

REGULATED  
INDUSTRIES  
COMMISSION 

RAISING THE STANDARDS

QUALITY  
of SERVICE  
STANDARDS



for the  
Electricity  
Transmission and  
Distribution Sector.

**CALL FREE: 800-4RIC (4742)**

[www.ric.org.tt](http://www.ric.org.tt)

Protecting **YOUR** Interests

## MISSION:

"To ensure the promotion of the highest quality of utility services at fair and reasonable rates while building a credible regulatory regime that responds adequately to stakeholders' concerns and also to ensure fairness, transparency and equity in the provision of utility services throughout the country."

### RAISING THE STANDARDS

# QUALITY of SERVICE STANDARDS



### for the Electricity Transmission and Distribution Sector

The Regulated Industries Commission (RIC) is an independent body with the responsibility and power to ensure that electricity customers receive quality services and, where applicable, compensation for losses caused by deficiencies in those services. For the RIC to be fully effective, however, it is important that you, the consumer, become aware of your rights and the relevant standards that are to be met by T&TEC.

The Quality of Service Standards (QSS) for the Electrical Transmission and Distribution Sector is an initiative launched in 2004 which seeks to ensure that consumer expectations of consistency, reliability, and accountability are met and/or exceeded. By virtue of its mandate in the RIC ACT (No. 26 of 1998), Section 6 (1) the RIC is empowered to prescribe standards of service, monitor the service provider to ensure compliance and impose sanctions for non-compliance.

With this objective in mind, the RIC has introduced Quality of Service Standards which establish the performance standards by which the **Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC)** is evaluated, and is based on two dimensions:

- 1. GUARANTEED ELECTRICITY STANDARDS (GES) 8** - set the service levels that must be met in each individual case.
- 2. OVERALL ELECTRICITY STANDARDS (OES) 7** - deal with situations where it is inappropriate to provide individual guarantees, but where you have a right to expect minimum levels of service.



## What are the GUARANTEED ELECTRICITY STANDARDS?

***GUARANTEED ELECTRICITY STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE SET THE SERVICE LEVELS THAT MUST BE MET IN EACH INDIVIDUAL CASE BY T&TEC AND INCLUDE:***

### RESPONSE & RESTORATION OF SUPPLY – GES1

- T&TEC is required to respond and restore supply after an unplanned outage on the distribution system within 10 hours.
- **COMPENSATION:** If T&TEC fails to achieve this standard, residential customers are to be paid a compensation of \$60.00 and non-residential customers \$600.00. For each additional period of 12 hours in which supply is not restored compensation will be a further \$60.00 for residential customers and \$600.00 for non-residential customers.
- Before this can be done though, the customer must file a claim with T&TEC and go through the process whereby the claim will be investigated.

### BILLING PUNCTUALITY – GES2

- Residential and Non-residential Customers must receive their first bill after a connection within 60 days and 30 days respectively.
- **COMPENSATION:** If T&TEC fails to achieve this standard, both residential and non-residential customers are to be paid a compensation of \$50.00.

### RECONNECTION AFTER THE PAYMENT OF OVERDUE BILLS – GES3

- Customers should have their supply reconnected within 24 hours after their bill (including the reconnection fee) is settled or an agreement on a payment schedule reached.
- **COMPENSATION:** If T&TEC fails to achieve this standard, residential and non-residential customers are to be refunded their reconnection fees.



## What are the GUARANTEED ELECTRICITY STANDARDS?...cont'd

### MAKING AND KEEPING APPOINTMENTS – GES4

- Appointments are to be arranged Mondays to Fridays during the hours of 8:00am – 4:00pm and must be confirmed in writing. T&TEC is required to give 24 hours notice of their inability to keep the appointment.
- **COMPENSATION:** If T&TEC fails to achieve this standard, both residential and non-residential customers are to be paid a compensation of \$50.00.

### INVESTIGATION OF VOLTAGE COMPLAINTS – GES5

- Upon receiving a customer complaint, T&TEC is required to visit (where deemed necessary) within 24 hours and correct problems where the supply is, or where an event on the electrical network has caused the supply to be, outside of the permitted voltage range.
- Customers must be notified of the correction of the fault within 15 working days of a voltage complaint.
- **COMPENSATION:** If T&TEC fails to achieve this standard, residential customers are to be paid a compensation of \$50.00 and non-residential customers \$600.00.

### RESPONDING TO BILLING & PAYMENT QUERIES – GES6

- T&TEC must provide a substantive (written) response to a customer's billing and payment queries within 15 working days.
- **COMPENSATION:** If T&TEC fails to achieve this standard, both residential and non-residential customers are to be paid a compensation of \$50.00.

