

Electricity Compliance Reporting Manual – Data Input Guide for Retail and Distribution Licensees

Electricity Industry Act 2004

May 2007

Economic Regulation Authority



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Economic Regulation Authority (**Authority**) is responsible, under the *Electricity Networks Access Code 2004 (Access Code)* for approving, and subsequently monitoring performance against, a set of service standard benchmarks for the South West Interconnected Network (**SWIN**) operated by Western Power. The service standard benchmarks for the period 2006-09 are set out in the current Access Arrangement which is available on the Authority's web site¹. The Authority requires Western Power to report against the service standard benchmarks identified in section 15 of the Electricity Compliance Reporting Manual (Reporting Manual).²

The Authority is responsible for administering the licensing scheme under the *Electricity Industry Act 2004 (Act)*. A business licensed by the Authority is required to comply with a range of obligations prescribed by the Act and its associated regulations and codes.

Under section 11 of the Act, the Authority may determine licence terms and conditions, including requiring a licensee to publish specified information in relation to its performance under a licence. In accordance with these powers the Authority requires the holders of electricity distribution licences, retail licences and integrated regional licences³ to report against the performance indicators identified in section 16 of the Reporting Manual.

1.2 Purpose

The Authority has issued Data Sheets for the reporting of performance information to the Authority in accordance with the requirements set out in sections 15 and 16 of the Reporting Manual. These Data Sheets will be used as the basis of reporting at the end of each financial year.⁴

It is important that there is a shared understanding amongst all stakeholders in respect of the information that is required to be reported within these Data Sheets, including the definitions to be applied and the Authority's expectations as to the manner in which the information should be presented.

In support of this objective the Authority has issued this guide in order to provide guidance to licensees on the:

- timeframes within which the Data Sheets must be completed and lodged with the Authority;
- definitions to be applied to the performance indicators in the Data Sheets; and
- basis upon which inputs to the Data Sheets should be calculated (where appropriate).

Licensees should note that this framework document is not intended to be exhaustive of all material terms and definitions in the relevant regulations and codes. To this extent, the framework document is a guide only and should not be treated as definitive.

¹ The current Access Arrangement can be found on the Economic Regulation Authority website at http://www.era.wa.gov.au/2/455/48/amended_propose.pm

² The latest version of the Reporting Manual can be found on the Economic Regulation Authority website at <http://www.era.wa.gov.au/electricity/regulatoryGuidelines.cfm>

³ Only integrated regional licensees who are licensed to distribute or retail electricity are required to report against the indicators in section 16 of the Reporting Manual.

⁴ The latest version of the Data Sheets can be found on the Economic Regulation Authority website at <http://www.era.wa.gov.au/electricity/regulatoryGuidelines.cfm>

1.3 Indicator key

Licensees' reporting obligations are broken down into three categories, each of which uses a unique numbering structure:

- 1) Western Power Access Arrangement. Section 15 contains all of the service standard benchmarks for the current access arrangement. Each indicator is prefixed with the letters AA.
- 2) Distribution indicators are prefixed with the letter 'D'. The indicators are then further grouped into 6 categories each of which is prefixed with the letters A-F. The combination of these gives the 6 indicator groups DA – DF inclusive. Each indicator within a group is then assigned a unique number prefix.
- 3) Retail indicators are prefixed with the letter 'R'. The indicators are then further grouped into 6 categories each of which is prefixed with the letters A-F. The combination of these gives the 6 indicator groups RA – RF inclusive. Each indicator within a group is then assigned a unique number prefix.

Each of the distribution and retail indicator categories are described in more detail in sections 4 and 5.

2 Reporting Framework

The Reporting Manual includes four separate and distinct sets of reporting requirements:

- 1) Compliance reports. Section 3 of the Reporting Manual requires all electricity licensees to provide compliance reports to the Authority either immediately in the case of Type 1 breaches, or on an annual basis for Type 2 indicators. The annual report is to be provided to the Authority by 31 August immediately following the financial year that is the subject of the report.
- 2) Annual reporting by Western Power in relation to the service standard benchmarks set out in the Access Arrangement for the SWIN. The benchmarks are set out in section 15 of the Reporting Manual.
- 3) The holders of electricity retail and integrated regional (with retail obligations) licences who are retailing to small use customers, i.e. who consume less than 160MWh per annum, are required to report against the performance indicators set out in section 16.2 of the Reporting Manual. The indicators in section 16.2 are derived from the *Code of Conduct (For the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers)* (Code of Conduct) and the 2006 SCORRR Report⁵
- 4) The holders of electricity distribution and integrated regional (with distribution obligations) licences are required to report against the indicators set out in section 16.1 of the Reporting Manual. The indicators in section 16.1, relevant to distributors, are derived from the Code of Conduct, 2002 SCORRR Report⁶ and the *Electricity Industry (Network Quality and Reliability of Supply) Code 2005* (Reliability Code).

