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Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission

TAMIL NADU ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE REGULATIONS

Notification No. TNERC/SPR/9/1 Dated 21.07.2004

WHEREAS under section 86 of the Electricity Act, 2003 (Central Act 36 of 2003) the State Electricity Regulatory Commission shall, among others, specify or enforce standards with respect to quality, continuity and reliability of service by Licensees;

AND WHEREAS under section 57 and 58 of the said Act the State Electricity Regulatory Commission may, after consultation with the Licensees and persons likely to be affected, specify different standards of performance for a class or classes of Licensees subject to previous publication:

NOW, THEREFORE under section 57 read with section 181 of the said Act, and all other provisions enabling in that behalf and after previous publication, the Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission hereby makes the following Regulations.

CHAPTER I

Preliminary

1. Short Title and Commencement

- (i) These regulations may be called the “**Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission- Tamil Nadu Electricity Distribution Standards of Performance Regulations 2004**”

- (ii) All these Regulations except provisions under regulations 21 and 22 shall come into force from the date of their publication in the Tamil Nadu Government gazette.
- (iii) The provisions under regulations 21 and 22 shall come into force after one year from the date of their publication in the Tamil Nadu Government gazette.

2. Definitions

In these Regulations unless the context otherwise requires: -

- (i) “**Act**” means the Electricity Act 2003 (Act 36 of 2003)
- (ii) “**Commission**” means the Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission.
- (iii) Words and expressions used in these Regulations but not defined either in these Regulations or in the Act shall have the same meanings as understood in the engineering and commercial circles.

CHAPTER 2

Distribution Standards Of Performance

3. Quality of Service

Quality of service means providing uninterrupted, reliable electric supply at stipulated voltage and frequency, which will be the end result of its planning, designing of network, operation and service management to ensure stability in supply and prompt compliance of consumers' complaints on metering and billing. The supply with frequent power failure, fuse of calls, voltage fluctuations will not ensure continuity in supply. These factors determine the degree of satisfaction of the consumers.

4. Duties of the Licensees to Supply on Request

Section 43 of the Act deals with duty to supply and read as below:

"43. (1) Every distribution licensee, shall, on an application by the owner or occupier of any premises, give supply of electricity to such premises, within one month after receipt of the application requiring such supply:

Provided that where such supply requires extension of distribution mains, or commissioning of new sub-stations, the distribution licensee shall supply the electricity to such premises immediately after such extension or commissioning or within such period as may be specified by the Appropriate Commission.

Provided further that in case of a village or hamlet or area wherein no provision for supply of electricity exists, the Appropriate Commission may extend the said period as it may consider necessary for electrification of such village or hamlet or area.

(2) It shall be the duty of every distribution licensee to provide, if required, electric plant or electric line for giving electric supply to the premises specified in sub-section (1):

Provided that no person shall be entitled to demand, or to continue to receive, from a licensee a supply of electricity for any premises having a separate supply unless he has agreed with the licensee to pay to him such price as determined by the Appropriate Commission.

(3) If a distribution licensee fails to supply the electricity within the period specified in sub-section (1), he shall be liable to a penalty which may extend to one thousand rupees for each day of default."

The Licensees shall endeavor to give supply within a week but not exceeding 30 days wherever no extension or improvement works are involved in giving supply.

The Licensees shall observe the following time schedule for supply of electricity involving extension of distribution lines, etc.

Category	Time Schedule
a) Extension and improvement without transformers:	60 days
b) Extension and improvement with transformers.	90 days

Note: This time schedule is also applicable for additional loads.

5. Exceptions on Duty to Supply for Agricultural and Hut Services:

The provision under section 43 of the Act is however not applicable in the case of agricultural and hut services, which shall be governed by the directives issued by the Commission from time to time, on the basis of the guidance on this matter by the National Electricity Policy (as

stipulated in section 86(4)) of the Act and the policy directions in public interest by the State Government (as stipulated in section 108 of the Act)

6. Temporary Supply

The intending consumers may require temporary services for construction of residential houses, complexes, commercial complexes, industrial premises and also for illumination during festivals, etc.

