

Jemma Baker
Ofgem
10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
London, E14 4PU

20th December 2024

Email: FutureConsumers@ofgem.gov.uk

Response to consultation: Consumer Standards – 24/7 Metering Support Statutory Consultation

BUUK Infrastructure (BUUK) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation on proposals relating to ensuring that energy suppliers provide better metering support services to customers.

Overview of our business

BUUK Infrastructure (BUUK) is the leading UK multi-utility infrastructure investor, working across Great Britain and competing against incumbent utility companies.

Our initial interest in utilities began with ownership of regulated gas networks and we have gradually expanded our portfolio into other utility sectors including electricity, fibre, water, wastewater, and heat.

We are ready to invest in solutions to support the transition to net zero applying our experience of delivering utility infrastructure and we believe our credentials mean we are well-placed to do this.

Our IDNO electricity distribution networks business supplies over 900,000 customers. Whilst our IGT gas transportation business supplies 1.9 million customers.

Summary of BUUK views

As our business provides gas and electricity services to many domestic customers, we understand the issue being addressed here. We regularly encounter situations on our networks where customers experience problems with their energy meters, creating issues with their supply, and who are unable to contact their supplier for assistance.

In these instances they often turn to us as their network provider for support. We too often find it difficult to contact suppliers metering agents and teams out of normal operating hours.

This creates unnecessary challenges for customers, and in circumstances where vulnerable consumers are involved, has required our emergency crews to attend to provide temporary solutions to maintain their supply. This is both a poor service for the customer and an inefficient and expensive outcome for the industry.

A clearer and more robust regulatory framework that ensures that all energy suppliers provide a 24/7 metering service for their customers is a development that we support.

Implementing supplier Standard Licence Condition (SLC) 31G.3A(c) will help to address this issue and we assume that this will also be accompanied by compliance monitoring by Ofgem.

We would have preferred for this obligation to have been implemented before the start of the current winter period but understand that April 2025 is the earliest date that this can pragmatically now happen.

Yours faithfully,

Alex Travell
Head of Regulation