The Authority has prepared pro-forma data collection sheets (datasheets) for licensees to complete. The data sheets can be used by licensees to report against the performance indicators set out in sections 16.1 and 16.2 of the Reporting Manual. There is a separate

⁵ Steering Committee on National Regulatory Reporting Requirements – National Energy Retail Performance Indicators, which can be found at http://www.era.wa.gov.au/2/281/51/regulatory_guid.pm

⁶ Utility Regulators Forum discussion paper – National regulatory reporting for electricity distribution and retailing businesses, March 2002. The paper can be found at http://www.era.wa.gov.au/2/281/51/regulatory_guid.pm

datasheet for Western Power to report against the service standard benchmarks set out in section 15 of the Reporting Manual.

The latest version of the datasheets for sections 15, 16.1 and 16.2 can be found on the Authority's web site⁷.

2.1 Reporting Cycle for Performance Indicator Datasheets

The Authority will provide the datasheets for each reporting year to licensees on or before 20 June.

Licensees are required to provide the completed datasheets and any accompanying explanatory material for each year ending 30 June to the Authority not later than the following 20 September. The first reporting period in respect of the Reporting Manual is the year ending 30 June 2007, with the completed datasheets to be provided to the Authority no later than 20 September 2007.

2.2 Lodging Compliance Reports and Datasheets

Section 3.5 of the Reporting Manual provides details of how to lodge annual and immediate compliance reports and completed datasheets. This information is replicated below.

Electronic lodgement:

<mailto:electricity.reporting@era.wa.gov.au>

Hard copy lodgement:

Chairman
Economic Regulation Authority
PO Box 8469
Perth Business Centre WA 6849

3 Completing the datasheets

When completing the datasheets it is important that the structure of the datasheets is not modified by inserting, deleting or re-ordering rows or columns.

Only enter data in the 'Basis of Reporting' column or by completing the tables that are contained in Annexures 2A, 2B and 3.

If it is necessary to add a comment in relation to an indicator use the Excel 'Insert Comment' function to add the comment in the indicator number cell.

The datasheets comprise a number of tables of the format shown in Table 1 below.

⁷ The latest version of the Data Sheets can be found on the Economic Regulation Authority website at: <http://www.era.wa.gov.au/electricity/regulatoryGuidelines.cfm>

Table 1: Example datasheet format

No.	Reference	Description	Basis of Reporting		
			Number	Percentage	Value (\$)
DA 1	Code of Conduct clause 13.6(a)	Total number of connections established			

The 'No.' column contains the unique reference number for the indicator. In this case the indicator is the first indicator in the distribution indicator set (D), category A (Customer Connections).

The 'Reference' column identifies the document from which the indicator has been derived.

The 'Description' is copied from the document that the indicator was derived from.

The 'Basis of Reporting' offers 3 options:

- Number. This is used to enter any numerical value other than a percentage or a dollar value.
- Percentage.
- Value (\$).

Data should only be entered into unshaded cells. There are a number of indicators related to customer complaints that require separate reporting. Annexure 1 and 2 contain details of the required format for the complaint information to be provided by licensees. However, it is expected that this information will be provided as an attachment to the datasheets in either soft or hard copy. A similar situation arises in relation to reporting breaches of the Reliability Code using the format prescribed in Annexure 4.

If it is not possible to provide information on an indicator please enter "N/A" in the unshaded cell(s) with a comment, if appropriate.

4 Definitions – Distribution Performance Indicators

4.1 Customer Connections

The Code of Conduct only covers customers who consume less than 160MWh of electricity per annum, therefore only these customer connections should be reported.

The “**total number of connections established/provided**” (indicators **DA 1** and **DA 5**) only includes new connections that have been established, i.e. connected and energised during the reporting period.

The “**total number of connections**” (indicator **DA 4**) should report the total number of customer connections actually in service on the distribution network as of 30 June of the reporting year.

The “**number of connections not provided/established**” (indicators **DA 2**, **DA 3** and **DA 6**) include connections not provided within the regulated time frame prescribed in the Electricity Industry (Obligation to Connect) Regulations 2005 or an alternative time period agreed by the customer.

4.2 Network and Asset Information

The 2002 SCONRRR Report (pages 8 and 9) set out the definitions to be applied to this set of indicators. The reader is referred to this document on the Authority’s web site⁸.

