

## Retail Market Review Response

As with any form of quasi monopoly service such as gas and electricity, banking, water etc I would strongly urge you to ensure that pricing is only allowed per unit of usage and at the same rate for every customer. This allows easy comparison of all tariffs and makes sure that customers can know they are getting the best deal.

Please therefore require all gas and electricity suppliers to charge the same for every cu meter or Kw/ Hr (the only exception being dual rate electricity tariffs where a separate per unit rate could be sued for night time units) In particular standing charges should be abolished as they always discriminate against efficient and low usage customers. The only different tariffs chargeable should be for monthly direct debit where a lower rate can be charged although this should be reflected as a percentage discount on bills. There is no need for a lower internet tariff as remote read meters will almost eliminate the need for any expensive customer interactions.

I would also urge you to ban any form of lock in or penalty where a customer leaves because a company has altered its prices, and to ban any form of auto renewal which involves a minimum contract period or early cancellation penalty. The only time a penalty should be chargeable is if a customer is offered a rate that is guaranteed not to change for at least 12 months and preferably 18 months or more

If discounts are to be made available for elderly and vulnerable customers these should always be in the form of a percentage discount.

To avoid estimated billing all meters should be remote read. If a supplier has not installed such a meter then it should not be allowed to charge more than £25 per fuel month until it has six months actual meter readings. This will encourage rapid replacement of outdated meters. Ofgem should make it illegal for any new meter not to be capable of accepting micro generated electricity for payment of the feed in or other offsetting tariff. Once 65% of meters are remote readable any switch of supplier should be completed within 5 working days of a request and the new supplier should be obliged to accept any customer regardless of history, but allowed to continue an existing prepayment metering situation. An outstanding bill due to the old supplier should never stop a supply switch.

Finally all prepayment customers should pay no more that 2% in excess of other customer rates. There is no excuse for a higher premium than this as it should not cost more than this for a customer to load a prepayment card at his or her bank or post office. If it does then the supplier does not have up to date equipment installed.

Rather than requiring suppliers who are also generators to supply other suppliers or auction their production, I think it is preferable to make it illegal for a company or group to be both generator and supplier and also to make it illegal for any form of contract between supplier and generator which involve any influence on retail prices by the generator.

The above does not prejudice any individual supplier and will make it easier for new entrants thus improving competition. If suppliers consider the above conditions increase their costs then they should adjust their single tariff rates accordingly.

Regards

