the problem was now their responsibility, and giving information about how to find approved gas contractors to do the work.

Overall, gas leaks are not an area where current performance or standards were felt to be lacking.

EXPECTED STANDARDS OF SERVICE – INTERRUPTIONS

We invited respondents to define their expectations of service and communication from GDNs, when an interruption to supply, or other street work, was planned. In general, it was noticeable that while people were unaware of the existing regulatory standards, their proposals were in most cases similar to, or less stringent than, standards that already apply.

Consumers thought advance notice of planned interruptions was important, and suggested notice periods ranging from a week to three months. Some suggested that the notice period should be longer for longer interruptions. Similarly, more notice was sought in colder winter months than in summer, because the impact of the interruption would be more acute.

Consumers also suggested that the longer-term notice should be followed by an imminent reminder, a few days before the work commences. It was suggested that the reminder also include a contact telephone number that would be continually available so consumers could access information about the work in question if needed. Consumers advised that it would be acceptable for that ‘helpline’ to be a recorded message, so long as it gave up-to-date information and included the facility to speak to a person if required.

There were calls for someone to be available on site during the works to ensure residents were kept informed of the progress and outcome of the work, especially if any changes in the schedule were necessary.

Consumers noted this was equally important whether the interruption had been planned or was unexpected. With unplanned interruptions it was important that consumers could find out from someone knowledgeable both what has happened and how long the interruption is likely to last.

For some domestic consumers the timing of any interruption to their supply was important and they suggested it be contained within the working day, ideally starting after children had left for school, and completed by early evening whenever possible.

If the restoration of supply requires that someone visit the premises, people wanted that to be completed within a one- to two-hour call-out period.

Similarly, if the planned work or restoration of supply entails a visit to a consumer’s premises, people wanted tightly defined appointment intervals which were adhered to. Consumers suggested GDNs should nominate a one- to two-hour window, rather than ‘morning’ or ‘afternoon’ or ‘Wednesday’ timeframe. This would minimise inconvenience experienced by consumers as they could either delay going to work, or leave work a little early, rather than having to take a half or whole day off.

NEW CONNECTIONS AND ALTERATIONS

Most consumers expected homes to already have an existing gas supply.

Among those who did have experience of arranging a new gas supply, a common complaint was the time that it takes for works to be completed and the associated cost:

“I would ring Transco, apply, then arrange a meeting with a surveyor. Then I would make appointments and await workers turning up – 12 weeks.”

Those with experience of this situation generally found that:

- completion of the work takes longer than the advised time;
- it is expensive;
- there are complicated arrangements, such as a complex forms to fill in, when arranging to have the work undertaken.

One or two respondents said they would get costs and timescales from more than one company.

Those with no prior experience in obtaining a new connection or altering an existing connection thought the timeframes involved would be short:

“Urban area 2-3 weeks and rural 4-6 weeks.”

Of those consumers with experience in this area, a range of work had been undertaken and was typically done several years ago. These experiences were likely to have predated recent changes to gas industry structure and standards that are currently in place. It was apparent that for most of these consumers, the work had often caused problems.

Consumers perceived the main sources of these problems to be a result of:

- the proliferation of companies to deal with, including the supplier, meter company and separate contractors for each stage of work including different companies to deliver barriers, excavate a trench, lay pipe, back fill the excavation etc;

“If the pipe is outside your property, they also have two contractors: one to come and dig the trench and another to come and reinstate it ...”

- the lack of coordination between the various parties, resulting in perceived inefficiency;

“Then somebody had to come and fix that and somebody else had to come and connect it and it was several weeks’ period of time, I can’t remember how long, but it was in the summer so it wasn’t a big issue. But it was annoying that if they are going to fix something, there should be one man who is able to come to fix it and go.”

- poor communications systems or customer interfaces;
- the requirement for advance payment, usually 6 or 7 weeks before the work;
- the cost of work;
 - perceived as a result of using several different companies instead of one.
- the time taken from commissioning the work to completion, which had ranged from 6 to 12 weeks.

One aspect of the process that seemed to work well was the time taken to prepare a quotation for the requested works. This was generally found to have been acceptable.

EXPECTED STANDARDS – NEW CONNECTIONS AND ALTERATIONS

All respondents were invited to contribute their views on the standards of service they would expect in arranging a new connection or alteration. Those with more direct experience had clearer views on what improvements could be made.

There was a wide range of views that people gave and some common suggestions included:

- ten working days to come and look at the job and provide a quote;
- up to four weeks prior notice to the consumer before carrying out the work;
- one person or company should come on the agreed day and do all the work from start to finish;
- if a visit to the home is necessary, consumers want a tighter time interval to be nominated, for example 1-2 hours, rather than just a particular day or morning.

Some consumers expected their gas supplier to take a central role in arranging such work and would prefer or expect their supplier to coordinate any other parties involved.

COMPLAINTS

Several consumers had experienced problems with their GDN however it was unclear in these interviews who had made a formal complaint.

This made it difficult to compare GDNs' performance when dealing with complaints against consumers' expectations. Despite this, consumers raised some general principles which apply equally to GDNs' complaint handling, including:

- make it clear who to communicate with. Ideally the GDN should provide the name and telephone number of a single point of contact who will be handling the matter;
- provide an available point of access
 - with minimum waiting time and call-routing; and
 - eliminate the need for them to restate the nature and background of the complaint each time they call;
- communicate proactively, taking the burden off the consumer;
- give a clear picture of what to expect, by when and then stick to those agreed timescales.

In some cases, consumers were uncertain about who they should complain to in different circumstances:

- the company named on A-boards or vans associated with work;
- the contractor's personnel actually carrying out street work;
- the company that sent them advance information about work being carried out in their area.

Some felt they could contact their local authority as they are responsible for highways, if their complaint was about holes in the road or poor reinstatement etc.

AWARENESS OF EXISTING SERVICE STANDARDS

We found no unprompted awareness of the existing standards of service and the areas they cover or where consumers might find out more information about such standards.

Several people expressed the desire for such 'entitlements' to be made clear to them. In particular, they felt they should be advised of their rights and any applicable service standards when:

- they request or commission gas works; or
- they are notified of planned work in their area.

More generally, some people expressed an interest in the service standards that they had not heard of before, and felt there was a case for informing them of these standards irrespective of immediate need. They felt that some information, such as a leaflet to be included occasionally with their gas bill, would be useful.

People with actual experience of problems have tended to find that the reality of how these problems were dealt with usually surpassed other people's expectations of the service they are likely to receive. In other words, the GDNs' performance tends to exceed people's prior expectations of them. A common example of this was the provision of alternative heating and cooking facilities by the GDNs to priority consumers when their gas supply was interrupted.

The idea that alternative heating and cooking facilities might be offered to priority consumers during an extended interruption was not suggested by anyone and when the idea was introduced there was general surprise that this was an existing standard.

Some consumers noted that gas interruptions are actually rare with few people having experienced even one such event and that gas supply in general has a high level of reliability and continuity. This was for some respondents a noticeable and favourable contrast to their experience with their electricity supply.

In general, people felt their actual experience of 'events' related to gas tended to be better than their expectations. There was however one clear exception to this; almost everyone who had direct experience of arranging a new connection or alteration had encountered service problems.

COMPENSATION

Compensation was a subject that some consumers raised early in discussion of problems they had experienced, or could envisage arising.

There were particular circumstances in which people felt they should have the right to seek compensation, principally:

- interruption to gas supply, if it means they incur extra spending on other energy;
- disruption to their own premises (such as their garden or driveway) that is necessitated by works, particularly if reinstatement is not completely to their satisfaction;
- work that they are paying for, and which takes longer than announced or agreed.

When consumers discussed the subject of compensation, they generally took one of two different approaches:

- they sought to be recompensed for additional costs incurred; or
- they sought an amount it ought to cost the GDNs as a 'fine'.

Those who took the former approach suggested compensation should include earnings lost by the customer while awaiting missed home-visit appointments, the cost of additional work to improve GDNs reinstatement works etc.

Those consumers who took the latter approach suggested that even a relatively small individual compensation amount could be effective as a 'fine', because it would be multiplied by the numbers of consumers affected.

However when consumers were probed as to actual amounts that would be acceptable in different circumstances, people had very few suggestions to make.

BROADER VIEWS OF GDNS' CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

With regard to corporate social responsibility duties, consumers suggested that GDNs could:

- avoid prolonged delays in reinstatement after work had been completed;
- achieve better co-ordination between utilities in the phasing of streetworks, to avoid repetitive or consecutive interruption and inconvenience to residents, property and traffic;
- explain better why particular works are necessary;
- protect sensitive rural environments when laying cross-country pipes;
- proactively lay gas supplies to all new estates and developments so as to avoid later disruption; and
- recognise the special needs of particular types of consumers, especially those of pensionable age, with disabilities or special communication needs, and respond accordingly.

PART B: BUSINESS CONSUMERS

UNDERSTANDING OF THE GAS INDUSTRY

This section of the report summarises the key findings from the qualitative interviews completed with small and large business consumers, contractors and energy consultants.

There were clear differences in knowledge of the structure of the gas industry across the spectrum of business consumers interviewed, as well as in attitudes.

Many of the smaller or medium size businesses reacted more like domestic consumers, in their lack of awareness of the structure of the industry; the main difference between small companies and domestic consumers seemed to be that smaller businesses were more conscious of how a gas interruption may lead to a loss of income. Much of what has been said in the previous section therefore also applies to small business consumers.

Some large companies with multiple sites, who were more likely to have had contact with their GDN were better informed about GDNs and as a result have expectations more in line with actual performance. The same was true for the small number of agents and contractors in the sample.

Half the smaller business consumers interviewed had heard of Transco, but had very little idea of its role. An impression given by some seemed to be that British Gas is the main company, and Transco is an organisation that carries out work on behalf of British Gas. They were not alone in this view; even among some of the bigger companies there was only a limited understanding of the industry.

One respondent commented that he is aware of the separation of responsibilities, but for him the supplier and not the GDN is his first point of contact.

One said Transco was for leaks and emergencies, and Powergen is simply the billing agent, but another commented that Powergen is responsible for everything, and believed there was no distinction between the supplier and distributor.

A small number of business consumers commented about the 'faceless' image of GDNs, saying that they should be more visible in the marketplace and knowledge of them is lacking.

Some larger organisations commented on the importance of gas to their companies, but despite this not all of them had contingency plans in the event of an interruption. This highlights the relative rarity of such events occurring with some business respondents unable to recall experiencing an interruption to their gas supply.

Business consumers noted that when gas was needed only for heating and staff cooking, they had given less thought to alternative fuels than if a gas interruption would interfere with production processes.

INTERRUPTIONS

Within the sample, we interviewed businesses which had experienced planned and/or unplanned interruptions and some who advised they had never experienced a loss of supply.

PLANNED INTERRUPTIONS

Smaller businesses who had experienced planned interruptions had generally been satisfied with the way it was handled.

One customer described work done on their gas supply:

“The gas supply was cut off and a new pipe was laid and it was reconnected without any problems – Transco did it for us – we received a standard notice and we contacted Transco and asked how long it was going to be – and we worked out what we needed to do from there. In the event it was only one day because they dug the trenches, laid all the pipes and then connected the thing in one afternoon.”

Another described an occasion when he received a standard letter telling him that the mains were going to be shut down across a wide area. He rang to find out how long the delay would be, and when told it would be a day, he felt that was acceptable.

He did not feel that this situation warranted any compensation, but if an interruption were unexpected so there was no opportunity to plan for it and it lasted for a prolonged period, he would expect something to compensate him for both the inconvenience and loss of income.

Most of those who had experienced some planned interruption were quite happy with the period of notice, and the length of time they were without gas.

Whereas many of the domestic consumers talked of the need for a month’s notice of a planned loss of service, several of the businesses said they would be happy with much less notice; in some cases a few days’ notice would be sufficient for them to switch to an alternative, or to make plans.

One talked of the GDN giving two days’ notice of a two-hour interruption, which was entirely satisfactory. What was less acceptable was the fact that the associated roadworks went on for 10 weeks, resulting in a loss of trade for him. He seemed uncertain who was responsible for this.

UNPLANNED INTERRUPTIONS

Three of the larger businesses commented about their experiences of unplanned interruptions. One talked of something going wrong when Transco was doing some work on their site. They were not informed about the problem in sufficient time to switch to an alternative fuel for their processes, and this resulted in lost production.

One respondent (from a college which had several sites) recalled that they had been told that a major upgrade was needed to their supply, but this was done in one day and the work made good, so although there had been no warning of what was to happen, they had been happy with the way the problem was handled.

Another respondent referred to an unplanned interruption his organisation had experienced which took three days to repair. He was given no information about what was happening or how long he would be without gas. For this business consumer being kept informed was very important as was being able to speak to a live telephone operator rather than a recorded message.

Other respondents echoed the view that it is crucial to be able to speak to someone who knows what is happening and can tell them how long an interruption will last.

It is very important to business consumers to be kept informed. Knowing the likely length of any interruption or works being undertaken helps them to plan and may prevent them experiencing any financial loss.

LEAKS

Of all those interviewed, four large businesses and three smaller business consumers had recent experience of a gas leak. In all but one case, they had been very impressed with the experience in terms of speed of response and overall professionalism:

“Fast and they know what they are doing.”

“[The GDN] responded quickly – carried out repairs on a fractured pipe, and kept everyone informed.”

In one case, the leak was outside the building, and they believed the GDN took two days to respond. They would have expected a much quicker response had the leak been internal, and said they assumed this was normal procedure.

One small business consumer (a pub owner), had not been satisfied with the overall service he received. He smelt gas, rang the emergency number on his meter and Transco arrived within two hours. Whilst he was satisfied with this aspect of the service he was dissatisfied at the time it took to identify where the problem was.

Business consumers’ expectations are that the GDNs’ response to a reported gas escape will be prompt. Some respondents expected the GDN to attend either immediately or within 30 minutes:

“I have no actual experience, but I would expect a quick and efficient response.”

Again, keeping people informed as to what is happening is very important, especially when a interruption impacts on both production and staff.

A small number complained that although response to the leak was good, the completion of subsequent reinstatement works was too slow:

“Two years ago, I called the Gas Board and the Fire Brigade. The problem was dealt with quickly but it took three days for the work to be made good.”

NEW CONNECTIONS AND ALTERATIONS

Smaller business respondents had very little experience of obtaining a new connection or of altering their gas supply. Larger companies had more relevant experiences to discuss.

One respondent felt the cost of their connection was very expensive for what was involved. It had involved a lot of paperwork and planning. This business consumer advised he had organised the work through his supplier, not his GDN.

Another had some praise for his GDN's standard of work:

“Although there are problems getting siteworks organised, and having work done by a GDN, you know it is to a certain standard.”

Those without actual experience in this area were asked what they might do if they were arranging a new connection or service alteration. Most advised they would contact their supplier, rather than their GDN. Others advised they would rely on an architect or a builder to coordinate and arrange these works.

COMPLAINTS

None of the smaller businesses interviewed had made a gas-related complaint to their GDN, but assumed if they did, they would be most likely to complain in the first instance to their gas supplier:

“I would expect Powergen to deal with any complaint relating to gas distribution.”

Others said they would call British Gas, or they would ring the number on the back of their bill.

Larger business consumers who were interviewed did not have much more experience of GDNs' complaint handling. One had complained about the length of time it took to get a quote from Transco, then subsequently received four cheques from them, each for £80. He had not requested any compensation and was unsure why he had received it or how the sum of £320 had been calculated. He was however pleasantly surprised.

Some of those who had never made a complaint said that they would be uncertain who to complain to or who to contact. One business consumer specifically said they had had trouble finding the right person to speak to about a problem. This respondent actually commented that they regretted the lack of a direct relationship with the GDN and that they had assumed everything had to go via their shipper/supplier. They suggested an annual meeting with their GDN may be beneficial.

AWARENESS OF EXISTING SERVICE STANDARDS

Consistent with the findings for domestic consumers, awareness of service standards among business consumers is low. Without exception, all the smaller business respondents said they were not aware of any service standards applicable to GDNs, although a small number added they hoped there were such standards in place.

Also consistent with domestic consumers, businesses had very little idea as to where they could find out about the existing standards of service. A common reaction was that if such standards do exist, people should be informed about them, and they should be publicised and accessible:

“People should be made aware – there should be a table relating to length of time, inconvenience and financial loss.”

“Consumers should be more aware. It should be linked to actual financial loss, but I expect this to be low if it is anything like the electricity compensation scheme.”

Two respondents, however, were actually less than happy about too much emphasis on standards as they feel there is a danger of encouraging the spread of ‘blame culture’.

Awareness of existing service standards is not a great deal higher among larger businesses, with several saying they assume standards exist but that they have no awareness of them. Even the largest companies demonstrated very little knowledge, with one or two confusing them with Health and Safety requirements.

There is some expectation that standards in the gas industry are probably similar to those in the other utilities. One or two had come across standards relating to the electricity and telecommunications industries.

The general view was that service standards should be easily available to people, maybe in leaflet form and certainly on websites.

As with domestic consumers, the main requirement in terms of service that businesses are looking for is for proactive, early and reliable information and a fast resolution to any problem.

Contractors whose work needs to be coordinated with the GDNs suggested that more precise appointment timeframes would enable them to manage their engineers more effectively.

COMPENSATION

The main area business consumers expect to be covered, and for which they would look for compensation, is interruptions to their gas supply.

Some believe that compensation should be linked to the duration of an interruption, and that compensation should be higher for an unplanned interruption than for one about which they are notified. Some would expect compensation for interruptions that lasted, for example, over a day and that this should be deducted from their monthly bill.

Overall, businesses suggested that the level of compensation could vary according to:

- the length of the interruption;
- the time of year; and
- how widespread the area affected is.

Whilst business consumers' expectations are realistic, and they appreciate that some problems or interruptions are unforeseen, and not really anyone's fault, a concern is that a gas interruption which affects their schedule or processes could lead to claims for compensation being made against them.