Network - means distribution works which are used to convey electricity under a distribution licence but does not include a line, pole, switch, transformer or apparatus that is on or a part of premises to which electricity is supplied by a distributor and situated beyond the point at which electricity is so supplied.

Non-residential customer - means a customer who does not use the electricity supplied primarily for domestic purposes.

Residential customer – means a customer who primarily uses the electricity supplied for domestic purposes.

CBD feeder - means:

- a feeder supplying predominantly commercial, high-rise buildings supplied by a predominantly underground distribution network containing significant interconnection and redundancy when compared to urban areas;⁹ and
- the area supplied with electricity by;
 - the Milligan Street Zone Substation; or
 - the Hay Street Zone Substation.
 operated by Western Power Corporation.¹⁰

Urban feeder - means:

- a feeder, which is not a CBD feeder, with actual maximum demand over the reporting period per total feeder route length greater than 0.3 MVA/km;¹¹ and
- the feeder is located in the:

⁸ http://www.era.wa.gov.au/2/281/51/regulatory_guid.pm

⁹ 2002 SCONRRR Report, page 7.

¹⁰ Network Quality and Reliability of Supply Code, clause 3(1).

¹¹ 2002 SCONRRR Report, page 7.

- o metropolitan region described in the *Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act 1959* Third Schedule;
- o Local Government district of Mandurah; and
- o the following townsites as constituted under the *Land Administration Act 1997* section 26 – Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie.¹²

Short rural/rural short feeder¹³ - means a feeder which is not a CBD or urban feeder with a total feeder route length less than 200 km. Rural short feeders may include feeders in urban areas with low load densities.

Long rural/rural long feeder¹⁴ - means a feeder which is not a CBD or urban feeder with a total feeder route length greater than 200 km.

Back-up feeders should be given the same classification as the normal supply feeder they are providing back up for.

Subtransmission (ST) line – means a line generally 22kV or above, used to distribute electricity from a transmission connection point to one or more (zone) substations.

High voltage (HV) line – means a line used to distribute electricity from a (zone) substation, generally operating at a nominal voltage between 1kV and 33kV.

Low voltage (LV) line – means a line that operates at a nominal voltage of 1kV or below.

Energy delivered (DB 3) – means the annual GWh of electricity consumed by end-customers of the distribution network. This includes energy produced by embedded generators and consumed within the distribution area through the distribution network, unread meters and un-metered consumption (including estimated theft).

Line length (DB 4) – means the route length in kilometres of lines in service, including overhead lines, underground cables or a combination of the two. Line length does not include low voltage service connections.

Note:

- a double-circuit line counts as two lines and each three-phase line, single-phase line or single-wire earth return (SWER) line counts as one line; and
- total line length is to be disaggregated by feeder classification, line voltage, and line type.

Number and total capacity of transformers (DB6) – the total capacity indicator refers to the total installed rated MVA capacity of the transformers.

Distribution losses (DB 6) – is calculated as:

$$100 \times (\text{electricity purchased} - \text{electricity delivered}) / \text{electricity purchased}$$

Network service area (DB 7) – means the area in square kilometres covered by the licensee's distribution district. Areas within the distribution area to which a service is not provided by the distributor (e.g. national parks, inset areas) are included in the service area.

Peak demand (DB10) – means the maximum coincident demand on each network type at the terminal stations feeding the sub-transmission network and at the zone substations feeding the high voltage network. The total peak demand is the maximum coincident demand in each of the network types. The total network peak demand is the maximum coincident demand of the distributor's network.

¹² Network Quality and Reliability of Supply Code, clause 3(1).

¹³ 2002 SCORRRR Report, page 7.

¹⁴ 2002 SCORRRR Report, page 7.

Note: The peak demand should be stated in MW at the time of maximum MVA demand. A distributor's network peak demand does not necessarily coincide with system maximum demand.

4.3 Complaints and Compensation Payments

Complaint – is defined in accordance with standard AS ISO 10002-2006 Customer Satisfaction - Guidelines for Complaints Handling in Organizations (ISO 10002:2004, MOD).

Note: complaints regarding pre-payment meters are handled separately from other distribution network complaints.

Other complaints – means any complaint that cannot be assigned to a category that is defined in the Code of Conduct or 2002 SCNRRR Report. Examples include, but are not limited to, poor service, privacy issues, failure to respond to complaints, and health and safety issues.

Action taken to address a complaint (DC 9 and DC 25) – Annexure 2 provides a template setting out the type of information that is to be provided. This indicator is intended to identify the processes of continual improvement applied by the distributor to its service delivery and performance.

