

November 2000

**Customer access to information in the
gas market**

**Modification of Transco's Public Gas
Transporter Licence**

Summary

This document sets out proposals for increasing the amount of information made available by Transco to consumers (and potential consumers seeking a new connection to Transco's mains pipeline system) through the introduction of a special licence condition – to be known as Condition 17A.

Ofgem has long been aware of concerns of current and potential gas consumers about access to data held by Transco regarding transportation arrangements to the customers' own sites. Transco believes that it is unable to release this data as it has been concerned about contravening section 42 of the Gas Act which restricts disclosure of information. In order to facilitate the release of data, Ofgem approached the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to make changes to the Gas Act to facilitate wider access to data. In response, the DTI placed an Order before Parliament amending the Gas Act to enable the Director General to designate categories of recipients. This document consults on the introduction of a new licence condition, Condition 17A, 'Disclosure of Information to consumers and other relevant parties', which has been developed to facilitate consumers' access to the information held by Transco about consumers' sites and local networks, particularly:

- 1 Provision to domestic consumers calling Transco's M Number Helpline of the identity of their supplier.
- 2 Access by Industrial & Commercial (I&C) consumers to the transportation data held about their site(s) by Transco and used for its supply point administration (SPA) service.
- 3 Access by owners and occupiers of property, developers and "self lay" pipeline installers to Transco's local gas system schematic drawings.

A subsequent document¹ will look at the availability of information affecting the wholesale price of gas, particularly for large volume gas consumers.

Views are invited on the introduction of the special licence condition set out in the appendix in order to facilitate the release of items 1, 2 and 3 above.

Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	1
Background	1
References.....	2
Rationale.....	3
Structure of this document.....	3
2. Proposals for the Modifications.....	5
Providing domestic consumers calling Transco’s M Number Helpline with the identity of their supplier.....	5
Access by I&C consumers to the transportation data held on their site(s) by Transco.....	6
Access by owners and occupiers of property, developers and “self lay” pipeline installers to Transco’s local gas schematic drawings.....	10
3. Detailed explanation of proposed changes.....	11
4. Issues for Consultation.....	12
Appendix 1- Section 23 Notice.....	13
Appendix 2- Proposed terms of new PGT licence condition 17A.....	14
Appendix 3- Regulatory Framework.....	16
Appendix 4- Consumption and Geographical Data held by Transco.....	19

¹ ‘The New Gas Trading Arrangements: Reform of the Gas Balancing Regime. A Consultation Document’, Ofgem, expected November 2000.

1. Introduction

Background

1.1 Ofgem (and prior to that, Ofgas) has been concerned at the difficulties faced by consumers when trying to obtain information from Transco about the gas transportation arrangements to their site(s) e.g. the identity of the supplier, the amount of gas offtaken, number and type of meters etc. An analysis of the complaints made to Ofgem by gas consumers (and potential consumers), has identified four areas where access to more detailed information has the potential to improve the operation of the competitive gas market and thereby deliver greater benefits to consumers. The areas are:

1. Providing domestic consumers calling Transco's M Number Helpline with the identity of their supplier.
2. Access by I&C consumers to the transportation data held about their site(s) by Transco.
3. Access by owners and occupiers of property, developers and "self lay" pipeline installers to Transco's local gas schematic drawings.
4. Access by the mainly large volume gas consumers to information affecting the wholesale price of gas.

This document deals solely with access to the information held by Transco about consumers sites and the local gas networks i.e. items 1, 2 and 3 above; a second document² will look at widening the availability of gas trading information.

² The New Gas Trading Arrangements: Reform of the Gas Balancing Regime. A Consultation Document (forthcoming).