Generally, business consumers expected a maximum time for the resolution of any problems and a compensatory framework that is satisfactory for both sides. The areas that were discussed as likely to lead to demands for compensation were:

- missed appointments. They expected some compensation for lost time and inconvenience caused;
- speed of response to a complaint or a query, expecting on average this not to exceed a week; and
- when not notified of a planned interruption.

Overall, there was little consensus as to how compensation could and should work in practice. For larger business consumers, it was noted that any matters concerning compensation would normally be handled by a financial person, not the energy specialist interviewed in this research.

BROADER VIEWS OF GDNS' CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Business respondents had few ideas to suggest as to how gas companies could improve their corporate social responsibility duties.

The main suggestions were:

- that GDNs should make more effort to reinstate street works promptly and in particular to ensure the area is left as safe as possible;
- another complimented the gas industry for replacing trees after they have dug up the road.

There is little awareness of what GDNs actually do in terms of the environment, although one or two assumed that the GDNs undertake work and activities in this area.

Business consumers would welcome more transparency in this area:

“I would like to know what they are doing about the environment.”

Something all business consumers had in common was that when something goes wrong it is important that they are kept informed:

“It is essential that the gas distributor keeps everyone informed and can be easily contacted.”

One commented how important it is for GDNs to keep consumers up to speed with what is happening, and spoke of recent experience of excellent communication with one GDN.

4 QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

MAIN FINDINGS

This section of the report summarises the main findings from the quantitative survey research. It examines domestic and business consumers’:

- awareness of their local GDN, existing service standards, entitlement to compensation, the Priority Services Register and the Mains Replacement Programme;
- recent experience of GDNs’ service levels and performance;
- views on the importance of and their satisfaction with existing standards of service;
- views on compensation levels; and
- perceptions of the social role and responsibilities of GDNs.

AWARENESS

Over a third of domestic consumers (38%), and businesses (39%) thought they knew the GDN who owns, operates and maintains the pipes which deliver gas to their premises. However, only a few were able to name their local GDN correctly without prompting (3% of domestic consumers, 1% of businesses). Almost half (47%) of those consumers who said they knew their GDN mentioned Transco (the company who previously owned all 8 GDNs) and a third mentioned their supplier (i.e. British Gas, Scottish Gas, npower, Powergen etc).

After being prompted with the name of their local GDN, a third of consumers and businesses recognised the name. This rises to over four in ten amongst those who have experienced a recent event such as a gas leak/emergency, a gas connection or service alteration or a planned/unplanned interruption.

Awareness in the random consumer sample is highest for NGG (39%) and lowest for WWU (20%). There was not much variation in awareness of GDNs among business consumers.

These findings are consistent with the qualitative research.

Chart 4.1: Awareness of local GDN amongst consumers

Base: All consumers in the random sample and those experiencing recent event

Q: Have you heard of...(Local GT)?

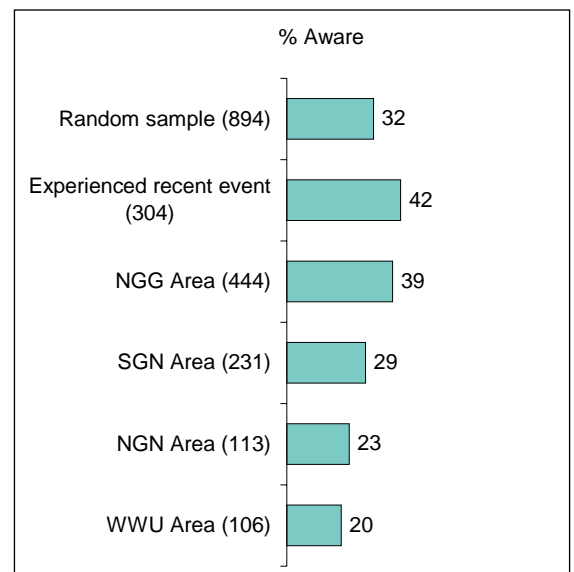
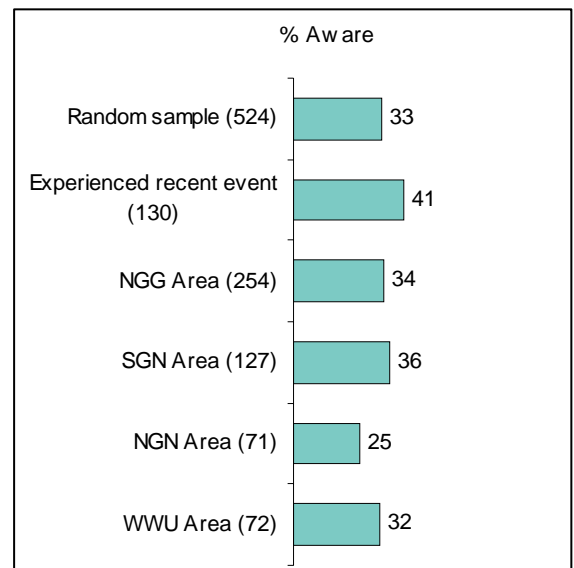


Chart 4.2: Awareness of local GDN amongst businesses

Base: All businesses in the random sample and those experiencing recent event

Q: Have you heard of...(Local GT)?



Approximately a third of consumers and businesses are aware that Ofgem sets a number of minimum standards of service to which GDNs must adhere, but very few were able to name one.

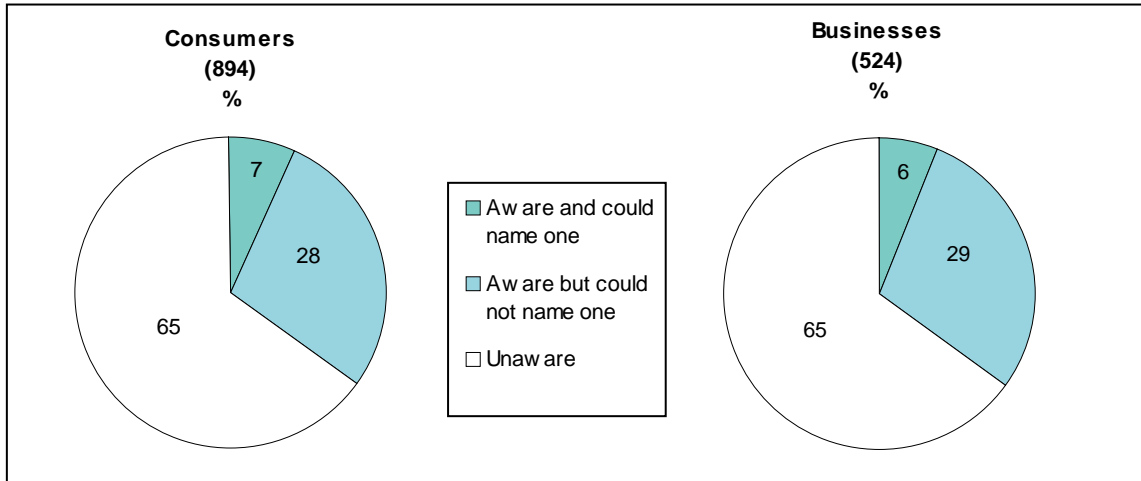
Awareness of specific standards of service is highest among consumers in the NGN area (12%) and for business consumers in WWU (11%) and NGG NW (10%). The results also show that awareness of service standards does not change when consumers have experienced an event recently.

Chart 4.3: Awareness of service standards

Base: All in the random sample

Q: Did you realise that Ofgem sets a number of minimum standards of service to which gas distributors must adhere?

Q: What standards of service are you aware of?



Consistent with the qualitative findings, awareness of entitlement to compensation is also low. Only one in eight consumers and one in six businesses are aware.

Twice as many larger companies (50 employees or more) (26%) were aware that they could be entitled to compensation from their GDN than smaller companies (up to 49 employees) (13%).

As expected, the results regarding awareness of entitlement to compensation are also consistent with those regarding awareness of service standards. For both, domestic and business consumers' awareness did not increase when they had recently experienced an event. Awareness was again highest among consumers in the NGN area and for business consumers in NGG NW.

Chart 4.4: Awareness of entitlement to compensation

Base: All

Q: Were you aware before this interview that you could be entitled to compensation from...if they do not meet these standards?



Seven in ten consumers and businesses would like to be informed of their 'rights' and existing standards of service, preferably by card/leaflet, newsletter or an email with appropriate links to the relevant websites.

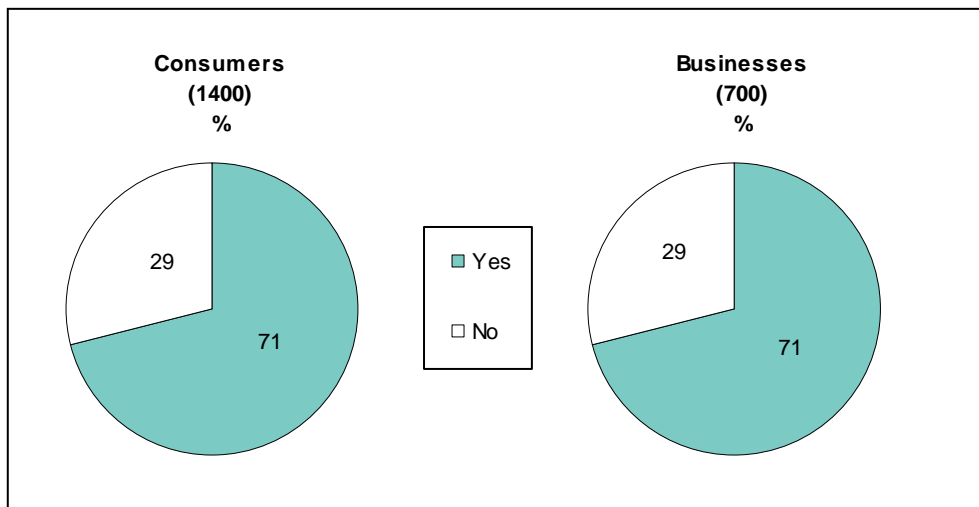
Half of consumers surveyed would like to be informed of applicable service standards when work is being planned in the area and half suggested once a year with their bill.

Six in ten businesses would also like to be informed when works were being planned in their area and a third would like to be informed annually with their bill.

Chart 4.5:whether would like to be informed of their rights

Base: All

Q: Would you like to be informed of your rights in terms of standards of service?



Of the consumers surveyed who were eligible for the Priority Services Register (domestic consumers of pensionable age or those with disabilities) only 13% were even aware of it and only a quarter of these actually signed up to it.

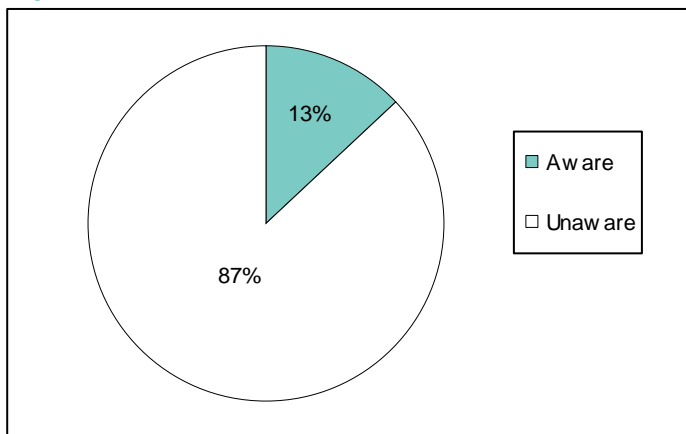
This was slightly higher than awareness of the Priority Services Register among the random domestic consumer sample (11%).

When consumers were asked who they thought were 'priority' consumers, 64% mentioned the elderly, 27% mentioned children and 19% the disabled.

Chart 4.6: Awareness of Priority Services Register

Base: All consumers eligible for the priority services register (483)

Q: Are you aware of the priority services register?



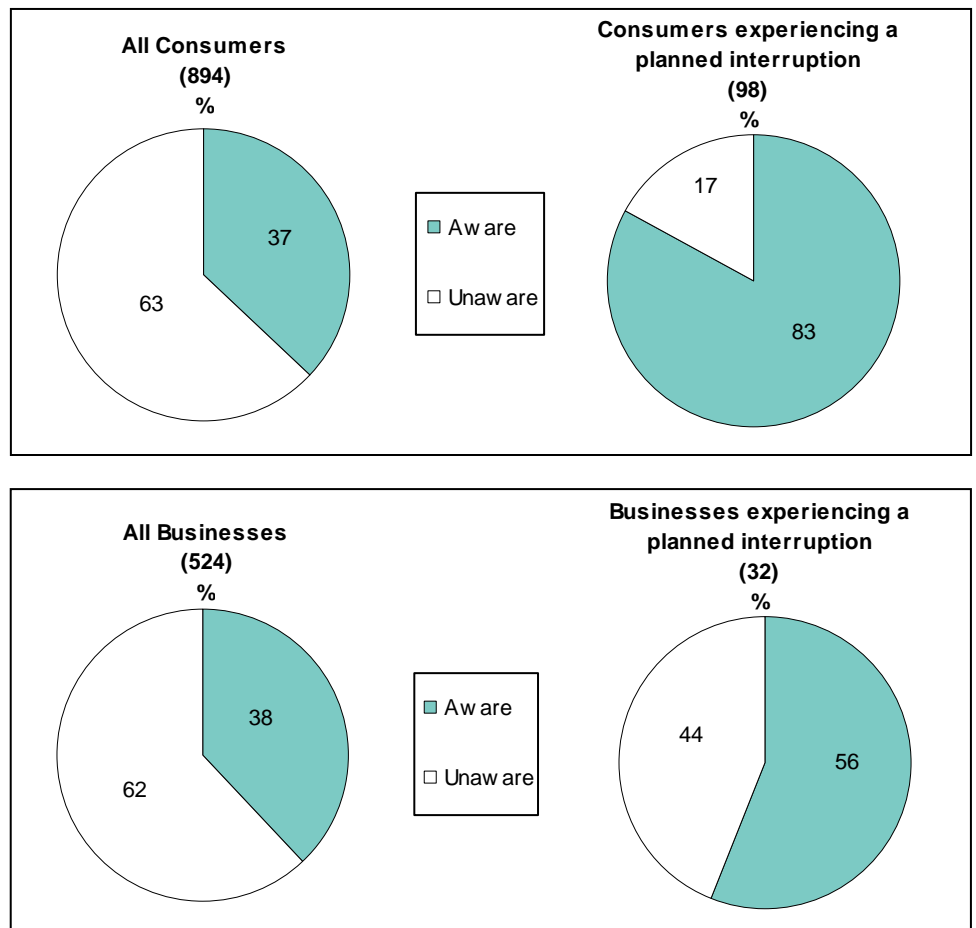
Four in ten domestic and business consumers are aware of the Mains Replacement Programme. As expected, awareness of the programme amongst consumers who have experienced a planned interruption is much higher at 83%.

Businesses experiencing a planned interruption, whilst more aware of the programme than businesses in general, are not as aware as domestic consumers who have experienced a planned interruption (56%), although care should be taken with the business result as it is based on only 32 responses.

39% of consumers and 36% of businesses would like to receive more information about why works are being carried out.

Chart 4.7: Awareness of the Mains Replacement Programme
Base: All in random sample

Q: Are you aware of the mains replacement programme which requires gas distributors to replace older iron pipes with polyethylene pipes that are less susceptible to corrosion?



RECENT EXPERIENCE OF GDN SERVICE

5.5 percent of domestic consumers and 8.8 percent of businesses in the random sample recall experiencing any gas works in the last 12 months. The most prevalent type of works experienced by consumers are gas connections/service alterations (3.1%) followed by gas leaks/emergencies (2.2%). For businesses, gas leaks/emergencies are experienced most often (5.0%) followed by gas connections/service alterations (3.8%).

1.6 percent of domestic consumers and 1.9 percent of businesses have made a complaint relating to gas works.

Higher income households (£30K or more per annum) are more likely to have complained (7%).

Table 4.8: Experience of recent events		
Base: All consumers (894) and businesses (524) in the random sample		
<i>Q: Which of the following have you experienced in the last 12 months</i>		
Event experienced*	Consumers (%)	Businesses (%)
Gas leak/emergency	2.2	5.0
Unplanned interruption to supply	0.2	0.8
Planned interruption to supply	0.8	1.3
Gas connection/service alteration	3.1	3.8
Reinstatement works	0.6	1.5
Made a complaint	1.6	1.9

* These events are not mutually exclusive.

EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION WITH GDN SERVICE

Domestic consumers who had experience of a recent event were asked to recall how GDNs had performed against any existing applicable service standards.

In the vast majority of cases, consumers recalled that GDNs performed well and met the targets set out in the standards, particularly for:

- Answering emergency calls within 30 seconds;
- Attending uncontrolled leaks within the hour;
- Providing advanced notice of planned interruptions;
- Reinstating premises within 10 days of completing works;
- Providing a schedule of works within 20 days of the acceptance of a quotes; and
- Commencing and completing works on the given dates.

Consumers recalled GDNs performing less well when it came to responding fully and promptly to complaints and providing information regarding unplanned interruptions within 12 hours.

Residential consumers are largely satisfied with the service they received with respect to specific service standards. Almost all were very or fairly satisfied with the length of time it took to get through to an operator to report a gas leak or emergency (97%). The vast majority were satisfied with the notice given in advance of a planned interruption (92%) and with the time it took for an engineer to turn up in the event of a gas leak or emergency (89%).

78 percent of those having work carried out on their property were satisfied with the time it took to reinstate the property and 77 percent were satisfied with the quality of the reinstatement works.

76 percent of those receiving updates about an unplanned interruption were satisfied with the frequency of those updates.

Seven in ten (71%) were satisfied with the speed with which GDNs restored the gas supply in the event of an unplanned interruption.

Only complaint handling is rated poorly amongst domestic consumers with 55% dissatisfied and only 33% satisfied.

Business consumers experiencing recent events are also generally satisfied with the performance of the local GDN for those areas of service covered by Ofgem standards.

