

**ELECTRICITY RETAIL LICENCE PERFORMANCE REPORT  
2010/2011**



## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Synergy is required under the *Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers*<sup>1</sup> (**Customer Service Code**) to publish annual information on:

- Affordability and access.
- Customer complaints.
- Compensation payments.
- Call centre performance.
- Customer accounts.
- Pre-payment meters.

This report details Synergy's performance with respect to the above matters for the period 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011 (**2010/11**).

Synergy is Western Australia's largest energy retailer, procuring and selling electricity and gas to customers throughout the South West Interconnected System (**SWIS**), stretching from Kalbarri in the north, to Kalgoorlie in the east and Albany in the south.

The primary activities of Synergy include energy procurement relating to an energy portfolio in excess of \$20 billion, marketing, electricity and gas sales, customer service in terms of billing, payment processing and information provision. Synergy sells approximately 71% of the electricity consumed in the SWIS (household and business customers) and around 49% of the gas load supplying businesses.

As at the year ending 30 June 2010, Synergy had approximately 1 million customers, received over 1.4 million telephone calls, processed about 6 million electricity bills, received \$2.67 billion in energy sales revenue and paid \$2.56 billion to suppliers predominately for the generation and transport of electricity and purchase and transport of gas.

During the year, Synergy also undertook a significant amount of business activity on behalf of the state government including:

- Implementation of retail tariff increases in July 2010 affecting more than 970,000 customers.
- Delivering increases to state government concessions and rebates to more than 240,000 customers.
- Administering the state government's residential net feed in tariff applicable to approximately 58,000 residential customers.

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<sup>1</sup> A small use customer is a customer who consumes not more than 160 MWh per annum.

## 1. AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESS

**Table 1 - Affordability and access: residential customers**

Code reference	Affordability	Number of customers	Percentage
13.2(1)(a)	Total number of residential customers	890,918	100%
13.2(1)(a)(i)	Total number of, and percentage of its residential customers who are subject to an instalment plan	30,893	3.47%
13.2(1)(a)(ii)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have been granted additional time to pay their bill under Part 6 (of the Code of Conduct )	96,148	10.79%
13.2(1)(a)(iii)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have been placed on a shortened billing cycle	0	0.0%
13.2(1)(a)(iv)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have been disconnected in accordance with clauses 7.1 to 7.3 (of the Code of Conduct) for failure to pay a bill	7,631	0.86%
13.2(1)(a)(v)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have been disconnected who were previously the subject of an instalment plan	1,993	0.22%
13.2(1)(a)(vi)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have been disconnected at the same supply address within the past 24 months	858	0.10%
13.2(1)(a)(vii)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have been disconnected while receiving a concession	2,189	0.25%
13.2(1)(a)(viii)	Total number the retailer requested to be reconnected, other than pursuant to clause 8.1(1)(b) or clause 8.1(1)(c) who were not reconnected within time	44	0.005%
13.2(1)(a)(ix)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have been reconnected at the same supply address in the same name within 7 days of having been disconnected	4,366	0.49%
13.2(1)(a)(x)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have been reconnected in the same name who were previously the subject of an instalment plan	1,805	0.20%
13.2(1)(a)(xi)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have been reconnected in the same name and at the same supply address within the past 24 months	544	0.06%
13.2(1)(a)(xii)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have been reconnected and who, immediately prior to disconnection, was receiving a concession	1,512	0.17%
13.2(1)(a)(xiii)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have lodged security deposits	0	0.0%
13.2(1)(a)(xiv)	Total number of, and percentage of residential customers who have had direct debit plans terminated	3,925	0.44%

**Table 2 - Affordability and access: non-residential customers (< 160 MWh)**

<b>Code Reference</b>	<b>Affordability</b>	<b>Number of Customers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
13.2(1)(b)	Total number of non-residential small use customers	91,763	100%
13.2(1)(b)(i)	Total number of, and percentage of non-residential customers who are subject to an instalment plan	920	1.00%
13.2(1)(b)(ii)	Total number of, and percentage of non-residential customers who have been granted additional time to pay their bill under Part 6 {of the Code of Conduct}	6,867	7.48%
13.2(1)(b)(iii)	Total number of, and percentage of non-residential customers who have been placed on a shortened billing cycle	0	0.00%
13.2(1)(b)(iv)	Total number of, and percentage of non-residential customers who have been disconnected in accordance with clauses 7.1 to 7.3 {of the Code of Conduct} for failure to pay a bill	499	0.54%
13.2(1)(a)(v)	Total number the retailer requested to be reconnected, other than pursuant to clause 8.1(1)(b) or clause 8.1(1)(c) who were not reconnected within time	5	0.005%
13.2(1)(b)(vi)	Total number of, and percentage of non-residential customers who have been reconnected at the same supply address in the same name within 7 days of having been disconnected	218	0.24%
13.2(1)(b)(vii)	Total number of, and percentage of non-residential customers who have lodged security deposits	0	0.00%
13.2(1)(b)(viii)	Total number of, and percentage of non-residential customers who have had direct debit plans terminated	100	0.11%

