

**Record Notes of 1st Meeting of "Monitoring Committee for reviewing the performance of the Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL) held on 27.06.2012 at 11.30 AM. in the Conference Hall of AERC.**

Members present as per Annexure A.

In pursuance of the discussions and decisions taken at the 15th State Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting held on 17th February, 2012, the Commission constituted a Monitoring Committee for improvement of the quality of power supply and the Standards of Performance of Assam Power Distribution Company limited (APDCL) and the 1st meeting was convened on 27.06.2012 at the Conference hall of the Commission.

At the outset, the Chairperson of the Commission welcomed the members of the Committee and outlined the importance of improvement of quality of power supply and standards of performance to be achieved by APDCL for benefit of the consumers of the State. While reading out the Terms of Reference of the Monitoring Committee, the Chairperson emphasized that it shall be the duty of a distribution licensee to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical distribution system in his area of supply and to ensure that quality of power supply meet the specified minimum guaranteed standards. The Chairperson also stated that the licensee must display in the consumer care/ bill payment centers the list of compensation payable in case of non compliance of performance standards as stipulated in the AERC Regulations.

Few members of the Committee stated that consumers also need to play a more pro-active role by registering complaints against low standards of performance and poor quality of supply and for this they need to be aware of their rights and obligations. The Chairperson informed that the Commission in its tariff order for FY 2010-13 directed APDCL to establish and earmark funds for consumer education and awareness. The Chairperson emphasized that the funds spent in this regard can be passed on to the consumer in subsequent tariff orders.

A member suggested that the Standards of Performance and compensation payable for none compliance can be published in Assamese/ local languages and stapled

with the bills for consumer awareness. All members stated that the quality of supply in the state and even in Guwahati was far from satisfactory. The members lay emphasis on the need to monitor the status of projects under APDRP and r-APDRP schemes so that the projects are completed on time. The Chairperson assured that the latest status would be sought and the information shared with the members in the next meeting.

Regarding the status of the Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY), it was informed that the Distribution Company was experiencing loss in revenue collection due to this scheme. It was informed that consumers availing RGGVY connections were not required to deposit security money and in most cases it was found that the consumers applying against BPL category often consumed electricity in the same pattern as other domestic categories. The members wanted to know the status of RGGVY schemes being implemented and loss estimate of the distribution licensee on security deposit from consumers getting connected through RGGVY. The Chairperson stated that the licensee would be required to submit the above facts to the commission so that the same can be circulated among the members prior to the next meeting of the Monitoring Committee.

The Chairperson stated that this meeting was called mainly to decide on the initial modalities and then to plan out a course of action for monitoring the power supply quality & service standard performance of the distribution licensee by way of demonstration in select areas of APDCL on a pilot basis. The members agreed to select few areas within Guwahati city for initial monitoring of the power supply quality and performance standards. Accordingly, the Chairperson requested the Members to finalise first at least one area in Guwahati and decide the field inspection date convenient to all the Members for initial study.

In the meanwhile, it was also brought to the notice of the Members regarding the letter from the Secretary, Assam Branch Indian Tea Association informing his inability to attend the meeting due to pre-occupation. However, two issues were

forwarded to the Commission for consideration in the meeting namely, a) quality of supply and b) grid interruptions. It was emphasized in the letter that the quality of supply needs to be monitored to ensure that the consumers were getting supplies at contracted values. It was brought to the notice of the Commission that despite directions from the Electricity Ombudsman, MRI downloads were yet to be made available to the consumers. Regarding grid interruptions, it was informed that unscheduled power cuts and frequent interruptions causes huge damage to machinery and the quality of tea and therefore, it was suggested that such interruptions be avoided to the extent possible through effective monitoring. In order to substantiate the dismal power situation in the state, grid interruption reports were enclosed with the letter. The matter was discussed at length in the meeting and all members expressed concern that MRI downloads were still not practiced in most tea estates despite repeated directions in the Tariff Orders of the Commission. A copy of this letter along with the enclosures was handed over to the CGM (Commercial), APDCL for scrutiny and remedial action.