References

- 1.2 Transco believes it has been unable to release information to consumers, amongst others, because of section 42 of the Gas Act 1986. Section 42 sets out the general restrictions on the disclosure of information and provides that, subject to specific exemptions, no information obtained under or by virtue of the provisions of the Act and which relates to the affairs of any individual or any particular business can be disclosed during the lifetime of that individual or the duration of that business, without the consent of the individual or the person carrying on that business. Contravention of this section of the Act is a criminal offence punishable by a custodial sentence.
- 1.3 Ofgem was unable to provide Transco with any comfort over the interpretation of s42 and so brought the matter to the attention of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), asking them to consider a change to the Gas Act to facilitate wider access to information.
- 1.4 The DTI issued a Consultation Paper³ setting out options which would enable PGTs to disclose information not only to other licence holders as now, but to other relevant parties as required by a condition of their licence.
- 1.5 The DTI received a positive response to its Consultation Paper and an Order⁴ was placed before Parliament amending the Gas Act to enable the Director General to designate categories of recipient.
- 1.6 Later this month, Ofgem will publish a document (The New Gas Trading Arrangements: Reform of the Gas Balancing Regime) that will consider the issues surrounding the availability of information relating to gas trading.

³ A Proposed Modification of the Gas Act 1986, Section 42, to Facilitate the Disclosure of Information Required for the Operation of an Effective and Competitive Gas Market, DTI, March 2000.

⁴ The Gas Act (General Restriction on Disclosure of Information)(Modification) Order April 2000

Rationale

- 1.7 Existing gas consumers (and those seeking new connections) have complained about a lack of supply and site information within the market. Three categories of information have been identified which, if made more widely available, would enable consumers to more readily benefit from competition. Ofgem is therefore seeking to assist consumers by requiring Transco to make these categories of information available to them as soon as possible; this timing is particularly important in the case of I&C site data.
- 1.8 Transco is keen to assist consumers by making information, particularly I&C site data, more widely available and has developed an internet based facility which would allow I&C consumers to view the information it holds about their sites. This facility is expected to be available by early November and would prove beneficial to those I&C consumers preparing tenders for the January and April 2001 gas contracting rounds.

Structure of this document

- 1.9 Chapter one of this document describes the background to Ofgem's proposals in more detail. Chapter two describes the proposals for a new Licence Condition – to be known as 17A – to be included in Transco's licence; Chapter three comments on the implementation of the licence condition and Chapter four sets out the issues consulted upon.
- 1.10 Appendix 1 is the formal notice under section 23 of the Gas Act 1986 proposing the modification to Transco's PGT licence. The changes to be made are in the Schedule to that notice. Appendix 2 sets out the proposed wording of the new licence condition. Appendix 3 defines the regulatory framework against which this condition. Appendix 4 lists the geographical and consumption currently held by Transco, to be displayed via its Internet access scheme.
- 1.11 The Director General would therefore welcome comments on the issues raised in Chapter 4 of this document and any other points that interested parties wish to make. Representations must be received by 1st December 2000 at the latest. Replies should be addressed to:

Adam Knight
Supply Directorate
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
9 Millbank
London, SW1 3GE

- 1.12 Responses will normally be made available in the Ofgem library unless there are good reasons why they must remain confidential. Consultees should clearly mark the part of their response (or the whole response) which is to remain confidential if this is the case, and where possible should consign any confidential material to appendices.
- 1.13 Following the period of consultation, a further draft of the proposed licence modifications may be produced with such amendments as are necessary in light of the responses to the consultation.

2. Proposals for the Modifications

- 2.1 The proposed special licence condition will set out the general obligations which will govern the way in which Transco discloses information to consumers of gas at the relevant site, and the type of information to be disclosed.
- 2.2 As previously stated, the existing condition 17 in the PGT licence deals with the provision of information relating to meter points to gas shippers and gas suppliers; the proposed new special condition, 17A, will build on this obligation by extending the type of information which can be made available to specific categories of recipients by Transco – subject to certain safeguards.
- 2.3 The categories of information to be released, and the benefits expected to arise therefrom, are considered here in greater detail.

Providing domestic consumers calling Transco's M Number Helpline with the identity of their supplier.