Recognising that some distributors receive a significant number of complaints per annum, it is acceptable for the distributor to group complaints if the same action has been taken to conclude/rectify each complaint. For example, a distributor receives 100 reliability of supply complaints and concludes 50 complaints by direct telephone contact, 20 complaints by letter, 20 complaints following referral to the Ombudsman and then subsequent action, and the remaining 10 complaints are concluded without the customer expressing satisfaction. It is acceptable for the distributor to provide a table showing a breakout of actions as described above rather than records relating to each individual complaint.

Time taken for a complaint to be concluded/rectified¹⁵ (DC10 and DC 26) – The time period for each complaint commences when the complaint has been recorded by the distributor and ends when the final action in respect of concluding the complaint has been completed. If a referral is made to the Energy Ombudsman, the time taken for the Ombudsman to deal with the complaint is included in the calculation of the total time. It is recognised that a distributor will not always be able to address a complaint to the satisfaction of the customer. A complaint may be recorded as being “concluded” or “rectified” although the complaint has not been resolved, provided the distributor has followed the appropriate procedures for dealing with the complaint.

It is left to the distributor to consider how they wish to provide data on the time taken to conclude/rectify a complaint. It is preferable to calculate the average time for all complaints to be concluded/rectified as a minimum, but there may be value in the distributor also providing an average time to conclude/rectify each category of complaint resolution (see the example above) in addition to an overall average.

Reliability Code complaints (DC21 and DC 22) – includes all complaints of non-compliance received by the distributor in respect of all matters covered by Part 2 of the Act or a separate instrument executed under section 14(3) of the Reliability Code.

The discrete areas referred to in indicator DC 22 are those defined in Schedule 1(2) of the Reliability Code.

¹⁵ Consistent with the approach applied to retail indicators relating to the conclusion of complaints under the Code of Conduct, clause 13.3(1)(d).

Total amount spent (DC 23) – includes the total amounts spent by the distributor in dealing with the complaints recorded in indicator DC 21. This might include payments to customers in addition to operational and capital expenditures on the part of the distributor.

Pre-payment meter customer (DC 24-26) – means a customer who has a pre-payment meter fitted at that customer's supply address.

Payments under Code of Conduct section 13.9(a) (DC 27 and DC 28) – there is an option for the distributor to also provide the amounts paid on a voluntary basis.

Payments made under section 19 of the Reliability Code (DC 29) – payment is to be made to the eligible customer for all interruptions exceeding 12 hours in length whether or not the required notice of interruption has been given to the customer. The duration of the interruption is calculated from the earlier of the time when the licensee was advised by the customer or when the distributor should have become aware, based on information reasonably available to them, that the supply had been interrupted.

Note: an eligible customer is a customer who consumes not more than 50MWh of electricity per year.

4.4 Contact Centre Performance

Calls

Total number of calls to call centre¹⁶ (DD 1) - means the total number of calls connected to the enquiry/complaint number that were handled by an operator or customer service officer, and in the case of an IVR¹⁷ system, the number of calls where the customer has selected the relevant operator option (but excludes all other calls not requiring operator attention):

Total calls = Calls connecting to number – (calls successfully handled by IVR + IVR calls abandoned)

Note: This is to include the number of abandoned calls to an operator, in the case of an IVR system recorded once the operator option has been selected, but exclude any calls abandoned prior to the customer selecting the operator option on the IVR.

Number of calls not answered within 30 seconds¹⁸ (DD 2) - means the number of calls to an operator (of the “total number of calls to call centre”) that were not answered within 30 seconds from when the customer connects to the enquiry/complaint number¹⁹.

Note:²⁰ A call is “answered” when the caller speaks to a human operator, but not when the call is placed in an automated queuing system. The number of telephone calls does not include calls to payment lines and automated interactive services.

Average waiting time before call is answered²¹ (DD 3) - means the total time waited by callers before their telephone call was answered by an operator, divided by the total number of calls to call centre.

Note:²² A call is “answered” when the caller speaks to a human operator, but not when the call is placed in an automated queuing system. The number of telephone calls does not include calls to payment lines and automated interactive services.

¹⁶ 2002 SCONRRR Report.

¹⁷ Interactive Voice Response system – a platform that uses either digits or voice recognition technology to interact with customers who call the enquiry/complaint number.

¹⁸ Defined consistently with the definition applied under the 2006 SCONRRR Report to the equivalent retail indicators.

¹⁹ 2002 SCONRRR Report, page 36

²⁰ 2002 SCONRRR Report, page 8.

²¹ Defined consistently with the definition applied under the 2006 SCONRRR Report to the equivalent retail indicators.