Such temporary services shall be effected as per the time schedule specified for the new and additional loads.

The Licensees shall refund the balance deposit if any within 3 months from the date of disconnection of service after temporary supply period is over.

7. Shifting of Service Connection / Deviation of Lines and Shifting of Equipments

Wherever the consumers request for shifting the service connection as specified in the Supply Code, or for deviation of the existing lines at their cost the following time schedule shall be observed for completing these works after getting the expenses as specified in the Distribution Code / Supply Code.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Shifting of meter / service | 15 days |
| 2. Shifting of LT / HT lines | 60 days |
| 3. Shifting of Transformer structures | 90 days |

The time schedule given above includes the time required for preparation of estimates, collection of deposits, etc.

The accounts should be settled within three months from the date of completion of shifting work by recovery of excess expenditure or refunding the balance deposit.

8. Transfer of Service Connection

The transfer of service connection shall be effected within 7 days from the date of receipt of complete application.

9. Change of Tariff

A consumer can utilize a service connection given to him for a purpose different from the purpose for which he originally obtained the service connection, only if the same tariff is applicable to the new purpose also. If a different tariff is applicable to the new purpose, the consumer shall apply to the Licensee before changing the purpose and a revised Test Report will be taken indicating the change in the tariff.

The Licensee shall effect change of tariff within seven days from the date of receipt of application from the consumer.

However no consumer shall be permitted to change the tariff of the service connection from any Low Tension Tariff (other than agriculture) to Low Tension Tariff for agriculture.

10. Complaints in Billing, etc.

Wherever the Licensees receive complaints from consumers that there is error in billing, etc. the Licensee shall resolve such disputes regarding quantum of commercial transaction involved within the due date for payment, provided the complaint is lodged three days prior to the due date for payment. Such of those complaints received during the last three days period shall be resolved before the next billing along with refunds / adjustments if any. However, the consumer shall not, on the plea of incorrectness of the charges, withhold any portion of the charges.

11. Replacement of Meter

Wherever the Licensees receive complaints or the Licensee found during inspection / meter reading, that the meter in a service connection is not correct or defective or burnt, the Licensee shall replace the meter after collecting the charges as applicable and within 30 days.

12. Interruptions and Restoration of Supply

(I). The Licensee may, for reasons of testing or forced outage or maintenance, temporarily discontinue the supply for such period as may be necessary, provided that in case of planned shut down for improvement / periodical maintenance of distribution network, the Licensee will, wherever possible give advance notice in this behalf and notify through local newspapers in advance.

(II) In case of interruptions to individual or a group of consumers due to breakdown, the Licensee shall restore supply as per the time schedule furnished below:

Interruption due to	Power restoration time	
	Urban	Rural
High Tension supply failure	1 hour	6 hours
Fault in pillar boxes or transformer structures	2 hours	4 hours
Failure of distribution transformer	24 hours	48 hours
Individual service connection faults	3 hours	9 hours

Failure / Interruption in Corporation limits and certain special areas declared by the Commission from time to time shall be attended to round the clock within the time limit specified for urban areas. Complaints of failure/ interruption at consumer premises in rural areas and urban areas other than corporation limits shall be attended to between 8.00 AM and 6.00 PM. Individual complaints of consumers received during night hours i.e., from 6.00 PM to 8.00 AM shall be considered to have been received at the start of working hours on the next day and attended to within the time limit as specified above. The restoration time specified in respect of individual service connection faults in rural areas shall exclude the time period of 6.00 PM to 8.00 AM. However the complaints from essential services like Water supply, Hospitals, and other important Govt. services shall be attended to immediately, round the clock

(III) In case of interruptions, it is the responsibility of the affected consumer to inform the same to the Licensee's local office or nearest fuse off call center by Telephone / written communication in person, etc.

Provided that in case failure / break down due to natural calamities like cyclone, etc. the Licensee shall take every action to restore supply within the least possible time.