## 2. CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

**Table 3 - Complaints: residential customers**

Code Reference	Complaints	Number of Complaints	Percentage
13.3(1)(a)	Total number of complaints received from residential customers	13,403	100%
13.3(1)(b)(i)	The percentage of total complaints from residential customers that relate to billing/credit complaints	12,639	94.30%
13.3(1)(b)(ii)	The percentage of total complaints from residential customers that relate to transfer complaints	0	0.00%
13.3(1)(b)(iii)	The percentage of total complaints from residential customers that relate to marketing complaints (including complaints made directly to a marketer)	172	1.28%
13.3(1)(b)(iv)	The percentage of total complaints from residential customers that relate to other complaints	592	4.42%
13.3(1)(c)	The action taken by a retailer to address a complaint	Refer text	
13.3(1)(e)	The percentage of complaints from residential customers concluded within: 15 business days 20 business days		42.32% 48.94%

To provide a satisfactory conclusion to customer disputes, Synergy’s internal dispute resolution process typically involves the following steps:

1. Complaint received via pro-forma, letter, email or phone.
2. Synergy acknowledges complaint and if required, seeks further clarification / information from the customer.
3. Synergy commences complaint investigation and initiates action which may involve third party involvement such as Western Power for meter testing.
4. Synergy liaises with the customer providing results of investigation and confirming resolution.
5. Conclude complaint.

**Table 4 – Complaints: non residential customers**

Code Reference	Complaints	Number of Complaints	Percentage
13.3(1)(a)	Total number of complaints received from non-residential customers	1,865	100%
13.3(1)(b)(i)	The percentage of total complaints from non-residential customers that relate to billing/credit complaints	1,776	95.23%
13.3(1)(b)(ii)	The percentage of total complaints from non-residential customers that relate to transfer	1	0.05%

Code Reference	Complaints	Number of Complaints	Percentage
	complaints		
13.3(1)(b)(iii)	The percentage of total complaints from non-residential customers that relate to marketing complaints	24	1.29%
13.3(1)(b)(iv)	The percentage of total complaints from non-residential customers that relate to other complaints	64	3.43%
13.3(1)(c)	The action taken by a retailer to address a complaint	Refer text	NA
13.3(1)(f)	The percentage of complaints from non-residential customers concluded within: 15 business days 20 business days		32.33% 38.07%

**Table 5 – Complaints: small use customers**

Code Reference	Complaints	Average days
13.3(1)(d)	The time taken for the appropriate procedures for dealing with the complaint to be concluded	31.79

**3. COMPENSATION PAYMENTS**

**Table 6 – Compensation payments**

Code Reference	Compensation Payments	Number
13.4(a)	Total number of payments made under clause 14.1 {of the Code of Conduct} Reconnections	44
13.4(b)	Total number of payments made under clause 14.2 { of the Code of Conduct} Wrongful Disconnections	4
13.4(c)	Total number of payments made under clause 14.3 { of the Code of Conduct} Customer Service	24

**4. CALL CENTRE PERFORMANCE**

**Table 7 – Call Centre Performance**

Code Reference	Call Centre Performance	Number of calls / duration	Percentage
13.5(a)	Total number of telephone calls to an operator	1,443,364	
13.5(b)	Number of and percentage of telephone calls to an operator responded to within 30 seconds	1,010,120	70%
13.5(c)	Average duration (in seconds) before call answered by operator	54	
13.5(d)	Percentage of calls that were unanswered	58,125	4%

**5. CUSTOMER ACCOUNTS**

**Table 8 – Customer accounts**

Code Reference	Customer Accounts	Number of accounts
13.6(1)(a)	Total number of residential accounts held by contestable customers	1,095
13.6(1)(b)	Total number of residential accounts held by non-contestable customers	889,823
Total residential accounts		890,918
13.6(1)(c)	Total number of business accounts held by contestable customers	8,781
13.6(1)(d)	Total number of business accounts held by non-contestable customers	82,982
Total business customer accounts		91,763

## 6. PRE-PAYMENT METERS

**Table 9 – Pre-payment meters**

Code Reference	Pre-payment meters	Numbers
13.7(a)	Total number of pre-payment customers	20
13.7(b)	Total number of complaints, other than those complaints specified in clause 13.13(a), relating to a pre-payment meter customer	0
13.7(c)	The action taken by a retailer to address a complaint	N/A
13.7(d)	The time taken for the appropriate procedures for dealing with the complaint to be concluded	N/A
13.7(d)	The time taken for the appropriate procedures for dealing with the complaint to be concluded	N/A
13.7(e)	The percentage of complaints from pre-payment meter customers other than those complaints specified in clause 13.13(a) concluded within 15 business days and 20 business days	N/A
13.7(f)	The total number of customers reverting to a standard meter within 3 months of the later of the installation of the pre-payment meter or the date that the customer agrees to enter into a pre-payment meter contract	0
13.7(g)	The total number of customers reverting to a standard meter in the three month period immediately following the expiry of the period referred to in paragraph (f)	0
13.7(h)	The total number of customers who have reverted to a standard meter	0
13.7(i)	the number of instances where a pre-payment meter customer has— (i) been disconnected; or not received electricity other than being disconnected; (ii) not received electricity other than being disconnected	N/A
13.7(j)	The duration of each of those events referred to in paragraph (i)	N/A
13.7(k)	The number of pre-payment meter customers who have informed the retailer in writing, by telephone or by electronic means that the pre-payment meter customer is experiencing payment difficulties or financial hardship	0
13.7(l)	The number of pre-payment meter customers who the retailer identifies have been disconnected three or more times in any three-month period for longer than 240 minutes on each occasion.	N/A