



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Water Advisory Body and the Commission for Regulation of
Utilities**

Wednesday 13 October 2021, 2pm

Venue: Remote Meeting via WebEx Video Conferencing

Attended by:

Chairperson Paul McGowan

Members Miriam McDonald Michelle Minihan
Martin Sisk Dónal Purcell

Secretariat Claire Gavin Colin Flood
Darren Browne

By Invite: Alison Brody (CRU) Karen Kavanagh (CRU)

1. Introduction

The representatives of the Commission for Regulation of Utilities were welcomed to the meeting by the WAB Chairperson before introductions were exchanged.

2. Commission for Regulation of Utilities Presentation

The Commission for Regulation of Utilities presented to the WAB members on the Irish Water Performance Assessment Framework 2020-2024 which included the following topics:

- Background;
- Objectives of the Review;
- Basis for Reviewing Metrics;
- Basis for Setting Targets;
- Decision on Categories and Metrics;
- Decision on Metrics and Targets; and
- Decision Paper.

They reconfirmed that the Framework is an important piece of work which provides a broad spectrum of metrics to assess Irish Water's performance with the now added feature of including set targets.

3. Questions/Discussion on the Presentation to the WAB

The following questions were asked by the WAB members:

- i. In relation to the 'Speed of telephone response' metric, what is meant by 'within 20 seconds in the queue'?**

When a customer calls Irish Water they join an Interactive Voice Recognition system. Once they choose the relevant option they are placed in a queue to speak to an agent. To receive a positive score on this metric, an agent must answer the call within 20 seconds in the queue having been directed through the Interactive Voice Recognition system.

- ii. In relation to the 'Call abandonment rate' metric, is this reflective of when a customer hangs up the call after reaching the Interactive Voice Recognition system and why did you choose the target of 4%?**

This metric reflects those customers who have followed the Interactive Voice Recognition system and are placed in the queue to speak to an agent but hang up before speaking to the agent. The reason for hanging up would be unknown.

The target of 4% set as it is a similar target to other longstanding utility providers such as the Electricity Supply Board Networks (ESB Networks).

- iii. In relation to the first call resolution metric, are 'calls' identified as enquiries made by customers about an incident or complaints expressly made by customers about an incident to Irish Water?**

This metric would only cover enquiries to Irish Water made by customers about an incident. Complaints made by customers about an incident would be recorded under the 'Response to complaints' metrics.

- iv. How is this differentiation between enquiries and complaints made by customers of incidents being audited for accuracy?**

Work is ongoing to have clarity around how Irish Water classify calls in line with the provisions in the Customer Handbook.

- v. In discontinuing the metric 'Speed of telephone response (2)' metric, how was this received by Irish Water?**

The metric was removed as it did not accurately reflect Irish Water's performance.

- vi. In relation to the 'Customer Satisfaction Survey' metric, is there any consideration by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities to separate the feedback from domestic and business customers given currently all calls go through the Irish Water contact centre together?**

As it stands, there is no consideration to separate the feedback between domestic and business customers. It has been acknowledged that the 'Customer Satisfaction Survey' does provide greater feedback of the experiences of domestic customers. However, it is planned to establish a stakeholder panel which will reflect the views of other

customers, such as business customers. Further consideration is planned to determine who will be represented on this panel with work beginning in 2022.

vii. How did Irish Water respond to the targets set?

Prior to finalisation there was further consultation and engagement with Irish Water. The basis for the 100% target with regards to 'Response to complaints' was based on the customer handbooks. Some targets were agreed based on research and discussions with Irish Water, others reflect norms for similar utility operators in Ireland. Many of the targets for the metrics were based on the outcomes and outputs that Irish Water has already committed to as part of the Revenue Control 3 decision.

viii. With regards the 'Leakage' metrics, are you expecting 2019 performance data by the end of 2021?

The Commission for Regulation of Utilities expects to receive 2019 performance data by the end of 2021.

ix. The Water Forum has a role in facilitating stakeholder engagement on all water issues and provide advice and observations to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities on Irish Water performance. How will the customer service stakeholder panel work with The Water Forum?

The Commission for Regulation of Utilities confirmed they plan to work with The Water Forum once they have progressed planning on the panel. The aim of the panel is not to duplicate the work of The Water Forum but instead to add value.

The WAB Board thanked the Commission for Regulation of Utilities for its presentation and the answers provided to the Board. The Performance Assessment Framework metrics and

targets will be considered by the Board to determine which of them may feature in future publications by the WAB.

The meeting was brought to a close.