

Attendees:

Alison Sleightholm	-	Western Power Distribution
Mary Preece	-	EDF Energy plc
Lorraine Reddington	-	Central Networks
Phil Wilson	-	Central Networks
David Gill	-	CE Electric
John Barnett	-	CE Electric
Jeremy Blackford	-	SP Power Systems
Joe Ashe	-	Electricity North West
Alan Broadbent	-	Scottish & Southern (by tele-conference)
Laura Nell	-	Ofgem
James Hope	-	Ofgem
Dorothy Eke	-	Ofgem (minutes)

The 4th meeting of the CIWG commenced with a round table introduction of the group for the benefit of SSE representative who joined the meeting via a teleconference. This was followed by a quick recap on actions from previous meeting.

1.0 Complaints

- 1.1 One of the actions on DNOs from the last meeting was to agree a common industry interpretation of complaints, resolved complaints and repeated complaints. DNOs reported there were areas of agreement and disagreement across all DNOs on how complaints and claims are treated and how DNOs treat anything with legal redress. An SP representative was volunteered by the group to send proposed revised wording based on their discussion during the morning session and circulate this to the group by 9th October; therefore this action was marked as ongoing.
- 1.2 An Ofgem representative explained that it is important that definitions agreed by the DNOs are consistent and in line with the Regulations. She also mentioned that Ofgem would like to include as much information on complaints as possible in the licence drafting initial consultation to be published on the 19th of October and stressed that the more details included in the document would be better for the process.
- 1.3 An SP representative asked to know the deadline for submitting anything to be included in the licence. An Ofgem representative responded that information for the main body of the text will be required by the end of that week. He also mentioned that it is important that complaints to sub-contractors working on behalf of DNOs are picked up and reported appropriately so there is a need to make clear how complaints to sub-contractors are dealt with. He stressed the need for clarity on what a complaint is, what it is about and whether specific to work being carried out by sub-contractors.
- 1.4 Another Ofgem representative mentioned that Ofgem should take a legal view on the definitions that the group come up with. She further explained that a complaint is said to be resolved when the DNO has taken the action agreed with the customer. It was however clear from discussions across the room that there are different practices across DNOs and that customers are currently not counted in the same. She also explained there may be need to add a separate line in the

template to differentiate between what is recorded as a complaint and what is recorded as a claim and the process that DNOs have in place for dealing with them in order to ensure consistency across all DNOs. She further pointed out the need to obtain a legal view as to what is truer to the meaning of Regulations.

- 1.5 An SP representative explained that SP is currently unable to split up complaints and to distinguish properly genuine repeated complaints but that they are working to ensure this is corrected in the near future. He also confirmed that figures for Quarter 3 & 4 of 2009/10 will be reported more accurately.
- 1.6 An Ofgem representative suggested that SP put forward an explanation with their submission, clarifying what information they have included as repeated complaints. Another Ofgem representative asked for views on DNOs auditing each other on complaints for the purposes of sharing best practice and developing consistent questionnaire.
- 1.7 A WPD representative thought it was a nice idea but may not work in practice if money is involved. She is of the view that the approach with which one DNO audits another DNO will influence the outcome. A CE representative however said they are open to the idea of DNOs auditing each other.
- 1.8 An Ofgem representative suggested that DNOs discuss amongst themselves and consider whether they could audit each other's area of the licence compliance and to suggest what weightings to apply to the different groups.

Action

- DNOs to decide whether there is need for time band on repeat complaints, come up with reasonable definitions of time band and if not, suggestions and reasons for adopting no time band. An SP representative to document draft definitions of complaints, resolved complaints and repeated complaints and circulate to the group by the 9th of October 2009.

2.0 Telephony

- 2.1 An Ofgem representative raised one of the issues from last meeting with regard to inconsistencies noted in the way some DNOs currently record unsuccessful calls. He explained that the RIGs clearly states how these figures should be reported and that non-compliance is a breach of the licence. He also mentioned that he will be writing to the DNOs that indicated non-compliance in order to rectify this discrepancy and will be requesting the following information:

- Confirmation in writing on how they are ensuring compliance with the RIGs with regard to key measures reporting
- details of their service provider; and
- processes and procedures they have in place for recording the key measures

3.0 Broad Measure

- 3.1 An Ofgem representative did a quick run through of issues that came out of DNOs responses to the Initial Proposals. She mentioned that Ofgem has taken comments on board and wanted to get DNOs' agreement on the right position to

take with regard to issues to be resolved on the broad measure before and after the price control.

- 3.2 There were questions on whether greater weighting should be applied to the survey, taken away from complaints or whether there should be a market tested advocacy to give credibility. She also said there is a need to decide what quotas to put on customers as part of the survey but suggested this could be informed by the pilots.

4.0 Customer Satisfaction

- 4.1 An Ofgem representative circulated the spreadsheets containing options for calibrating the incentives to the group prior to the meeting and invited comments from the DNOs. There was some debate around whether DNOs should be rewarded for good performance across the three areas of the customer satisfaction (supply interruptions, connections & general enquiries). He invited views from the DNOs of the three options presented and enquired whether DNOs had other options or suggestions on approaching this.
- 4.2 Most people did not object to having minimum threshold across the three areas. A CE representative supported option 1 and commented that as it is a broad measure; DNOs should be rewarded based on good performance across the three areas. An SP representative suggested that caution is needed in order not to discourage DNOs performing well in other areas if they are performing badly in one area.
- 4.3 An Ofgem representative explained that the drawback of Option 2 is that DNOs with a low figure could be overly rewarded if they score higher than other DNOs.

5.0 Stakeholder Engagement

- 5.1 There was a discussion around what the measurement for stakeholder engagement should cover i.e who to engage, tools to use etc. Some DNOs suggested different types and methods of engagement for different groups and how processes are reviewed.
- 5.2 A number of options were put forward. An Ofgem representative explained it is important to get information from the DNOs on processes of stakeholder engagement, an element of explanation and feedback on how DNOs are keeping activities under review. She also explained that Ofgem is keen to know the best way of securing feedback from customers. Another Ofgem representative explained that stakeholder engagement is more about the views of the stakeholders and how the DNOs are incorporating these views. He also said that DNOs are in a better position to share what experiences they have had.

6.0 Revenue Exposure

- 6.1 There were discussions and suggestions around what people put forward as potential weighting. Some people thought it should be less on complaints and more on customer survey and stakeholder engagement.
- 6.2 An Ofgem representative explained the key issues for final proposals and said Ofgem will welcome views from DNOs at this stage.

7.0 Strawman Options

- 7.1 An Ofgem representative talked the group through suggested options. He mentioned he is awaiting DNOs data and will be able to bring further ideas to next meeting. He also said there will be caveats given discussions already had.

Action

- DNOs to email their views, comments, suggestions and concerns on proposed strawman options by 16th October.