Note: The Licensee shall arrange to keep the consumers informed of the progress of rectification of faults.

(IV) The Licensee shall maintain un-interrupted supply of power to Railways and in case of any interruption restore the supply on top priority.

(V) In case of interruption due to line fault/ failure of transformer/ equipment, the Licensee shall inform the complainant (subject to availability of communication at both ends) within one hour from receipt of complaint, the reasons for interruption and the likely time by which the power supply will be restored.

13. Quality of Supply

Quality of supply means providing uninterrupted, reliable and quality electric supply at stipulated voltage and frequency (within the permissible limits) without sags or spikes to the consumer. When a consumer makes a complaint regarding quality of power supply, an

authorized representative of the Licensee shall visit the consumer's premises within 48 hours of receipt of complaint and convey in writing within 10 days, the action proposed to be taken for attending to the complaint and the time by which it would be attended.

14. Permissible Limits for Voltage and Frequency Variations

The limits of permissible variations in voltages at various levels have to be fixed on the basis of existing network, spare capacity etc., and can always be improved with system improvements, capacity generation and various other related factors. Hence, even though the ideal situations would be different, the bandwidth of variations has to reflect the actual condition and has to be specified after periodical reviews. Accordingly, the Commission from time to time will order the permissible limits for voltage variations.

The frequency variations shall be governed by the National / State Grid Code and hence not specified under this regulation

15. Voltage Complaints

The voltage complaints shall be attended to within 48 hours if no system upgradation is required. Wherever system upgradation is required to improve the status it shall be attended to within 180 days.

16. Failure of Equipments

The incidents such as failure of equipments, viz. failure of power transformer, breakers, measuring transformers, lightning arresters and capacitor banks would affect the distribution system causing aberrations, deviations in system voltage and frequency levels. The Licensees shall maintain the equipments as per the schedule of maintenance so as to minimise the failure rate and thereby increase the level of performance.

17. Responding to Consumer's Complaint

If any consumer makes a complaint in writing, the Licensee shall reply to the consumer within 10 days after receipt of the letter. In case the Licensee requires to visit the site or consult any other officer to give a comprehensive reply, the Licensee shall explain to the consumer as to why a substantive response cannot be sent immediately and intimate the name address and telephone number of the Licensee's employee dealing with the complaint.

The Licensee shall also ensure that a substantive response is sent to the consumer within 20 days of receiving the complaint letter.

18. Making and Keeping Appointments

Wherever the Licensee make an appointment in writing to visit a consumer on a particular day, the Licensee shall keep such appointment. When the appointment has to be cancelled the Licensee shall give a 24 hours notice of its cancellation to the consumer.

19. Grievance Handling

The Licensee shall make arrangement to receive complaints from consumers at appointed date and time at appropriate offices. This information shall be suitably made known to the consumers. The Licensee's representative shall receive the complaints on the appointed dates and time.

Wherever the Licensee is unable to comply with the above requirement, the Licensee shall inform the consumers, to the extent feasible, in advance giving reasons for the inability and the time when it will be complied with. In spite the above or due to failure to inform the cancellation, if a consumer turns up with a complaint on the appointed day and registers his presence, he is eligible for compensation at the specified rate.

20. Handling of Complaints on Non-compliance

The Licensee is required to maintain standards of performance for supply of Electricity to all consumers in a manner prescribed. The time limit prescribed in these standards refer to the maximum time required to be taken to perform different activities of consumer service. It shall be the endeavour of the Licensee to provide best possible service well within time limits specified in these regulations.

