

QUALITY OF SERVICE
STANDARDS FOR THE
SUPPLY AND
DISTRIBUTION OF
WATER AND
WASTEWATER
SERVICES

December
2017

Final Decision - Summary



Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose of this Document.....	1
Acknowledgement	1
2. THE GUARANTEED STANDARDS SCHEME	2
2.1 Introduction.....	2
2.2 The Guaranteed Standards	2
2.3 Implementation of the Guaranteed Standards.....	5
Compensatory Payments.....	5
Level of Compensation	5
Force Majeure Conditions and Exemptions from Standards	6
2.4 Overall Standards.....	8

List of Tables

Table 1 – Summary of Final Decisions of Guaranteed Standards	2
Table 2 – Summary of Final Decisions for Overall Standards	8

1. INTRODUCTION

Section 6(1) of the Regulated Industries Commission (RIC) Act No. 26 of 1998, empowers the RIC to prescribe standards for services for the entities under its purview, monitor these service providers to determine their compliance with the standards and impose sanctions for non-compliance. The Act also mandates the RIC to consult with all interested parties it considers as having an interest. In August 2017, the Regulated Industries Commission (RIC) published draft Quality of Service Standards for Water and Wastewater Services for public consultation in the document *Quality of Service Standards for the Supply and Distribution of Water and Wastewater Services*. This document formed the basis of the consultation with the public and other stakeholders. The RIC received Ten (10) written responses from various stakeholders. The details of these and the RIC's responses are provided in the full Final Decision document.

Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this document is to present a summary of RIC's final decisions on the Quality of Service Standards for the Supply and Distribution of Water and Wastewater Services. A copy of this document, as well the full Final Decision document, is available on the RIC's web site at <http://www.ric.org.tt/publications/>.

Acknowledgement

The RIC wishes to express its appreciation to all who participated in the consultation and made comments using social media and other means. Special thanks to the respondents who took the time to submit written responses.

2. THE GUARANTEED STANDARDS SCHEME

2.1 Introduction

The Guaranteed Standards Scheme consists of guaranteed and overall standards. Guaranteed Standards establish performance levels that the service provider must meet in serving individual customers. They cover the main areas of concern of consumers in the water sector, and attract compensatory payments if the service provider fails to meet the prescribed performance level. The Overall Standards cover areas of service where it is not appropriate or feasible to give individual guarantees, but where the expectation is that the utility will provide pre-determined, minimum levels of service. The Overall Standards, therefore, relate to the quality of service affecting a group of consumers. These standards do not carry compensatory payment.

There was no overall objection to the concept and implementation of the proposed scheme. The standards are summarized in the following tables.

2.2 The Guaranteed Standards

Table 1 – Summary of Final Decisions of Guaranteed Standards

Code	Standard Description	Performance Measure	Required Units	Compensation per customer class (% of bill)	Further Period for Compensation
GWS 1	Implementation of Schedules	1. Supply of pipe borne water	1. Minimum of 48 hours aggregate per week	15% - Classes A, C, D, E 3% - Class B	Not Applicable (N/A)
GWS 2	Restoration of Supply after service interruption	Maximum time to restore supply	<u>Planned Interruptions</u> As per published times but no later than 48 hours after start of interruption <u>Unplanned Interruptions</u> 72 hrs for trunk mains 48 hrs for strategic mains 24 hrs other interruptions	15% - Classes A, C, D, E 3% - Class B <u>Further Compensation</u> 5% - Classes A, C, D, E 1% - Class B	12 hours