Business consumers recalled GDNs meeting most standards but thought GDNs performed less well in:

- Answering complaints fully within 10 days;
- Restoring supply within 24 hours of an unplanned interruption;
- Scheduling works within 20 days of a quote for a connection/alteration being accepted.

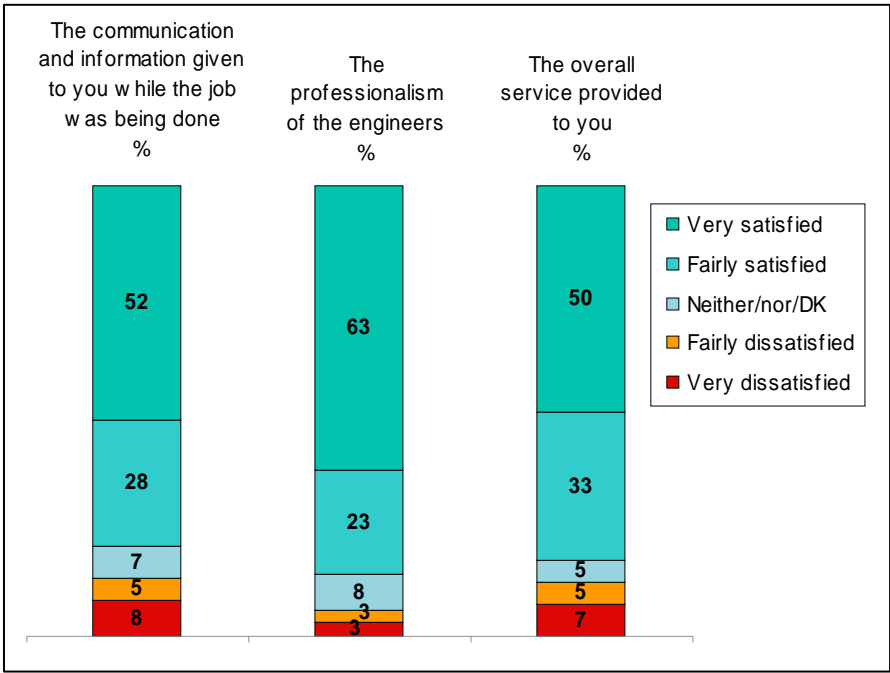
As with domestic consumers, only complaint handling is rated poorly, with 40% dissatisfied.

Domestic consumers with experience of a recent event showed high levels of satisfaction with the overall level of service provided. 63% are very satisfied with the professionalism of engineers with a further 23% fairly satisfied.

Eight in ten or more are satisfied with the level of communication and information given while the job was being done and with the overall service provided to them.

Chart 4.11: Consumers' satisfaction with GT's performance during a recent event
 Base: All consumers experiencing a recent event (304)

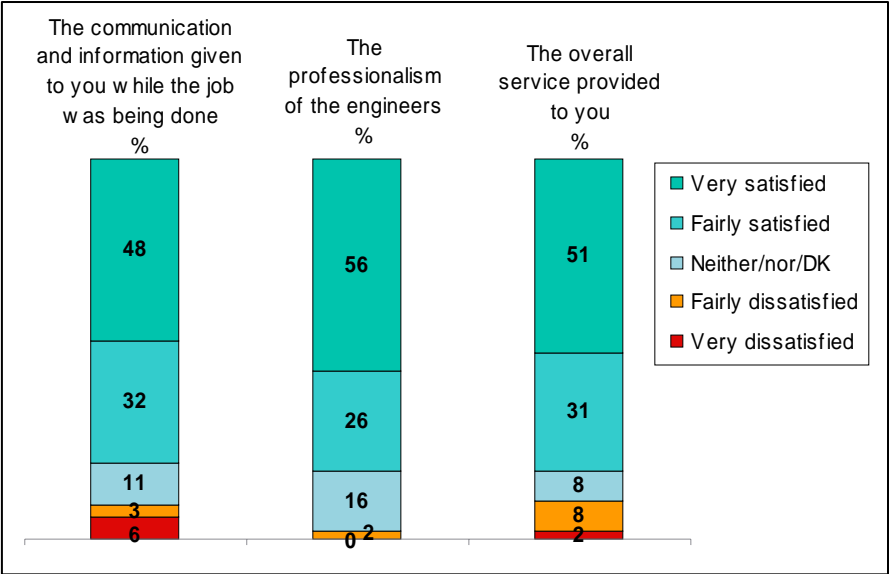
Q: How satisfied were you with.....



Businesses, like consumers, give good overall satisfaction ratings to GDNs for the service they received during a recent event. Again, eight in ten or more are satisfied with communication, the professionalism of engineers and the overall service provided.

Chart 4.12: Businesses' satisfaction with GT's performance during a recent event
 Base: All businesses experiencing a recent event (130)

Q: How satisfied were you with.....



IMPORTANCE OF AND SATISFACTION WITH STANDARDS

Consumers were presented with a random selection of eight of the eleven service standards being reviewed in this study.

The selection of eight standards from eleven was made in the interests of keeping the interview to a reasonable length. The order in which standards were read out to respondents was randomised.

Consumers were asked to rate each standard in terms of importance on a five point scale where 5 is extremely important and 1 is not at all important.

Chart 4.13 shows that all standards are given a 5 or 4 out of 5 for importance by at least seven in ten consumers. This indicates that the current service standards are targeted at areas that consumers consider to be important.

Domestic consumers rated the standards relating to emergencies and unplanned interruptions as most important. Eight in ten feel it is extremely important that uncontrolled gas leaks are attended within 1 hour. Seven in ten deem it extremely important that alternative heating and cooking facilities are provided to the elderly and disabled within 4 hours of an unplanned interruption being reported.

A similarly large proportion deem it extremely important that emergency calls are answered within 30 seconds.

The next most important service standards are restoration of supply within 24 hours of an unplanned interruption; planned works completed within timescale; and prior notice given of a planned interruption. These were all considered extremely important by at least half of domestic gas consumers.

Not so important, in relative terms, are:

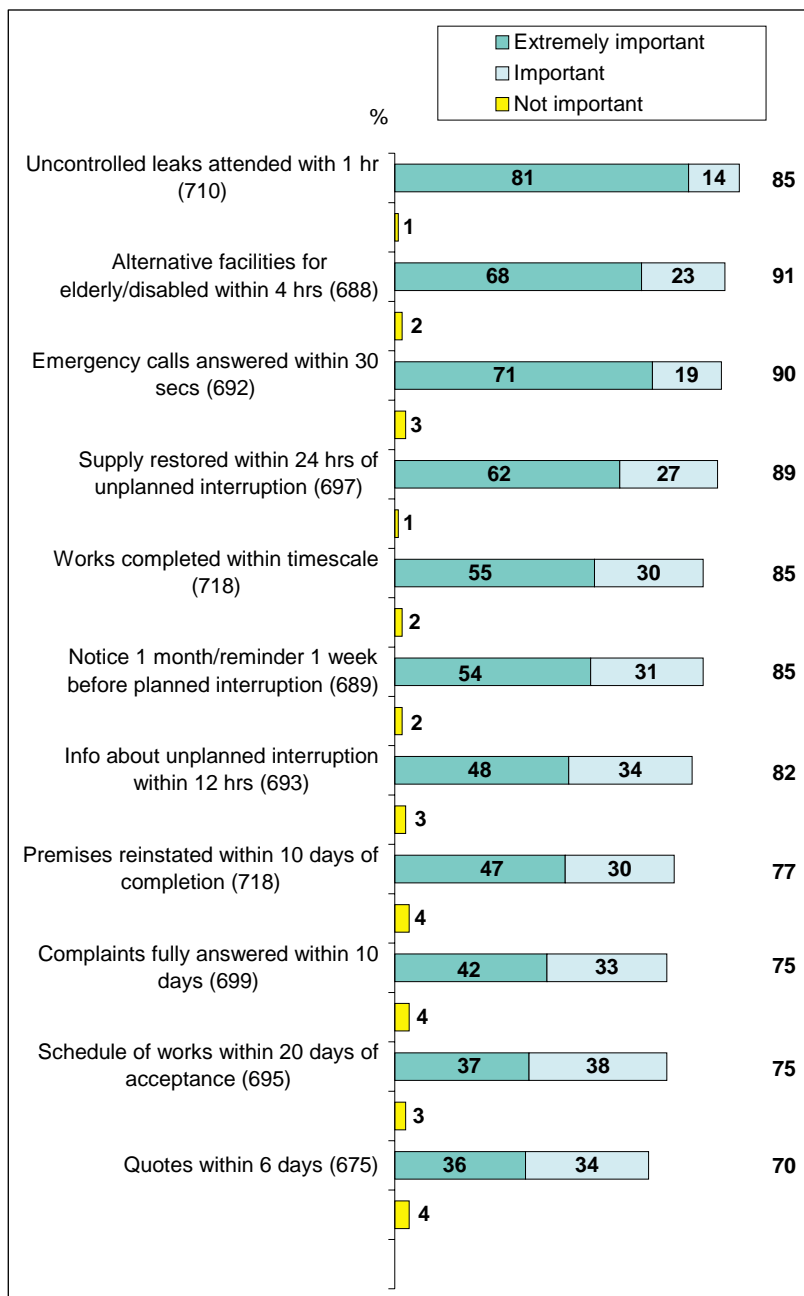
- being supplied with information about unplanned interruptions within 12 hours;
- reinstatement of premises within 10 days;
- complaints being fully answered within 10 days;
- schedules of works being given within 20 days of acceptance;
- quotes for requested works being supplied within 6 days.

Consumers did not rank standards as being any more important because they had recently experienced a related event. Furthermore, priority consumers did not give higher importance ratings to the standard requiring provision of alternative heating and cooking facilities in the event of an unplanned interruption.

Chart 4.13: Importance of service standards among consumers

Base: All consumers in the random sample answering for each standard

Q: How would you rate this standard in terms of importance?



NB: Respondents who answered "Neither/Nor" and "Don't Know" are not shown in chart.

Businesses mirror domestic consumers in the importance they place on service standards (see Chart 4.14).

Most important are attending uncontrolled leaks quickly, ensuring emergency calls are answered quickly and restoring supply quickly after an unplanned interruption.

Next most important are completing requested works within timescale, giving notice of planned interruptions, providing information about unplanned interruptions and reinstating premises promptly after works.

Least important are responding to complaints promptly and providing schedules and quotes for requested works quickly.

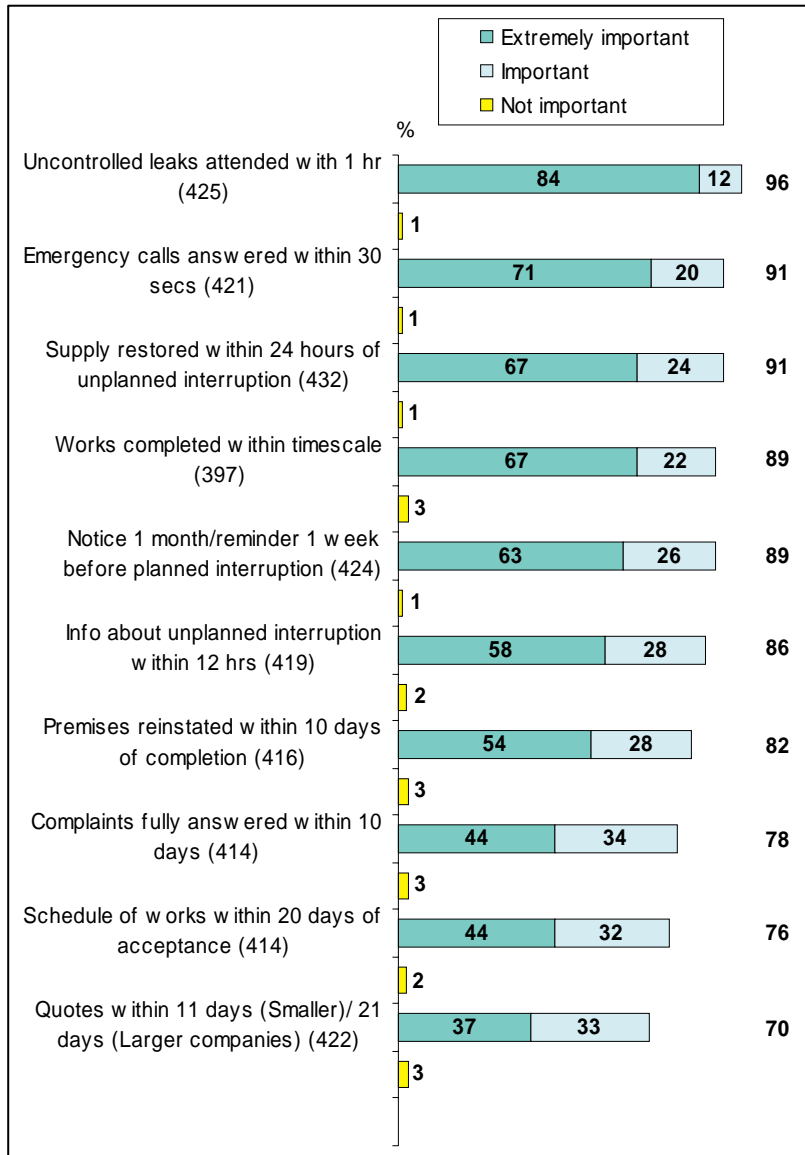
Compared with domestic consumers, a higher proportion of businesses gave the standard relating to the provision of information about unplanned interruptions within 12 hours the highest importance rating.

As with consumers there are no significant differences in importance ratings for standards between those recently experiencing an event and the random sample. Nor are there any differences in importance rankings between smaller and larger business consumers.

Chart 4.14: Importance of service standards among businesses

Base: All businesses in the random sample answering for each standard

Q: How would you rate this standard in terms of importance?



NB: Respondents who answered “Neither/Nor” and “Don’t Know” are not shown in chart.

Consumers and businesses were also asked how acceptable each of the service standards were using a four point scale:

- very good;
- reasonable;
- not quite acceptable;
- totally unacceptable.

Eight in ten consumers find all but one of the service standards set by Ofgem very good or reasonable.

Fully answering complaints within 10 days was less acceptable, being rated as very good or reasonable by seven in ten.

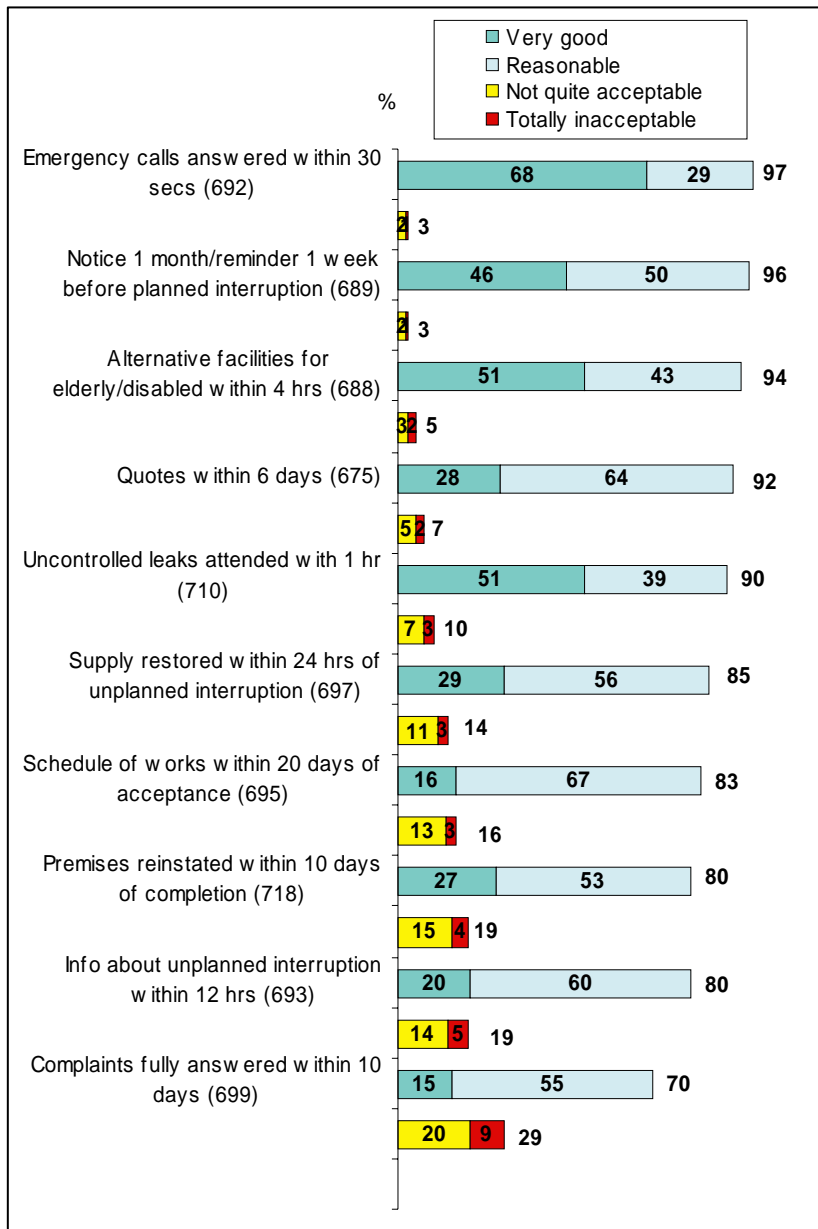
Those experiencing events do not have significantly different views about the acceptability of standards except that recent complainants are significantly more likely to rate the complaint handling standard as totally unacceptable (20%) than those in the random sample (9%).

Generally, no significant differences were found in consumers' ratings of standards by demographic sub-groups such as gender, age, income, presence of children or whether they resided in an urban or rural area.

Chart 4.15: Acceptability of service standards amongst consumers

Base: All consumers in the random sample answering for each standard

Q: *What do you think of this standard?*



NB: Respondents who answered "Don't Know" are not shown in chart.

