

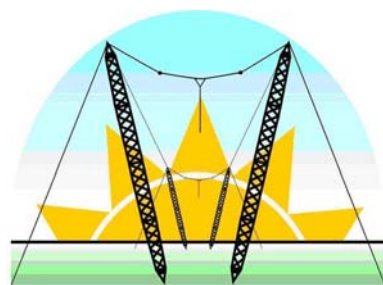
NAMIBIA ELECTRICITY SUPPLY INDUSTRY

QUALITY OF SUPPLY AND SERVICE STANDARDS

QUALITY OF SERVICE STANDARD

RELEASE 1: 2004

For Implementation By:



ELECTRICITY CONTROL BOARD

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Abbreviations:

- d - day(s)
- ECB – Electricity Control Board
- EPL - emergency priority list
- ESI – Electricity Supply Industry
- h - hour(s)
- LV – Low Voltage (as defined in NRS 048 Part 1)
- MV – Medium Voltage (as defined in NRS 048 Part 1)
- QOS – Quality of Supply
- QOSS – Quality of Supply and Service
- RED – Regional Electricity Distributor



1 Scope and General

This standard outlines various service activities and the minimum standards for measuring the quality-of-service provided to customers by electricity Licensees in Namibia. It also introduces various quality-of-service activities that the Licensees would report on to the Electricity Control Board (ECB).

This reporting is intended to give the ECB a common basis for evaluating quality of service when:

- granting distribution licences;
- monitoring the performance of Licensees on an ongoing basis; and
- dealing with customer complaints.

2 Normative references

The following standards and specifications contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this standard. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid.

All standards and specifications are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the documents listed below. Information on currently valid national and international standards and specifications can be obtained from the South African Bureau of Standards.

SABS ISO 9004-1:1994, Quality management and quality system elements — Part 1: Guidelines.

SABS ISO 9004-2:1991, Quality management and quality system elements — Part 2: Guidelines for services.

NRS 048-2:2003, Electricity supply — Quality of supply — Part 2: Voltage characteristics, compatibility levels, limits and assessment methods.

3 Terms and Definitions

3.1 Overall and Guaranteed Standards

This document differentiates between **overall standards** and **guaranteed standards**.

Overall standards are minimum standards which need to be achieved by Licensees. However there are no penalties payable if in any individual cases these standards are not met. The ECB may however consider penalising a Licensee who consistently fails to meet the overall standards over a significant timeframe. The NRS standard is largely adopted as overall standard.

Guaranteed standards are minimum standards which must be met for each and every occurrence of the service they refer to. Penalties are payable to individual customers for whom these guaranteed standards are not met. The guaranteed standards are usually set significantly lower than the overall standard. They are a signal to the Licensee that something is really wrong if penalty payments are a regular occurrence, and that even bare minimum standards are not being met. Guaranteed standards are set specifically for Namibian circumstances.

The minimum standards given in this document are **overall** standards except where specifically noted.

3.2 General Provisions

The following general provisions apply:



- The Licensee may contract with customers for quality of service which is better than the minimum standard. The Licensee may however not contract for performance worse than the minimum standard.
- The Licensee may apply to the ECB for exceptions to specific minimum standard provisions. Such application shall be made in writing and shall motivate the request.

3.3 Definitions

For the purpose of this standard, the following definitions apply:

- **customer:** A person (or legal entity) who either has entered into an electricity supply agreement with a Licensee, or legally consumes electricity supplied by that Licensee.¹
- **dwelling:** A place or structure of residence.
- **forced interruption:** An interruption that
 - occurs when a component is taken out of service immediately, either automatically or as soon as switching operations can be performed, as a direct result of emergency conditions, or
 - is caused by human error or by the improper operation of equipment.
- **Licensee:** A supply authority licensed by the ECB to distribute electricity.
- **lost call:** A telephone call that gets through to the Licensee but that is not answered.
- **planned interruption:** An interruption that occurs when a component is deliberately taken out of service (by the utility or its agent) at a selected time, usually for the purpose of construction, preventative maintenance or repair.
- **prescription:** Limitation by law of the time within which a claim can be made.
- **rural (networks or system):** Those networks not considered Urban Networks. Rural networks includes all dedicated supplies (supplying only one customer from an MV/LV transformer) from MV networks to supply dispersed rural customers such as commercial farms or individual homesteads and businesses.
- **temporary supply:** An electricity supply that is provided to a customer in the event of unusual circumstances. Such a supply might not conform to the service levels normally provided by agreement between the customer and the Licensee.
- **urban (areas or networks):** Supply to an applicant will be considered to be urban when all of the following conditions are met:
 - It is a proclaimed township, demarcated town, village, settlement or locality or within a proclaimed township.
 - The number of connections within a 1 km radius of the particular point of supply exceeds 314. All connections within the particular development will then qualify.
 - The number of, current and newly applied connections per km of MV line exceeds 44 and there must be at least 500 connections in one development.

3.4 List of Namibian Urban Areas as at 2004

According to the above definition of “urban networks” the following places are considered as having urban networks as at 2004 (which does not imply that all networks at these places are urban):

- Windhoek
- Walvis Bay
- Swakopmund
- Tsumeb
- Grootfontein
- Otjiwarongo

¹ In 4.2 a potential customer (i.e. a person or legal entity that makes an application or requests an electrical supply) is referred to as a customer



- Outjo
- Oshakati
- Ongwediva
- Ondangwa
- Rundu
- Katima Mulilo
- Opuwo
- Omaruru
- Henties Bay
- Arandis
- Karibib
- Usakos
- Okahandja
- Gobabis
- Keetmanshoop
- Lüderitz
- Mariental
- Rehoboth
- Karasburg

Note: This list is not necessarily exhaustive. The definition of “urban” should be applied to determine the status of any specific place / network.