Code	Standard Description	Performance Measure	Required Units	Compensation per customer class (% of bill)	Further Period for Compensation
GWS 3	Provision of Truck borne supply if mains supply is interrupted	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Time to provide customer requested truck borne supply Supply of truck borne water upon customer's request when water schedule is disrupted 	<p><u>Planned Interruptions</u> To be provided within 24 hours after the notified time for interruption has ended if pipe borne supply not yet available</p> <p><u>Unplanned Interruptions</u> To be provided from 48 hours after the start of the disruption and within the next 24 hours if pipe borne supply not yet available</p>	<p>15% - Classes A, C, D, E 3% - Class B</p> <p><u>Further Compensation</u> 5% - Classes A, C, D, E 1% - Class B</p>	24 hours
GWS 4	Time to repair to Water Service connections (WSC)	Maximum time to repair WSC	<p><u>Water Service Connection Repair</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Within 48 hrs of report by customer – for loss of supply to registered critical institutions (e.g. schools, hospitals) and for leaks resulting in damage to property. Within 3 working days – for leaks & loss of supply affecting supply to customer. 	<p>15% - Classes A, C, D, E 3% - Class B</p> <p><u>Further Compensation</u> 5% - Classes A, C, D, E 1% - Class B</p>	<p>12 hours</p> <p>12 hours</p> <p>24 hours</p>
GWS 5	Installation of new Water Service Connections (WSC)	Time to install WSC	<p><u>¾" WSC (domestic) and 1"– 4" (single building)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Determine feasibility and notify customer within 5 working days of application for domestic WSC, and 10 working days for multi-family dwelling units. Install WSC within 7 working days of confirmation of feasibility <p><u>All other WSC</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Issue response to application for Outline Approval within 20 working days of receipt of payment. Issue Final Approval within 20 days of receipt of acceptable engineering design. Install WSC within 15 working days of receipt of payment. Issue Completion Certificate in 7 working days. 	<p>15% - Classes A, C, D, E 3% - Class B</p> <p><u>Further Compensation</u> 5% - Classes A, C, D, E 1% - Class B</p>	24 hours

Code	Standard Description	Performance Measure	Required Units	Compensation per customer class (% of bill)	Further Period for Compensation
GWS 6	Reconnection of supply after settling outstanding accounts or disconnection due to error	Maximum time to reconnect supply	Within 24 hours of receipt of full payment or as per agreement with WASA or in determining of error made	15% - Classes A, C, D, E 3% - Class B <u>Further Compensation</u> 5% - Classes A, C, D, E 1% - Class B 3% - Class B	24 hours
GWS 7	Response to complaints	1. Time to acknowledge receipt 2. Time to communicate final position	1. Within 5 working days of receipt of complaint 2. Within 30 working days of receipt of complaint	15% - Classes A, C, D, E 3% - Class B <u>Further Compensation</u> 5% - Classes A, C, D, E 1% - Class B	24 hours
GWS 8	Response to Poor Water Quality	Time to respond to poor water quality	1. Service provider to respond, and conduct site visit where necessary, within 1 working day 2. Solve problem within 3 working days of site visit 3. Give an alternative for water supply where applicable	15% - Classes A, C, D, E 3% - Class B <u>Further Compensation</u> 5% - Classes A, C, D, E 1% - Class B	N/A
GWS 9	Compensatory payments for guaranteed standards	Maximum time to credit compensatory payment for non-compliance with standards	Within 60 working days of receipt of claim	15% - Classes A, C, D, E 3% - Class B <u>Further Compensation</u> 5% - Classes A, C, D, E 1% - Class B	7 days

2.3 Implementation of the Guaranteed Standards

*In areas where the infrastructure cannot deliver the level of performance specified by the standard GWS 1 – **Implementation of Schedules**, WASA shall apply to the RIC to be considered for an exemption no later than six months after the publication of this standard. Where an exemption is granted, it shall be for a specified period of no more than 24 months to allow WASA to bring the level of service in the respective area up to the standard. In such instances, WASA shall provide a minimum supply of 24 hours aggregate at a minimum pressure of 3.5 metre head (5 psi) in accordance with published water supply schedules. The sum total of the number of customers within the areas approved for exemption from this standard shall not exceed ten (10) percent of the total number of customers serviced by WASA. Until such time that an exemption is granted, WASA is required to deliver service to the respective customer group under consideration in accordance with the standard.*

Compensatory Payments

The utility will be required to make compensatory payment to customers if they fail to meet the Guaranteed Standards. Compensatory Payments benefit both the customer and the utility as they serve two main purposes: one, to compensate the customer for poor quality of service and two, to provide efficiency incentives to the service provider. While recompense for the customer is important, equally significant purposes of these payments are to encourage the utility towards better performance, to focus its attention on the causes of failure and to improve the overall level of customer service.