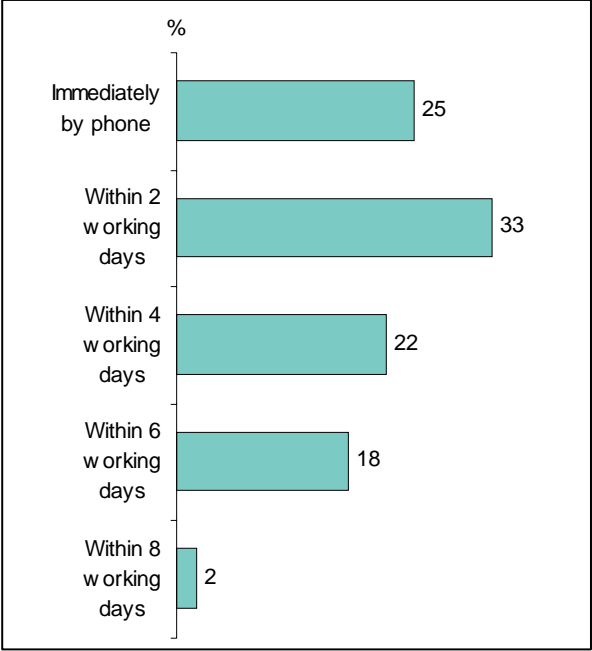
Those finding the complaint handling standard unacceptable were asked which standard would be acceptable.

A quarter would like an immediate response over the phone, a third wanted a response within 2 working days and forty per cent within 4-6 working days.

Chart 4.16: Preferred response time for replying to complaints (consumers)

Base: All consumers in the random sample considering the standard relating to complaints being fully answered within 10 days to be unacceptable (203)

Q: What standard would be acceptable?



Most businesses, like domestic consumers, find all service standards acceptable. Although for some standards there were lower levels of acceptance, notably:

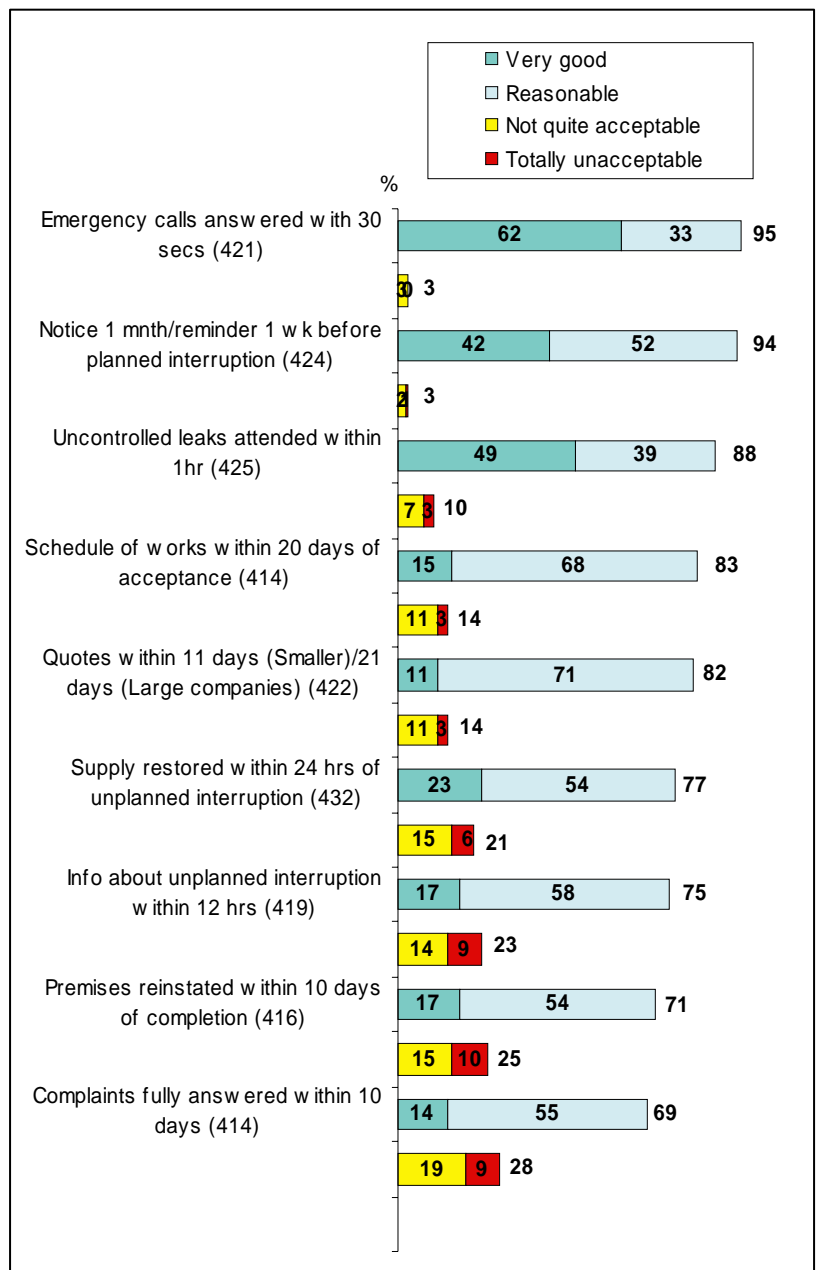
- provision of information about unplanned interruptions;
- restoration of supply within 24 hours for unplanned interruptions;
- provision of quotes and schedules within given timeframes;
- prompt reinstatement of property after works.

Again there were no significant differences in results between those business consumers who had experienced an event and those who had not, or between smaller and larger companies.

Chart 4.17: Acceptability of service standards among businesses

Base: All businesses in the random sample answering for each standard

Q: What do you think of this standard?



NB: Respondents who answered "Don't Know" are not shown in chart.

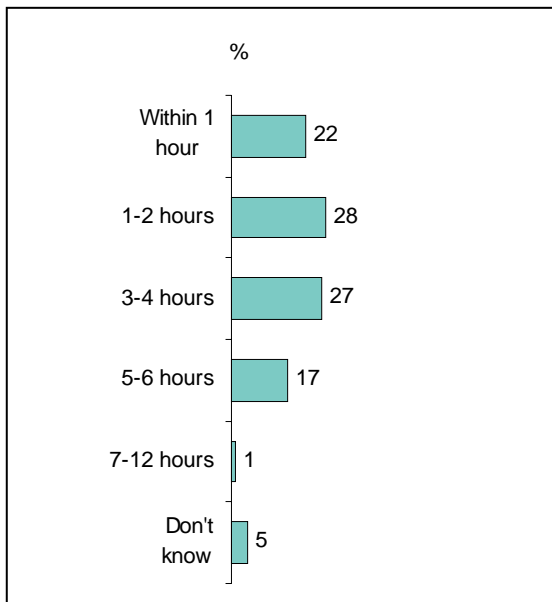
A quarter of businesses found the standard requiring GDNs to supply information about an unplanned interruption within 12 hours unacceptable. When they were asked what standard would be acceptable, half would like information within 1 to 2 hours and almost 45 per cent would like information within 3-6 hours.

Larger companies (with 50 or more employees) were significantly more likely than smaller companies to want information within an hour.

Chart 4.18: Preferred speed to provide information about an unplanned interruption (businesses)

Base: All consumers in the random sample considering the standard relating to information about an unplanned interruption being provided within 12 hours to be unacceptable (97)

Q: What standard would be acceptable?

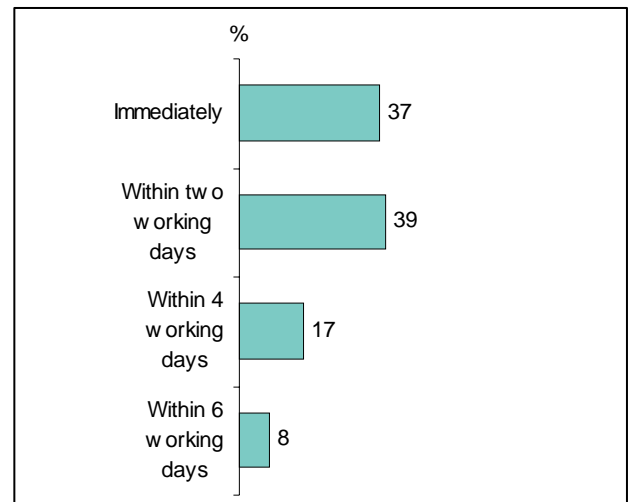


A quarter of business consumers also found the standard to reinstate property within 10 days unacceptable. When asked what standards would be acceptable, the majority suggested reinstatement works should be completed immediately or within two working days.

Chart 4.19: Preferred timeframe for reinstatement of property (businesses)

Base: All businesses in the random sample considering the standard relating to reinstatement of property within 10 days to be unacceptable (103)

Q: What standard would be acceptable?

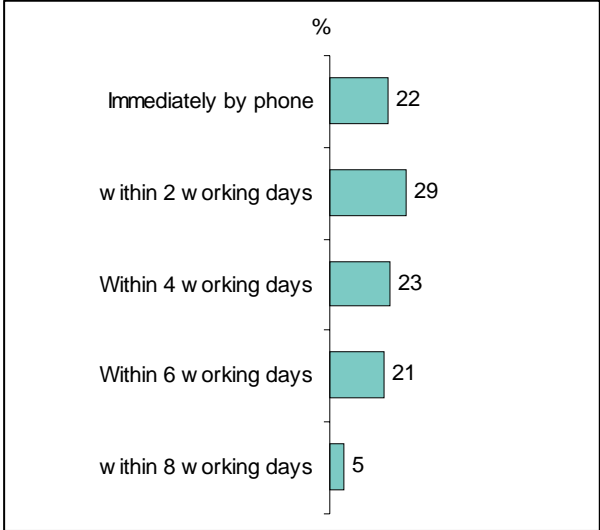


Three in ten businesses also found 10 working days an unacceptable length of time to wait for a response to a complaint. Half suggested an immediate response or within two working days as an acceptable timeframe for responding to complaints with the vast majority seeking a response within 6 working days.

Chart 4.20: Preferred response time for replying to complaints (businesses)

Base: All businesses in the random sample considering the standard relating to complaints being fully answered within 10 working days to be unacceptable (116)

Q: What standard would be acceptable?



VIEW OF COMPENSATION LEVELS

Consumers were advised of the current compensation levels available to them in the event of a GDN not meeting certain standards. They were then asked to rate whether the compensation amount was very good, reasonable, not quite acceptable or totally unacceptable.

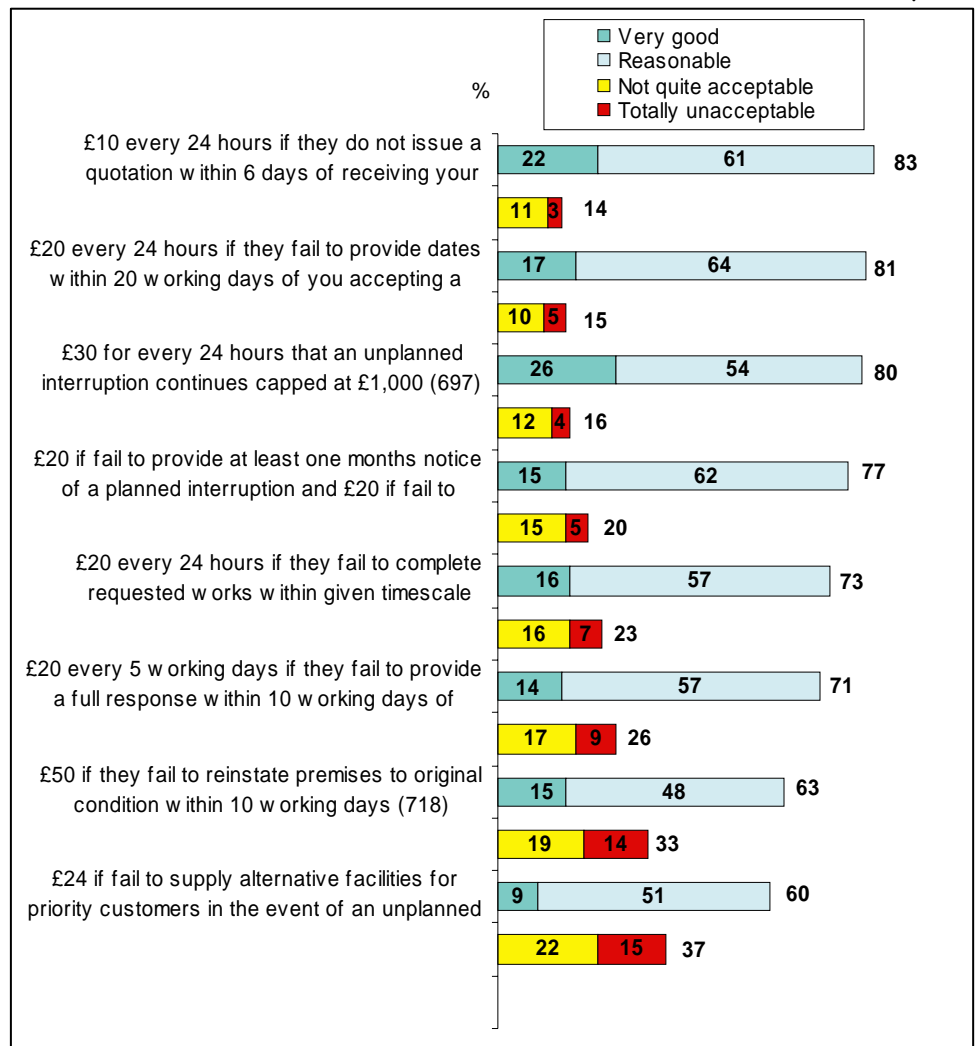
Domestic consumers find the levels of compensation by and large reasonable except for failing to supply alternative heating and cooking facilities for priority consumers (£24) and for failing to reinstate premises within 10 working days of completing works (£50).

Those experiencing a recent gas event gave similar responses except those who had made a complaint. Complainants were significantly more likely to find the proposed compensation level of £20 for failing to meet the standard unacceptable (50% when compared to 26% in the random sample).

Chart 4.21: Views of compensation levels among consumers

Base: All consumers in the random sample answering for each standard

Q: What do you think about the following level of compensation available to you in the event of the gas distributor failing to meet this standard?



NB: Respondents who answered "Don't Know" are not shown in chart.

Just over a third (36%) of consumers find the £24 compensation payment for failing to supply alternative heating and cooking facilities to priority consumers unacceptable. Most of these consumers suggested payments of £50 or more.

Half of consumers finding £50 unacceptable for failure to reinstate premises promptly suggested between £100 and £250 instead.

Table 4.22: Preferred levels of payment among those consumers finding current compensation levels unacceptable.

Base: All consumers in the random sample finding compensation unacceptable

Q: What level of payment would be acceptable?

£24 if the GDN fails to supply alternative facilities for priority consumers in the event of an unplanned interruption
 (Base: 255)

£30-£40	13%
£50	38%
£60-£70	5%
More than £70	27%
Don't know	17%

£50 if the GDN fails to reinstate premises to original condition within 10 working days
 (Base: 238)

£60-£90	5%
£100	31%
£100-£250	22%
More than £250	13%
Don't know	29%

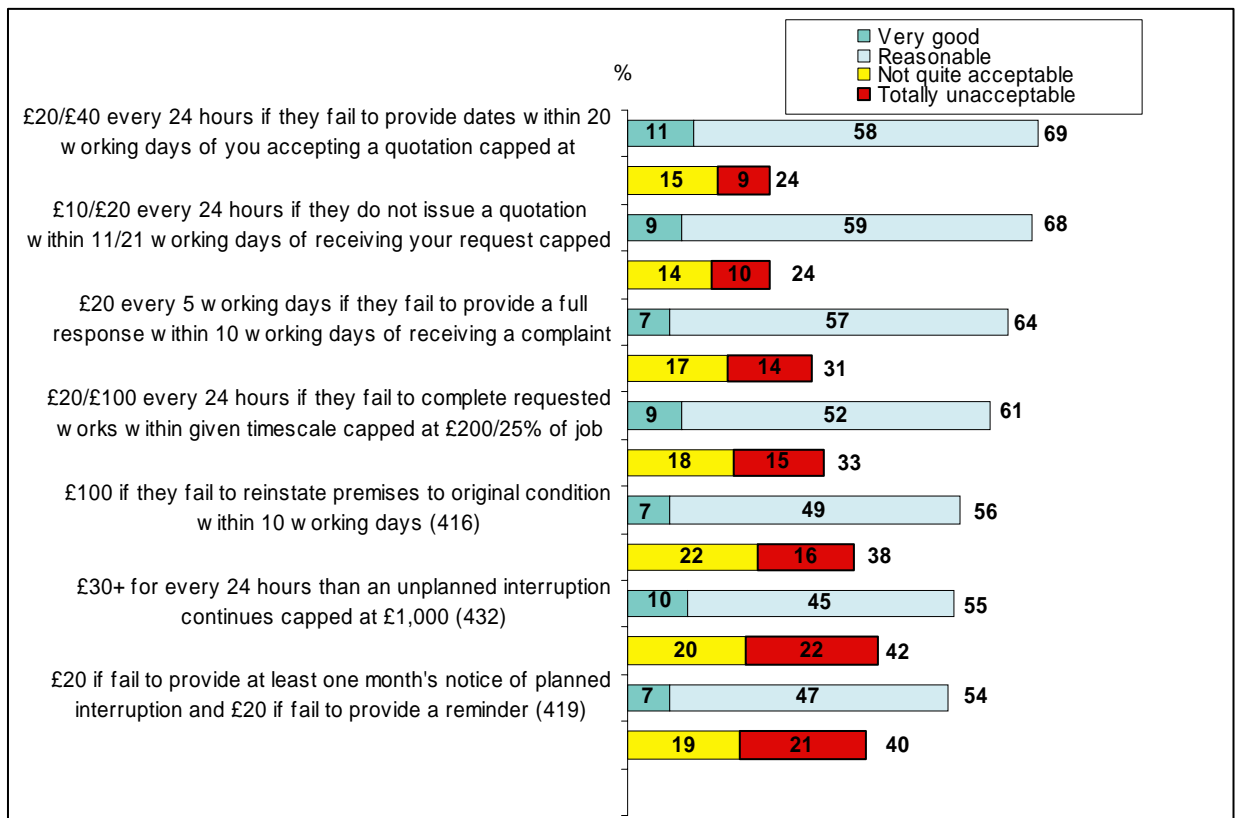
Businesses were less satisfied than domestic consumers with the levels of compensation payments in the event that GDNs fail to meet certain service standards. Those compensation levels that were least acceptable to business consumers were:

- £20 if fail to provide notice of a planned interruption;
- £30* for every 24 hours that an unplanned interruption continues;
- £100 if fail to reinstate premises to original condition after works

Chart 4.23: Views of compensation levels among businesses

Base: All businesses in the random sample answering for each standard (circa 420)

Q: What do you think about the following level of compensation available to you in the event of the gas distributor failing to meet this standard?



