

## **Utilities Commission of the Northern Territory**

# **STANDARDS OF SERVICE CODE PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES**

**March 2006**

### **Background**

1. The purpose of these Guidelines is to set out the procedures the Commission will adopt when administering certain aspects of the NT Electricity Standards of Service Code (“the Code”) which took effect on 1 January 2006.
2. All terms used in these guidelines have the meaning as defined in the Code.

### **Authority for guidelines**

3. These Guidelines are issued pursuant to Section 7 of the *Utilities Commission Act 2000*, which authorises the Commission to issue guidelines relating to the performance of its functions.

### **Procedures for adding to or varying the Code or any approved standards of service obligations**

4. Unless the Commission considers that an application has been made on trivial or vexatious grounds (in which case the Commission may reject the application without further notice), an application to vary or revoke any part of the Code or to vary any Minimum Standards will be dealt with by the Commission in accordance with the following procedures.
5. The Commission will, before varying or revoking the Code (or any part of the Code) or varying any Minimum Standards, inform each person known to the Commission (whom the Commission believes has a sufficient interest in the matter) that the Commission is considering varying or revoking the Code (or any part of the Code) or varying any Minimum Standards by publishing a written notice which at least:
  - (a) states the nature of the proposed additional or varied obligation, variation or revocation;
  - (b) the reason the applicant, or the Commission where the change is initiated by the Commission, considers that the proposed additional or varied obligation, variation or revocation is required; and
  - (c) requests submissions by a date specified in the notice (not being a date earlier than 30 days after the date of the notice).
6. The Commission will also give a copy of any notice published in accordance with paragraph 5 to the Regulated Electricity Entity to which the notice relates.
7. The Commission will consider any submissions received by the date specified in the notice published under paragraph 5(b) and may (but is not obliged to) consider any submissions received after that date.
8. Within 30 days (or such longer period as the Commission notifies) after the last day for submissions specified in the notice published under paragraph 5(b), the

Commission will issue a draft decision stating whether or not it intends to proceed with the proposed variation, revocation or additional or varied obligation.

9. The Commission will:

- (a) provide a copy of its draft decision to the relevant Regulated Electricity Entity, any person who made a submission on the matter and any other person who requests a copy; and
- (b) request submissions from persons to whom it provided the draft decision by a specified date (not being a date earlier than 30 days after the date the draft decision was issued).

10. The Commission will consider any submissions it receives by the date specified by the Commission under paragraph 9(b) and it may (but is not obliged to) consider any submissions received after that date.

11. Within 30 days (or such longer period as the Commission notifies) after the last day for submissions on the draft decision specified by the Commission, the Commission will issue a final decision stating:

- (a) whether or not it will proceed with the proposed additional or varied obligation, variation or revocation; and
- (b) the final form of that proposed additional or varied obligation, variation or revocation.

#### **Procedures for compliance reporting**

12. The Commission will publish a summary of the information provided by the Regulated Electricity Entity in accordance with clause 8.1 of the Code, along with the Commission's assessment of the extent to which actual standards achieved in that year comply with the Minimum Standards, no later than 6 months after the end of each financial year concluding after the commencement of the Code.

13. The Commission will ensure that the information made publicly available by the Commission first complies with its obligations under section 26 of the Utilities Commission Act.

14. Within 30 days (or such longer period as the Commission notifies) after the Regulated Electricity Entity reports to the Commission as to the actual standards achieved in that year relative to the Minimum Standards in accordance with clause 9 of the Code, the Commission will:

- (a) provide a copy of its draft compliance report in confidence to the relevant Regulated Electricity Entity; and
- (b) request that the relevant Regulated Electricity Entity identify any errors of fact or interpretation contained in that draft compliance report and advise the Commission of those errors by a specified date (not being a date any earlier than 14 days after the date the draft was issued).

15. Within 14 days (or such longer period as the Commission notifies) after the last day for comments on the draft compliance report specified by the Commission, the Commission will publish its finalised compliance report.