Note:²³

- this indicator requires a distributor to report on the time waited by callers before a call is answered, therefore only answered calls are relevant (i.e. the indicator is monitoring a subset of the total calls received, i.e. only those calls that are connected to a human operator). This indicator should not include details of abandoned calls, nor include the average waiting time before a call is abandoned;
- where an IVR system operates it is not appropriate to regard the call as being answered as soon as the IVR system accepts the call. Where a caller to an IVR system is seeking to talk to an operator, monitoring of the call waiting time should commence from the selection of the relevant IVR operator option up and until an operator picks up the call; and
- for non-IVR systems, the monitoring time should commence when the call is received by the switchboard and covers the time until the operator picks up the call (and is able to deal with the customer's inquiry rather than place the customer back in a queue), including any time spent in a queue.

Percentage of calls abandoned²⁴ (DD 4) - means the percentage of the "total number of telephone calls to an operator" where the caller has indicated they wish to speak with a human operator and has hung up before the call is answered by an operator. Abandoned calls include those calls that were abandoned within the first 30 seconds of the call. This indicator excludes calls that were abandoned prior to the customer selecting the operator option on an IVR system.

Overload event (DD 5) – means the occurrence of an abnormally high volume of calls to the enquiry/complaint number. This usually occurs when there is a significant outage on a part of the distribution system caused by a *force majeure* event such as bad weather, major network failure or demand overload.

4.5 Network Performance

Small use customer (DE 1) – means a customer who consumes not more than 160MWh of electricity per year.

Interruption (DE 1-3, DE 5-8) – means the loss of electricity supply for more than one minute that is due to a cause beyond the control of the customer. It is noted that some distributors state two values for interruptions. The first value includes all interruption events and the second value excludes those interruptions in respect of Major Event Days (MED) calculated in accordance with the method described in standard IEEE 1366-2003²⁵.

Interruption (DE 9-21) – in relation to the SCORRRR indicators has the meaning identified in Note 1 on page 6 of the 2002 SCORRRR Report. The essential variation from the Reliability Code definition is that an interruption is any outage causing a loss of supply of greater than 0.5sec duration.

Overall interruptions²⁶ – means all sustained interruptions including transmission, directed load shedding, planned and unplanned.

²² 2002 SCORRRR Report, page 8.

²³ Defined consistently with the definition applied under the 2006 SCORRRR Report to the equivalent retail indicators.

²⁴ Defined consistently with the definition applied under the 2006 SCORRRR Report to the equivalent retail indicators.

²⁵ IEEE Standard 1366-2003 – IEEE Guide for Electric Power Distribution Reliability Indices, section 4.5

²⁶ 2002 SCORRRR Report, page 7.

Distribution network interruptions²⁷ – means planned and unplanned interruptions excluding transmission outages and directed load shedding.

Note:

- the “**distribution network interruptions**” (indicators **DE10-11, DE14-15, DE18-19**) is to be disaggregated into planned and unplanned interruptions; and
- planned interruptions are interruptions for which the required notice has or should have been given.

Normalised distribution network interruptions²⁸ further excludes outages which:

- exceed a threshold SAIDI impact of three minutes;
- are caused by exceptional natural or third party events; and
- where the licensee cannot reasonably be expected to mitigate the effect of the event on interruptions by prudent asset management.

Note:

- the “**normalised distribution network**” (indicators **DE12, DE16, DE20**) is derived by subtracting the allowable excluded outages from the distribution network unplanned interruptions.²⁹

Graph (DE 8) – the Reliability Code does not prescribe the format of the graph to be published by distributors. However, it is preferred that the graphs clearly identify the proportion or percentage of customer connections fall within and outside the interruption duration and frequency standards for each discrete area prescribed in sections 13(2) and 12(1) respectively of the Reliability Code.

System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI) (DE 9-12) – The 2002 SCORRRR Report definition is consistent with that in standard IEEE 1366-2003³⁰

System Average Interruption Frequency Index (SAIFI) (DE 13-16) – The 2002 SCORRRR Report definition is consistent with that in standard IEEE 1366-2003

Customer Average Interruption Duration Index (CAIDI) (DE 17-20) – The 2002 SCORRRR Report definition is consistent with that in standard IEEE 1366-2003

Momentary Average Interruption Frequency Index (MAIFI) (DE 21) – The 2002 SCORRRR Report definition is consistent with that in standard IEEE 1366-2003

A Breach (DE 22-23) - means a failure to comply with any provision of the Reliability Code. The breach may be identified by the licensee through the receipt of a customer complaint or through its own monitoring and investigation processes.