- 2.4 The M number (or Meter Point Reference Number) is a unique number allocated by Transco to every site or property served by its pipeline system to enable it to precisely identify that site. In effect, the M Number is allocated to the piece of pipe connecting the consumer's meter to Transco's transportation system; the M number is not the same as the Meter Serial Number which changes if the meter is replaced for any reason.
- 2.5 The M Number Helpline was originally set up by Transco to enable shippers and suppliers to make enquiries about sites in their portfolio (e.g. to check addresses, confirm M Numbers etc), thus reducing the number of calls to other parts of the company. The service proved extremely useful and was later made available to consumers.
- 2.6 A consumer calling Transco's M Number Helpline for the identity of their supplier has, in the past, been given the name of the shipper registered to the site. Unless the shipper was the same company as the supplier, the name of the shipper was often meaningless to the consumer and necessitated a second telephone call (to the shipper) in order to identify the supplier. Transco now provides the supplier name to consumers under a system of waivers i.e. all

suppliers and shippers have confirmed to Transco that they are content for the supplier identity to be revealed; however, as this is a cumbersome and bureaucratic process Transco seeks the comfort of a licence obligation in order to safeguard its position.

Provision of Supplier Identity

- 2.7 Transco already operates the M Number help-line as part of its contribution to facilitating competition in gas supply. The substitution of the identity of the supplier for the identity of the shipper is not expected to attract any material additional costs – since both areas of information are held on Transco’s SAM (Sites and Meters) database. In addition, Ofgem and Transco both agree that it would be inappropriate for domestic consumers (and those acting on their behalf) to be charged for the provision of M Number or supplier information.

Access by I&C consumers to the transportation data held about their site(s) by Transco.

- 2.8 In order to facilitate the process by which consumers can change the gas supplier serving their site(s) – known as supply point administration (SPA) - Transco maintains a record of the geographical and consumption characteristics (listed in appendix 4) of each site on its system taking mains gas. This information is held on its SAM database and forms the backbone of its SPA service.
- 2.9 There continues to be considerable criticism by I&C consumers about the quality of the data held by Transco about their sites (an issue which was emphasised in many of the responses received to Ofgas’ earlier consultation document about Customer/Transco issues⁵). The points made by consumers continue to be that:
- ◆ they cannot gain access to the data in order to check its accuracy, and
 - ◆ where it transpires that part of the data is inaccurate, there is no effective means to get it corrected.
- 2.10 Data inaccuracies can increase the risk of delays or failure when I&C consumers are trying to transfer a site to another supplier. Any delay in transferring a site to

a different supplier can lead to increased consumer costs as the incumbent supplier can and often does commence charging for gas at a higher out of contract price. Alternatively, a failure to transfer means that the consumer has been unable to leave the incumbent supplier and thereby cannot benefit from competition in supply e.g. by receiving sharper prices or better service.⁶ Inaccuracies in consumption data can also lead to errors in billing and site and metering charges.

- 2.11 The supply of gas to I&C sites is a more complex undertaking than the supply to domestic premises. Gas supplies to domestic premises tend to be straightforward since such premises tend to have a single meter and demand falls within known parameters; this is not the case with supplies to I&C sites.
- 2.12 Gas demand at I&C sites can range between 73,200 kWh per annum up to several million kWh and the sites can have quite complex arrangements of meters on them. I&C consumers can also occupy single sites or multi sites e.g. a local authority which has a number of offices, schools etc at a number of different locations within a county, or a national retailing chain with sites all over the country. Additionally, sites consuming over a certain amount of gas can be supplied on either firm or interruptible contracts. The accurate recording of the site configuration as well as demand characteristics (i.e. amount of gas used per annum, per day and even per hour) is therefore very important. However, as businesses develop, these data items can change; new acquisitions can increase demand, disposals reduce it, activities can be re-located to new sites etc. It therefore becomes essential that the data held by Transco accurately records circumstances at the consumer's site(s).
- 2.13 The key problem for consumers is that the process for keeping data up to date **i.e. consumer → supplier → shipper → Transco and back again**, contains insufficient incentives on the industry participants to ensure that information about consumers' sites can be regularly checked. It is Ofgem's belief that consumers need the ability to see and verify the data held on Transco's database about their site(s).