Level of Compensation

The proposed level of compensation available to customers for the guaranteed standards is:

- 15% of quarterly bill for domestic customers (Class A);
- 15% of monthly bill for commercial, cottage and agricultural customers (Classes C, D and E); and
- 3% of monthly bill for industrial customers (Class B).

Repeated breach of any guaranteed standard will incur further compensation as follows:

- 5% of quarterly bill for domestic customers;
 - 5% of monthly bill for commercial, cottage and agricultural customers;
- and
- 1 % of monthly bill for industrial customers.

This will apply for every further period the standard is not met up to a maximum of three periods. Calculation of the quantum of the compensatory payment is based on the net bill for the period after resolution of any disputed amount and application of any rebate.

Procedure for Receiving Compensation

Customers are required to make a claim for compensation once they experience a level of service that is below that prescribed by the standard. Claim forms will be available at regional centres and customer service offices of WASA. Claims will be investigated by the service provider, and once found to be valid, payments will be made within 60 working days of the date the claim was received by the service provider. Claims must be submitted within three months of the standard being breached.

Payments for breach of guaranteed standards will be credited to customers' accounts. The amount to be compensated will be clearly shown and appropriately labelled on the customer's bill.

Force Majeure Conditions and Exemptions from Standards

The Guaranteed Standards Scheme will be suspended in circumstances where compliance is beyond the control of WASA. The RIC must be promptly notified by WASA in all cases of suspension or proposed suspension of the scheme indicating the exact duration

of such suspension. The burden of proof of exceptional circumstance will lie with WASA. Examples of possible exceptional events are:

- Severe bad weather or natural disasters;
- System conditions such as major breakdown of treatment plants or pumping stations;
- Drought;
- Civil unrest;
- Strikes; and
- Malicious destruction of property.

On confirmation of the occurrence of a *force majeure* condition, WASA will use appropriate means to advise customers. However, it must make all necessary efforts to restore normal service to its customers as quickly as possible.

2.4 Overall Standards

Table 2 – Summary of Final Decisions for Overall Standards

Code	Standard Description	Performance Measure	Required Units
OWS 1	Notification with respect to planned supply interruptions	Minimum time to notify affected customers before supply interruption of more than 4 hours duration	48 hours
OWS 2	Water Pressure	Minimum and maximum pressures	<u>At point of Water Service Connection (WSC)</u> Minimum 14m head of pressure (20 psi) Maximum 70m head of pressure (100 psi)
OWS 3	Metering	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time to read meters 2. Time to issue bills 3. Maximum time to repair meters 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read meter every 2 months for all categories of customers 2. Issue bills within 10 working days of meter reading 3. Repair defective water meters within 30 days of receipt of report
OWS 4	Drinking water quality	WHO guidelines for drinking water	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sampling according to an established schedule 2. 100% compliance with WHO guidelines for bacteriological thresholds (water) 3. 95% compliance with WHO guidelines for physical/chemical parameters (water)
OWS 5	Sewage effluent quality	Compliance with standard for wastewater effluent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compliance with effluent discharge standard of water pollution rule or equivalent standard as set by the relevant authority having such jurisdiction
OWS 6	Repair to sewers	Maximum time to repair sewers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear choke in WASA sewer system within 18 hours of receipt of report of overflow. 2. Repair collapse of WASA sewer system within 72 hours of receipt of report

Code	Standard Description	Performance Measure	Required Units
OWS7	Road restoration after pipeline works	Maximum time to complete road restoration	Temporary restoration of road within 24 hours and permanent restoration within 7 days, in accordance with the road restoration guidelines issued by the Ministry of Works or equivalent entity
OWS8	Claims for damage	Time to process and pay claim	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reply within 5 working days of receipt of claim 2. Complete investigation within 30 working days of receipt of claim 3. Determine liability and make payment, where applicable, within 60 working days of receipt of claim
OWS9	Making and Keeping appointments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time to arrive for appointment 2. Time to notify customer of inability to meet appointment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrive within 30 mins of scheduled appointment 2. No less than 24 hrs of inability to keep appointment

A 24 month moratorium will apply to the implementation of the standard OWS 2 – Water Pressure.