* The compensation amount applicable to consumers (£30) was also tested for businesses, despite their current compensation amount being higher (£50). A higher level of acceptance would therefore be expected.

Many of the business consumers finding the current compensation payment of £50 per 24 hours an unplanned interruption continues unacceptable suggested £100 or more.

For failure to provide advance notice of a planned interruption, amounts between £100 and £250 were suggested instead of the current £20 compensation payment.

For failure to reinstate premises within 10 working days, the most often mentioned compensation amount was £500 instead of the £100 current payment.

It is clear that some businesses sought compensation amounts which would cover their 'out of pocket' costs incurred rather than payment amount which recognise the inconvenience caused.

Table 4.24: Preferred levels of payment among those businesses finding current compensation levels unacceptable

Base: All businesses in the random sample finding compensation unacceptable

Q: What level of payment would be acceptable?

£30 for every 24 hours than an unplanned interruption continues

(Base: 180)

£50-£90	11%
£100	18%
£150 or more	43%
Don't know	28%

£20 if the GDN fails to provide at least one month's notice of a planned interruption and £20 if fail to provide a reminder

(Base: 169)

£60-£90	19%
£100	17%
£100 - £250	2%
More than £250	33%
Don't know	29%

£100 if the GDN fails to reinstate premises within 10 working days

(Base: 158)

£110-£190	2%
£200-£490	19%
£500	24%
More than £500	18%
Don't know	37%

SOCIAL ROLE OF GDNS

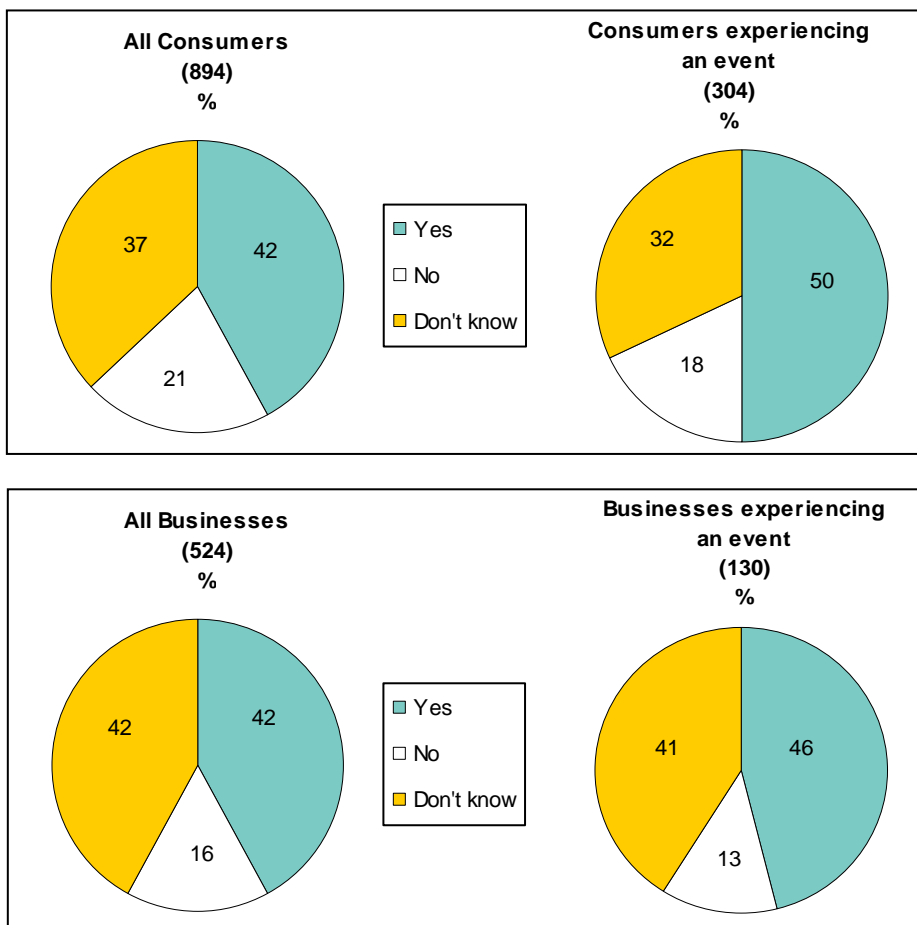
In this final section we look at domestic and business consumers’ views of GDNs’ contribution to society and the environment.

On balance twice as many consumers believe the GDNs make a positive contribution to the environment as believe they don’t.

The proportion seeing a positive environmental contribution rises to half amongst those who have experienced a recent event.

Chart 4.25: View about GDNs’ environmental contribution
 Base: All in the random sample

Q: Do you think that the gas distributors make a positive environmental contribution?



Those who did not think the GDNs make a positive environmental contribution were asked how they could do so. Many could not think of anything but those who could suggested more information on environmental issues, less disruption to roads and paths, greater use of renewable energy and encouraging people to use less gas.

Table 4.26: Ideas of how GTs could make a positive environmental contribution

Base: All who don't think that the gas distributors make a positive environmental contribution

Q: How could the gas distributors make a positive environmental contribution?

	Consumers (782) %	Businesses (402) %
More/better/updated information on environmental issues	6	4
Better organisation/less interruption to paths/roads	3	3
Move towards renewable energy	3	3
Be more energy efficient/encourage people to use less gas	2	2

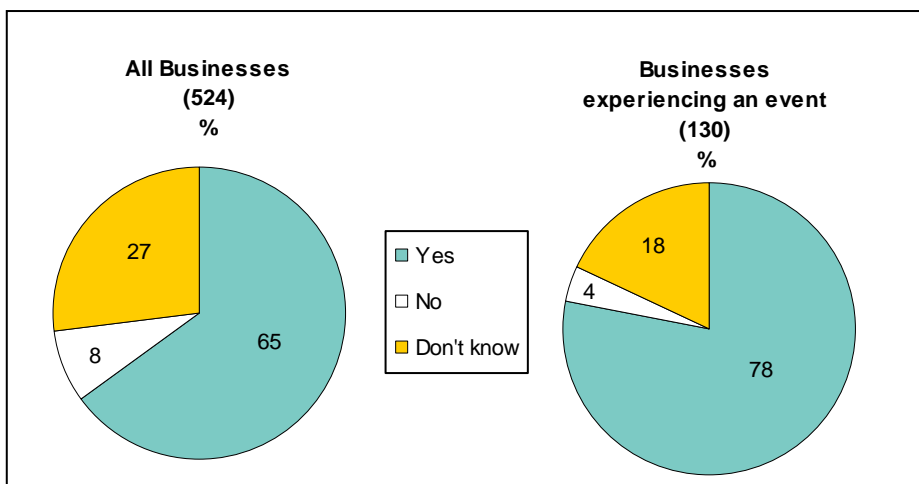
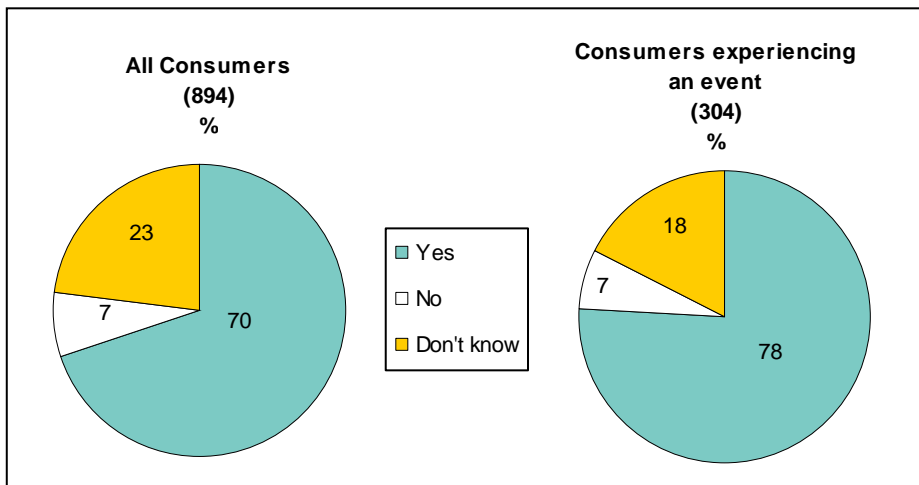
Seven in ten consumers and two thirds of businesses believe that GDNs have suitable social responsibilities. This rises to almost eight in ten amongst those who have recently experienced an event.

The vast majority of consumers who did not consider GDNs to have suitable social responsibilities were unable to suggest ways this could be improved. A few suggested better communication regarding the role and responsibilities of GDNs, some suggested that work should be carried out effectively and efficiently with prompt reinstatement while others wanted a reduction in gas prices.

Chart 4.27: View on whether GTs have suitable social responsibilities

Base: All in the random sample

Q: Do you believe that gas distributors have suitable social responsibilities?



Half of consumers and six in ten businesses could not think of how GDNs could be a better neighbour.

Some suggestions included: improving communication with consumers; for bills to be reduced and prices kept down, and suggestions regarding how the environment can be protected.

Table 4.28: How could the gas industry be a better neighbour

Base: All

Q: How could the gas industry be a better neighbour?

	Consumers (1,400) %	Businesses (700) %
Reduce bills/keep costs down	13	9
Inform people about their plans	7	9
More/better communication	5	6
Inform people about what they are doing for the environment/educate about environmental care	4	4
Listen to consumers/ask them what they want	3	3

5 CONCLUSIONS

The qualitative stage of this project highlighted that domestic and smaller business consumers knew little or nothing of the role of GDNs. Additionally, some much larger organisations also had only a limited understanding of the structure of the industry and the role and responsibilities of GDNs.

Most domestic and business consumers were unaware of the scope or details of any of the service standards that apply to GDNs. Where existing standards are in place, in some instances peoples' expectations lagged behind GDNs' actual performance.

Consumers expressed a desire to be informed about their 'rights' and these service standards and saw their gas bill, or relevant websites, as the most convenient way to inform them.

Consumers' experiences of interruptions to their gas supply had generally been good. When such events were planned, people were given sufficient notice and work was done within the advised timescales. The main criticism related to the quality and timing of associated reinstatement works.

Consumers' experiences in arranging new connections or alterations to supply were less satisfactory. The main areas of concern were the time, administrative burden and costs involved in arranging and completing the works. The workmanship of the GDNs however was rarely an issue.

Both business and domestic consumers were concerned that it was sometimes difficult to contact the person on site who was in charge of the gas works.

There was little consensus as to how compensation could or should work when service standards were not met. However a common expectation was that a reduction in their bill was an appropriate form of compensation.

Business consumers were more likely than domestic consumers to suggest that compensation should match any financial loss they may have incurred. This may be because some business consumers may face demands for compensation from their own consumers as a result of a gas interruption.

The quantitative survey confirmed most of the findings from the qualitative stage. In particular that there is low awareness of:

- GDNs, their identity, role and responsibilities;
- existing service standards;
- entitlement to compensation; and
- Priority Services Register.

Gas consumers did want to be informed of their 'rights' and applicable standards, especially when works were being planned in their area. A leaflet with the bill was the preferred channel for communicating this information.

Gas leaks and new connections/service alterations were the most common events experienced by consumers and businesses in the last year. GDNs performed well against existing standards however business consumers were less satisfied with performance in:

- giving information about unplanned interruptions within 12 hours;
- restoring supply within 24 hours of an unplanned interruption;
- answering complaints within 10 days.

Overall however, satisfaction with GDNs' performance in the event of interruptions was high.

The most important services standards for consumers and businesses alike were:

- attending uncontrolled gas leaks within an hour;
- answering emergency calls within 30 seconds;
- provision of alternative heating and cooking facilities to priority consumers (domestic consumers only);
- speedy restoration of supply in the event of an unplanned interruption;
- prior notice of a planned interruption; and
- requested works being completed on time.

Consumers and businesses are generally satisfied with Ofgem's standards with eight in ten finding most of them very good or reasonable.

However, a quarter of businesses want more exacting standards for:

- giving information about unplanned interruption (they would prefer information within 6 hours instead of 12);
- reinstatement of property after works (within 2 working days instead of 10) confirming findings from the qualitative stage;
- fully answering complaints (within 4-6 working days instead of 10).

Domestic consumers are satisfied with most levels of compensation available in the event of certain standards not being met. Businesses were less satisfied and suggested compensation between 3 and 5 times greater than current payment amounts. They expected that compensation should cover the costs they incurred.

Twice as many consumers and businesses believe GDNs make a positive contribution to the environment than not and large majorities of those consumers experiencing recent events believe that GDNs take their social responsibilities seriously.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The most important requirement is for GDNs to keep consumers informed, and try to resolve problems as speedily as possible.
- GDNs should be more proactive during an ‘event’, in particular improving their communication and notifying consumers of any changes to an announced or agreed programme of work.
- Improve the reliability of schedules, timing and cost for work involving new connections and alterations.
- Endeavour to complete reinstatement works more quickly after the conclusion of gas-related works.
- GDNs should consider providing an additional ‘imminent’ notification to consumers just before a planned interruption to compliment the earlier notice provided.
- Consider introducing more exacting standards for businesses with regards to giving information about unplanned interruptions, reinstating property and fully answering complaints.

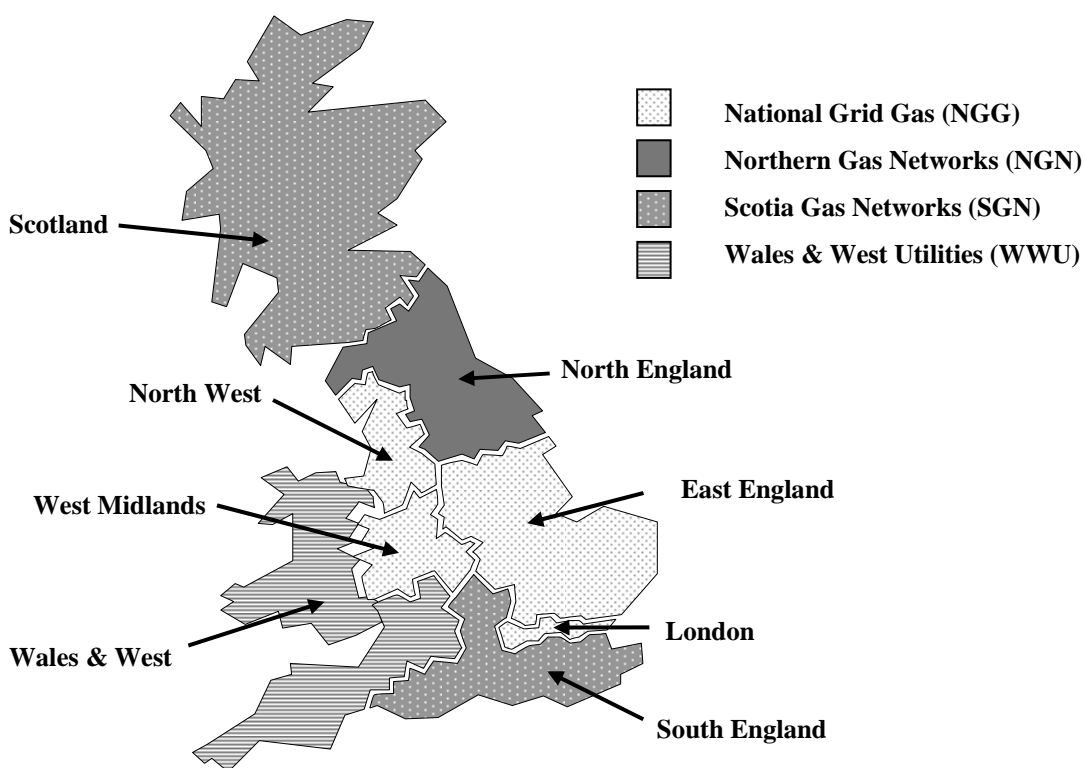
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTION TO THE GDNS

There are eight Gas Distribution Networks (GDNs), which are owned by four companies – National Grid Gas, Northern Gas Networks, Scotia Gas Networks and Wales & West Utilities. Figure A1 below shows the eight networks and their owners.

Figure A1: Map of the Gas Distribution Networks and their owners



NATIONAL GRID GAS (NGG)

National Grid Gas (NGG) owns four GDNs – North West (NW), East England (EoE), West Midlands (WM) and London (Lon).

These four networks are the GDNs that NGG elected to retain when it conducted its sale of gas distribution networks. Prior to the sale, NGG owned all eight GDNs.

The GDNs owned by NGG extend from London (north of the Thames) through eastern and central England, and as far north as the Lake District.

NORTHERN GAS NETWORKS (NGN)

Northern Gas Networks (NGN) owns the North England GDN. NGN purchased North England GDN from NGG on 1 June 2005.

North England GDN extends south from the Scottish border to South Yorkshire.

SCOTIA GAS NETWORKS (SGN)

Scotia Gas Networks (SGN) owns two GDNs, South of England and Scotland. Scotia purchased South England GDN and Scotland GDN from NGG on 1 June 2005.

South England GDN extends from Milton Keynes, to Dover in the east and Lyme Regis in the west, including London boroughs to the south of the River Thames.

