REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

REVIEW OF THE QUALITY OF SERVICE STANDARDS *FOR THE* ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION SECTOR

July 2017

Summary Document for Consultation

The Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) is the sole entity responsible for the transmission and distribution of electricity in Trinidad and Tobago. Therefore, consumers of electricity do not have the option to switch to another supplier if they are not satisfied with the quality of service provided by T&TEC.

The Regulated Industries Commission (RIC), in its capacity as the economic regulator for the sector, established the Quality of Service Standards (QSS) in 2004 to ensure that T&TEC provides and maintains an acceptable level of service to its customers. The QSS was subsequently revised in 2009 and in the thirteen years that the QSS has been instituted, the RIC acknowledges the improvement in service as T&TEC seeks to adhere to the standards to ensure a safe and reliable supply of electricity to its consumers and the wider public.

This document summarizes the revisions being proposed to the Guaranteed and Overall QSS in the consultative document "**Review of the Quality of Service Standards for the Electricity Transmission and Distribution Sector**" which is located on the RIC's website at http://www.ric.org.tt/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/QSS-Revision-2017-Consultation.pdf. More specifically, the summary document sets out:

a) The comparison of the current QSS and the proposed QSS (Table 1 and Table 2); and
b) The issues proposed for the consideration of all stakeholders.

The RIC invites feedback from the public with respect to our proposals. Responses to the specific questions asked in the consultative document, and any other issues which respondents believe should be considered by the RIC in reviewing the quality of service standards, should be sent in writing by **4:00 p.m. on September 8, 2017** to:

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Table 1: Comparison of the Current and Proposed Guaranteed Electricity Standards (GES)

	Current Standards		RIC Considerations	Proposals		
Code	**Service Description**	**Performance Level**		**Service Description**	**Performance Level**	**Penalty Payments**
GES1	**Restoration of supply after unplanned outage on the distribution system.**	Within 10 hours For each further 12 hr period	The RIC considers that 10 hours is an appropriate period of time for restoration of the electrical supply given typical conditions.	**Restoration of supply after unplanned outage on the distribution system.**	Within 10 hours.	$60 residential $600 non-residential For each further 12-hour period – $60 residential, $600 non-residential
GES2	**Billing Punctuality (new customers)**	Within 60 days residential. Within 30 days non-residential.	T&TEC's performance under the existing standard has been good. However, the RIC considers the dispatch of the first bill to be an important requirement on the part of the service provider in order to ensure that the customer is afforded the opportunity to review the bill in a reasonable period of time to mitigate the impact of any billing discrepancies at the onset. The RIC proposes to standardize the minimum level of compensation at $60.	**Billing punctuality. Time for first bill to be dispatched after service connection.**	Within 60 days residential. Within 30 days non-residential.	$60 for both residential and non-residential
GES3	**Reconnection of service after payment of overdue amounts or agreement on payment schedule**	Within 24 hours.	The RIC considers that 24 hours is an appropriate period of time for the reconnection of the electrical supply given typical conditions.	**Reconnection of service after settling of overdue amounts or agreement on payment schedule.**	Within 24 hours.	Refund of reconnection fee for both residential and non-residential
GES4	**Making and keeping appointments**	24 hours notice of inability to keep an appointment with customers.	The RIC considers that the customer's commitment to be available at the date and time that is arranged should be respected by the service provider. The RIC proposes to standardize the minimum level of compensation at $60.	**Making and keeping appointments.**	24 hours notice of inability to keep an appointment with customers.	$60 for both residential and non-residential

Table 1: Comparison of the Current and Proposed Guaranteed Electricity Standards (GES)

	Current Standards		RIC Considerations	Proposals		
Code	**Service Description**	**Performance Level**		**Service Description**	**Performance Level**	**Penalty Payments**
GES5	**Investigation of Voltage Complaints**	Visit within 24 hours. Correct within 15 working days.	The RIC has received complaints from some customers of cases in which their three phase equipment either cannot be operated or has been damaged by voltage imbalance in the three phase supply from T&TEC. This is in addition to the low and high voltage complaints that are typically reported by customers. The RIC proposes to standardize the minimum level of compensation at $60.	**Investigation of voltage complaints (high/low voltage and imbalanced three phase voltage).**	Visit within 24 hours. Correct within 15 working days.	$60 residential $600 non-residential
GES6	**Responding to billing and payment queries**	Substantive reply within 15 working days.	The RIC considers that 15 working days is an appropriate period of time for the service provider to process the customer's query. The RIC proposes to standardize the minimum level of compensation at $60.	**Responding to billing and payment queries.**	Substantive reply within 15 working days.	$60 for both residential and non-residential
GES7	**New Connection of supply** Service drop and meter to be installed	Within 3 working days	The existing standard sought to focus on the issue of delays in completing new connections of supply after all installation works have been completed by both the customer and the service provider (when necessary). However, customers have reported that they are experiencing inordinate delays in the completion of the surveys for new connections, the estimation of costs and the construction of additional infrastructure (network augmentation	**Execution of capital works and new connection of supply.** **A. Within 30 metres. (Where no construction works on the part of the service provider are required.)** **1. Completion of preliminary survey.**	Within 3 working days of request.	$60 residential $600 non-residential

