

Consumer Advocacy Cell
Assam Electricity Regulatory Commission, Guwahati

REVIEW OF STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE OF APDCL (LAZ)
For the period – FY 2009-10

1. Introduction

In exercise of the powers under Section 181(1) and 181(2) (za) and (zb) and also under Section 86 (1)(i) read with Section 57, 58 and 59 of the Electricity Act 2003 (Act 36 of 2003) the AERC framed the AERC (Distribution Licensees' Standards of Performance Regulations,) 2004.

These Regulations specify the standards of performance, which are minimum standards of service with reference to quality, continuity and reliability of services that a licensee shall achieve in the discharge of his obligations as a licensee. In case the Licensees do not adhere to the standards specified in the Regulations, they are liable to pay a fixed amount to the consumers.

2. Furnishing Reports

Provision 5.1 of the aforesaid regulations states that -

“The Licensee shall furnish to the Commission, in monthly reports and a consolidated annual report for each financial year, the following information as to the Guaranteed Standards of Performance:

(a) The levels of performance achieved by the Licensee with reference to those specified in Schedule – I to this regulation;

(b) The number of cases in which compensation were payable under clause 4 above, and the aggregate amount of the compensation paid and payable by the Licensee;

(c) The number of claims made by the consumer against the Licensee for failure to meet the Guaranteed Standards of Performance and the action taken by the Licensee including the reasons as to delay in payment, or non-payment of compensation for such claims.”

Provision 5.4 of these regulations also states that

“The Licensee shall furnish to the Commission, in a report for every quarter and in a consolidated annual report for each financial year, the following information as to the Overall Standards of Performance:

(a) The level of performance achieved with reference to those specified in Schedule II to this regulation; and,

(b) The measures taken by the licensee to improve performance in the areas

covered by Overall Standards and licensee's assessment of the targets to be imposed for the ensuing year."

Therefore, the Licensees are required to furnish quarterly and annual reports in the format as specified by the AERC, along with the details of payment made to consumers for not adhering to the SOP. In pursuance of the provisions as set out in the regulations the Commission prepared a proforma reflecting the required performance parameters of the distribution licensee and asked for information on these SOPs. After regular follow up by the CAC, the Licensees have furnished the report for the period April 2009 – March 2010.

Based on the data submitted by the APDCL (LAZ), the CAC has reviewed the performance of the Discom. The objective of this report is to highlight the performance of the APDCL (LAZ) against the overall standards specified.

3. **Services covered**

The Licensees Standards of Performance Regulations covers the following 10 types of services:

1	Restoration of power supply	6	Meter complaints
2	Line breakdowns	7	Replacement of meters
3	Distribution transformer failure	8	Voltage related complaints
4	Replacement of service Line	9	Frequency related complaints
5	Billing Complaints	10	Payment of compensation

4. **Restoration of power supply in case of Normal Fuse off**

As per the SOP the maximum time limit for attending to complaints relating to normal fuse off is 4 hours in cities and towns and within 24 hours in rural areas. The amount payable to affected consumer is maximum Rs.50 per day in each case of default. The total number of complaints received by the APDCL (LAZ) is 125068 out of which 69384 were complaints received in the urban areas and 55684 in rural areas and a respective 97% and 96% of these cases were attended to within the time frame. Against the overall/ targeted SOP of 99 per cent the actual average is 96.5 per cent. No Compensation was paid.

5. **Line Breakdowns/Transformer Failures**

APDCL (LAZ) received 20513 complaints relating to line breakdowns out of which 94.5% were attended to within the prescribed time. APDCL (LAZ) has reported that there were 595 cases of transformer failures out of which 71% have been set right within the time prescribed in the SOP.

As per SOP regulations, line breakdowns are to be set right within 24 hours in both urban and rural areas (time specified is 48 hours if poles are broken down and replacement required in cities and within 72 hours if poles replacement is required in rural areas). Transformer failures are to be repaired within 24 hours / 1 day in cities and 120 hours/ 5 days in rural areas. Actual performance regarding

replacement of failed distribution transformers was just an average of 71 % against target SOP of 95 %. No payment of compensation is reported.

6. Replacement of damaged service line

APDCL (LAZ) received 6181 complaints for replacement of damaged service lines. Of these, 5529 complaints were incidences where replacement were to be made at consumer’s cost and 70% of these complaints were resolved within the stipulated time of 3 days. Of the 652 complaints received where damaged service lines were to be replaced at licensee’s cost, only 12 % were taken care of within the target time period of 3 days. The actual achievement is far behind the desired standard of 99 per cent. No Compensation was paid.

7. Complaints relating to Bills

Complaints relating to bills are to be attended to within 3 days in urban areas and in case of rural consumers the time limit is 7 days. The overall standard of performance that the licensee must strive to achieve is 99 per cent in both the cases as per the relevant regulations.

APDCL (LAZ) adhered to the norms in 98 per cent of the 8253 number of complaints relating to bills in urban areas. But in rural areas, the recorded conformance to SOP is a dismal 25%. Out of 16074 complaints received from rural consumers, only 4019 were cleared within the time limit specified. No payment of compensation is reported.

8. Meter complaints

The following standards have been specified in relating to meter complaints.

- a) Inspect and check correctness of meters
 - Urban - 7 days
 - Rural - 15 days
- b) Replace Defective, Stopped or Burnt meters
 - I) LT Consumers

	Urban	Rural
Replacement not attributable to consumer	7 days	15 days
Where cost of meter to be recovered from consumer	15 days after payment	30 days after payment
Where the consumer is required to supply the metering equipment	15 days after delivery	-----

II) HT Consumers

Replacement of stopped / defective meters	7 days
Where cost of meter to be recovered from consumer	15 days after payment if meter is available with licensee otherwise within 3 months in any case
Where the consumer is required to supply the metering equipment	30 days after delivery.

Testing, checking and calibration of meters: Out of 2584 complaints relating to the testing and checking of meters received by APDCL (LAZ) in urban areas, 91 % complaints were attended to within the standard time and in rural areas out of 3963 such complaints, 79 % were attended to. Although actual performance in urban areas surpassed the targeted 90 per cent, the actual achievement in rural areas has much scope for improvement. No payment of compensation is reported.

Replacement of Defective, Stopped or Burnt meters: Out of 6568 complaints relating to replacement of defective/ stopped /burnt meters received by APDCL (LAZ) in urban areas, 46 % complaints were attended to within the standard time and in rural areas out of 13409 such complaints, 30 % were attended to. The actual performance in both the urban and rural areas is poor and leaves much to be desired. No payment of compensation is reported.

9. Frequency and Voltage complaints

No voltage related and frequency related complaints were reported and it is seen from the report that there was no voltage variation outside the range specified in the regulations.

The above analysis is based on the information furnished by APDCL (LAZ). There is no mechanism yet to gather information from an independent source. Hence the report is more of academic interest. Further, it is seen that no compensation was paid to the consumers in any case of default in adhering to the standards of performance specified in the regulations. The consumers need to be made aware of these standards. The APDCL should also put in place a system of collecting information regarding these standards from their field offices from time to time as specified in the regulations and take proactive steps to achieve the desired standards for supplying better quality and reliable power to its consumers. Calculations on service reliability indices were not submitted as specified in the formats.