Note:

- relevant information regarding the breach is to be reported by completing **Annexure 4** of the Data Sheet. **Annexure 4** requires the identification of:
 - the provision that has been breached;
 - the nature and extent of the breach, including the number of occasions a breach has occurred;
 - the impact of the breach including the number of customers and other licensees affected;

²⁷ 2002 SCORRRR Report, page 7

²⁸ 2002 SCORRRR Report, page 7.

²⁹ 2002 SCORRRR Report, page 7.

³⁰ IEEE Standard 1366-2003 – IEEE Guide for Electric Power Distribution Reliability Indices

- the reasons for the breach;
- the remedial action that the licensee has taken to rectify the breach; and
- the date the licensee has, or expects to, comply again fully with the provision that has been breached.

This approach is consistent with licensees' annual reporting of compliance against general licence obligations contained in sections 7 to 14 (inclusive) of the Reporting Manual;

- the “**total number of breaches**” indicator requires the licensee to report the number of breaches that have occurred, by provision; and
- the “**remedial action taken**” indicator requires the licensee to provide a brief description of the action taken to rectify the breach. Where a provision has been breached on a number of occasions in the reporting period and some or all of those breaches relate to the same incident, event or compliance failure, a single description of the remedial action taken may be provided for the related breaches.

4.6 Street Lighting

4.6.1 Code of Conduct Clause 13.7 (DF 1-3)

Annexure 3 contains a table for the distributor to populate with the number of faulty street lights reported per month.

Number of street lights reported faulty each month (DF 1) - if a street light fails more than once during a reporting month then each failure is counted as a separate failure event.

Time to repair faulty street lights (DF 2-3) – the time period commences when the distributor is notified that the street light is faulty and concludes when the street light has been returned to service.

4.6.2 2002 SCONRRR Report (DF 4-7)

Time to repair faulty street lights is the same as that for the Code of Conduct.

Agreed date (DF 5) – the agreed dates are:

- 5 business days for the metropolitan area; or
- 9 business days for all regional (non-metropolitan) areas.

This is calculated by summing the metropolitan and regional indicators in indicator DF 2 to give a total value for the entire distribution network.

5 Definitions – Retail Performance Indicators

5.1 Customers and Customer Information

Non-residential customer - means a customer that does not use the electricity supplied primarily for domestic purposes.

Residential customer – means a customer who primarily uses the electricity supplied for domestic purposes.

Total number of accounts (RA 1-2) - A customer may have multiple accounts. These indicators require the licensee to report the number of accounts, not customers, by the relevant customer class (i.e. residential or non-residential).

5.2 Affordability and access

Financial hardship (RB 1) - means a state of more than immediate financial disadvantage which results in a residential customer being unable to pay an outstanding amount as required by a retailer without affecting the ability to meet the basic living needs of the residential customer or a dependant of the residential customer.

Instalment plan/instalment payment plan (RB 2-6) - means an arrangement between a retailer and a customer for the customer to pay in arrears and to pay for continued usage on their account according to an agreed payment schedule and capacity to pay. It does not include customers using a payment plan as a matter of convenience or for flexible budgeting purposes.

Note:

- a suitable working definition is the number of plans involving at least three (3) instalments;
- the plans enable customers to make payments in instalments, by arrears and/or in advance, taking into account their capacity to pay;
- the key point is that the arrangements enable the customer to continue to receive supply and avoid disconnection; and
- there may be instances where a customer on an instalment plan elects to continue to make regular payments after any outstanding sums have been paid. In such instances, as indicated by the definition, the customer has moved to a “bill smoothing arrangement” and from that time should not be considered to be on an instalment plan.

Number of customers (RB 2, 3 and 5) - means the total number of customers billed by the retailer that are on instalment plans, reported by the relevant class (i.e. total, residential or non-residential).

Percentage of customers (RB 4 and 6) - is calculated by dividing the number of customers on instalment plans by the total number of customers in the relevant class (i.e. residential or non-residential).

Direct debit terminations as a result of default (RB 9-12) - means where a direct debit plan/facility is terminated as a result of default/non-payment.

Note:

- the term “direct debit plan” or “direct debit facility” is a general term meant to cover all customers paying by direct debit;

- it would generally require a default or rejection to occur in two successive payment periods, to reflect as far as possible true default on payments, rather than an error or a transitory shortfall;
- the key aspect of this definition is that a direct debit plan has been terminated as a result of default. This indicator should not include terminations for reasons other than default, for example, at the request of the customer who has decided to adopt different payment arrangements;
- two successive payment periods is considered as being specific to the customer in question and may relate to two fortnights or two quarters, as determined by the specific individual customer's arrangements; and
- all terminations would be included, including those relating to Centrepay.