⁵ Customer/Transco Issues in the Industrial and Commercial Gas Market, Ofgas, October 1998

⁶ For an assessment of the effect of poor data on metering, see "Review of gas metering arrangements Project Proposal" issued by Ofgem in August 2000.

- 2.14 The consumers' ability to have access to their site details held on Transco's SAM Database should improve the operation of Transco's SPA. This could lead to supply transfers taking place more smoothly and with less risk of failures. Increased certainty would reduce consumers' exposure to additional expense; which in turn would increase consumers' confidence in the I&C transfer process and facilitate market churn.
- 2.15 The proposed licence condition allows Transco to provide consumers with such site information, as is in its possession, to enable the gas supply to their sites to be properly managed.

Transco's approach

- 2.16 Transco has responded to the complaints from consumers about the accuracy of their data by looking into the feasibility of posting a copy of the I&C consumer data onto a restricted area of its Internet website. Consumers who would be registered to view their site pages would then be able to check the information held by Transco. Ofgem welcomes and fully supports this innovative work by Transco.
- 2.17 The Internet facility referred to earlier in this document is a new service provided by Transco to consumers and there has been much debate over whether a charge should be levied on users of it. There are at least three stages to the Internet facility viz. the Pilot, Phase 2 and Phase 3; these are now considered separately.
- 2.18 The Pilot Project scheme, launched in June 1999, enabled a small number of consumers (and their shippers) to view their site data. In order to ensure that the process was consistent with its interpretation of the requirements of s42, Transco sought – and received – waivers from all suppliers and shippers utilised by those consumers participating in the pilot. This would be totally impractical if the Internet facility were to be extended nationally.
- 2.19 The pilot operated until the middle of November 1999 and 14 consumers participated. A detailed report of the trial is available from Transco. It was clear that the participating consumers found the facility extremely beneficial. Transco has since decided to make the facility available to all I&C consumers nationally

and the removal of the s42 constraint now makes this a practicable proposition. In the future, therefore, consumers will be able to check their site data.

- 2.20 Phase 2 is the name to be given to the intended rollout – on a national basis to those requesting it – of the data screens trialled in the Pilot phase, but with the addition of the latest meter read for the consumer’s site(s). This project would also employ the IT equipment used during the Pilot phase so no new bespoke equipment would be employed. However, the resources needed by Transco to operate the facility e.g. enter consumers’ portfolios onto the new web pages, ensure those portfolios matched the data on the SAM, carry out routine housekeeping, maintain security etc., would be greater. Additional costs are also likely to be incurred in publicising the availability of the new facility.
- 2.21 Ofgem and Transco have looked carefully at the arguments for and against charging for Phase 2. Whilst it is clear that Transco will incur additional costs, it is also relevant that the company’s operations – as well as competition generally - will benefit from the increasing accuracy of its site data. After weighing up all relevant factors, including price control considerations, Transco has decided not to charge I&C consumers for use of the Phase 2 facility. Ofgem welcomes this decision.
- 2.22 Phase 3 is expected to be a significant enhancement of the Phase 2 Internet facility. Whilst details are still being developed, it is likely that this variant will feature more advanced, bespoke hardware with a greater capacity for consumers to manage their site data themselves. Clearly such a project is likely to have significant cost implications and the recovery of such costs – once quantified – will be an important part of the project definition. Ofgem and Transco have therefore agreed that, once properly scoped, the Phase 3 project can be looked at within the context of the next price control review.

Access by owners and occupiers of property, developers and “self lay” pipeline installers to Transco’s local gas schematic drawings.