Scotland GDN covers Scotland, which is the largest GDN by area but the smallest in terms of Regulatory Asset Value. It includes five independent networks which are not connected to the distribution system due to their location.

WALES AND WEST UTILITIES (WWU)

Wales and West Utilities (WWU) owns Wales and West GDN. WWU purchased Wales and West GDN from NGG on 1 June 2005.

Wales and West GDN encompasses Wales and a large part of south-west England from Swindon to the tip of Cornwall.

APPENDIX B

COMPOSITION OF FOCUS GROUPS WITH DOMESTIC CONSUMERS

Consumer focus group details			
Area	Social class	Age group	Date held
Newcastle	C2DE	41-64	16 October 2006
Stockport	ABC1	41-64	17 October 2006
Birmingham	C2DE	21-40	17 October 2006
London	ABC1	21-40	19 October 2006
Norfolk	ABC1	41-64	24 October 2006
Scottish Borders	C2DE	41-64	25 October 2006
Somerset	C2DE	21-40	26 October 2006
Maidstone	ABC1	21-40	26 October 2006

- Eight separate locations were chosen so that a focus group was held in each GDN area.
- We recruited consumers to give a wide range of ages and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- An explanation of each of the social classes represented in the focus groups is included in the table below:

Social class definitions
A
<p>Approximately 3% of the total population.</p> <p>Professional people, very senior managers in business or commerce or top-level civil servants.</p> <p>Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows.</p>
B
<p>Approximately 20% of the total population.</p> <p>Middle management executives in large organisations, with appropriate qualifications.</p> <p>Principle officers in local government and civil service.</p> <p>Top management of owners of small business concerns, educational and service establishments.</p> <p>Retired people, previously grade B, and their widows.</p>
C1
<p>Approximately 28% of the total population.</p> <p>Junior management, owners of small establishments, and all others in non-manual positions.</p> <p>Jobs in this group have very varied responsibilities and educational requirements.</p> <p>Retired people, previously grade C1, and their widows.</p>
C2
<p>Approximately 21% of the total population.</p> <p>All skilled manual workers, and those manual workers with responsibility for other people.</p> <p>Retired people, previously grade C2, with pensions from their job.</p> <p>Widows, if receiving pensions from their late husband's job.</p>
D
<p>Approximately 18% of the total population.</p> <p>Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, apprentices and trainees to skilled workers.</p> <p>Retired people, previously grade C2, with pensions from their job.</p> <p>Widows, if receiving pensions from their late husband's job.</p>
E
<p>Approximately 10% of the total population.</p> <p>All those entirely dependant on the state long-term, through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons. Those unemployed for a period exceeding six months.</p>

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF EXISTING STANDARDS OF SERVICE

This Appendix summarises the key standards of service applicable to GDNs. Two different types of service standard frameworks are summarised: Guaranteed Standards of Performance; and Overall Standards of Performance. These standards of performance frameworks were first introduced in April 2002.

GUARANTEED STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

The Gas Act 1986 allows the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority to make regulations for guaranteed standards of performance, with the consent of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. Guaranteed standards of performance set service levels that must be met in each individual case. If a GDN fails to provide the level of service required, it must make a payment to the consumer affected, subject to certain exemptions.

GUARANTEED STANDARDS 1-3

GS1. Supply restoration	If you are domestic consumer and your gas supply is interrupted as a result of a failure of, fault in or damage to your GDN's pipeline system you will be reconnected within 24 hours of the GDN first becoming aware of the problem.	If the GDN fails you will receive a payment of £30. You will also receive a further £30 for each additional complete 24 hours you are without gas up to a maximum of £1,000.
	Note for GS1: If your gas supply is interrupted as a result of damage to the GDN's pipeline system by a third party or water ingress into the pipeline, you are entitled to similar payments but under alternative arrangements. Similar compensation arrangements exist for non-domestic consumers (under the Uniform Network Code) who receive payments of £50 per 24 hours if their annual gas consumption does not exceed 73,200kWhs. Where their annual consumption exceeds this the payment is capacity based.	
GS2. Reinstatement of consumer's premises	If the GDN initiates work on your premises, your premises will be permanently reinstated within 10 working days of the completion of the engineering work.	If the GDN fails you will receive a payment of £50 if you are a domestic consumer, and £50 for each succeeding period of 5 working days thereafter. If you are a non-domestic consumer the payment will be £100 for the failure and £100 for each succeeding period of 5 working days thereafter.
GS3. Heating and cooking facilities for priority domestic consumers	If you are registered on your supplier's Priority Service Register and your gas supply is interrupted, you will be provided with alternative heating and cooking facilities within 4 hours, or if more than 250 consumers are affected, within 8 hours. (8pm-8am excluded)	If the GDN fails you will receive a payment of £24.

GUARANTEED STANDARDS 4-8

GS4. Provision of standard quotations (up to 275kWh)	If you requested a standard quotation from your GDN for a new connection or an alteration to an existing connection up to and including a rate of flow of 275kWh, the GDN will issue it within 6 working days.	If the GDN fails you will receive a payment of £10 and an additional £10 for each succeeding working day up to the quotation sum or £250 whichever is lowest.
GS5. Provision of non-standard quotations (up to 275kWh)	If you requested a non-standard quotation from your GDN for a new connection or an alteration to an existing connection up to and including a rate of flow of 275kWh, the GDN will issue it within 11 working days.	If the GDN fails you will receive a payment of £10 and an additional £10 for each succeeding working day up to the quotation sum or £250 whichever is lowest.
GS6. Provision of non-standard quotations (greater than 275kWh)	If you request a non-standard quotation from your GDN for a new connection or an alteration to an existing connection exceeding a rate of flow of 275kWh, the GDN will issue it within 21 working days.	If the GDN fails you will receive a payment of £20 and an additional £20 for each succeeding working day up to the quotation sum or £500 whichever is lowest.
Note for GS4, GS5 & GS6: these standards do not apply where the information you provided to your GDN was incorrect or incomplete or where consents are required from third parties.		
GS7. Accuracy of quotations	If the quotation is found to be inaccurate in accordance with the GDN’s published accuracy scheme, the GDN will reissue you with a correct quotation and any overcharge paid will be refunded. You can contact your GDN on the details provided for further information on their accuracy scheme.	If the quotation is found to be inaccurate in accordance with the GDN’s published accuracy scheme then you will be entitled to payment(s) under GS4, GS5 or GS6 until an accurate quote is issued.
GS8. Responses to land enquiries	If you ask for a Land Enquiry from your GDN in relation to a new connection or an alteration to an existing connection the GDN will issue a response within 5 working days.	If the GDN fails you will receive a payment of £40 and an additional £40 per working day thereafter up to a maximum of £250 for connections up to and including 275kWh and £500 for connections exceeding 275kWh.

GUARANTEED STANDARDS 9-12

GS9. Provision of commencement & substantial completion dates (up to 275kWh)	If the GDN receives an accepted quotation for a new connection or an alteration to an existing connection up to and including a rate of flow of 275kWh, it will offer a date for commencement and substantial completion within 20 working days.	If the GDN fails you will receive a payment of £20 and an additional £20 per working day thereafter up to the quotation sum or £250 whichever is lowest.
GS10. Provision of commencement & substantial completion dates (greater than 275kWh)	If the GDN receives an accepted quotation for a new connection or an alteration to an existing connection exceeding a rate of flow of 275kWh, it will offer a date for commencement and substantial completion within 20 working days.	If the GDN fails you will receive a payment of £40 and an additional £40 per working day thereafter up to the quotation sum or £500 whichever is lowest.
GS11. Substantial completion by agreed date	Where the GDN has agreed a substantial completion date for a new connection or an alteration to an existing connection it will meet that date. However, this does not necessarily mean that gas will be available for use inside the premises as the fitting of a meter, which will enable the flow of gas, must be arranged by you and your chosen gas supplier.	If the GDN fails, you will receive a payment related to the value of the contract and a payment for each working day thereafter up to a maximum level.
GS12. Notification and payments under the Guaranteed Standards.	Where a GDN has failed any of the above Guaranteed Standards of Performance they will write to inform you (or your supplier) and make the payment within 20 working days of compensation becoming due.	If the GDN fails you will receive a payment of £20 in addition to any payments made under the other Guaranteed Standards.

OVERALL STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

The Gas Act 1986 also allows the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority to determine overall standards of performance for GDNs. Overall standards of performance set minimum average levels of performance in key service areas. As such, there is no compensation to the consumer in the event of an individual failure to meet these standards.

OVERALL STANDARDS 1-5

OS1. Answering telephone calls	Telephone calls to the National Gas Emergency Service (which operates 24 hours a day), the general enquiry line and the meter point reference number helpline (during the hours which they operate) shall be answered within 30 seconds of the call being connected.
OS2. Notifying consumers of planned supply interruptions	For planned interruptions to the gas supply the GDN will provide written notification to each customer at least 5 working days in advance.
OS3. Informing consumers during unplanned supply interruptions	<p>For unplanned supply interruptions which are expected to last over 24 hours a GDN shall:</p> <p>a) Where up to 250 premises are affected, notify consumers of the expected programme for reconnection (including the expected date of reconnection) within 12 hours of it having knowledge of the interruption; and</p> <p>b) Where more than 250 premises are affected, provide public announcements (for example, using local public address broadcasts, and local radio, television and press) throughout the area affected describing the expected programme for reconnection (including the expected date for reconnection) within 12 hours of it having knowledge of the interruption.</p> <p>c) Provide a progress report and revised information on the expected date of reconnection after each succeeding period of 24 hours from the original announcement unless notification has previously been given.</p>
OS4. Responding to complaints	Where a GDN receives a written complaint relating to its transportation business a response is required, the GDN shall provide an oral or written response within 5 working days of receipt. Where the response to a written or oral complaint is not a substantive reply, the GDN will provide a substantive reply within 10 working days of receipt.
OS5. Responding to gas emergencies	<p>Where a GDN receives a report of a gas escape or other gas emergency, including a significant escape of carbon monoxide or other hazardous situations, it shall attend as quickly as possible within the following timescales:-</p> <p>a) All uncontrolled escapes/gas emergencies within 1 hour;</p> <p>b) All controlled escapes/gas emergencies within 2 hours.</p>

APPENDIX D – QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

RED DENOTES WHERE THE BUSINESS SURVEY IS DIFFERENT FROM THE DOMESTIC SURVEY

INTRO Good %POD%. I am from FDS an independent market research company. We are conducting a survey among businesses and organisations using gas on behalf of OFGEM, the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets about gas distribution, the supply of gas to businesses and organisations.

Could I speak to the person there who would deal with any problems with the gas supply e.g. an interruption to service or a gas leak?

IF NOT RESPONSIBLE PERSON, ASK TO SPEAK TO ONE AND REPEAT INTRO

Yes - Continue (Type "exit" for appointment/refusal/Do not have gas).....1

INTR02 Good %POD%. I am from FDS an independent market research company. We are conducting a survey among businesses and organisations using gas on behalf of OFGEM, the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets about gas distribution, the supply of gas to businesses and organisations.

Can I just check that you are the person there who would deal with the gas distributor in the event of a gas emergency, an interruption to your supply or a request for any work to be done affecting the gas supply?

IF NOT RESPONSIBLE PERSON, ASK TO SPEAK TO RESPONSIBLE PERSON AND REPEAT INTR02

Yes - Continue (Type "exit" for appointment/refusal/Do not have gas).....1

QSIZE Firstly, how many people are employed at the establishment where you work?

Less than 5
5-
10-24
25-49
50-99
100-199
200+
REF - CLOSE

QCONSUM What do you pay typically for gas each year?

Up to £500
£501-£1000
£1001-£1500
£1501-£2000
Over £2000
DK

Q1 Firstly, do you know who owns, operates and maintains the large gas pipes which deliver gas to your establishment?

(14) SP
Yes.....1
No.....2

Q2 Who is your local gas distributor? (15) SP

National Grid Gas.....	1
Scotia Gas Networks/Scotland Gas Networks/Southern Gas Networks.....	2
Northern Gas Networks.....	3
Wales & West Utilities.....	4
Transco.....	5
Other (specify)	0

(16-25)

Specified Other (15) SP

Don't know.....Y

Q3 The name of the company who owns, operates and maintains the large gas pipes that deliver gas to your **establishment** is [+X+]. This company is called a gas distribution network. Until June 2005 they were part of Transco. Have you heard of [+X+]? (26) SP

Yes.....	1
No.....	2

~~DELETE~~ Q3B Gas suppliers (such as British Gas, NPOWER and EDF) have a list of domestic customers who have greater needs if there is an incident such as an interruption to their gas supply. Are you aware of the priority services register? (27) SP

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
Don't know.....	Y

~~DELETE~~ Q3C Who do you view as priority customers? (28) MP

Elderly people.....	1
People with special needs (specify).....	2
Young children.....	3
Other (specify).....	4
Businesses (specify type).....	5
Don't know.....	Y

~~DELETE~~ Q3D People with special needs (specify) (29-38)

Q3E Other (specify) (39-48)

~~DELETE~~ Q3F Business (specify type) (49-58)

~~DELETE~~ Q3G Are you on your gas suppliers priority register? (59) SP

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
Don't know.....	Y

Q4 Which of the following has your **company/ organisation** experienced in the last 12 months? (60) MP

Gas leak/emergency.....	1
Interruption to gas supply.....	2
Gas connections/service alterations.....	3
None of the above.....	4

GO TO Q63CON

Q5a Did you or someone else there make a call to report the gas leak/ emergency?
 (61) SP
 Yes, ME.....1
 Yes, SOMEONE ELSE.....2
 No.....3
 DK

IF Yes, ME CONTINUE, OTHERWISE GO TO Q10

Q5 Who did you call to report your gas leak/emergency?
 (61) SP
 Gas distributor.....1
 Transco.....2
 Gas supplier.....3
 Local authority.....4
 Other (specify) 0

 (62-71)
 Specified Other
 (61) SP
 No answer.....X
 Don't know.....Y

Q6 Did you call the gas emergency number 0800 111 999?
 (72) SP
 Yes.....1
 No.....2 GO TO Q10
 Don't know.....Y GO TO Q10

Q7 How long did it take to get through to an operator?
 (73) SP
 Up to 5 seconds.....1
 Up to 10 seconds.....2
 Up to 15 seconds.....3
 Up to 20 seconds.....4
 Up to 25 seconds.....5
 Up to 30 seconds.....6
 Up to 45 seconds.....7
 Up to one minute.....8
 More than one minute.....9
 (74) SP
 Unable to get through.....0 GO TO Q10
 Can't remember.....1

Q8 How satisfied were you with the length of time it took to get through to an operator..? READ OUT
 (75) SP
 Very satisfied.....1
 Fairly satisfied.....2
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4
 Very dissatisfied.....5
 Don't know.....Y

Q9 How satisfied were you with the information and safety advice you were given by the operator? READ OUT
 (76) SP
 Very satisfied.....1
 Fairly satisfied.....2
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4
 Very dissatisfied.....5
 Don't know.....Y

Q10 Did you, or someone else there, turn off the meter control valve?
 (77) SP
 Yes.....1
 No.....2
 Don't know.....Y

Q11	How long did it take the gas engineer to turn up[+Y+]? (78) SP	
	Within 15 minutes.....1	
	Within 30 minutes.....2	
	Within 45 minutes.....3	
	Within 1 hour.....4	
	Within 1 1/2 hours.....5	
	Within 2 hours.....6	
	More than 2 hours (specify).....7	
	No engineer turned up.....8	GO TO Q14
	Don't know.....Y	
<hr/>		
Q11N	More than 2 hours (specify) - HOURS	Card: 07 (6-7)
	2+ _____	(8-16)
<hr/>		
Q12	How satisfied were you with the time taken for the engineer to turn up? READ OUT	
	(17) SP	
	Very satisfied.....1	GO TO Q14
	Fairly satisfied.....2	GO TO Q14
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3	GO TO Q14
	Fairly dissatisfied.....4	GO TO Q13
	Very dissatisfied.....5	GO TO Q13
	Don't know.....Y	GO TO Q14
<hr/>		
Q13	What would have been an appropriate response time for the engineer to turn up?	
	(18) SP	
	Within 15 minutes.....1	
	Within 30 minutes.....2	
	Within 45 minutes.....3	
	Within 1 hour.....4	
	Within 1 1/2 hours.....5	
	Within 2 hours.....6	
	More than 2 hours (specify).....7	
	Don't know.....Y	
<hr/>		
Q13N	More than 2 hours (specify) - HOURS	
	2+ _____	(19-27)
<hr/>		
Q14	Were you told not to use an appliance or that additional work would be needed?	
	(28) MP	
	Yes - told not to use appliance.....1	
	Yes - told additional work would be needed (SPECIFY).....2	
	No, neither.....3	
	Don't know.....Y	
<hr/>		
Q14O	Yes - told additional work would be needed (SPECIFY)	
	(29-38)	
<hr/>		
Q15	Did the engineer disconnect any appliances? IF YES PROBE FOR WHICH APPLIANCES THE ENGINEER DISCONNECTED	
	(39) MP	
	Yes - boiler.....1	
	Yes - gas cooker/hob.....2	
	Yes - gas fire.....3	
	Yes - gas water heater.....4	
	Yes - any other gas appliance (SPECIFY).....5	
	Yes - unspecified.....6	
	No.....7	
	Don't know.....Y	
<hr/>		

Q16 Did the engineer provide a list of Corgi engineers or provide the appliance helpline telephone number? (40) MP

Yes, list of engineers.....1
 Yes, helpline number.....2
 No.....3
 Don't know.....Y

Q17 Which of these was the reason for the interruption to your gas supply? READ OUT (41) MP

Faulty boiler or equipment **at your establishment**.....1
~~DELETE~~ Supply cut off because there was no money/tokens in the meter.....2
 Supply cut off by supplier because of late payment.....3
 Planned interruption to your gas supply that you were told about to allow work in your **area** (eg replacement of mains).....4
 Unplanned interruption which you were not warned about which affected you're **area**5

Q18 Were you given advanced notification that your supply would be interrupted? (42) SP