- (i) The Licensee shall register every complaint made by a consumer whether orally or in writing regarding failure/meter board /service lines, payment of bills and other services relating to supply of power, in the registers exclusively maintained under the following categories:
 - Supply related complaints register
 - Meter related complaints register
 - Billing and payment related complaints register
- (ii) A unique number shall be allotted to each complaint and conveyed to the consumer. In case of complaints which are supply related and restoration of supply, authorized persons of Licensee shall prepare an acknowledgment slip in duplicate after attending to the complaint and get the consumer signature. Where the consumer refuses to sign the acknowledgment slip, the fact shall be recorded and a copy handed over to the consumer. As a measure of precaution and proof of having visited the consumer's service location, the Licensee's employee shall also record the meter reading of the respective service and any one of the adjoining service connection in the acknowledgement slip. The designated officer shall entertain any complaints from the consumer for non-compliance, only if the complaint is accompanied with a copy of acknowledgment slip. The Licensee shall ensure redressal of all complaints promptly
- (iii) Complaints in respect of supply of electricity, its metering, billing and payment thereof, shall be made at the offices specified by the Licensee. The Licensee shall publish through public notices, local News Paper, TV, Radio, printing in the bills and receipts etc., the name of the office(s) its address(s), telephone number where the consumer can lodge complaints. The phone services for recording complaints when outsourced by the Licensee, the phone numbers of such call centers shall be incorporated in electricity bills and also displayed at the concerned offices of the Licensee.
- (iv) The office where a complaint is registered shall dispose it and if any instruction/sanction is to be obtained from higher authority, it shall be obtained by the complaint registering office. The higher authority may also directly communicate the decision. The complainant should not be required to approach such higher authority. Similarly in case an outsourced phone service is opted for, the complaint shall be forwarded to the concerned officer by such center itself and the Licensee shall ensure proper compliance by the outsourced service, including posting of its officers at such centers to streamline responses.
- (v) Complaints against non-registration of complaints and failure to perform within the time limits and/or to meet the performance targets, as specified in this regulation, shall be made to the concerned officers of the Licensee. The Licensee shall nominate the officers to whom the consumers can lodge their complaints initially and also the next level higher officer.
- (vi) In case a consumer is not satisfied with the disposal of the complaint even after taking the issue at the higher level, the consumer can approach the consumer grievance redressal forum

21. Compensation

The Licensee is expected to achieve the performance prescribed. If a Licensee fails to meet the standards specified for various service areas, the affected consumer is entitled for compensation by the Licensees as stipulated in the Act. The compensation payables are as follows:

S.No.	Events	Compensation payable
1	Duty to give supply on request a) New Service connection b) Additional Load c) Temporary Supply d) Shifting of service connection e) Transfer of service connection f) Change of tariff	Rs.100/- per day of delay subject to maximum of Rs.1000/-
2	Complaints in billing	Rs.150/- for non-reply within the period.
3	Replacement of meters	Rs.100/- for each day of delay subject to a maximum of Rs.1000/-
4	Interruption of supply	Rs.50/- for each six hours (or part thereof) of delay in restoration of supply subject to a maximum of Rs.2000/-
5	Voltage fluctuations and complaints	Rs.250/- for failure to visit or convey findings within the stipulated period
6	Responding to consumer's complaints	Rs.25/- for each day of delay subject to a maximum of Rs.250/-
7	Making and keeping appointments	Rs.50/- for failure of keeping appointment
8	Grievance handling	Rs.50/- for failure of grievance handling

22. Procedure for Payment of Compensation

The claim for compensation shall be dealt with in the following manner

I. Automatic- This mode of payment requires the Licensee to pay the compensation amount to the affected consumer automatically, following the non-compliance to a particular standard in the next billing cycle through credit entry in the consumption bill

II. Upon claim: An aggrieved consumer has the right to claim the compensation for non-compliance of the standards if the Licensee fails to pay the compensation in the next billing period by representing to the designated employee of the Licensee.