- 2.23 System schematic drawings (sometimes referred to as “Spider Diagrams”) show local gas pressures in and around the area to be developed and identify optimum offtake points for new connections. Transco can make these diagrams available to other PGTs (as organisations licensed under the Gas Act), but it is not able to supply them to self lay installers (an independent contractor dealing with the installation pipeline systems), who typically act on behalf of potential gas consumers. These parties are therefore disadvantaged in their attempts to compete with the connections business of PGTs. By making these schematic drawings available to other parties, Transco will be furthering competition in new connections – a process which can be expected to exert a downward pressure on the costs of such connections.
- 2.24 The proposed licence condition also enables a consumer to verify the licensee’s requirement to reinforce its pipeline system. Access may be particularly useful where a PGT is seeking a contribution towards the costs of such reinforcement⁷.
- 2.25 It is also suggested that this aspect of special condition 17A might be included within the wording of the new standard conditions of the transporters licence, eg. as an additional paragraph within Condition 5. This would mean that the requirement would apply to all gas transporters. Comments are invited on this suggestion in Chapter 4.
- 2.26 As the local schematic drawings are readily made available by Transco to other PGTs (as companies licensed under the Gas Act) the extension of this service to other relevant parties is not expected to materially increase Transco’s costs; the company has therefore agreed not to levy any charge for making these maps more widely available – subject to certain caveats about their use.

⁷ When a request for a new connection or increased capacity for an existing connection is received, Transco must ensure that its pipeline system has sufficient capacity to continue to supply the existing demands at the applicable pressures. If system pressures would be affected by the connection of the new load Transco may have to reinforce its pipeline system. This reinforcement may take the form of new pipelines being laid or the installation of compressors or other equipment to increase pressure within the pipes.

3. Details of the Proposed Licence Condition

- 3.1 Clause 1a of the new condition enables Transco to provide to consumers the type of geographical and consumption data necessary to:
- ◆ ensure that the transportation charges to the site(s) are based on correct information, and
 - ◆ enable them to compare their site data with that held by Transco.
- 3.2 The remaining part of Clause 1a ensures that domestic consumers can be given the identity of their suppliers when they contact Transco's M Number Helpline. Clause 1b ensures that potential gas consumers and those acting on their behalf e.g. self lay installers, can, subject to certain conditions, have access to Transco's local gas pipeline schematic drawings. This would enable them to verify any request from Transco for a financial contribution towards the cost of reinforcing its pipeline system in order to accommodate the new consumer's load.
- 3.3 Clause 2 sets out the circumstances whereby Transco can legitimately refuse to provide information; these are:
- ◆ its disclosure would seriously and prejudicially affect the commercial interests of the licensee,
 - ◆ in relation to local schematic drawings (Spider Diagrams), the intended recipient has refused to confirm that they will not use the information provided other than for the purpose of facilitating a new connection to the mains or verifying a request for reinforcement; or
 - ◆ in relation to the provision of site information, the consumer declines to pay the reasonable costs incurred by the licensee in complying with the request; however, this exception does not apply in the case of domestic consumers seeking the identity of their Suppliers.

4. Issues for Consultation

- 4.1 Ofgem considers that the changes proposed to be made to Transco's Licence will enable consumers – and in the case of the local schematic drawings, self lay installers and connection services – to benefit from the opportunities provided by competition in the supply of gas.

The Director invites views on:

- ◆ whether the terms of the proposed licence modification meet the intentions set out in this document;
- ◆ whether the terms of the proposed licence modification would be acceptable to Transco;
- ◆ whether the modifications proposed in the Notice at Appendix 2 should be made now; and
- ◆ whether the clauses dealing with the availability of system schematics should be added to the wording of Condition 5 in the forthcoming Gas Transporters Licence.

Views are, of course, welcome on any other aspect of the issues discussed within this document. Representations must be received by 1st December at the latest.