4 Requirements

4.1 General

4.1.1 Principles Governing the Application of this Standard

The following principles apply:

- in the granting or retention of licences, the ECB will assess compliance or non-compliance with acceptable quality-of-service standards. The ECB will not require Licensees to demonstrate compliance for each customer. The ECB will prescribe statistical sampling to verify continued compliance;
- it is the responsibility of Licensees to manage the quality of service provided to their customers. A supply agreement that makes customers aware of their rights and obligations could form part of the management system;
- the decision by a Licensee to provide different levels of service will be a mutually agreed business decision between the Licensee and the customer. A Licensee may contract with specific customers, or groups of customers, to provide different levels of service under agreed terms;
- it is not intended that the ECB receive all individual complaints directly. Licensees and their customers are expected to resolve their problems between themselves in the first instance. Only if a problem cannot be resolved, should the ECB become involved to achieve a solution to the problem;
- if a complaint is received by the ECB, a Licensee will be given a reasonable period to demonstrate that the service complies with the requirements specified for it. This period will be determined by the ECB in conjunction with the complainant and the Licensee;
- the service standards specified do not apply in cases where Licensees are experiencing unavoidable circumstances, such as:
 - War damage, uprising, pilfering, theft, sabotage, attack and malicious damage and areas identified by the South African Police Service as being of high risk to personnel.



- Damage caused by accidental and unavoidable occurrences attributable to third parties.
- Direct material damage caused primarily by the unusual intensity of a natural event, where the usual precautions against such damage could not prevent it or could not be taken.
- Atmospheric phenomena that are extreme and unusual, in terms of annual events, and that could not be prevented because of their cause or their extent, and to which electrical networks, especially overhead networks, are particularly vulnerable. Normal lightning activity is excluded because Licensees are expected to design and install appropriate lightning protection on the electrical network.
- Industrial action that prevents normal operation of the network.
- Motor vehicle accidents that are not reasonably avoidable.
- Situations where the Licensee provides a temporary supply to keep customers supplied during maintenance and construction work, or to minimize the extent and duration of a total loss of supply. The Licensee should state the negotiated duration of the temporary supply, which should be by mutual agreement between the customer and the Licensee. The normal supply should be reinstated as soon as possible.
 - The circumstances listed above do not automatically absolve the Licensee from any action that is deemed negligent.
 - a customer who requires an investigation into the level of service provided might be required to pay a cost-related fee in advance to cover the cost of the investigation. Such a fee will be refunded should the complaint be justified; and
 - matters that are dealt with in legislation are not covered by this specification (for example, the proving of negligence and the use of official languages in communicating with customers).

4.1.2 Reporting Procedures, Information Systems And Management Systems

The ECB recognizes the fact that Licensees will need time to put the necessary reporting procedures and information systems in place to comply with the requirements of this specification.

Initially, Licensees will only be required to report to the ECB on those service activities where data are already available.

Where practicable, the Licensees should revise their existing reporting procedures and information systems to be able to report in the format specified in section 6.

Where new information systems are installed, they should be configured to provide the information as required by 6.

In the future, the need for a particular Licensee to report on additional service activities will be determined by the ECB in agreement with the Licensee.

While some key parameters of quality of service are measurable, overall quality of service includes many aspects that cannot readily be measured. Overall quality of service is dependent upon appropriate quality management systems.

The guidelines given in SABS ISO 9004-1 and SABS ISO 9004-2 shall be used by Licensees in the management of the services that they provide to their customers.

4.2 Processing Of Requests For Supply

4.2.1 Service Activities For The Processing Of Requests For Supply

The management of the following activities for the processing of requests for supply will influence the quality of service²:

- applications;

² NOTE 1 Sub-clauses 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 applies to both the upgrading of existing supplies as well as new supplies.

NOTE 2 Where a Licensee has a standard approved tariff for providing a supply, the tariff is regarded as a quotation..



- feasibility studies;
- quotations/estimates;
- acceptance of quotation and payment;
- design;
- construction (including certificate of compliance);
- commissioning and decommissioning;
- supply contract between Licensee and customer; and
- meeting of agreed deadlines.

The service standards that are stipulated in sub-clauses 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 should be regarded as minimum standards. Should a customer require a supply sooner than the standard dictates, the Licensee should negotiate the time frame and any additional costs to meet the shorter deadline with the customer. The cost should be justified.

4.2.2 Quotations To Customers

If a customer has made a written request for supply and has provided all the necessary documentation, the following time frames for quotation shall apply.

The quotation times tabulated below are a guaranteed standard and carry penalties.

Table 1: Quotation Times (Guaranteed Standard)

Connection Type	Capacity ≤ 3x60 Amps (41 kVA), LV	Capacity ≤ 500 kVA, LV	Capacity > 500 kVA (budget quote only), LV & MV
Meter installation and supply only – urban	1 day	NA*	NA*
Meter installation and supply only – rural	1 week	NA*	NA*
Service Connection on urban LV network	1 week	NA*	NA*
Service Connection on rural LV network	2 weeks	NA*	NA*
Connection requiring LV works on urban network	3 weeks	3 weeks	NA*
Connection requiring LV works on rural network	3 weeks	3 weeks	NA*
Connection requiring MV works on urban network	4 weeks	6 weeks	8 weeks
Connection requiring MV works on rural network	4 weeks	6 weeks	10 weeks

- * NA implies that the connection type is not normally applicable to this size of supply. In cases where the combination does occur the standard from the nearest lower capacity column applies.
- Where a group of customers applies together, this is regarded as one application and the total sum of supply capacity required by the entire group will determine the size category which is applicable. If for example three farms apply together for 25kVA each then the total capacity exceeds 41kVA and the Licensee has 6 weeks for processing the quotation.
- Capacity refers to contractual supply capacity, not transformer size (although in many cases this will be the same).
- Quotations shall be made in writing.
- The time in the above table is counted from the date on which the customer has requested a quotation and supplied all necessary information to the Licensee. The Licensee shall inform the customer of all information required with the application immediately when the application is lodged with the Licensee. Failure by the Licensee to request missing information from the customer will not be regarded as a valid reason for not meeting this standard.

4.2.3 Providing A Supply

If a customer has paid all monies owing and met all other obligations stipulated by the Licensee and if, where applicable, all subsidies have been received, the following time frames shall apply for the provision of supply.