The Members raised their concern regarding non-response of field level functionaries of the distribution licensee to the complaints of consumers. There was a general complaint by members regarding non response by APDCL employees engaged to receive complaints on electricity related matters over telephone at the central complaint number in Guwahati. It was alleged that the phones were often not working. Attention was also drawn to the fact that there was much left to be done regarding the safety aspects of the consumers. It was alleged that transformers are often left open without any enclosures, which is dangerous and also results in loss of energy. A member suggested that Safety Rules needs to be strictly adhered to and bare conductors may be replaced with Aerial Bunched Conductors which are insulated and prevents hooking by consumers. Besides, it was suggested that check meters should be installed outside the premises of all industrial establishments to restrict commercial losses. Chairperson AERC suggested that the High Value consumers be indexed and supply status of these consumers be monitored every six months and in

case of extreme variations, the reasons for variation can be verified and action taken accordingly.

The Chairperson AERC also emphasized that the directives issued in the recent Tariff Order be executed by the Company for improvement in their services. A member suggested that APDCL may try to install prepaid meters at least on pilot basis in Government departments and to make it compulsory in Shopping Malls and big commercial establishments.

The members expressed satisfaction that the distribution licensee has started e-payment of bills for the consumers. The Commission stated that APDCL need to prepare a Load Shedding Protocol document in line with Maharashtra, Delhi etc and this will be approved by the Commission. The Chairperson then drew the attention of the members to the recent public notice of the Commission on issues of Open Access. He stated that a decision on the above matters would be taken only after the views and comments of the stakeholders are taken into account.

The members stressed upon the fact that distribution losses needed to be reduced further. It was further stressed that the licensee needs to monitor their reliability indices and submit standards of performance reports as is required by the Regulations. The members suggested that CGM (Distribution) of APDCL for upper, lower and central zones may also be invited to the next Committee Meeting. The Commission agreed to this suggestion.

After the aforesaid deliberation, the Meeting ended with a vote of thanks by the Chairperson of the Commission.

**List of Members who attended the First Meeting of Monitoring Committee  
for Review of Performance of APDCL  
Dated 27.06.2012 at 11.30 A.M., in the Conference hall of AERC.**

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- (1) **Shri J. Barkakati**, Chairperson, AERC
- (2) **Dr. R. K. Gogoi**, Member, AERC
- (3) **Ms U. Saikia**, ACS, Deputy Secretary, Power Deptt., Govt. of Assam
- (4) **Shri P.K. Dutta**, CGM (Com), APDCL
- (5) **Shri N.I. Hussain**, Chief Vigilance Officer, APDCL
- (6) **Shri A. Bhuyan**, AGM (T&C Division), APDCL
- (7) **Shri R. Choudhury**, AGM, Com (Rev), APDCL
- (8) **Shri B. Medhi**, Manager, Com (Rev), APDCL
- (9) **Shri G.C. Baishya**, Prsident, Grahak Suraksha Sanstha and Member, SAC
- (10) **Shri A.K. Baruah**, Prsident, AASSIA and Member, SAC
- (11) **Shri S. Baruah**, Prsident, NESSIA and Member, SAC
- (12) **Shri K.C. Medhi**, Secretary, NESSIA and Member, SAC

**Officers of AERC present :**

- (1) **Shri D. K. Sharma**, Joint Director (Tariff), AERC
- (2) **Shri T. Mahanta**, Deputy Director (Engg.), AERC

**Consultants of AERC present :**

- (1) **Shri A. K. Barthakur**, Senior Consultant, AERC
- (2) **Ms P. Sharma**, Consultant (Finance, Database and Consumer Advocacy), AERC
- (3) **Shri N.K. Deka**, Consultant (Technical), AERC.