Appendix 1

NOTICE

Gas Act 1986

Section 23(3)

Notice of proposal to modify the conditions of the licence granted and treated as granted under section 7 of the Gas Act 1986 to BG Transco plc

The Director General of Gas Supply (*the Director*) pursuant to section 23(3) of the Gas Act 1986 (*the Act*) hereby gives notice as follows –

1. The Director proposes to modify, pursuant to section 23(1)(a) of the Act, the standard conditions of the licence treated as granted to BG Transco plc under section 7 of the Act in the manner specified in the attached Schedule.
2. The effect of the modifications now proposed to be made is to require BG Transco plc to provide certain information reasonably required by customers, in relation to the supply of gas to their premises; and by owners or occupiers of premises seeking to obtain a new connection to the licensee's pipe-line system.
3. The reasons why the Director proposes to make the modifications are set out in the consultation paper that accompanies this notice.
4. Representations or objections with respect to the proposed modification may be made by 1 December 2000 and should be addressed to the Director General of Gas Supply, 9 Millbank, London SW1E 3GE.

The official seal of
the Director General of Gas Supply
here affixed is authenticated by –

.....
authorised in that behalf by the
Director General of Gas Supply

3 November 2000

Appendix 2

SCHEDULE

After standard condition 17 (Provision of information relating to meter points to gas shippers and gas suppliers) of the licence treated as granted to BG Transco plc under section 7 of the Gas Act 1986 there shall be inserted the following new condition:

Condition 17A : Disclosure of information to consumers and other relevant parties

- (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the licensee shall –
- (a) provide to any consumer of gas supplied through pipes, such information which is in the possession of the licensee as may be necessary and which is reasonably requested by, or on behalf of, any such consumer for the purpose of:
 - (i) managing the supply of gas to the premises of that consumer;
 - (ii) assessing the accuracy of any charges in respect of the conveyance of gas to such premises;
 - (iii) enabling that consumer to contract with another supplier for the supply of gas; or
 - (iv) identifying the supplier to the consumer's premises:

provided that the licensee shall refer for determination by the Director any question whether information had been reasonably requested by or on behalf of a consumer.

- (b) provide to owners or occupiers of premises or sites on which premises are to be constructed or to persons acting on their behalf, who may require a connection to the licensee's pipe-line system on request:
 - (i) such information as is in the possession of the licensee regarding predicted gas pressures on the licensee's pipe-line system as is necessary

for the purpose of the design, construction or maintenance of a connecting pipe by or on behalf of the connecting party; and

- (ii) such information as may be required by the requesting party to verify the licensee's requirement to reinforce the licensee's pipe-line system where the requesting party is required to contribute to the cost of that reinforcement.

(2) The licensee shall be entitled to refuse to provide information on the grounds that-

- (a) its disclosure would seriously and prejudicially affect the commercial interests of the licensee, and any question as to whether such interests would be so affected shall be determined by the Director; or
- (b) in relation to sub paragraph 1(b) above, a person to whom information is to be provided has refused to enter into an agreement with the licensee that that person will not use the information in question other than for the purpose of facilitating those activities referred to in sub paragraph 1(b) above, nor further disclose the information; or
- (c) in relation to sub paragraph 1(a) above, save where the request is made by or on behalf of a domestic consumer for the purposes of that consumer, the person requesting the information has declined to pay to the licensee, having been requested in writing to do so, a fee equal to the reasonable cost to the licensee of complying with the request save to the extent that such reasonable cost is recoverable from elsewhere. The licensee shall publish, in such manner as shall be appropriate to bring it to the attention of persons likely to be affected by it, a statement setting out the circumstances in which a fee is payable and the amount of any such fee.

(3) This condition shall not require the licensee to produce any documents or provide any information which it could not be compelled to produce or give in evidence in civil proceedings before the court.

Appendix 3 Regulatory Framework

This chapter explains the regulatory framework within which this consultation is taking place. Set out below are the legislative duties and powers that are particularly relevant to this consultation. These duties and powers are contained within:

- ◆ the Gas Act 1986; and
- ◆ the Public Gas Transporter Licence.

The Gas Act 1986

The duties of the Director General of Gas Supply (the 'Director') are set out in Sections 4 and 4A of the Gas Act 1986. The Director must exercise his functions in a manner which he considers is best calculated:

- ◆ to secure that, so far as it is economical to meet them, all reasonable demands in Great Britain for gas conveyed through pipes are met;
- ◆ to secure that licence holders are able to finance the carrying on of the activities which they are authorised or required by their licences to carry on; and
- ◆ to secure effective competition in the carrying on of activities related to the shipping and supply of gas.