Table 2: Period Allowed to Provide Supply (Guaranteed Standard)

Connection Type	Capacity ≤ 3x60 Amps (41 kVA), LV	Capacity ≤ 500 kVA, LV	Capacity > 500 kVA, LV & MV
Meter installation and supply only – urban	1 week	NA*	NA*
Meter installation and supply only – rural	3 weeks	NA*	NA*
Service Connection on urban LV network	2 weeks	4 weeks	NA*
Service Connection on rural LV network	3 weeks	4 weeks	NA*
Connection requiring LV works on urban network	6 weeks	8 weeks	NA*
Connection requiring LV works on rural network	8 weeks	10 weeks	NA*
Connection requiring MV works on urban network	6 months	6 months	Agreement
Connection requiring MV works on rural network	6 months	Agreement	Agreement

The above table is clarified as follows:

- * NA implies that the connection type is not normally applicable to this size of supply. In cases where the combination does occur the standard from the nearest lower capacity column applies (e.g. if a 500kVA supply can be activated by meter installation only then this should be done within 1 week).
- The above times will apply from the date that the customer has complied with all conditions of the quote (such as accepting terms in writing, made required payments, signed agreement, provided diagrams or maps indicating required position of connection and any other conditions which may be stated in the quotation) to the date on which the supply is made available (i.e. the Licensee is ready to switch the supply on, irrespective of whether the customer’s installation is ready for the supply to be switched on).
- To meet this standard the Licensee will have to have certain stock at hand, which requires that the Licensee does proper forecasting and planning, and makes provision for the availability of relevant required equipment. Such arrangements will come at a cost, which can be recovered when the connections are made.
- For MV network extensions adequate provision is made to obtain external and internal approvals and to order equipment and allow for delivery, however stock should be kept for small extensions to be made even at MV level (i.e. extensions of a magnitude that occur regularly, say at least once every two months).

4.3 Credit Metering

4.3.1 Service Activities For Credit Metering

The management of the following activities and factors influence the quality of service in dealing with credit meter customers:

- meter reading (frequency);
- billing (format, information provided and methods);
- account queries;
- payment method;
- payment venues (queuing times, operating hours);
- special meter readings;
- check-meter readings;
- disconnections;
- reconnections;
- penalties for non-payment and theft;
- meter auditing for accuracy; and
- calibration.

4.3.2 Information To Be Provided To Credit Meter Customers

The following information shall be provided to credit meter customers:



- the scheduled frequency of meter readings;
- the method used to estimate electricity consumption during periods when no meter readings are taken;
- the format of the electricity account;
- the methods of payment of the account and the period allowed for payment before penalties are applied;
- the location of payment venues and the hours of business;
- the penalties for late payment, for non-payment and for the disconnection/reconnection process;
- how a customer should initiate an account query;
- the process that the Licensee will follow when it is impossible to gain access to a customer's premises;
- the process for dealing with special meter readings and check-meter readings;
- the process for dealing with meter accuracy queries and the fees charged for accuracy audits;
- the penalties applied in the case of tampering, by-passing of meters, or any other method used to procure electrical energy illegally;
- where applicable, the process for recovering any energy account arrears; and
- where applicable, the voltage transformer/current transformer factors should be available or calculable.

4.3.3 Frequency Of Meter Reading

Meters shall be read and bills produced at least at intervals defined below.

Table 3: Frequency of Meter Readings and Bills (Guaranteed Standard)

Item	Application	URBAN	RURAL
Frequency of meter readings	All supplies up to 100 kVA	At least once every 3 months	At least once every 4 months
	All supplies above 100 kVA	Once every month	Once every month
Timing of bills	Time from billing to due date for payment	14 days	14 days
	Billing cycle	Once per month	Once per month

The above table is clarified as follows:

- Where meter readers cannot obtain access to the meters, the Licensee will not be liable to pay a penalty. However the Licensee shall immediately make arrangements with the affected customer to ensure future access to the meters.
- Customers with demand meters must be read every month unless the demand meter is capable of storing the monthly maximum demand for the numbers of months during which the meter will not be read. Licensees are encouraged to read all demand meters monthly to avoid disputes relating to demand estimates.
- Where estimate bills are issued the Licensee shall ensure that the estimate is not more than 15% different from the actual. This may require the Licensee to utilise a sophisticated estimating system. Where a Licensee fails to provide estimates that meet this accuracy requirement the Licensee shall either make arrangements with the customer(s) in question for the customer(s) to read the meters or the Licensee shall read the meters more regularly.
- For the most accurate billing the ideal is to have all meters read every month, however this is not cost effective in many cases. The estimation of bills is one of the biggest causes of disputes and unhappiness for customers. With the planned implementation of seasonal tariffs, monthly reading may become a necessity.
- Where sites are very far away from the nearest Licensee office, it is recommended to employ remote metering technology or meters that record readings for 12 months. Alternatively customers can provide readings on monthly basis if they do not wish to receive estimate bills.



- Timing of bills: Licensees are required to maintain regular meter reading and billing cycles. Every customer must have a regular monthly payment due date, which must be made known to the customer. The Licensee must then make the bill available (i.e. post and have amounts available on enquiry) at least 14 days before the payment due date, failing which the customer is entitled to claim for a penalty.

The principle of a regular billing cycle makes it possible for the customer to be held responsible for paying his/her bill on time (even if he/she has not received the bill for whatever reason), because he/she knows on which day of the month the bill must be paid.

4.3.4 Estimated Energy Consumption

In cases where it is necessary to estimate electricity consumption for a particular period, the method of estimation shall be based on historical data or, in the absence of such data, on a method agreed upon between the customer and the Licensee.

4.3.5 Format Of The Account

4.3.5.1 Essential Information

The following information shall be clearly presented on the account:

- the date of the previous meter reading (or estimate) and the corresponding meter reading (or estimate);
- the date of the current meter reading (or estimate) and the corresponding meter reading (or estimate);
- the applicable tariff;
- the number of units consumed (or estimated) during the period covered by the account;
- the cost of the electricity consumed during the period covered by the account and the daily average during that period;
- the date and the amount of the previous payment;
- the outstanding balance, if applicable;
- any other amounts charged and a description of what the charges are for;
- the total amount payable;
- the latest date by which the account is to be paid in order to avoid penalties;
- acceptable methods of payment; and
- any arrears, together with a written warning that disconnection will follow unless paid within 14 days.

4.3.5.2 Optional Information

The following agreed upon information, and any additional and agreed upon information, should ideally also be presented on the account:

- a) the payment venues, hours of business, and telephone and telefax numbers;
- b) the voltage transformer/current transformer and load factors (where applicable) should be available or calculable;
- c) the account query procedure, including the applicable telephone numbers; and
- d) the consequences and procedures in the case of locked premises (see 4.3.9).

4.3.6 Payment Venues

The Licensee shall ensure that, wherever practical, facilities are provided within or close to urban residential, commercial or industrial areas to afford customers a reasonable opportunity to pay their accounts and to resolve account queries.

