

Code of Practice for the handling of complaints

1. Aim

This code of practice for the handling of complaints (the “**Code**”) has been prepared by Phoenix Natural Gas Limited (“**PNGL**”) in compliance with Condition 2.8A of its licence reproduced at Annex A of this Code. For the avoidance of doubt this Code will not change, alter, or amend, any definition or obligation contained within PNGL’s licence and, in the event of any inconsistency between the licence and this Code; the licence will take precedence.

This Code ensures that PNGL operates an accessible, equitable and transparent, simple and inexpensive complaints procedure which shall enable any person to bring and have promptly dealt with any complaint they may have in respect of the activities of PNGL.

2. Definition of a complaint

For the purposes of this Code, “complaint” means

“an expression of dissatisfaction made by any person in respect of the activities of PNGL”.

PNGL will record each complaint using the classifications detailed in the template issued to it by the Utility Regulator as required under Section 4 of this Code.

3. Specific Requirements

PNGL must have in place a written procedure (the “complaints handling procedure”) for handling complaints. The complaints handling procedure will enable any person to bring and have promptly dealt with any complaint they may have in respect of the activities of PNGL.

The complaints handling procedure must as a minimum include information about:

1. how to make an complaint;
2. the steps PNGL will take to process and endeavour to resolve the complaint;
3. the timeframes in which PNGL will endeavour to resolve the complaint but which shall not be longer than three months, including when PNGL is likely to notify the complainant about the progress or resolution of the complaint;
4. the contact details for lodging a complaint with PNGL, including all of the following low-cost options:
 - i. a telephone number charged at the local call rate;
 - ii. a UK postal address; and
 - iii. online.

5. the contact details for the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland.

PNGL shall ensure that its complaint handling procedure is sufficiently accessible.

4. Monitoring and enforcing of the Code

PNGL must maintain a record of the complaints received in the template issued to it by the Utility Regulator for a period of two years.

Compliance with this Code will be reviewed when required and at the request of the Authority. The Authority may request from PNGL, having giving reasonable notice (but not less than 14 days), the completed template.

5. Reviewing and modification of the Code

This Code and the manner in which it has been operated shall be reviewed by PNGL whenever requested to do so by the Authority, with a view to determining whether any revisions should be made to it.

The review will include representation from the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland, and may require a meeting of the Distribution Operators' Forum. PNGL may propose an amendment to this Code by preparing an "Application for Change" which will include the proposed change and the proposed text amendments to this Code together with the proposed date of implementation.

The Application for Change should be sent to the Authority and the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland with a request for a meeting.

If the Authority approves the change to this Code, it will reissue the Code to PNGL.

6. Publication

PNGL shall publish this Code and its complaints handling procedure on, and make it readily accessible from, its website; and give or send free of charge a copy to any person who requests it.

Condition 2.8A: Complaints Handling Procedure

2.8A.1 Requirement to Prepare etc. a Code

The Licensee shall, no later than three months after this Condition takes effect or such later date as the Authority directs, prepare, submit to and have approved by the Authority a code of practice for the handling of consumer complaints (the **Code**).

2.8A.2 The Code

The Code shall include arrangements by which the Licensee will establish and operate an accessible, equitable and transparent, simple and inexpensive complaints procedure which shall enable any person to bring and have promptly dealt with any complaint he may have in respect of the Licensee's activities.

2.8A.3 Minimum Requirements

The complaints procedure established and operated by the Licensee in accordance with the Code shall as a minimum:

- a) specify the period, which may differ for different types of complaint but which shall not be longer than three months, within which it is intended that complaints will be processed and resolved;
- b) be made available to any person without charge; and
- c) facilitate the fair and prompt settlement of complaints and disputes.

2.8A.4 [not used]

2.8A.5 [not used]

2.8A.6 [not used]

2.8A.7 [not used]

2.8A.8 [not used]

2.8A.9 [not used]

2.8A.10 [not used]

2.8A.11 [not used]

2.8A.12 This Condition is subject to Condition 2.9B: Preparation, Revision Of and Compliance with Codes of Practice.