Yes.....1 GO TO Q19
 No.....2 GO TO Q20
 Don't know.....Y GO TO Q20

Q19 How were you notified? (43) MP

By letter.....1
 By telephone.....2
 In person.....3
 Other (specify) 0
 (44-53)

Specified Other (43) MP
 Don't know.....Y

Q20 How far in advance were you notified? (54) SP

Same day.....1
 1-2 days.....2
 3-4 days.....3
 5-7 days (about a week).....4
 8-14 days (about 2 weeks).....5
 Up to a month.....6
 More than a month (specify).....7
 Don't know.....Y

Q20N More than a month (specify) - MONTHS _____ (55-63)
 1+

Q21 How satisfied were you with the notice you were given? READ OUT (64) SP

Very satisfied.....1 GO TO Q23
 Fairly satisfied.....2 GO TO Q23
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3 GO TO Q23
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4 GO TO Q22
 Very dissatisfied.....5 GO TO Q22
 Don't know.....Y GO TO Q23

Q22	How much notice would you have liked?	(65)	SP
	Same day.....	1	
	1-2 days.....	2	
	3-4 days.....	3	
	5-7 days (about a week).....	4	
	8-14 days (about 2 weeks).....	5	
	Up to a month.....	6	
	More than a month (specify).....	7	
	Don't know.....	Y	
<hr/>			
Q22N	More than a month (specify) - MONTHS		
	1+ _____	(66-74)	
<hr/>			
Q23	Were you issued a reminder nearer the time of the interruption?	(75)	SP
	Yes.....	1	GO TO Q24
	No.....	2	GO TO Q26
	Don't know.....	Y	GO TO Q26
<hr/>			
Q24	How were you notified?	(76)	SP
	By letter/card.....	1	
	By telephone.....	2	
	In person.....	3	
	Other (specify)	0	
			Card: 08 (6-7)
		(8-17)	
	Specified Other		Card: 07 (6-7)
		(76)	SP
	Don't know.....	Y	
<hr/>			
Q25	How far in advance were you given the reminder?		Card: 08 (6-7)
		(18)	SP
	Same day.....	1	
	1-2 days.....	2	
	3-4 days.....	3	
	5-7 days (about a week).....	4	
	8-14 days (about 2 weeks).....	5	
	More than 2 weeks.....	6	
	Don't know.....	Y	
<hr/>			
Q26	Would you have liked a reminder?	(19)	SP
	Yes.....	1	GO TO Q27
	No.....	2	GO TO Q28
	Don't know.....	Y	GO TO Q28
<hr/>			
Q27	How far in advance would you have liked the reminder?	(20)	SP
	Same day.....	1	
	1-2 days.....	2	
	3-4 days.....	3	
	5-7 days (about a week).....	4	
	8-14 days (about 2 weeks).....	5	
	More than 2 weeks.....	6	
	Don't know.....	Y	
<hr/>			
Q28	Were you told how long you would be without gas?	(21)	SP
	Yes.....	1	
	No.....	2	
	Don't know.....	Y	
<hr/>			

- | | | |
|-------|--|-----------|
| Q29 | What did you do when you found that you had no gas? | (22) MP |
| | Checked with neighbours1 | |
| | Phoned supplier.....2 | |
| | Phoned Gas Distribution Network.....3 | |
| | Phoned gas emergency number.....4 | |
| | Phoned local authority.....5 | |
| | Other (specify)0 | |
| | (23-32) | |
| | Specified Other | (22) MP |
| | Don't know.....Y | |
| <hr/> | | |
| Q30 | Was the interruption specific to your establishment or did it also affect your neighbours? | (33) SP |
| | Just my establishment.....1 | |
| | Affected neighbours.....2 | |
| | Don't know.....Y | |
| <hr/> | | |
| X6 | Did you call the gas emergency number 0800 111 999? | (34) SP |
| | Yes.....1 | |
| | No.....2 | GO TO X10 |
| | Don't know.....Y | GO TO X10 |
| <hr/> | | |
| X7 | How long did it take to get through to an operator? | (35) SP |
| | Up to 5 seconds.....1 | |
| | Up to 10 seconds.....2 | |
| | Up to 15 seconds.....3 | |
| | Up to 20 seconds.....4 | |
| | Up to 25 seconds.....5 | |
| | Up to 30 seconds.....6 | |
| | Up to 45 seconds.....7 | |
| | Up to one minute.....8 | |
| | More than one minute.....9 | |
| | (36) SP | |
| | Unable to get through.....0 | GO TO X10 |
| | Can't remember.....1 | |
| <hr/> | | |
| X8 | How satisfied were you with the length of time it took to get through to an operator..? READ OUT | (37) SP |
| | Very satisfied.....1 | |
| | Fairly satisfied.....2 | |
| | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3 | |
| | Fairly dissatisfied.....4 | |
| | Very dissatisfied.....5 | |
| | Don't know.....Y | |
| <hr/> | | |
| X9 | How satisfied were you with the information and safety advice you were given by the operator? READ OUT | (38) SP |
| | Very satisfied.....1 | |
| | Fairly satisfied.....2 | |
| | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3 | |
| | Fairly dissatisfied.....4 | |
| | Very dissatisfied.....5 | |
| | Don't know.....Y | |
| <hr/> | | |
| X10 | Did you, or someone else in the household, turn off the meter control valve? | (39) SP |
| | Yes.....1 | |
| | No.....2 | |
| | Don't know.....Y | |

X11 How long did it take the gas engineer to turn up from the time they were called?
(40) SP
Within 15 minutes.....1
Within 30 minutes.....2
Within 45 minutes.....3
Within 1 hour.....4
Within 1 1/2 hours.....5
Within 2 hours.....6
More than 2 hours (specify).....7
No engineer turned up.....8 GO TO X14
Don't know.....Y

X11N More than 2 hours (specify) - HOURS
2+ _____ (41-49)

X12 How satisfied were you with the time taken for the engineer to turn up? READ OUT
(50) SP
Very satisfied.....1 GO TO X14
Fairly satisfied.....2 GO TO X14
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3 GO TO X14
Fairly dissatisfied.....4 GO TO X13
Very dissatisfied.....5 GO TO X13
Don't know.....Y GO TO X14

X13 What would have been an appropriate response time for the engineer to turn up?
(51) SP
Within 15 minutes.....1
Within 30 minutes.....2
Within 45 minutes.....3
Within 1 hour.....4
Within 1 1/2 hours.....5
Within 2 hours.....6
More than 2 hours (specify).....7
Don't know.....Y

X13N More than 2 hours (specify) - HOURS
2+ _____ (52-60)

X14 Were you told not to use an appliance or that additional work would be needed?
(61) MP
Yes - told not to use appliance.....1
Yes - told additional work would be needed (SPECIFY).....2
No, neither.....3
Don't know.....Y

X140 Yes - told additional work would be needed (SPECIFY)
(62-71)

X15 Did the engineer disconnect any appliances? IF YES PROBE FOR WHICH APPLIANCES THE ENGINEER DISCONNECTED
(72) MP
Yes - boiler.....1
Yes - gas cooker/hob.....2
Yes - gas fire.....3
Yes - gas water heater.....4
Yes - any other gas appliance.....5
Yes - unspecified.....6
No.....7
Don't know.....Y

- X16 Did the engineer provide a list of Corgi engineers or provide the appliance helpline telephone number? (73) MP
 Yes, list of engineers.....1
 Yes, helpline number.....2
 No.....3
 Don't know.....Y
-
- Q31 Were you provided with updates once you'd reported your interruption? (74) SP
 Yes.....1 GO TO Q32
 No.....2 GO TO Q36
 Don't know.....Y GO TO Q36
-
- Q32 How were you updated? (75) MP
 By card/letter through door.....1
 By telephone.....2
 In person.....3
 Other (specify) 0
 Specified Other (8-17)
 Don't know.....Y
 Card: 09 (6-7)
 Card: 08 (6-7)
 (75) MP
-
- Q33 How often were you updated? Card: 09 (6-7)
 (18) SP
 Twice a day.....1
 Once a day.....2
 Every other day.....3
 Less often (specify).....4
 Don't know.....Y
-
- Q33N Less often (specify) - DAYS
 2+ _____ (19-27)
-
- Q34 How satisfied were you with the frequency of updates? READ OUT (28) SP
 Very satisfied.....1 GO TO Q36
 Fairly satisfied.....2 GO TO Q36
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3 GO TO Q36
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4 GO TO Q35
 Very dissatisfied.....5 GO TO Q35
 Don't know.....Y GO TO Q36
-
- Q35 How often would you have liked to have been updated? (29) SP
 Twice a day.....1
 Once a day.....2
 Every other day.....3
 Less often (specify).....4
 Don't know.....Y
-
- Q35N Less often (specify) - DAYS
 2+ _____ (30-38)
-
- Q36 Were you offered alternative heating and/or cooking facilities? (39) SP
 Yes - both.....1
 Yes - heating only.....2
 Yes - cooking only.....3

No.....4
 Don't know.....Y

Q37 How long was your gas interrupted for? (40) SP
 Up to 2 hours.....1
 Up to 6 hours.....2
 Up to 12 hours.....3
 Up to 18 hours.....4
 Up to 24 hours.....5
 Up to 36 hours.....6
 Up to 48 hours.....7
 More than 48 hours (specify).....8
 Don't know.....Y

Q37N More than 48 hours (specify) - DAYS _____ (41-49)
 2+

Q38 How satisfied were you with the speed with which they resolved the problem i.e. reinstated the gas supply? READ OUT (50) SP
 Very satisfied.....1
 Fairly satisfied.....2
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4
 Very dissatisfied.....5
 Don't know.....Y

Q39 How satisfied were you with the service provided to you during the interruption? READ OUT (51) SP
 Very satisfied.....1
 Fairly satisfied.....2
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4
 Very dissatisfied.....5
 Don't know.....Y

Q40 Were you told that an engineer would be attending your establishment to reconnect your gas supply? (52) SP
 Yes.....1
 No.....2
 Don't know.....Y

Q41 Was someone there when the engineer first tried to reconnect your supply? (53) SP
 Yes1 GO TO Q45CON
 No.....2
 Don't know.....Y GO TO Q45CON

Q42X How did you contact your gas distributor to arrange connection? ? (54) SP
 By phone.....1
 Didn't contact them.....2
 Other (specify) 0
 Specified Other (55-64)
 Don't know.....Y (54) SP

Q42 Did they leave a contact number for **someone** to call to arrange reconnection?

(65) SP

Yes.....1
 No.....2
 Don't know.....Y

Q42B Was that the number you rang?

(66) SP

Yes.....1
 No.....2
 Don't know.....Y

Q43 How quickly did they attend to reconnect your supply after you contacted them?

(67) SP

Within 1 hour.....1
 Within 2 hours.....2
 Within 4 hours.....3
 Within 6 hours.....4
 Within 8 hours.....5
 Within 10 hours.....6
 More than 10 hours (specify).....7
 Don't know.....Y

Q43N More than 10 hours (specify) - HOURS

48+ _____ (68-76)

Q44 How satisfied were you with the time taken for them to reconnect your gas supply after you contacted them?

(77) SP

Very satisfied.....1
 Fairly satisfied.....2
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4
 Very dissatisfied.....5
 Don't know.....Y

Q45A How many quotations did you obtain for the work to be carried out?

(78) SP

One.....1
 Two.....2
 Three or more.....3
 Don't know.....Y

Q45B Who did you obtain a quotation(s) from for the work to be carried out?

(79) MP

Your gas supplier e.g. British Gas, npower.....1
 Your gas distributor.....2
 A local contractor/Corgi engineer.....3
 Fulcrum Connection.....4
 Other (specify) 0

Card: 10 (6-7)

(8-17)

Specified Other

Card: 09 (6-7)

(79) MP

Don't know.....Y

Q58 How satisfied were you with the time taken to complete reinstatement works? READ OUT

	(41)	SP
Very satisfied.....	1	GO TO Q59V
Fairly satisfied.....	2	GO TO Q59V
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....	3	GO TO Q59V
Fairly dissatisfied.....	4	GO TO Q59
Very dissatisfied.....	5	GO TO Q59
Don't know.....	Y	GO TO Q59V

Q59 How long is acceptable for completion of reinstatement works?

	(42)	SP
Up to 2 days.....	1	
Up to 5 days.....	2	
Up to 1 week.....	3	
Up to 2 weeks.....	4	
More than 2 weeks (specify).....	5	
Don't know.....	Y	

Q59N More than 2 weeks (specify) - WEEKS

2+	_____	(43-51)
----	-------	---------

Q59V Were there any works being carried out on the pavement or road directly outside your premises?

	(52)	SP
Yes.....	1	
No.....	2	GO TO Q60
Don't know	Y	GO TO Q60

IF YES

Q59W Were these works outside your premises carried out on a weekday(s) or a weekend or both?

	(52)	SP
Weekday (s).....	1	
Weekend	2	
Both	3	
Don't know	Y	

Q59X Was access to your business affected by these works directly outside your premises?

	(52)	SP
Yes.....	1	
No.....	2	GO TO Q60
Don't know	Y	GO TO Q60

IF YES

Q60A Did the works make it more difficult for customers to enter the premises?

	(52)	SP
Yes.....	1	
No.....	2	GO TO Q60C
Don't know	Y	GO TO Q60C
Not applicable	X	GO TO Q60C

IF YES

Q60B Did you notice a drop in footfall as a result?

	(52)	SP
Yes, to a great extent.....	1	
Yes, to a small extent.....	2	
No	3	
Don't know.....	Y	

Q60C Did the works make it more difficult for staff to enter the premises?

	(52)	SP
Yes.....	1	
No.....	2	
Don't know	Y	

Q60 How satisfied were you with the communication and information given to you while the job was being done? READ OUT

(52) SP

Very satisfied.....1
 Fairly satisfied.....2
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4
 Very dissatisfied.....5
 Don't know.....Y

Q61 How satisfied were you with the professionalism of the engineers? READ OUT

(53) SP

Very satisfied.....1
 Fairly satisfied.....2
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4
 Very dissatisfied.....5
 Don't know.....Y

Q62 How satisfied were you with overall service provided to you? READ OUT

(54) SP

Very satisfied.....1
 Fairly satisfied.....2
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4
 Very dissatisfied.....5
 Don't know.....Y

Q63 Have you made a complaint by phone or in writing about any issue relating to the repair or replacement of gas pipes, a gas emergency, the laying of a new connection or alteration of an existing gas supply?

(55) SP

Yes.....1
 No.....2 GO TO Q70
 Don't know.....Y GO TO Q70

Q64 How did you complain?

(56) SP

By phone only.....1
 By letter only.....2
 Both.....3
 Don't know.....Y

Q65 Did you receive a response to your complaint?

(57) SP

Yes.....1
 No.....2
 Don't know.....Y

Q66 How did the gas distributor, [+X+] respond?

(58) SP

By letter.....1
 By phone.....2
 By phone, then by letter.....3
 By letter, then by phone.....4
 Other.....5
 Don't know.....Y

Q67 How long did it take [+X+] to respond to your complaint?

(59) SP

Up to 2 working days.....1
 3 working days.....2
 4 working days.....3

5 working days.....4
 6 working days.....5
 7 working days.....6
 8 working days.....7
 9 working days.....8
 10 working days.....9
(60) SP
 More than 10 working days.....0
 Didn't receive a reply.....1

Q68 How satisfied were you with the response to your complaint? READ OUT

(61) SP

Very satisfied.....1
 Fairly satisfied.....2
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....3
 Fairly dissatisfied.....4
 Very dissatisfied.....5
 Don't know.....Y

Q69 Was the complaint resolved to your satisfaction?

(62) SP

Yes.....1
 No.....2
 Don't know.....Y

Q70 Did you realise that Ofgem sets a number of minimum standards of service to which gas distributors must adhere?

(63) SP

Yes.....1 GO TO Q71
 No.....2 GO TO Q74

Q71 What standards of service are you aware of? Specify

(64-73)

Q74

I am going to read out standards which Ofgem have set for the gas distributors and some that Ofgem may set in the future. For each one could you tell me:

Whether you consider that standard to be very good, reasonable, not quite acceptable or totally unacceptable to you, as a **business** gas customer and how important it is for you that this standard is met?

For some of them I will ask you what you think about the level of compensation that is available to **your business** if the standard is not met.

When we are talking about compensation please bear in mind that companies which are obliged to pay out large levels of compensation may offset this by increasing the charges they make to all customers which would be reflected in your gas bill.

Telephone calls to the national emergency number for gas leaks should be answered within 30 seconds

Q74AI Is this standard? READ OUT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	10/74	(75)	(76)	(77)	(78)	(79)	(80)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74AII What standard would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	SP
Up to 5 seconds...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Up to 10 seconds..	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Up to 15 seconds..	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Up to 20 seconds..	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Up to 25 seconds..	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Up to 30 seconds..	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Up to 45 seconds..	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Up to one minute..	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	
More than one minute (specify)..	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74AIIN More than one minute (specify) - MINUTES

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	(23-31)	(32-40)	(41-49)	(50-58)	(59-67)	(68-76)	12/8-16
1+.....	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Q74AIII How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(53)	(54)	(55)	(56)	(57)	(58)	(59)	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

A gas engineer should attend an uncontrolled emergency gas leak within 1 hour of it being reported.