4.3.7 Penalties For Non-Payment

The following conditions shall be met unless different conditions have been contractually agreed upon:



- no disconnections shall be effected until at least 14 days after the due date for payment stipulated on the account;
- commercial and industrial customers shall be given at least 24 hours notice of an impending disconnection;
- disconnections shall only be carried out up to 2 h before normal closing time of the payment venue;
- disconnections shall not be carried out over weekends, public holidays or Fridays (unless normal payment and reconnection facilities are available on Saturday mornings), or on the day before a public holiday; and
- reconnections shall be effected as promptly as possible and no later than the first working day after the account has been settled satisfactorily and the reconnection fee has been paid.

The target average percentage success is at least 95 %.

4.3.8 Account Queries

For accounts that require investigation, an account query made in person at a service/payment venue or telephonically shall be acted upon and be responded to as stipulated in 4.6.3.

4.3.9 Locked Premises

In cases where the Licensee is unable to gain access to a customer's premises for the purposes of reading the meter, a meter reading card or a notification (or both) shall be left for the customer's attention.

If the card, with an acceptable reading, has not been returned before the next billing, or if the customer has not contacted the Licensee within this interim period, the Licensee shall make every effort to make telephonic contact or personal contact with the customer.

If, after a predetermined period, it is impossible to gain access to the meter, the supply to the customer shall be disconnected after the customer has been informed in writing.

4.3.10 Credit Meter Accuracy Queries

The Licensee shall, on request, provide meter accuracy checking as a service to customers. Information on how to obtain the service and any associated costs shall be readily available to the customers.

Where applicable, any fee charged for checking the accuracy of a meter shall be refunded if the meter accuracy should prove to be outside the declared limits specified in the supply agreement.

Meter accuracy checks shall be performed within 15 working days of the receipt of the prescribed fee.

The target average percentage success is at least 95 %.

There shall be monetary adjustments either way (within the period of prescription).³

Check-metering shall be used where applicable.

4.4 Prepayment Metering

4.4.1 Service Activities For Prepayment Metering

The management of the following service activities influences the quality of service to prepayment meter customers:

- information to be provided to customers;
- vending stations (location and business hours);
- meter accuracy audits;
- frequency of meter inspections; and
- disconnections and reconnections.

³ NOTE See 3.3 for the definition of prescription.



4.4.2 Information To Be Provided To Prepayment Meter Customers

The Licensee shall provide every prepayment meter customer with the following information by means of a brochure issued at the time of installation of the service connection and periodically thereafter:

- the type of electricity token to be used and how to purchase and use the token;
- the applicable tariff (which shall also be displayed at the vending stations);
- the location of points of sale of tokens and the hours of business;
- the contact telephone numbers and addresses of the Licensee's service centres, where service queries and queries concerning the meter can be handled;
- the process for dealing with meter accuracy queries and the fees charged for accuracy audits;
- the process that the Licensee will follow when it is impossible to gain access to a customer's premises, and therefore to the meter;
- the process that will be followed when penalties are applied for tampering with, or bypassing, a prepayment meter;
- the process for disconnecting the service; and
- where applicable, the process for the recovery of any electricity account arrears.

Changes in the approved tariff shall be announced in an appropriate way as and when required.

4.4.3 Provision Of Vending Stations

The Licensee is required to provide a vending station or other vending service within each rural site where electricity is provided, or at least within reasonable travelling distance from each such site (e.g. another nearby locality where people go to purchase other goods or services on a regular basis).

Where practical, there shall be a vending station within 5km of every urban customer.

The Licensee shall provide sufficient vending stations to keep queuing times below ten minutes at least 95% of the time.

Where practical, the Licensee shall provide at least one vending station for every 2 000 customers.⁴

4.4.4 Hours Of Business Of Vending Stations

Vending stations shall sell tokens during normal office hours on weekdays. If possible vending should also be available during weekends and during extended shopping hours on weekdays.

Certain vending stations may close on weekends and public holidays, and during normal office hours, provided that there are vending stations in operation nearby.

4.4.5 Prepayment Meter Accuracy Queries

The same meter accuracy checking service that is provided for credit meter customers shall be available to pre-payment meter customers (see 4.3.10).

The Licensee shall provide the means to read, to transfer or refund, as appropriate, the amount of unexpended credit due to a customer when a prepayment meter is replaced or removed.

4.4.6 Frequency Of Prepayment Meter Inspection

The Licensee shall have the right to inspect a prepayment meter at the customer's premises.

Meters may be inspected if tampering or theft is detected or suspected. The latter can be ascertained by studying the purchase patterns of consumers.

Where reasonable but unsuccessful attempts have been made to gain access to the prepayment meter, the Licensee may disconnect the supply after having delivered a written warning to the customer.

⁴ NOTE Where several vending stations at one location can be justified, these could be manned according to customers' purchasing patterns, with the maximum number manned at times of peak demand, hence the need to determine the number of transactions per vending station per year.



4.4.7 Reconnection Of Prepayment Meters

Prepayment meters should be reconnected within 48 working hours of receiving a request and the payment of the reconnection fee (except in the case of hard disconnections or service removals after tampering has taken place).⁵

The target average percentage success is at least 95 %.

4.5 Network Faults

4.5.1 Service Activities For Network Faults

The management of the following service activities influences the quality of service in dealing with network faults:

- availability and location of fault reporting centres;
- hours during which faults may be reported;
- fault reporting procedures;
- telephone answering response time;
- response times;
- time to restore supply;
- number and duration of interruptions; and
- notification of planned interruptions.

4.5.2 Fault Reporting Process

The Licensee shall provide a 24 h telephone service to receive reports of faults from customers (see 4.7.2).

The Licensee shall provide a customer services office to receive reports of faults from the customers during normal office hours.

The Licensee shall not be required to have a customer services office at rural sites. However a toll free telephone service shall be provided for customers at rural sites that do not have a customer services office.

There may be a need to address customer faults from a different location after normal office hours; however, the telephone number to report faults telephonically shall remain the same. Hence the Licensee shall have the facility to redirect telephone calls to the different location after hours.

The Licensee shall supply the customer with the telephone number of the fault reporting centre to which faults should be reported. The following information should be requested from a customer reporting a fault; customer's name; telephone number (if any); physical address; and the nature of the fault. Pole number and site identity should also be reported where the physical address is not formal.

