

REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

RIC NEWS

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ISSUE 1
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KNOW YOUR STANDARDS!

NEW QUALITY OF
SERVICE STANDARDS
FOR T&TEC AND WASA



IN THIS ISSUE

- Pg. 3 *KNOW YOUR STANDARDS*
- Pg. 7 *RIC'S PUBLIC OUTREACH SESSIONS – BRIAN LARA PROMENADE*
- Pg. 8 *RIC'S STAFF DAY OUT – PHOTO GALLERY*

REGULATED
INDUSTRIES
COMMISSION 

Protecting YOUR Interests



REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

*Protecting **YOUR** Interests*

WE HAVE MOVED!

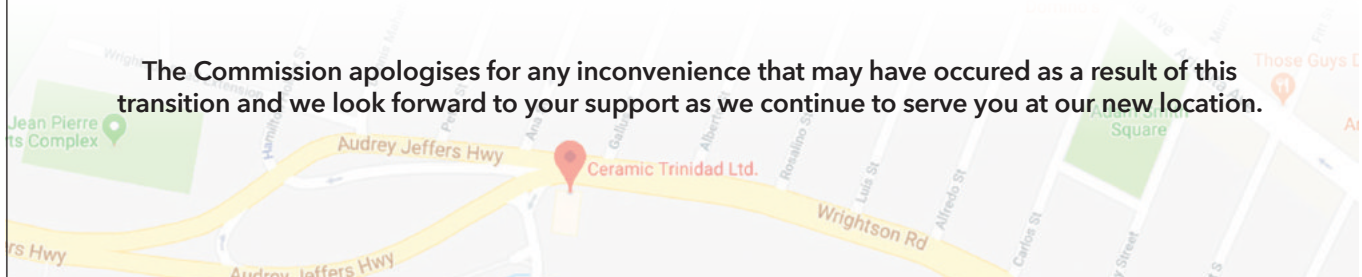


The Regulated Industries Commission wishes to advise members of the public that its office has been relocated to

#37 WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT-OF-SPAIN
(Ceramic Trinidad Limited Building)

Please note that we are now fully operational and all of our contact information remains the same.

The Commission apologises for any inconvenience that may have occurred as a result of this transition and we look forward to your support as we continue to serve you at our new location.



CONTACT INFO:

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KNOW YOUR STANDARDS

The Regulated Industries Commission (RIC) is responsible for regulating prices, establishing service standards and monitoring the performance of the service providers in the electricity and water sectors. The RIC is guided by the legislative and regulatory framework set out in the RIC Act No. 26 of 1998. Section 6(1) expressly empowers the RIC to prescribe standards of service, monitor the service provider's performance to ensure compliance with these standards and impose sanctions for non-compliance.

In accordance with its mandate, the RIC established the Quality of Service Standards for the Electricity Transmission and Distribution Sector (T&TEC QSS) in April 2004. These standards focus on the customers' concerns in relation to the quality of service provided by the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) and establish a minimum acceptable level of service to be delivered to customers. They were subsequently revised in 2009 and again in 2017. In the thirteen years that the QSS have been instituted, the RIC acknowledges the improvement in service provided by T&TEC as the utility sought to comply with the standards to ensure a safe and reliable supply of electricity to its customers and the wider public. The RIC awaits promulgation of the 2017 revision in the Trinidad and Tobago Gazette for the revised standards to be enforced. The revised T&TEC QSS will consist of eight guaranteed and six overall standards.

In August 2017, the RIC conducted public consultation on the Quality of Service Standards for the Supply and Distribution of Water and Wastewater Services (WASA QSS). These standards focus on the customers' concerns in relation to the quality of service provided by the Water and Sewerage Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (WASA) and seek to establish the minimum acceptable level of service to customers. The RIC published its final decision on the WASA QSS in December 2017 and awaits promulgation in the Trinidad and Tobago Gazette for the proposed standards to be enforced. The proposed WASA QSS will consist of nine guaranteed and nine overall standards.

For the standards to be effective, however, it is important that consumers become fully aware of their rights and the obligations that the respective utility (T&TEC and WASA) will have to uphold under standards that are published in the Trinidad and Tobago Gazette.

The **GUARANTEED STANDARDS** set the service levels that must be met in the provision of service to each individual consumer. When the service provider (T&TEC or WASA) fails to meet a guaranteed standard, a specified penalty payment has to be made to the affected customer. Customers are to be automatically compensated in instances where T&TEC fails to meet the standards from GES 2 to GES 8. However, in instances where T&TEC has not complied with GES1, customers are required to complete and submit a claim form, which is available at any of T&TEC's Service Centre. WASA customers will be required to complete and submit a claim form for all the guaranteed standards, GWS 1 to GWS9, which will be made available at any of WASA's Service Centre. Claims must be submitted within 3 months of the occurrence otherwise they will not be considered. EXCEPTIONS: T&TEC and WASA will be excluded from paying compensation for claims resulting for events outside of their control.