Number of customers (RB 9 and 11) - means the total number of customer's direct debit plans that have been terminated as a result of default, reported by the relevant class (i.e. total, residential or non-residential).

Percentage of customers (RB 10 and 12) - is calculated by dividing the number of direct debit plans terminated by the total number of direct debit plans in the relevant customer class (i.e. residential or non-residential).

5.3 *Disconnections for Non-Payment and Re-connections*

Disconnection for failure to pay (RC 1) - means a small use customer whose supply was disconnected due to the customer's failure to pay an amount owed. Note that this indicator refers to the number of events or occasions where disconnection has occurred, i.e. if a customer is disconnected twice in the same reporting period then this counts as two disconnection events.

Reconnected at the same supply address (RC 2) - means small use customers whose supply was reconnected in the same name at the same premises within 30 days of a disconnection for failure to pay an amount owed.

Disconnection previously within the past 24 months (RC 9/10 and 19/20) - means residential customers whose supply was disconnected for a failure to pay an amount owed and who have been disconnected for a failure to pay an account on one or more occasions in the previous 24 months.

Disconnection of customers previously on an instalment plan (RC 7/8 and 17/18) - means residential customers whose supply was disconnected for failure to pay an amount owed and who are, or who were in the previous 24 months, on a budget instalment plan.

Disconnection of government funded rebate customers (RC 11/12 and 21/22) - means disconnection of residential customers who receive a government-funded energy rebate or concession.

Note: "**concession**" means a concession, rebate, subsidy or grant related to the supply of electricity, including, without limitation, those known as or relating to:

- Life Support Equipment Electricity Subsidy Scheme.
- Seniors Air Conditioning Rebate.
- Supply Charge Rebate.
- Dependent Child Rebate.
- Account Establishment Fee Rebate.

- Meter Testing Reduced Charges.³¹

Percentage of customers (RC 3-22) - is calculated by dividing the number of customers subject to the reported event by the total number of customers in the relevant customer class (i.e. residential or non-residential).

Reconnected within 7 days (RC 13-16) - means customers whose supply was reconnected, where a reconnection has been carried out for a small use customer at the same premises in the same name within 7 days of disconnection due to a failure to pay an amount owed.

Reconnected previously on a budget instalment plan (RC 17 and 18) – means residential customers whose supply was reconnected in the same name at the same premises following disconnection for failure to pay an amount owed, who are, or who were in the previous 24 months, on a budget instalment plan.

Reconnected government rebate customers (RC 21 and 22) - means residential customers whose supply was reconnected in the same name at the same premises following disconnection for failure to pay an amount owed, who receive a government funded energy rebate or concession

Note:

- the **reconnected within 7 days** indicator refers to the number of events or occasions where disconnection has occurred. For example, if customer A is reconnected twice in a reporting year, two reconnections must be reported; and
- the **percentage of customers reconnected** indicator is calculated by dividing the number of customers reconnected in the relevant category by the number of customers disconnected for failure to pay.

5.4 Refundable advances and security deposits

Security deposit/refundable advance - means a payment made by a customer to secure the connection or reconnection of supply of electricity and which is refundable. This definition can be used inter-changeably between Code of Conduct indicators and SCORRRR indicators.

Note:

- the “**number of customers**” (indicator **RD 1** and **3**) means the total number of customers billed by the retailer that have provided a security deposit, reported by the relevant class (i.e. total, residential or non-residential).
- the **number** reported should be as at 30 June of the relevant financial year.
- the **percentage of customers** (indicator **RD 2** and **4**) is calculated by dividing the number of customers who have lodged security deposits by the total number of customers in the relevant class (i.e. residential or non-residential).

5.5 Complaints and Compensation Payments

Complaint – is defined in accordance with standard AS ISO 10002-2006 Customer Satisfaction - Guidelines for Complaints Handling in Organizations (ISO 10002:2004, MOD).

³¹ Code of Conduct, clause 1.5. Information on these concessions can be found on the Department of Community Development’s site at <http://www.community.wa.gov.au/>

Note: complaints regarding pre-payment meters are handled separately from other retail customer complaints.

Billing and account complaints (RE 2, 10 and 15) – includes billing errors, incorrect billing of fees and charges, failure to receive relevant Government rebates, high billing, credit collection, disconnection and reconnection, and restriction due to billing discrepancy.

Marketing complaints (RE 4, 11 and 16) – includes advertising campaigns, contract terms, sales techniques and misleading conduct.

Transfer complaints (RE 5, 12 and 17) - includes a failure to transfer a customer within a certain time period, disruption of supply due to transfer and billing problems directly associated with the transfer (e.g. delay in billing, double billing).