The Licensee shall give the reporting customer a fault reference number.

4.5.3 Restoration Of Supply After Forced Interruptions

After forced interruptions the supply shall be restored as follows:

⁵ NOTE Normally a disconnection of the prepayment meter will be done by either opening the circuit-breaker or removing the fuse. However, in the case of a hard disconnection, a section of the service conductor is also removed.



Table 4: Restoration Times After Forced Interruptions (Overall and Guaranteed Standards)

Percentage of Interrupted Supplies Restored	Urban	Rural
30% (overall standard)	1.5h	3h
60% (overall standard)	3.5h	7h
90% (overall standard)	7.5h	15h
98% (overall standard)	12h	24h
100% (guaranteed standard)	24 hours	48 hours

The above table is clarified as follows:

- Start time of interruptions will be the time the interruption is first detected by supervisory systems or first reported by a customer, whichever occurs first. End time of the interruption will be the time when supply to the last affected customer has been restored.
- Penalties are applicable only to the guaranteed standard.
- Large distribution and transmission customers should provide for quality of service in their power supply contracts, and thereby contract for appropriate penalties for exceeding acceptable outage restoration times.
- Major disasters are excluded from penalty payments, however the onus is on the Licensee to apply to the ECB to have a specific occurrence classified as a major disaster.

There is a need to classify each fault/customer in an emergency priority list (EPL) which dictates the order in which supply after each forced interruption is restored. An example of an EPL is illustrated in annex A. This priority list should be updated as required by the Licensee.

The above represents the worst case scenario and should be improved upon whenever circumstances permit.

Customers who require improved continuity of supply (for example large customers) could negotiate additional feeders. This would be the subject of a separate agreement.

4.5.4 Number And Duration Of Planned Interruptions

This is a guaranteed standard.

Table 5: Number and Duration of Interruptions per Year (Guaranteed Standard)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Category of network	Planned interruptions				Forced interruptions			
	Overhead distribution		Underground distribution		Overhead distribution		Underground distribution	
	Number	Time	Number	Time	Number	Time	Number	Time
Urban established	6/y	24h/y	3/y	16h/y	12/y	32h/y	4/y	24h/y
Urban developing	8/y	48h/y	6/y	24h/y	24/y	120h/y	6/y	32h/y
Rural overhead (<=33 kV)	8/y	48h/y	NA	NA	24/y	120h/y	NA	NA

The following definitions and rules apply in this respect:

- Networks will be defined by LV transformer areas, i.e. LV networks originating from an MV to LV transformer.
- An urban network be considered “established” when 75% or more of potential/planned connections have been made in an LV transformer area, provided that the LV transformer area serves more than ten stands.
- Where an LV transformer area serves ten or less stands then the network shall be considered “established” when 50% or more of potential/planned connections have been made.
- Urban customers who receive supply at MV or using a dedicated (used only by a single customer) MV to LV transformer shall be regarded as being served by “established” networks.



- These interruptions will exclude the short dips or interruptions caused during the trip and ARC (Automatic Reclose). Therefore only those interruptions count where the breaker has gone to lock out, i.e. interruptions in excess of 5 minutes.
- The year period refers to a rolling 12 month cycle.
- The customer shall be responsible for recording interruption events which he/she is experiencing. Such records shall include as a minimum the date, start time and end time of every interruption. The customer is required to submit a copy of this record together with a penalty claim in respect thereof in order to substantiate the claim. The Licensee shall not be required to entertain claims in respect of interruptions where the customer does not provide this information.
- The Licensee shall be required to maintain a record of interruptions on its networks in order to enable it to verify claims by customers. Such records shall include as a minimum the date, start time and end time of every interruption as well as the networks and/or transformer areas affected. Such records shall be of sufficient detail to enable the Licensee to determine whether a specific customer has been affected by a specific interruption.
- In case a Licensee does not maintain sufficient records to enable it to verify interruption penalty claims by customers then claims which are supported by the prescribed event records kept by customers shall be considered valid.

The above table is clarified as follows:

- The planned outage times should allow for enough flexibility to switch out parts of networks while those that are being worked on are isolated. These times will put pressure on Licensees to remove droppers so as to limit the time that very large sections of the circuits go without power.
- Planned outages on overhead circuits allow for say:
 - 1 outage 8 hour to do line maintenance which could include re-conductoring, replacing insulators or poles, etc.
 - 2 outages 16 hours to work on a main line feeding many other customers radially.
 - 3/5 outages 8/56 hours established/developing for shorter outages to isolate and connect or do maintenance on networks in the area.
- Planned outages on underground circuits allow for say:
 - 1 outage 8 hour to do maintenance which should include switchgear and transformer work and any small preventative repairs.
 - 1 outage 8 hours to work on a circuits that affect both sides of a supply ring.
 - 4 outages 8 hours in developing areas for shorter outages to isolate and connect new circuits in the area.
- Forced outages on overhead circuits allow for say:
 - 2/4 bigger type outages 8/16 hours urban/developing & rural each for major line repairs or replacement of transformer / switchgear.
 - 10/20 outages of 1.6 /2.8 hours urban/developing & rural to reset / reclose switch, do small repairs, isolate faulty circuits.
- Forced outages on underground circuits allow for say:
 - 2 outages of 8 hour each to do major repairs such as to change breaker or transformer and any small repairs.
 - 2/4 outage urban/developing 4 hours each for other smaller repairs and switching.
- It must be realised that the Licensee may decide not to work overtime or buy in external contractors or generally take a longer time but rather pay the penalties involved. The more customers that are involved the more the urgency would be for the Licensee to complete the work in a short duration.



The Licensee shall endeavour to keep supply interruptions to an absolute minimum and, in the case of planned interruptions, shall, except under exceptional circumstances, ensure that customers are given adequate notice.

Where a customer or a group of customers has suffered a series of interruptions within a short period, the Licensee shall endeavour to prevent coincident planned interruptions from affecting the same customer(s) for at least two months, with the understanding that urgent remedial work might require a planned interruption to rectify the cause of such a series of interruptions.

4.5.5 Notice Of Planned Interruptions

Where possible, at least 48 hours advance notification should be given of any planned interruption. Details of such notification are given in 4.5.6.

The Licensee may choose to give certain customers on the EPL more than 48 hours notification and may even decide to notify these customers personally.