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 proposed overall standards, therefore, relate to the quality of service affecting a group of consumers

The OVERALL STANDARDS set the service levels that must be met in the provision of service to customers on the whole; however, it would not be feasible to apply penalty payments on an individual basis when service levels are not met. However, the RIC will monitor and hold T&TEC and WASA accountable for each's performance with respect to established service levels.

**PROPOSED STANDARDS FOR THE
ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION SECTOR**

GUARANTEED ELECTRICITY STANDARDS (GES)

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.

BILLING PUNCTUALITY GES2

Customers must receive their first bill after a connection within 60 days and 30 days respectively.

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.

MAKING AND KEEPING APPOINTMENTS GES4

Appointments are to be arranged Mondays to Fridays during the hours of 8:00am – 4:00pm and T&TEC must confirm in writing. T&TEC is required to give 24 hours notice of their inability to keep the appointment.

INVESTIGATION OF VOLTAGE COMPLAINTS GES5

Upon receiving a customer complaint, T&TEC is required to visit (where deemed necessary) within 24 hours and correct system problems that has caused the supply to be, outside of the permitted voltage range. (Complaints have now been defined in the case of both single-phase and three-phase voltage supplies).

Customers must be notified of the correction of the fault within 15 working days of a voltage complaint.

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.

EXECUTION OF CAPITAL WORKS AND NEW CONNECTION OF SUPPLY GES7

T&TEC must complete preliminary surveys; provide cost estimates; complete construction works; and install customers' meters within various established durations after all payments have been made and the appropriate documentation submitted, including a valid Certificate of Inspection from the Government's electrical Inspectorate Department. The requirements for installing customers' meters can also apply from a date mutually agreed upon between the service provider and the customer that is beyond the stipulated number of working days.

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.

OVERALL ELECTRICITY STANDARDS (OES)

NETWORK RELIABILITY OES1

T&TEC is required to maintain the yearly network reliability metrics for planned and unplanned outages on the distribution network (excluding force majeure events) of each of its Distribution Areas to within the set limits which will be reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis.

Initial targets are: SAIDI to within 400 minutes; and SAIFI to within 4.8.

RESPONDING TO METER PROBLEMS OES2

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 OES3

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 OES4

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 is required to monitor highway lighting and repair 100% of failed highway lighting within 14 working days after surveyed or reported failure.

RESPONSE TO CUSTOMER'S WRITTEN COMPLAINTS/ REQUESTS OES5

T&TEC is required to respond after receipt of written complaints/ requests within 5 working days. T&TEC is required to complete an investigation of the issue, resolve the matter and communicate its final position to the

customer within 15 working days following receipt of the written complaints/ requests. In the event that a third party is involved, for example, an insurance claim, T&TEC is required to complete an investigation of the issue, resolve the matter and communicate its final position to the customer within 30 working days following receipt of the written complaints/ requests.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF CLAIM UNDER GUARANTEED ELECTRICITY STANDARD GES1 OES6

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

PROPOSED STANDARDS FOR THE SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION OF WATER AND FOR WASTEWATER SERVICES

GUARANTEED WATER STANDARDS (GWS)

IMPLEMENTATION OF WATER SCHEDULES GWS1

WASA is required to provide a minimum water supply of 48 hours aggregate per week at a minimum pressure of 5 psi in accordance with published water supply schedules.

RESTORATION OF SUPPLY AFTER SERVICE INTERRUPTION GWS2

WASA is required to respond and restore supply after a service interruption on the distribution system no later than 48 hours for planned interruptions and varying scenarios for unplanned interruptions.

PROVISION OF TRUCK BORNE SUPPLY IF MAINS SUPPLY IS INTERRUPTED GWS3

WASA is required to provide a truck borne supply of water upon customer request within 24 hours after the notified time for a planned interruption has ended if pipe borne supply is not yet available; and from 48 hours after the start of an unplanned interruptions and within 24 hours if pipe borne supply is not yet available.

TIME TO REPAIR A WATER SERVICE CONNECTION (WSC) GWS4

WASA is required to repair a Water Service Connection (WSC) within 48 hours of report by the customer for loss of supply to registered critical institutions and for leaks resulting in property damage; and within 3 working days for leaks and loss of supply affecting supply to customers.

INSTALLATION OF NEW WATER SERVICE CONNECTION (WSC) GWS5

WASA is required to determine feasibility, notify customers and install WSC within timeframe for varying scenarios.