Q74BI Is this standard.....? READ OUT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(64)	(65)	(66)	(67)	(68)	(69)	(70)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74BII What standard would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(75)	(76)	(77)	(78)	(79)	(80)	13/8	SP
Within 15 minutes.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Within 30 minutes.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Within 45 minutes.	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Within 1 hour.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
More than one hour	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

APPENDIX D – QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

Q74BIII How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

[+X+] should provide written notice at least 1 month before a planned interruption to supply and provide a reminder 1 week before the interruption

Q74CI What do you think of these standards....? READ OUT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(24)	(25)	(26)	(27)	(28)	(29)	(30)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74CII What standard would be acceptable for written notice?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(35)	(36)	(37)	(38)	(39)	(40)	(41)	SP
At least 1 month before interruption.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
At least 6 weeks..	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
At least 2 months..	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
At least 3 months..	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
More than 3 months (specify)..	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74CIIN More than 3 months (specify) - MONTHS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	(46-54)	(55-63)	(64-72)	14/8-16	(17-25)	(26-34)	(35-43)
3+.....	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Q74CIIB What standard would be acceptable for a reminder of the interruption

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(80)	15/8	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	SP
On the day of the interruption.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Less than a week..	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
At least 1 week...	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
At least 2 weeks..	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
At least 3 weeks..	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
More than 3 weeks (specify).....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74CIIBN More than 3 weeks (specify) - WEEKS

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	(18-26)	(27-35)	(36-44)	(45-53)	(54-62)	(63-71)	(72-80)
3+.....							

Q74CIIII How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(44)	(45)	(46)	(47)	(48)	(49)	(50)	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74CIV What do you think about the following level of compensation available to you in the event of the gas distributor failing to meet this standard: £20 if failed to provide at least one months notice and £20 if failed to provide a reminder one week beforehand. READ OUT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(55)	(56)	(57)	(58)	(59)	(60)	(61)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74CV What level of payment would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(66)	(67)	(68)	(69)	(70)	(71)	(72)	SP
£30.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
£40.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
£50.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
£60.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
£70.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
£80								
£90								
£100								
£110								
£120								
£130								
£140								
£150								
More than £150 (specify).....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74CVI More than £150 (specify) - £

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	17/8-16	(17-25)	(26-34)	(35-43)	(44-52)	(53-61)	(62-70)
70+.....							

[+X+] should inform customers that an unplanned interruption has occurred and advise on the expected programme for reconnection within 12 hours of the unplanned interruption occurring

Q74DI	Is this standard...? READ OUT							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(35)	(36)	(37)	(38)	(39)	(40)	(41)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74DII	What standard would be acceptable?							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(46)	(47)	(48)	(49)	(50)	(51)	(52)	SP
Notification within 1 hour.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Within 2 hours....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3-4 hours.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
5-6 hours.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
7-8 hours.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
9-10 hours.....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
11-12 hours.....	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
More than 12 hours (specify)...	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74DIIN	More than 12 hours (specify) - HOURS						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	(57-65)	(66-74)	19/8-16	(17-25)	(26-34)	(35-43)	(44-52)
12+.....	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Q74DIII	How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

SKIP MODULE E FOR BUSINESSES

Customers on the priority services register such as the elderly and disabled should be provided with alternative heating and cooking facilities within 4 hours of the gas being interrupted in the event of an unplanned disruption

Q74EI	Is this standard...? READ OUT						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	(28)	(29)	(30)	(31)	(32)	(33)	(34)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74EII What standard would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(39)	(40)	(41)	(42)	(43)	(44)	(45)	SP
Within 1 hour.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Within 2 hours....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Within 3 hours....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Within 4 hours....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
More than 4 hours.	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74EII B Should alternative cooking and heating facilities be provided to all customers?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(50)	(51)	(52)	(53)	(54)	(55)	(56)	SP
Yes.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
No.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74EIII How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(61)	(62)	(63)	(64)	(65)	(66)	(67)	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74EIV What do you think about the following level of compensation available to you in the event of the gas distributor failing to meet this standard: £24 if failed to supply alternative facilities for priority customers in the event of an unplanned disruption.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(72)	(73)	(74)	(75)	(76)	(77)	(78)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74EV What level of payment would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	SP
£30.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
£40.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
£50.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
£60.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
£70.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	

£80
 £90
 £100
 £110
 £120
 £130
 £140
 £150
 More than £150

(specify).....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Q74EVI More than £150 (specify) - £

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	(21-29)	(30-38)	(39-47)	(48-56)	(57-65)	(66-74)	22/8-16
70+.....	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

In the case of an unplanned interruption, [+X+] should restore customers' supply within 24 hours where possible

Q74FI Is this standard...? READ OUT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(53)	(54)	(55)	(56)	(57)	(58)	(59)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74FII What standard would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(64)	(65)	(66)	(67)	(68)	(69)	(70)	SP
Within 2 hours....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Within 6 hours....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Within 12 hours...	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Within 18 hours...	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
More than 18 hours	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74FIII How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(75)	(76)	(77)	(78)	(79)	(80)	23/8	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74FIV What do you think about the following level of compensation available to you in the event of the gas distributor failing to meet this standard: £30 for every 24 hours that an unplanned interruption continues capped at £1000.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74FV What level of payment would be acceptable for every 24 hour period that the disruption continued?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(24)	(25)	(26)	(27)	(28)	(29)	(30)	SP
£30.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
£40.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
£50.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
£60.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
£70.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
£80								
£90								
£100								
£110								
£120								
£130								
£140								
£150								
More than £150 (specify).....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74FVI More than £150 (specify) - £

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	(35-43)	(44-52)	(53-61)	(62-70)	(71-79)	24/8-16	(17-25)
70+.....	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

[+X+] should issue quotations for providing new **business** connections or upgrading pipes within **11 working days - IF QCONSUM up to £1000 or DK/ 21 working days - IF QCONSUM > £1000** of receiving a request

Q74GI Is this standard.....? READ OUT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(62)	(63)	(64)	(65)	(66)	(67)	(68)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74GII What standard would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(73)	(74)	(75)	(76)	(77)	(78)	(79)	SP
Within 2 days.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Within 4 days.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Within 6 days.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
More than 6 days..	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74GIII How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74GIV What do you think about the following level of compensation available to you in the event of the gas distributor failing to meet this standard:

IF QCONSUM up to £1000 - £10 every 24 hours if they do not issue a quotation within 11 days of receiving your request capped at £250.

IF QCONSUM > £1000 - £20 every 24 hours if they do not issue a quotation within 21 days of receiving your request capped at £500.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)	(26)	(27)	(28)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74GV What level of payment would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(33)	(34)	(35)	(36)	(37)	(38)	(39)	SP
£30.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
£40.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
£50.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
£60.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
£70.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
£80								
£90								
£100								
£110								
£120								
£130								
£140								
£150								
More than £150 (specify).....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74GVI More than £150 (specify) - £

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	(44-52)	(53-61)	(62-70)	(71-79)	26/8-16	(17-25)	(26-34)
70+.....	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Where a customer has accepted a quote for a new connection or service alteration, [+X+] should provide the customer with the planned commencement and completion dates for the works within 20 working days

Q74HI Is this standard...? READ OUT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(71)	(72)	(73)	(74)	(75)	(76)	(77)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74HII What standard would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	SP
Within 2 working days.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Within 5 working days.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Within 1 week.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Within 2 weeks....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Within 3 weeks....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Within 4 weeks....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
More than 4 weeks.	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74HIII How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)	(26)	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74HIV What do you think about the following level of compensation available to you in the event of the gas distributor failing to meet this standard: £20 - IF QCONSUM UP TO £1000 or DK/ £40 - IF QCONSUM > £1000 every 24 hours if they fail to provide dates within 20 working days of you accepting a quotation capped at £250 - IF QCONSUM UP TO £500 or DK/ £500 - IF QCONSUM > £500 .

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(31)	(32)	(33)	(34)	(35)	(36)	(37)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74HV What level of payment would be acceptable for every 24 hour period they are late?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(42)	(43)	(44)	(45)	(46)	(47)	(48)	SP
£30.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
£40.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
£50.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
£60.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
£70.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
£80								
£90								
£100								
£110								
£120								
£130								
£140								
£150								
More than £150 (specify).....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74HVI More than £150 (specify) - £

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
70+.....	(53-61)	(62-70)	(71-79)	28/8-16	(17-25)	(26-34)	(35-43)

When digging up premises [+X+] should restore the premises to their original state within 10 working days of completing works

Q74II Is this standard....? READ OUT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(80)	29/8	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74IIII What standard would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	SP
Immediately after completing works...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Within 2 working days.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Within 4 working days.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Within 6 working days.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Within 8 working days.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Within 10 working days.....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
More than 10 working days.....	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74IIII How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(29)	(30)	(31)	(32)	(33)	(34)	(35)	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74IIV What do you think about the following level of compensation available to you in the event of the gas distributor failing to meet this standard: £100 if fail to restore to original condition within 10 working days.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(40)	(41)	(42)	(43)	(44)	(45)	(46)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74IV What level of payment would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(51)	(52)	(53)	(54)	(55)	(56)	(57)	SP
£30.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
£40.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
£50.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
£60.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
£70.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
£80								
£90								
£100								
£110								
£120								
£130								
£140								
£150								
More than £150 (specify).....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74IVI More than £70 (specify) - £

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	(62-70)	(71-79)	30/8-16	(17-25)	(26-34)	(35-43)	(44-52)
70+.....							

[+X+] should send a full response within 10 working days of receiving a complaint

Q74JII Is this standard...? READ OUT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74JIII What standard would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(28)	(29)	(30)	(31)	(32)	(33)	(34)	SP
Immediately - phone response....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Within 2 working days.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Within 4 working days.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Within 6 working days.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Within 8 working days.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Within 10 working days.....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
More than 10 working days.....	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74JIIII How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(39)	(40)	(41)	(42)	(43)	(44)	(45)	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74JIV What do you think about the following level of compensation available to you in the event of the gas distributor failing to meet this standard: £20 every 5 working days if failed to provide a full response within 10 working days of receiving complaint capped at £200.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(50)	(51)	(52)	(53)	(54)	(55)	(56)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74JV What level of payment would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(61)	(62)	(63)	(64)	(65)	(66)	(67)	SP
£30.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
£40.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
£50.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
£60.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
£70.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
£80								
£90								
£100								
£110								
£120								
£130								
£140								
£150								
More than £150 (specify).....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74JVI More than £150 (specify) - £

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	(72-80)	32/8-16	(17-25)	(26-34)	(35-43)	(44-52)	(53-61)
70+.....	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

[+X+] should complete works requested by the customer eg new connections/upgrading pipes within the given time scale.

Q74KIII How would you rate this standard in terms of importance, where 5 is extremely important that this standard is achieved and 1 is not at all important?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(26)	(27)	(28)	(29)	(30)	(31)	(32)	SP
1 - not at all important.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
3.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
4.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5 - extremely important.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74KIV What do you think about the following level of compensation available to you in the event of the gas distributor failing to meet this standard:

IF QCONSUM UP TO £1000 - £20 every 24 hours if failed to complete requested works within given time scale capped at £200.

IF QCONSUM OVER £1000 - £100 every 24 hours if failed to complete requested works within given time scale capped at 25% OF THE JOB VALUE

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(37)	(38)	(39)	(40)	(41)	(42)	(43)	SP
Very good.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Reasonable.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Not quite acceptable.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
Totally unacceptable.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74KV What level of payment would be acceptable?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	(48)	(49)	(50)	(51)	(52)	(53)	(54)	SP
£30.....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
£40.....	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
£50.....	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
£60.....	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
£70.....	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
£80								
£90								
£100								
£110								
£120								
£130								
£140								
£150								
More than £150 (specify).....	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
Don't know.....	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Q74KVI More than £150 (specify) - £

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	(59-67)	(68-76)	34/8-16	(17-25)	(26-34)	(35-43)	(44-52)
70+.....	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Q77 Were you aware before this interview that you could be entitled to compensation from [+X+] if they do not meet these standards?

	(17)	SP
Yes.....	1	
No.....	2	

Q78 Have you ever received compensation from a gas distributor because they failed to provide you with a good service?

	(18)	SP
Yes.....	1	
No.....	2	

Q79A Why did you receive compensation?

(19-28)

Don't know.....Y

Q79B How much compensation did you receive?

(29) SP

Less than £10.....1
 £10.....2
 £20.....3
 £30.....4
 £40.....5
 £50.....6
 £60.....7
 £70.....8
 £80.....9

(30) SP

£90.....0
 £100.....1
 £110.....2
 £120.....3
 £130.....4
 £140.....5
 £150.....6
 £160.....7
 £170.....8
 £180.....9

(31) SP

£190.....0
 £200.....1
 More than £200.....2

(29) SP

Don't know.....Y
 Refused.....{

Q81 Would you like to be informed about your rights in terms of standards of service?

(32) SP

Yes.....1
 No.....2
 Don't know.....Y

Q82 How would you like to be informed?

(33) MP

Card/leaflet.....1
 Newsletter.....2
 Link to information on the internet.....3
 Other (specify) 0

(34-43)

Specified Other

(33) MP

Don't know.....Y

Q83 In which of these ways would you like to be informed? READ OUT

(44) MP

When planning work in **this area**1
 Annually in bill.....2
 Electronic link in bill.....3
 Other (specify) 0

(45-54)

Specified Other

(44) MP

Don't know.....Y

- Q84 Are you aware of the mains replacement programme which requires gas distributors to replace older iron pipes with polyethylene pipes that are less susceptible to corrosion?
- (55) SP
Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know.....Y
-
- Q85 Would you like to receive more information on the reasons why works are being carried out?
- (56) SP
Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know.....Y
-
- Q85B What information would you like to receive?
- (57-66)
Don't know.....Y
-
- Q86 How would you like to be informed?
- (67) MP
Card/leaflet.....1
Newsletter.....2
Link to information on the internet.....3
Other (specify) 0
- (68-77)
Specified Other
(67) MP
Don't know.....Y
-
- Q87 In which of these ways would you like to be informed? READ OUT
- (78) MP
When planning work in **this area**1
Annually in bill.....2
Electronic link in bill.....3
Other (specify) 0
- Card: 36 (6-7)
(8-17)
Specified Other
Card: 35 (6-7)
(78) MP
Don't know.....Y
-
- Q88 Do you think that the gas distributors make a positive environmental contribution?
- Card: 36 (6-7)
(18) SP
Yes.....1 GO TO Q90
No.....2
Don't know.....Y
-

Q89 How could this be improved? (19-28)

Don't know.....Y

Q90 Do you believe that gas distributors have suitable social responsibilities?

(29) SP

Yes.....1 GO TO Q92

No.....2

Don't know.....Y

Q91 How could this be improved? (30-39)

Don't know.....Y

Q92 How could the gas industry be a better neighbour?

(40-49)

Don't know.....Y

Finally I would just like to ask you a few classification questions so that we can group your answers.

QACTIV What is the main business activity carried out at this establishment READ OUT IF NECESSARY

(50) SP

Manufacturing/ Agriculture/ forestry 1

Construction2

Distribution (including hotels, restaurants) 3

Business/ financial services/ other commercial 4

Public sector 5

Other (specify) 0

(51-60)

Specified Other

QFUNCTION And what is the main function carried out at this establishment? READ OUT IF NECESSARY

(50) SP

Manufacturing, production or construction.....1

Office, administrative services or call centre...2

Shop, showroom or other sales outlet.... 3

Warehouse or distribution depot.....4

Restaurant, pub or other catering establishment 5

Hotel, guest house, residential home ...6

School or other education establishment.... 7

Hospital, surgery or other medical service.....8

Other (specify) 0

(51-60)

Specified Other

QHOURS What are your normal operating hours?

(50) SP

Less than 9 hours1

9-19 hours2

20-24 hours3

REF

QHOURS How many days in the week is your business operating?

	(50) SP
Less than 5 days	1
5 days	2
6 days	3
7 days	4
REF	

Q93 ~~DELETE~~ Is the home in which you live? READ OUT

	(50) SP
Being bought on a mortgage.....	1
Owned outright.....	2
Rented from a Local Authority or housing association.....	3
Rented privately.....	4
Other (specify)	0
	(51-60)
Specified Other	
	(50) SP
Refused.....	{

Q94 Which of the following best describes the location of your business there? READ OUT

	(61) SP
City.....	1
Town.....	2
Village.....	3
Countryside.....	4
Refused.....	{

Q95 ~~DELETE~~ Are you or is anyone else in your household registered as disabled or chronically ill?

	(62) SP
Yes, me.....	1
Yes, someone else.....	2
No.....	3
Refused.....	{

Q96 ~~DELETE~~ How many people aged 18 years or over, including yourself, are living in your household?

	(63) SP
One.....	1
Two.....	2
Three.....	3
Four.....	4
Five.....	5
Six or more.....	6
Refused.....	{

Q97 ~~DELETE~~ How many children aged 0-17 are living in your household?

	(64) SP	
None.....	1	GO TO Q99
One.....	2	
Two.....	3	
Three.....	4	
Four.....	5	
Five.....	6	
Six or more.....	7	
Refused.....	{	GO TO Q99

Q98 ~~DELETE~~ Are any of them babies or infants under 3 years of age?

	(65) SP
Yes.....	1
No.....	2
Refused.....	{

Q99 Into which of the following age brackets do you fall?

	(66) SP
18-24.....	1
25-34.....	2
35-44.....	3
45-54.....	4
55-64.....	5
65-74.....	6
75 or over.....	7
Refused.....	{

Q99A ~~DELETE~~ Finally, for classification purposes only, what is the approximate total annual income of your household before tax and other deductions? READ OUT BANDS IF NECESSARY

	(67) SP
Up to £5,000.....	1
£5,000-£9,999.....	2
£10,00-£19,999.....	3
£20,000-£29,999.....	4
£30,000-£39,999.....	5
£40,000-£49,999.....	6
£50,000-£59,999.....	7
£60,000-£69,999.....	8
£70,000-£79,999.....	9
	(68) SP
£80,000 or more.....	0
	(67) SP
Refused.....	{

QCLOSE Thank you for your time and co-operation. You have been interviewed by FDS for OFGEM. If you have any queries about the survey I can give you the name and telephone number of the executive in charge. IF REQUESTED, The FDS executive in charge of the survey is Sheila Carey on 020 7272 7766
Goodbye.

HANGUP.....	[] SP
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Q100 CODE GENDER

	(80) SP
Male.....	1
Female.....	2

QINT INTERVIEWER'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I have conducted this interview in full, with the person named below in accordance with your instructions and within the MRS code of conduct.
TYPE IN YOUR INTERVIEWER NUMBER:

	Card: 37 (6-7)
1 TO 9999 _____	(8-11)