In the case of large customers, wherever possible, the Licensee and customers should mutually agree on planned interruptions.

The target average percentage success is at least 95 %.

4.5.6 Press/Media Releases

The Licensee should make use of the appropriate media to inform its customers of future major interruptions. The following information should be supplied:

- the time that the interruption(s) will occur or is/are planned to occur;
- the area(s) that will be affected;
- the nature of the problem, or the reason for the planned interruption;
- the action that will be taken to restore the supply or to minimize disruption;
- the time at which it is anticipated that the supply will be restored; and
- notification that customers are to treat the supply as live at all times.

The Licensee may also choose to make use of the appropriate media to inform its customers of the reason for any previous forced interruptions.

4.6 Customer Complaints, Enquiries And Requests

4.6.1 Service Activities For Customer Complaints, Enquiries And Requests

The management of the following service activities influences the quality of service in dealing with customer complaints, enquiries and requests:

- availability and location of service centres;
- telephone services;
- response times; and
- time taken to resolve problems.



4.6.2 Customer Complaints

Table 6: Minimum Standards for Handling Customer Complaints

Service activity	Measure of service standard	Overall standard (recommended practice)	Guaranteed Standard
		Response	Resolved
Customer complaints	Time to respond and resolve	80% one stop without referral.	4 weeks.
		20% and written – respond within 1 week.	4 weeks.
		Quality of supply related NRS048.	Quality of supply related NRS048.
Handling of claims.	Time to respond and resolve	Written reply within 1 week.	Penalty payments within 31 days.

The above table is clarified as follows:

- The guaranteed standard is applicable to final and complete resolution of the query/complaint/problem.
- For complaints related to the quality of supply, 4.8 applies.

4.6.3 Customer Enquiries

Table 7: Minimum Standards for Handling Customer Enquiries

Service activity	Measure of service standard	Overall standard (recommended practice)	Guaranteed Standard
		Response	Resolved
Customer enquiries	Time to respond and resolve	80% one stop without referral.	1 day
		Remaining 20% and written enquiries – respond within 1 week.	4 weeks.
		Payment queries 100% one stop.	Changes effected within 31 days.
		Meter reading queries working 5 days.	Changes effected within 31 days.
		Account queries 5 working days.	Changes effected within 31 days.

Meter queries are also covered in 4.3.10 and 4.4.5.

Account queries are also covered in 4.3.8.

4.6.4 Customer Requests

Table 8: Minimum Standards for Handling Customer Requests

Service activity	Measure of service standard	Overall standard (recommended practice)	Guaranteed Standard
		Response	Resolved
Customer requests moving of meters, moving of street lighting, changing of meters and changing of tariffs	Time to respond and resolve	1 week to reply stating requirements.	4 weeks to provide detailed quotation and conditions.

For network alterations, 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 apply.



Provision of supply is covered in 4.2.

4.7 Telephone Services

4.7.1 Service Activities For Telephone Services

The management of the following service activities influences the quality of service in dealing with telephone services:

- provision of telephone services;
- business hours;
- telephone answering response times;
- duration of calls; and
- management of telephone answering centres.

The equipment for measuring the service activities in 4.7.3 and 4.7.4 might not be generally available; therefore Licensees should regard these standards as goals to be achieved in the future.

Guidelines are included in annex C to help the Licensees manage the telephone centres.

4.7.2 Provision Of Essential Telephone Services

A 24 h telephone service shall be provided for the reporting of faults and emergencies.

The Licensee shall provide a telephone service for complaints, requests and queries. This service shall be available during normal office hours.

4.7.3 Provision And Performance Of Specific Telephone Services

The Licensee should provide at least the telephone services stipulated below:

- Information requests
- Payments
- Reports of faults
- Claims
- General complaints
- Meter readings
- Emergency reports

4.7.4 Call Handling

The recommended performance standards for the telephone services are

- 85 % of incoming calls should be responded to within 15 s,
- the average response time should be shorter than 10 s,
- the lost call rate should be less than 2 %,
- 90 % of all incoming calls should be dealt with within 5 min,
- referrals should be a maximum of 10 % of calls where a one-stop service is a possibility,
- 90 % of misdirected calls should be closed within 30 s, and
- the availability of the fault and emergency services should be better than 1 h downtime per year.

4.8 Non-Compliance With The Quality Of Supply Standard

The management of the following service activities influences the quality of service in dealing with quality-of-supply parameters:

- time to respond to a complaint received from a customer;
- negotiation of a time span to resolve the problem; and
- adherence to the time span in resolving the problem.



Table 9: Minimum Standards for Handling Quality of Supply Reporting

Service activity	Measure of service standard	Overall standard (recommended practice)	Guaranteed Standard
		Response	Resolved
Customer reporting	Time to respond and resolve	All fault reports not resolved telephonically are referred to the dispatcher within 1 hour.	Apply continuity of supply standards.
		All emergency reports acted on immediately.	2 hour urban 6 hours rural.

The Licensee shall correct quality-of-supply complaints within the time span negotiated with the customer.

4.9 Customer Education And Customer Forums

4.9.1 Customer Education

General customer education is encouraged. A utility shall demonstrate that it has used whatever means deemed necessary or appropriate (or both) for the specific target audience to effectively communicate the mandatory information contained in NRS 047 (all parts).

4.9.2 Components Of A Customer Education Programme

4.9.2.1 National Level (Collaborative)

4.9.2.1.1 Safety Issues

The following topics shall be addressed⁶:

- the safe use of electricity;
- the dangers of illegal connections and tampering;
- the dangers of incompetent/unqualified persons conducting illegal/unsafe connections;
- reconnections, modifications, repairs, etc.;
- the use of unauthorized/unsafe devices; and
- protection against over-voltages.

4.9.2.1.2 The Reasons For, And The Culture Of Paying For Electricity

The following topics shall be addressed:

- a customer that is legally connected shall not redistribute electricity without complying with the bylaws or contractual constraints and the legal implications thereof;
- the issue of cross-subsidization of non-payers by paying customers;
- owners of rented properties shall ensure that all outstanding amounts are recovered from tenants; and
- efficient use of energy.