RECONNECTION OF SUPPLY AFTER SETTLING OUTSTANDING ACCOUNTS OR DISCONNECTION DUE TO ERROR GWS6

WASA is required to reconnect a supply after settlement of outstanding accounts of disconnection due to error within 24 hours of receipt of full payment or as agreed between WASA and customer, or in determining of error made.

RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS GWS7

WASA is required to acknowledge complaints within 5 working days of receipt of complaint and communicate final position within 30 working days of receipt of complaint.

RESPONSE TO POOR WATER QUALITY GWS8

WASA is required to respond to complaints of poor water quality and conduct site visit, where necessary, within 1 working day; resolve problems discovered within 3 working days of site visit; and provide an alternative water supply where applicable.

COMPENSATORY PAYMENTS FOR GUARANTEED STANDARDS GWS9

WASA is required to credit compensatory payment for non-compliance with standards to the customer account within 60 working days of receipt of claim.

OVERALL WATER STANDARDS (OWS)
.....**NOTIFICATION WITH RESPECT TO PLANNED SUPPLY INTERRUPTIONS OWS1**

WASA is required to provide notification to customers 48 hours prior to a supply interruption with a duration of 4 hours.

WATER PRESSURE OWS2

WASA is required to provide a minimum water supply pressure of 14 metre head (20 psi) and a maximum pressure of 70 metre head (100 psi) at the point of the customer's Water Service Connection (WSC).

METERING OWS3

WASA is required to read meters at least every two months, and issue bills within 10 working days of meter readings. Defective water meters are to be repaired within 30 days of receipt of report.

DRINKING WATER QUALITY OWS4

WASA is required meet World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines for drinking water with 100% compliance for the bacteriological threshold and 95% compliance for physical and chemical parameters of the water. WASA is also required to collect water samples and carry out tests according to an established schedule.

SEWAGE EFFLUENT QUALITY OWS5

The quality of the effluent discharged by WASA into the environment shall comply with the water pollution rule or equivalent standard as set by the relevant authority having such jurisdiction.

REPAIRS TO SEWERS OWS6

WASA is required to clear choke in WASA's sewer system within 18 hours of receipt of report of overflow and repair collapse of WASA's sewer system within 72 hours of receipt of report.

ROAD RESTORATION AFTER PIPELINE WORKS OWS7

WASA is required to complete temporary road restoration within 24 hours and complete permanent restoration within 7 days. Restoration works shall be performed in accordance with the road restoration guidelines issued by the Ministry of Works or equivalent entity.

CLAIMS FOR DAMAGE OWS8

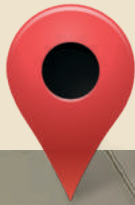
WASA is required to reply to within 5 working days of receipt of a claim for damage; complete investigation within 30 working days of receipt of claim; and determine liability and make payment where applicable within 60 working days of receipt of claim.

MAKING AND KEEPING APPOINTMENTS OWS9

WASA is required to arrive for appointments within 30 minutes of the scheduled appointment and notify customers no less than 24 hours prior of their inability to keep an appointment.

More information on the proposed T&TEC & WASA Quality of Service Standards can be found in the full documents available on the RIC's website at www.ric.org.tt/publications

RIC'S PUBLIC OUTREACH SESSIONS



BRIAN LARA PROMENADE



Customer Service Officer, Ms. Shelly Soonachan takes a complaint from customer



Tariff Analyst, Ms. Sonia Rogoopath interacts with members of the public



IT Manager, Mr. Martin Haynes speaks with a visitor at the RIC's booth

In a continued effort to engage and educate the public on the role and responsibilities of the RIC, the organization recently hosted a Stakeholder Information Day/Information Booth on the Brian Lara Promenade on Friday 9th March, 2018 from 10am – 2pm.

This initiative sought to disseminate information about the Price Reviews for WASA and T&TEC, educate customers on how they could save money on their electricity bills as well as address customer complaints and concerns with their utility providers. Members of the RIC staff got an opportunity to interact with the public and disseminated information through the distribution of promotional items and RIC brochures as well as face-to-face discussions. Visitors to the booth also had the opportunity to lodge complaints and have their questions answered by a Customer Service Officer of the RIC.

Look out for our next outreach at a location near you!

PHOTO GALLERY

RIC's Staff Day Out



The Regulated Industries Commission hosted a **Staff Day Out** on February 22nd 2018 to Gasparee Island as a team building activity for staff. The team visited a beautiful, private, island home located just off the main land of Trinidad.

There were also lots of team building activities planned out for the day for the team and staff members were taken on a guided tour of the Gasparee Caves..



Above: Winning Team A in action during the first game of building the tallest and strongest tower team building exercise.

Centre: RIC staff having fun at a game of Human Knot

Below: Team B working diligently to complete their tower making sure that it was strong enough to support a half cup of water for at least one minute.



CDA Tour Guide taking staff on a guided tour of the Gasparee Caves