Table 1: Comparison of the Current and Proposed Guaranteed Electricity Standards (GES)

	Current Standards		RIC Considerations	Proposals		
Code	**Service Description**	**Performance Level**		**Service Description**	**Performance Level**	**Penalty Payments**
			works). The proposed revision to the performance measures and required performance units under this standard, see table 11, is intended to address these issues. The RIC proposes to standardize the minimum level of compensation at $60.	**A. Within 30 metres.** **2. Service drop and meter to be installed.**	Within 3 working days.	$60 residential $600 non-residential
GES7				**B. Within 100 metres. (Where construction works on the part of the service provider are required.)** **1. Completion of preliminary survey.**	Within 3 working days of request.	$60 residential $600 non-residential
				B. Within 100 metres. **2. Provision of estimate.**	Within 5 working days of all documents being provided by the customer.	$60 residential $600 non-residential
				B. Within 100 metres. **3. Completion of construction works.**	Within 15 working of submission of any required payments and agreements signed by the customer.	$60 residential $600 non-residential
				B. Within 100 metres. **4. Meter to be installed.**	Within 3 working days of submission of all payments and documentation.*	$60 residential $600 non-residential
				C. Greater than 100 metres. (Where construction works on the part of the service provider are required.) **1. Completion of preliminary survey.**	Within 3 working days of request.	$60 residential $600 non-residential
				C. Greater than 100 metres. **2. Provision of estimate.**	Within 7 working days of all documents being provided by the customer.	$60 residential $600 non-residential

Table 1: Comparison of the Current and Proposed Guaranteed Electricity Standards (GES)

	Current Standards		RIC Considerations	Proposals		
Code	**Service Description**	**Performance Level**		**Service Description**	**Performance Level**	**Penalty Payments**
GES7				**C. Greater than 100 metres.** **3. Completion of construction works.**	Within 20 working days of submission of any required payments and agreements signed by the customer.	$60 residential $600 non-residential
				C. Greater than 100 metres. **4. Meter to be installed.**	Within 3 working days of submission of all payments and documentation. *	$60 residential $600 non-residential
				D. Industrial **1. Completion of preliminary survey.**	Within 3 working days of request.	$600
				D. Industrial **2. Provision of estimate.**	Within 15 working days of all documents being provided by the customer.	$600
				D. Industrial **3. Completion of construction works.**	Within the time mutually agreed with the customer and submission of any required payments and agreements signed by the customer.	$600
				D. Industrial **4. Meter to be installed.**	Within 3 working days of submission of all payments and documentation. *	$600
GES8	**Payments owed under guaranteed standards**	Within 30 working days for non-residential and 60 working days for residential.	The RIC considers that 30 working days is an appropriate period of time for the service provider to credit payment to customers' account. The RICproposes to standardize the minimum level of compensation at $60.	**Payments owed under guaranteed standards.**	Within 30 working days for non-residential and 60 working days for residential.	$60 for both residential and non-residential

Table 2: Comparison of the Current and Proposed Overall Electricity Standards (OES)

	Current Standards		RIC Considerations	Proposals	
Code	**Service Description**	**Performance Level**		**Service Description**	**Performance Level**
OES1	**Frequency of meter reading**	90% of industrial meters should be read every month 90% of residential and commercial meters read according to schedule	There has been a high installation rate of AMI meters and the number of meters to be manually read is small. The service provider has demonstrated the ability to read these meters to set schedules and maintained 100% compliance over the period 2004 to 2015.	**It is proposed to remove this standard.**	
OES2	**Billing punctuality**	98% of all bills to be mailed within 10 working days after meter reading or estimation	There is a high installation rate of AMI meters and the number of bills not generated by an automated process is small. The service provider has demonstrated the ability to dispatch bills to set schedules and maintained 100% compliance over the period 2012 to 2015.	**It is proposed to remove this standard.**	
OES1			The overall network reliability statistics for the service provider for unplanned outages has been improving over the period 2004 to 2015, however, performance varies by distribution area and consequently some customers receive a more reliable supply of electricity than others. The RIC is of the opinion that operational and maintenance measures can be implemented consistently throughout the distribution areas to improve the reliability of supply to all customers. The objective is to have the values for SAIDI and SAIFI reduced in the worse performing distribution areas while maintaining or improving the values of these indices in the other distribution areas.	**Maintaining the network reliability for unplanned outages (excluding force majeure events) for each of its distribution areas.** **<u>New Standard.</u>**	Maintain the yearly network reliability metrics for unplanned outages (excluding force majeure events) for each of its distribution areas within the following limits: SAIDI to within 400 minutes; and SAIFI to within 4.8.
OES2	**Responding to meter problems**	Visit or substantive reply within 10 working days 95% of the time	There has been a high installation rate of AMI meters. The service provider is expected to process customer complaints efficiently through the use of the installed Advanced Metering Infrastructure.	**Responding to meter problems** **Formerly OES3.**	Visit or substantive reply within 10 working days 95% of the time