4.9.2.1.3 Quality Of Supply (Protecting Against Overvoltages)

⁶ NOTE SANS 10142-1, that covers low-voltage installations, includes compulsory requirements for the installation of surge arrestors by the customer at his point of supply, which are compulsory for new installations from April 2002, and for all installations from 2005. A second part of SANS 10142 is in course of preparation, which will cover installations above 1 kV and up to and including 33 kV.



Customers' equipment will have a range of sensitivity to overvoltages. It is not usually practicable for the utility to provide surge protection at all points of supply, which will adequately protect all customers' equipment satisfactorily.⁷

4.9.2.2 *Local Level (Utility-Specific)*

Education on the following topics shall be conducted at a local/regional level:

- tariffs;
- utility processes:
 - Management of disconnections.
 - Reporting all defaulters – a process should be developed to facilitate this notwithstanding the need for confidentiality.
 - Reporting of illegal connections.
- processes of interacting with the respective utility on services (this includes account enquiries, new service applications, etc.);
- bill content and queries pertaining to a bill; and
- Licensees should ensure that the customers' rights were inherently protected by explaining/clarifying local by-laws where necessary.

4.9.3 *Customer Forums*

Licensees shall demonstrate that they do have channels to address customer feedback.

In areas where an integrated development plan or any other equivalent communication structures exist, these shall be deemed as customer communication forums. Where such structures are not in place, the relevant utility shall facilitate the establishment thereof.

4.10 *Special Services (Optional)*

The management of the following factors influences the quality of service in dealing with special services:

- types of special services provided; and
- response times in providing such special services.

The Licensee is not expected to measure or report on special services.

Special services could include

- the delivery, checking and determination of electricity consumption of domestic appliances,
- secure supply to community service centres,
- special arrangements to restore power after an interruption to customers who have life-support equipment such as kidney-dialysis machines,
- the provision of standby plants, and
- the classification of certain customers as key customers.

Where required, standards for the quality of special services should be specified by the Licensee in an agreement with the customer.

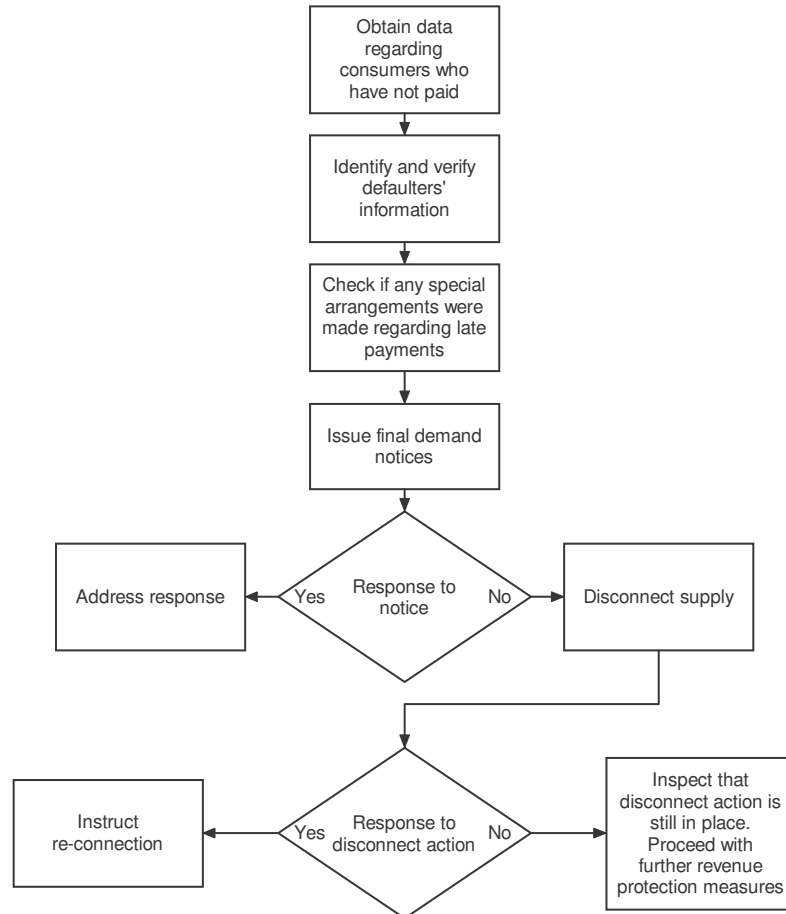
A Licensee could classify certain maximum demand customers as key customers. In this case, the Licensee shall supply each key customer with details of a contact person/s or organization where the following quality-of-service activities could be addressed: interruptions, equipment maintenance, account queries, technical assistance and tariff negotiations. The Licensee should ensure that at least 10 % of its key customers are requested to fill in the customer satisfaction questionnaire detailed in 4.10 of NRS 047-2. The customer satisfaction questionnaires that are completed and returned to the Licensee should be included in the annual quality-of-service report to the ECB.

⁷ NOTE National (SANS) codes of practice to guide customers on this and other quality of supply issues are under consideration.

4.11 Management Of Disconnections

Disconnections are part of a utility's normal ongoing business. The flow chart in figure 1 gives guidance on this issue.

Figure 1: Flow chart for the management of disconnections



5 Penalties

When a Licensee fails to meet certain guaranteed minimum standards penalty payments are due to the customer(s) who have been affected by the failure to meet the standard.

The Licensee shall report annually to the ECB the amount of penalties paid for each service item which carries a penalty payment.

Penalty payments will be required for the following contraventions:



Table 10: Penalty Amounts

Service activity	Category	Basic Penalty	Additional refunds / payments
Planned and Forced interruptions.	All categories.	N\$100-00	50% of fixed charges for every 14 days exceeded.
Restoration times after forced interruptions.	Only the last category 100%.	N\$100-00	50% of fixed charges for every 14 days exceeded.
Service activities	All those given in 4.6 as guaranteed standard	N\$100-00	NA
Meter readings	All	N\$100-00	NA
Bill completion & delivery	All	N\$100-00	NA
Quotation times.	All	N\$100-00	NA
Time to provide supplies	All	N\$100-00	NA

5.1 Calculation of Penalty Amounts

The penalty payment for all minimum standards not complied with and being claimed will be equal to:

- Standard penalty fee of N\$100-00 for not meeting the standard.
- For every multiple that the minimum standard is not met the same multiple of the penalty shall be added to the amount payable, e.g. if standard allows 1 week to complete a task and actual performance is 3 weeks taken to complete the task then the penalty is 100 (for the first week) + 200 (for the second week) + 300 (for the third week) = N\$600-00.
- A further refund shall be paid for every 14 days or part thereof where a customer is without supply in excess of 14 days equal to 50% of the fixed charges per month by the Licensee. This includes fixed charges (basic charges, capacity charges) as well as average demand charges.
- The penalty amounts may be amended by the ECB from time to time.
- The penalty system is intended to provide customers with an incentive to police the standards. Penalties are not intended to compensate customers for direct or consequential losses.