### NEW CONNECTION OF SUPPLY – GES7

- T&TEC must complete a new connection of supply within 3 working days after all payments have been made and the appropriate documentation submitted, including a valid Certificate of Inspection from the Government's Electrical Inspectorate Department.
- **COMPENSATION:** If T&TEC fails to achieve this standard, both residential and non-residential customers are to be paid a compensation of \$50.00.



## PAYMENTS OWED UNDER GUARANTEED ELECTRICITY STANDARDS – GES8

- Once the claim for a breach of any standard has been accepted by T&TEC, compensatory payment must be credited to the customer's bill within 30 working days for non-residential and 60 working days for residential customers.
- **COMPENSATION:** If T&TEC fails to achieve this standard, both residential and non-residential customers are to be paid a compensation of \$50.00.
- **EXCEPTIONS:** T&TEC is excluded from paying compensation for interruptions caused by the failure of generation, faults on customers' equipment and faults due to force majeure conditions i.e. events outside of their control.

## WHAT IF T&TEC FAILS TO MEET ONE OF THE GUARANTEED ELECTRICITY STANDARDS?



- Compensatory payments apply for breaches under all Guaranteed Electricity Standards. Compensatory payments are in the form of a credit on the customer's billing account based on the set amount and/or guidelines indicated for each breached standard.

## HOW WILL COMPENSATION BE APPLIED?



- If GES1 is not upheld by T&TEC, you will be required to complete and submit a claim form, which is available at any of T&TEC's Service Centres. Claims must be submitted within 3 months of the occurrence otherwise they will not be considered. However, customers will be automatically compensated for breaches under GES 2 - GES 8.

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU FILE A CLAIM?



- Once T&TEC has investigated your complaint and it is found to be valid, your billing account will be credited.



## What are the OVERALL ELECTRICITY STANDARDS?

**OVERALL ELECTRICITY STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE COVER AREAS WHERE IT IS INAPPROPRIATE OR NOT FEASIBLE TO GIVE INDIVIDUAL GUARANTEES, BUT WHERE THE EXPECTATION IS THAT T&TEC WILL PROVIDE PREDETERMINED LEVELS OF SERVICE.**

### FREQUENCY OF METER READING – OES1

- T&TEC is required to read at least 90% of all industrial meters every month and 90% of other meters according to the schedule (*i.e. billing cycle*) except where the meter is inaccessible.

### BILLING PUNCTUALITY – OES2

- 98% of all bills must be mailed within 10 working days after meter reading;

### RESPONDING TO METER PROBLEMS – OES3

- T&TEC must respond to customers' meter problems by visiting or with a substantive (*written*) response within 10 working days 95% of the times.

### PRIOR NOTICE OF PLANNED INTERRUPTIONS – OES4

- T&TEC is required to give 3 days (*72 hours*) advance notice of the planned outages/interruption to customers 100% of the time with the expected date, time and duration of the interruption being clearly stated.

### STREET LIGHT MAINTENANCE – OES5

- T&TEC is required to repair 100% of failed street lights under its control with the exception of highway lighting, within 7 working days after receiving notification.
- T&TEC must establish a weekly schedule to monitor highway lighting and shall repair 100% of failed highway lighting within 14 working days after surveyed or reported failure.



## RESPONSE TO CUSTOMER'S WRITTEN COMPLAINTS/REQUESTS – OES6

- T&TEC is required to provide a substantive (written) response to customers' written complaints within 10 working days, with the final position being communicated within 30 working days thereafter.

## NOTIFYING CUSTOMER OF RECEIPT OF CLAIM UNDER GUARANTEED ELECTRICITY STANDARD GES1 – OES7

- T&TEC must notify 100% of customers of receipt of claims submitted for compensatory payment within 10 working days.

**THE OVERALL ELECTRICITY STANDARDS DO NOT CARRY COMPENSATION.**



## WHAT IF T&TEC FAILS TO MEET ONE OF THE OVERALL ELECTRICITY STANDARDS?



- *The RIC will ensure that the Overall Electricity Standards are enforced so that you, the consumer, will receive a significantly improved level of service.*

## WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY?



- *It's your responsibility to monitor the quality of services that you receive and to ensure that T&TEC complies with the Quality of Service Standards and that they are held accountable for any breaches of these standards.*

**GET INVOLVED, TAKE CHARGE!**



**CALL FREE: 800-4RIC (4742)**

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