23. Level of Performance

The standards specified in previous clauses set the levels of performances, which the Licensees are required to achieve in specific service areas. In order to assess the overall performance level of the Licensee, the following targeted performances in individual areas are specified:

Sl. No.	Service area covered under this standard	Targeted performance within the stipulated period
1	Restoration of supply during interruption due to HT break down, fault in pillar box or transformer structure and fault in individual service connections	Licensee shall achieve 75% of the standards specified. Out of the balance, 20% shall be achieved within 24 hours from the time of complaint.
2	Replacement of failed Distribution Transformers	95%
3	Giving new supply / additional load	95%
4	Refund of balance deposit in temporary supply	90%
5	Shifting of service	95%
6	Change of Tariff	95%
7	Transfer of service connection	95%
8	Complaints in billing	95%
9	Replacement of meters	95%
10	Voltage fluctuation and voltage complaints	90%
11	Responding to consumer complaints	90%
12	Making and keeping appointments	95%
13	Grievances handling	100%

24. Information on Standard of Performance

The Licensees shall furnish the information on the level of performances achieved, number of cases in which compensations were paid and the aggregate amount of compensation paid, once in six months in the format prescribed as per sub-section (1) of section 59 of the Act, so as to facilitate the Commission to approve the same for publication by the Licensee as per sub-section (2) of section 59 of the Act.

25. Service Reliability

Reliability of the distribution system operated by the distribution Licensee shall be computed on the basis of number and duration of interruptions in a year. Reliability standards shall be judged by two indices namely Consumer's average interruption frequency index (CAIFI), Consumer's average interruption duration index (CAIDI)

Each Distribution Licensee shall formulate a suitable model on the basis of his geographical spread of the network to reveal the reality of the situation on the above two indices and set standards of performance. The model shall be got approved by the Commission and can be distinct for each Licensee.

26. Regulation to be read with Supply Code, Distribution Code, etc.,

- (1) As these Regulations are intended to enforce quality, continuity and reliability of service, these Regulations shall be read along with Supply code, Distribution code, Grid code and other relevant provisions of the Act, Rules and Regulations made there under pertaining to supply and consumption of Electricity.
- (2) Where any of the provisions in these Regulations is found to be inconsistent with those of the Act, Rules or Regulations made there under, notwithstanding such inconsistency, the remaining provisions in these regulations shall remain operative.
- (3) Where any dispute arises as to the applications or interpretations of any provisions of these regulations, it shall be referred to the Commission whose decision shall be final and binding on the parties concerned.

27. Exemption

- I. The Commission may relax adherence by the Licensee to any specific standard of performance during force majeure condition such as War, Mutiny, Civil commotion, riot, Flood, Cyclone, Storm, Lightning, Earth Quake, Grid Failure and Strike / Curfew, Lock out, Fire affecting the Licensee's installations and activities and also under wind or rainy conditions where safety of electrical equipment and personnel is not possible.
- II. Commission under specific circumstances may relax provisions of Regulations in general or in specific cases for the period specified in these Regulations.

28. Power to Remove Difficulties

- I. If any difficulty arises in giving effect to any of the provisions of these Regulations, the Commission may, by general or special order, direct the Licensee to do anything not being inconsistent with the provisions of the Act, which appears to it to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of removing the difficulties.
- II. The Licensee may make an application to the Commission and seek suitable orders to remove any difficulty that may arise in implementation of these Regulations.

29. Savings.

Nothing contained in these Regulations shall affect the rights and privileges of the consumers under any other law including the Consumer Protection Act 1986 (Act 68 of 1986)

Annexure

Format for Furnishing Information on Achieving Level of Performance and Compensation Paid

Sl. No.	Service area covered under this standard	Targeted performance	Performance achieved	Aggregate Compensation paid & nr of consumers
1	Restoration of supply during interruption due to HT break down, fault in pillar box or transformer structure and fault in individual service connections	Licensee shall achieve 75% of the standards specified. Out of the balance, 20% shall be achieved within 24 hours from the time of complaint.		
2	Replacement of failed distribution transformer	95%		
3	Giving supply / additional load	95%		
4	Refund of balance deposit in temporary supply	90%		
5	Shifting of service	90%		
6	Change of Tariff	95%		
7	Transfer of service connection	95%		
8	Complaints in billing	95%		
9	Replacement of meters	95%		
10	Voltage fluctuation and voltage complaints	90%		
11	Responding to consumer complaints	90%		
12	Making and keeping appointments	95%		
13	Grievances handling	100%		

(By Order of Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission)

**R.Balasubramanian
Secretary**