Subject to these primary duties, the Director also has a duty to exercise his functions in the manner he considers is best calculated:

- ◆ to protect the interests of consumers of gas conveyed through pipes in respect of the prices charged and other terms of supply, the continuity of supply and the quality of the gas supply services provided and the exercise of rights to enter their premises;
- ◆ to promote efficiency and economy on the part of licensees, and the efficient use of gas conveyed through pipes; and

- ◆ secure effective competition in the conveyance of gas through pipes to new pipeline systems and areas, in the supplying and laying of services, and in the carrying on of ancillary activities to supply and shipping (e.g. metering).

In so doing, he has a duty to take into account the effect on the environment of activities connected with the conveyance of gas through pipes. In addition, the Director has certain duties related to safety.

On May 12th 2000, the Act was amended under "The Gas Act (General Restrictions on Disclosure of Information (Modification) Order 2000." The Order modified s42 (1A) to the effect that licence holders may make disclosure information obtained under or by virtue of Part I of the Act 1986, not only to other licence holders, but more generally where it is required as a condition of their licence.

On 28th July 2000, the Utilities Act 2000 received Royal Assent. The Act amended the Gas Act 1986 (as amended by the Gas Act 1995) to create the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority (the Authority). The Authority will supersede the role of the Director General of Gas Supply. The Authority's duties include a primary duty to act in the manner best calculated:

'...to protect the interests of consumers, where possible by promoting effective competition between persons engaged in, or in commercial activities connected with the shipping, transportation or supply of gas so conveyed.'

The changes following on from the Utilities Act will be introduced in stages over the coming months; all measures are expected to be in place by May 2001.

Public Gas Transporter's Licence

The Gas Act 1986 (amended 1995) provides for the licensing of Public Gas Transporters (to be known as gas transporters under the Utilities Act 2000), the largest of these being Transco. These licences contain standard conditions that apply to each individual PGT. Under Section 9(1) of the Gas Act, each PGT has a duty as respects each of its authorised areas:

- ◆ to develop and maintain an efficient and economical pipe-line system for the conveyance of gas;

- ◆ subject to paragraph (1) above, to comply, so far as it is economical to do so, with any reasonable request for it to connect to that system; and

- ◆ convey gas by means of that system to any premises.

Standard Condition 17 of the PGT licence deals with the provision of information relating to meter points to gas shippers and gas suppliers. The new special Condition proposed for inclusion into Transco's Licence, as detailed in Appendix 2, will deal with the further provision of information as described in this document. It is this new Licence Condition that Ofgem invites views on.

Appendix 4 Consumption and Geographical Data held by Transco⁸

1) Meter Point Reference/Related MPRNs	16) Meter Serial Number
2) Premise Address	17) Reading Frequency
3) Emergency Contact Information Contact Name/Job Title Electronic Address Type (eg phone, fax) Electronic Address (Number)	18) Meter Location
4) Supply Point AQ (DM)	19) Meter Type
5) Supply Point AQ (NDM)	20) Meter Manufacturer
6) Meter Point AQ	21) Year of Manufacturer
7) Supply Type	22) Meter Model/Status/Date Fitted
8) Gas Nomination Type	23) Bypass Fitted Y/N
9) Supplier Name	24) Reading Units/Imperial/Metric Ind.
10) Supply Point Reference Number	25) Corrector Model/Status/Date Fitted
11) Confirmation Effective Date	26) Corrector Serial/Manuf/Yr of Manuf
12) SOQ	27) Datalogger Model/Status/Date Fitted
13) SHQ	28) Datalogger Serial/Number/Manuf
14) EUC	29) Correction Factor
15) Exit Zone	30) Current Read

⁸ Information fields detailing consumption and geographical data to be displayed on the website. Information provided by Transco.