

Annex A: Benchmarking summary

<p>Sector: Water</p> <p>Organisation responsible for publication of statistics: Ofwat</p> <p>Further information: http://www.ofwat.gov.uk/regulating/reporting/rpt_los_2008-09.pdf http://www.ofwat.gov.uk/consultations/pap_con_090807sim.pdf?download=Download#</p>		
Key Customer Service Indicators used	Publication method and frequency	Best practice identified by Consumer Focus
<p>Current: Overall Performance Assessment¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billing contacts not responded to (within five working days (WD)) • Written complaints not responded to (within 10WD) • Bills not based on meter readings • Received telephone calls not answered within 30 secs • Telephone call handling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Calls abandoned ○ All lines busy ○ Call handling satisfaction <p>Future: Service Incentive Mechanism (1) All lines busy and calls abandoned indicators To measure the ease with which customers can make telephone contact with their local water company during office hours. The 'all</p>	<p>Current: Annual quantitative measures and rankings for overall customer service used since 1996-97 to incentivise performance across the broad range of services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company league table acts as a financial and reputational incentive • A company that provides particularly good service can charge a little more, a company providing poorer service must charge less <p>Future: Annual publication of league table of customer service performance from 2011 against the two consumer experience measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volumetric measure of unwanted contacts. Contacts not dealt with effectively at earliest opportunity have 	<p>New Service Incentive Mechanism developed that uses qualitative consumer experience data as well as quantitative complaints data to give a holistic picture of water company performance.</p> <p>Consumer Focus is keen to combine qualitative measures with quantitative ones to give consumers a full picture of relative company performance. We are also keen to develop a weighted model that places greater distinction on the amount of time and effort it has taken the consumer to get their problem resolved.</p>

¹ List of measures excludes industry specific service measures eg indicators relating to flooding, pressure, water supply etc.

lines busy' category measures the degree of difficulty customers' experience in being able to connect with a company agent or automated system. The aim of the 'calls abandoned' category is to capture the total number of callers who abandon their call before it is substantively answered by the company

(2) Unwanted telephone contacts

Companies receive a variety of types of telephone contact. Some of these can be defined as 'wanted' from the consumer's point of view, for example, when the caller wants to pay their bill or is providing information or is seeking information. Others can be defined as 'unwanted'. These are where the caller has experienced some form of aggravation (however mild) and this has prompted them to make contact.

(3) Written complaints

This covers any written communication from a customer or a customer's representative alleging that an action or inaction of the company, or a service or lack of service provided by the company or agent/contractor has fallen below his/her expectation, even if written in mild and friendly terms. This includes any expression of annoyance or dissatisfaction by the customer, or disagreement with the company.

(4) Escalated written complaints

This is defined as a second complaint from a consumer relating to the same issue that, in accordance with the company's approved complaints procedure, is reviewed by a person or persons not involved in providing the response to the consumer's first complaint.

(5) CCWater investigations

These are complaints not resolved by a company and accepted for investigation by CCWater. CCWater will only investigate where a complaint has exhausted the company's own complaints procedure,

an increasing impact

- Satisfaction levels of consumers who have had direct contact with water company to capture users' end to end experience with their water company, from initial contact to final resolution

or where the company has deviated from their complaints procedure, and where CCWater feel there are areas of challenge.

Sector: Financial Services

Organisation responsible for publication of statistics: Financial Services Ombudsman

Further information: http://www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk/publications/policy-statements/complaint_data_mar09.html

Key Customer Service Indicators used	Publication method and frequency	Best practice identified by Consumer Focus
<p>(1) Cases: The number of new cases received by the ombudsman service in this six-month period – from consumers dissatisfied with the financial business’s response to their complaint. This number is likely to reflect the size of the business involved. The number is broken down into five broad complaint categories.</p> <p>(2) Resolved cases: The percentage of resolved cases where the ombudsman service made a change in favour of the consumer. This change could range from £1 to £100,000.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Six monthly firm specific data on number of new cases received and per cent of cases resolved in favour of the consumer• Absolute numbers not ratios• List of firms is displayed in alphabetical order but tables can be searched as follows:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ by the number of new complaints referred to us <i>or</i>○ by the percentage of complaints the FSO upheld in favour of consumers• List of FAQs provided by the FSO but not contextual analysis to allow individual interpretation of figures and trends	<p>The FSO has made information about named individual businesses publicly available, to encourage businesses to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• benchmark their standards of complaints-handling against other firms• learn from businesses who are handling complaints better <i>and</i>• reduce the number of unresolved complaints referred to the ombudsman service <p>Consumer Focus is keen to produce relative performance information which both provides consumers with useful information to aid their choice of energy supplier as well as providing incentives for companies to drive improvements in service and complaint handling for consumers.</p>

Sector: Financial Services

Organisation responsible for publication of statistics: Financial Services Authority

Further information: http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/other/complaints_data.pdf
http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/cp/cp09_21.pdf

Key Customer Service Indicators used	Publication method and frequency	Best practice identified by Consumer Focus
<p>Volume of direct complaints received according to product, type of firm and cause of the complaint. Firms report the volumes according to 36 different product categories (eg credit cards). These product categories can be combined into five different product groups (eg Banking and Loans).</p> <p>Complaints-handling – including the number of complaints that take more than eight weeks for firms to resolve and the proportion of complaints upheld by firms. Unlike the volumes information described above, firms do not currently report their complaints handling information split into different product</p>	<p>Current: Six monthly aggregate non-firm specific publication of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the volume of complaints firms have received, by product type and cause of the complaint, eg delays and misleading advice• how firms have handled complaints, including the speed of complaints-handling and the proportion of complaints that have been upheld by firms <p>Future: Six monthly firm specific data. From July 2010 firms are required to publish their own data against each complaint category as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complaints opened• Complaints closed	<p>The FSA has identified measures for publication that are already collected and reported to the FSA by firms to minimise the additional cost to firms of publishing this information and build on the experience that firms already have of calculating and reporting the figures.</p> <p>Consumer Focus acknowledges the investment that was required of suppliers to make their systems fit for purpose for the launch of the Complaint Handling Standards in October 2008 and seeks to avoid a further burden where possible.</p> <p>The FSA has carried out research into the benefits of publishing complaints data in terms of informing consumers and encouraging firms to improve their products and customer service. They concluded that publishing complaints could help consumers make more informed retail decisions, but it is likely that the key benefits of complaints publication will materialise through the reputation and financial performance incentives it creates for firms to improve their products and customer service.</p>

<p>categories or groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complaints closed within eight weeks %• Complaints upheld by firm % <p>The data will be contextualised per 1,000 accounts/1m of premium income/no of approved persons.</p> <p>The FSA will then publish aggregate data based on these measures.</p>	<p>Consumer Focus is keen to publish relative performance information to encourage companies to improve their complaint handling and overall customer service outcomes for consumers.</p>
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