5.2 Penalty Claims Handling and Verification

The process of handling claims is critical to the success of the penalty system. The following is required in this respect:

- Every Licensee shall have a system of recording its performance regarding the listed standards.
- The minimum requirement is that recordings be made of all those items which carry a penalty. Recordings should preferably be made electronically, but may also be made manually.
- The customer shall be issued with an incident reporting number for all cases of customer complaints or queries. This shall be recorded by the Licensee with sufficient details to be able to trace the customer and the incident.
- The process of tracking the incident as it progresses should be recorded by the Licensee.
- Once the customer has an incident number with date, he/she will be able to prove a contravention even if not tracked by the Licensee. For example, if the customer applies for a supply and obtains a reference number, he/she will receive a quotation which will be dated. These two pieces of evidence will be proof whether a penalty is payable or not.
- The Licensee must issue a customer service charter where all the standards stipulated will be made available to its customers, including an explanation of how to claim for penalties.
- Every Licensee shall have a standard claims form that stipulates the formalities to prove the facts of a claim.



5.3 *Payment of Penalties to Customers*

- Penalties shall be paid by the Licensee to the Customer within 30 days of receipt of the fully completed claim form by the Licensee. This means that the Licensee is required to process and verify the claim within this period of 30 days.
- Should the Licensee wish to dispute the claim then the customer must be notified within a period of 30 days and the dispute must be resolved with the customer within a total period of 60 days from the date of receipt of the claim.
- The default method of payment for penalties is cash or cheque. The customer should indicate on the claim form which method is preferred and whether payment should be posted or collected by the customer.
- The Licensee may elect to pay the penalty in the form of a credit on the next monthly bill for customers who receive a bill.
- The Licensee may elect to pay the penalty in the form of a prepaid electricity token provided that the Customer is willing to accept this form of payment. The penalty claim form should make provision for the customer to indicate whether payment in this form is acceptable to the customer.

5.4 *General Provisions Regarding Penalties*

- Licensees are required to have clear conditions of service stipulated in contracts with customers. For small customers (normally domestic and single phase business only) this may take the form of a documented and publicised customer service charter.
- Licensees shall prominently display information regarding standards that carry penalties at all service centres. Such information should include details regarding minimum standards and how to claim penalties. The same information shall be available at all service centres in the form of brochures which the customers can take along.
- Penalty claim forms shall be readily available at all service centres.

6 **Reporting Requirements**

The South African standard NRS 047 Part 2 is applicable as recommended practice only. Licensees are encouraged to implement systems capable of reporting as per NRS 047 Part 2 for their own quality management processes. The ECB will decide at a later stage (once initial implementation has been completed) whether additional reporting is required.

Licensees shall submit a report annually to the ECB regarding penalty claims made and penalty claims and refunds paid to customers in the following recommended format:

Table 11: Recommended Format for Penalty Reporting

Service activity	Total number of claims	Total value of penalties paid out [N\$]	Total Value of refunds made
Duration and number of planned and forced interruptions.			
Restoration times after forced interruptions.			
Various Service activities			
Meter readings			
Bill completion & delivery			
Quotation times.			
Time to provide supply			

Licensees shall on request by the ECB furnish the ECB with the detail records underlying the above summary report.



Licensees should advise the ECB where specific reporting requirements are considered onerous or incur costs which are disproportionate to the value of the information provided. In such cases Licensees should propose alternatives to the ECB.



7 **Annex A: An example of an emergency priority list (EPL)**

(informative)

An EPL could prioritize faults as follows:

- **Priority 1:** Faults at hospitals, clinics and emergency operating rooms, and faults at dwellings where life-support machines are used;
- **Priority 2:** Area faults (i.e. more than one customer affected) where most of the customers are industrial customers;
- **Priority 3:** Faults that affect large industrial customers (more than 10 MVA consumption);
- **Priority 4:** Area faults where most of the customers are residential customers;
- **Priority 5:** Faults that affect individual industrial customers; and
- **Priority 6:** Faults that affect rural customers.



8 Annex B: Guidelines on managing telephone centres

(informative)

8.1 Operating principles

The following operating principles apply:

- employees should receive comprehensive training before going live;
- continuous, ongoing employee training should be provided;
- most employees are generalists and handle all types of calls;
- the generalist employees are backed up by one or more specialists;
- one national telephone number (preferably toll free) for customer service contact;
- disaster recovery plans to cover all eventualities to limit potential downtime to an absolute minimum;
- use of sophisticated forward planning techniques to determine optimum staffing levels, catering for forecasted business cycles;
- minimal paperwork;
- information is available and communicated to other areas electronically;
- use of technology such as automated call distribution, computer/telephone integration and interactive voice response to enhance customer responsiveness and telephone centre efficiency;
- telephone centres should have very strong information/communication links with the dispatching function;
- customer contact interaction details are available from the telephone centre's database to customer service managers and to service interface people, on a log-in basis;
- some service people (for example service reps) could use the telephone centre as a backup resource (HelpLine);
- standard greetings and scripting will provide consistency of standards and image; and
- the on-site information technology and human resource support and operations managers of the local telephone centre are represented on the divisional management team.

8.2 Policies

Telephone centre employees are

- authorized according to their competencies to provide specific categories of service to customers,
- authorized to negotiate and extend credit to customers within specified limits,
- authorized to accept credit card payments and arrange Automatic Clearing Bureau facilities on customer request,
- required to adhere to generally accepted accounting practice and audit/segregation-of-duties requirements in respect of the payment receipting portion of their role,
- authorized to accept telephonic meter readings from customers,
- authorized to add, change and delete customer personal details within defined parameters,
- authorized to add, change and delete customer interaction history within defined parameters,
- authorized to add, change and delete customer agreement details within defined parameters,
- authorized to commit Licensees to performing within defined performance standards, and
- to ensure that all customer interaction details will be fully updated on the system prior to closing or suspending the contact.