

All Distribution Network  
Operators (DNOs)

Direct Dial: 020 7901 1861  
Email: james.veaney@ofgem.gov.uk

Date: 13 October 2015

Dear all,

### **Request to amend a question in the customer satisfaction survey**

All Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) operators are required to collect customer satisfaction survey data. The methodology for collecting and reporting this data is outlined in the "RIIO-ED1 regulatory instructions and guidance: Annex H – Customer Service" document ("the RIGs").<sup>1</sup> A DNO may apply for permission to amend questions in the customer satisfaction survey questionnaire.<sup>2</sup> These amendments must be agreed with Ofgem and all other DNOs.

The DNOs have asked to amend one of the initial "routing questions" (RQ1) in the customer satisfaction survey. RQ1 currently states "*When your contact took place, did you speak to a telephone advisor at all?*"

- If an unplanned interruption customer answers "yes" to this question, then the customer is asked the questions in Section 3 (Unplanned Power Cuts – Calls Answered by Agent/Calls from an Agent) of the survey.
- If an unplanned interruption customer answers "no" then they are asked the questions in Section 4 (Unplanned Power Cuts – Contact answered by a Message/Message Received from network company) of the survey.

The questions in each section are slightly different. The DNOs must achieve a statistically robust number of interviews for both sections of the survey.

Over the last year DNOs have significantly increased the number of courtesy calls that they make to customers following the restoration of power to their premises. As a result of this, the market research company has found that more customers are responding "yes" to RQ1. It is believed that this is because some customers that initially listened to an automated message are responding to the survey question in relation to courtesy call they received after the event.

This is having negative consequences on the survey, because some DNOs are struggling to achieve the required sample size of the "Unplanned Interruption – Message" category. It also means customers who have experienced a message service during the unplanned interruption, are being asked questions relevant to customers who experienced an agent service.

To address this issue, the DNOs have asked to amend RQ1 in the customer satisfaction survey to state "*~~when your contact took place~~ during the power interruption, did you speak to a telephone advisor at all?*" The DNOs consider that this will clarify to the customer which interaction they are referring to. The DNOs also consider that this will help to ensure

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/2015/06/annex\\_h\\_customer\\_service\\_0.pdf](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/2015/06/annex_h_customer_service_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> As stated in paragraph 3.4 of RIIO-ED1 regulatory instructions and guidance: Annex H – Customer Service.

that only customers that spoke to an agent during the power interruption are asked the questions in Section 3.

We consider that the DNOs' proposed solution improves upon the current wording and helps ensure that the survey works as originally intended. We therefore approve the DNOs' request to amend RQ1 of the customer satisfaction survey.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Veaney', written in a cursive style.

James Veaney,

**Head of Distribution Policy**