Connection complaints (RE 5) – includes a failure to establish and energise a connection, other than re-connection following disconnection for failure to pay a bill, in a timely manner.

Disconnection/re-connection complaints (RE 6 and 7) – includes complaints about disconnection and re-connection of supply in relation to the provisions set out in Parts 7 and 8 of the Code of Conduct.

Other complaints – means any complaint that cannot be assigned to a category that is defined in the Code of Conduct or 2006 SCORRR Report. Examples include, but are not limited to, poor service, privacy issues, failure to respond to complaints and health and safety issues.

Action taken to address a complaint (RE 19 and RE 25) – Annexure 1 provides a template setting out the type of information that is to be provided. This indicator is intended to identify the processes of continual improvement applied by the retailer to its service delivery and performance.

Recognising that some retailers receive a significant number of complaints per annum, it is acceptable for the retailer to group complaints if the same action has been taken to conclude/rectify each complaint. For example, a retailer receives 100 billing and account complaints and concludes 50 complaints by direct telephone contact, 20 complaints by letter, 20 complaints following referral to the Ombudsman and then subsequent action, and the remaining 10 complaints are concluded without the customer expressing satisfaction. It is acceptable for the retailer to provide a table showing a breakout of actions as described above rather than records relating to each individual complaint.

Time taken for a complaint to be concluded/rectified³² (DC 20 and DC 26) – The time period for each complaint commences when the complaint has been recorded by the retailer and ends when the final action in respect of concluding the complaint has been completed. If a referral is made to the Energy Ombudsman the time taken for the Ombudsman to deal with the complaint is included in the calculation of the total time. It is recognised that a retailer will not always be able to address a complaint to the satisfaction of the customer. A complaint may be recorded as being “concluded” or “rectified” although the complaint has not been resolved, provided that the retailer has followed the appropriate procedures for dealing with the complaint.

It is left to the retailer to consider how they wish to provide data on the time taken to conclude/rectify a complaint. It is preferable to calculate the average time for all complaints to be concluded/rectified as a minimum, but there may be value in the retailer also providing an average time to conclude/rectify each category of complaint resolution (see the example above) in addition to an overall average.

³² Consistent with the approach applied to retail indicators relating to the conclusion of complaints under the Code of Conduct, clause 13.3(1)(d).

Number of payments made (RE 21-23) - requires provision by the retailer of the number of payments made in the reporting period for the relevant service failure. It is left as an option for the retailer to provide the total amount represented by each category of payment.

5.6 Contact Centre Performance

Total number of telephone calls to an operator (RF 1) - means the total number of calls received by a retailer that were handled by an operator or customer service officer, and in the case of an IVR system covers the number of calls where the customer has selected the relevant operator option (but excludes all other calls not requiring operator attention).

Note:

- this is to include the number of abandoned calls to an operator, in the case of an IVR system recorded once the operator option has been selected, but exclude any calls abandoned prior to the customer selecting the operator option; and
- this is to include any calls to a customer service officer, including sales calls. However, telephone calls received by third parties, such as contractors or marketing agents acting on behalf of a retailer, are not to be included.

Operator calls responded to within 30 seconds (RE 2) - means the number of calls to an operator (of the **total number of telephone calls to an operator**) that were answered within 30 seconds, commencing from the time that the customer selected the relevant operator option in the case of an IVR system.

Note: The “percentage of operator calls responded to within 30 seconds” indicator is calculated by dividing the **number of operator calls responded to within 30 seconds** by the **total number of telephone calls to an operator**.

Average wait before call answered by operator (RE 3) - means the total time waited by callers before their telephone call was answered by an operator divided by the total number of calls to an operator.

Note:

- this indicator requires a retailer to report on the time waited by callers before a call is answered and so only answered calls are relevant (i.e. the indicator is monitoring a subset of the total calls received). This indicator should not include details of abandoned calls, nor include the average waiting time before a call is abandoned;
- where an IVR system operates, it is not appropriate to regard the call as being answered as soon as the IVR system accepts the call. Where a caller to an IVR system is seeking to talk to an operator, then monitoring of the call waiting time should commence when the caller selects the relevant IVR operator option and cover the resulting time up and until an operator picks up the call, to deal with the caller’s issue; and
- for non-IVR systems, the monitoring time should commence when the call is received by the switchboard and cover the time until the operator picks up the call (and is able to deal with the customer’s inquiry rather than place the customer back in a queue), including any time spent in a queue.

Percentage of calls abandoned (RE 5) - means the percentage of the “total number of telephone calls to an operator” where the caller has hung up before the call is answered by an operator. Abandoned calls include those calls that were abandoned prior to 30 seconds.