Table 2: Comparison of the Current and Proposed Overall Electricity Standards (OES)

	Current Standards		RIC Considerations	Proposals	
Code	**Service Description**	**Performance Level**		**Service Description**	**Performance Level**
OES3	**Prior Notice of planned outages**	At least 3 days advance notice of planned outages 100% of the time	The service provider has the responsibility to ensure that customers are given sufficient notice of planned interruptions in order to make alternative arrangements during the loss of the electricity supply.	**Prior Notice of planned outages** **Formerly OES4.**	At least 3 days advance notice of planned outages 100% of the time
OES4	**Street lights maintenance.**	100% of failed street lights with the exception of highway lighting repaired within 7 working days. 100% of failed highway lighting repaired within 14 working days.	The RIC considers the provision of reliable lighting of the country's roads and highways as an important requirement on the part of the service provider	**Street lights maintenance.** **Formerly OES5.**	100% of failed street lights with the exception of highway lighting repaired within 7 working days. 100% of failed highway lighting repaired within 14 working days.
OES5	**Response to customer queries/requests (written)**	Substantive response within 10 working days and Communicating final position within 30 working days.	This performance measure was simplified in the last revision of the QSS. However, customers have complained of the timeliness for the service provider to issue a response and address their complaints.	**Response to customer queries/requests (written)** **Formerly OES6.**	Respond after receipt of written queries/ requests within 5working days. Complete investigation, resolve issue and communicate final position within 10 working days thereafter. Complete investigation, resolve issue and communicate final position, if third party is involved (e.g. Insurance claim) within 15 working days thereafter.
OES6	**Notifying customers of receipt of claim under guaranteed standard GES1.**	100% of customers to be notified of receipt of claim within 10 working days.	**This standard will be discontinued when the automatic payment for breaches under GES1 commences.**	**Notifying customers of receipt of claim under guaranteed standard GES1.** **Formerly OES7.**	100% of customers to be notified of receipt of claim within 10 working days.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Q1. What are your views with respect to the RIC's approach to continue with the implementation of a system of Guaranteed and Overall Standards?

Q2. What are your concerns with respect to the service provider's performance as presented in the principal document? Please explain why?

Q3. What are your views on the retention of GES1, GES2, GES3, GES4, GES6 and GES8? Would the performance measurements of these standards have to be adjusted, and if so, how?

Q4. The range of issues under GES5 which pertains to voltage complaints has been expanded to include imbalanced three phase voltages. What are your views with regard to the adjustment made to this standard?

Q5. A number of additional performance measures have been introduced under GES7 based on the concerns expressed by customers. What are your views with regard to the adjustment made to this standard?

Q6. It is proposed to set the minimum compensatory payment level at $60.00. Under GES1, GES5 and GES7 the compensatory payment level for residential customers has been set at $60.00 and for non-residential customers it has been set at $600.00 based on the anticipated effect that non-compliance with these standard will impose on the respective categories of customers. Do you agree that it is appropriate to set differing payment levels for the different categories of customers? What method should be used to determine payment levels going forward and how frequently should this review occur?

Q7. OES1 and OES2 are being removed due to the benefits of the Automatic Metering Infrastructure (AMI) that has been installed in over ninety percent of T&TEC's network and the very high level of performance achieved in relation to these standards over time. Are you in agreement with this proposition?

Q8. A new standard pertaining to T&TEC's network reliability performance has been proposed under OES1. What are your views on the establishment of this new standard and the proposed performance measures and requirements?

Q9. What are your views on the retention of the OES3, OES4, OES5 and OES7? Would the performance measurements of these standards have to be adjusted, and if so, how?

Q10. The range of issues under the new OES5 which pertains to the response to customer queries has been expanded to include investigating and resolving the query. What are your views with regard to the adjustment made to this standard?

Q11. Measures have been proposed to improve the accuracy and consistency of data submissions by the service provider. Are you in agreement with these propositions? If you do not agree, please explain why?

Q12. Measures have been proposed to increase the public's awareness of the QSS scheme. Are you in agreement with these propositions? If you do not agree, please explain why?

Additional issues related to the regulation of the Quality of Service Standards for the Electricity Transmission and Distribution Sector can also be raised by interested parties and the RIC will give due consideration to all submissions. Respondents are kindly asked to reference their comments to the relevant subsections and enumerated paragraphs within the principal document.