



ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION – SERVICE QUALITY PERFORMANCE FOR THE DECEMBER QUARTER 2006

Introduction

The Authority's *Electricity Distribution: Service Quality Reporting Guidelines* require Distribution Network Service Providers (DNSPs) to provide data on service quality measures quarterly and annually. The Guidelines can be obtained from the Authority's website at www.qca.org.au.

The Authority commenced publishing the DNSPs' reports on its website with the September quarter 2002 reports. In August 2005, the Authority revised its Guidelines to strengthen the reporting and to facilitate nationally consistent reporting. The DNSPs commenced reporting against the revised Guidelines with the September quarter 2005 reports.

For the quarterly reports, the Authority provides a brief overview of the measures reported by the DNSPs. For the annual reports, the Authority provides a more detailed review of the DNSPs' performance. Reports of the distributors' annual financial and service quality performance are available on the Authority's website.

The Nature of the Data

The service quality measures that the DNSPs are required to report against fall into three groups.

Reliability measures provide information about interruptions to electricity supply. Interruptions can occur because of problems with generation, transmission or distribution. Distribution interruptions may be planned or unplanned, and unplanned interruptions will at times be due to events that are beyond the control of the DNSPs, such as severe storms.

Quality of supply measures are intended to indicate problems with the nature of electricity supply, such as low or high voltage levels, based on customers reporting symptoms that are typically associated with such problems.

Customer service measures provide information about how customers' problems, enquiries and requests for services are handled by the DNSPs.

A Cautionary Note

The service quality measures collected by the Authority are not intended to allow comparison of the DNSPs with each other. This is because Energex and Ergon Energy operate in very different environments. Energex operates a distribution network that is located in the urban area of South East Queensland whereas Ergon Energy operates a distribution network spread across the remainder of the state. As a result, it is to be expected that the distributors' performance will vary significantly on a number of service quality measures.

In addition, a number of measures reported by the distributors are subject to detailed qualifications. In some cases, this relates to the consistency of measures over time. Readers should consult the distributors' reports to ensure correct interpretation of the data.

ENERGEX

1. Reliability measures

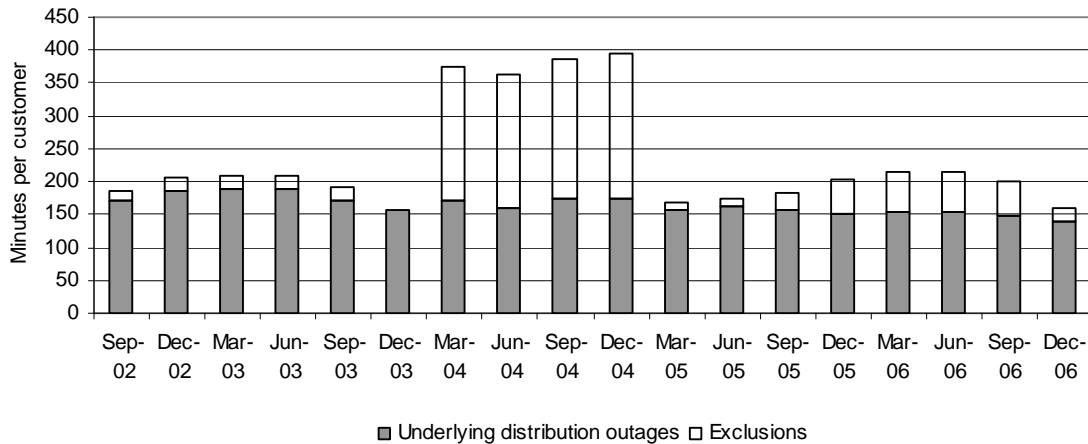
➤ *Underlying reliability at another record best.*

The average duration of distribution-related outages increased from around 22 minutes during the September quarter to around 40 minutes during the December quarter. However, this was 22 per cent lower than that experienced during the December quarter 2005.

For the 12 months to end December 2006, Energex customers experienced, on average, 1.75 distribution-related interruptions leaving them without power for a total of 160.3 minutes. As shown in Figure 1, this result was a significant improvement on the 12 months to end September 2006.

Removing the effect of unusual events, underlying distribution-related reliability also improved, with the average duration of outages over the preceding 12 months (shaded), already at a record low last quarter, falling to a new low of 138.4 minutes.

Figure 1 Average duration of outages per customer for the 12 months to end of quarter



The number of Energex’s customer reliability complaints increased from 68 in the September quarter 2006 to 104 during the December quarter. However, this result was well below the average for the previous four December quarters of 154 complaints.

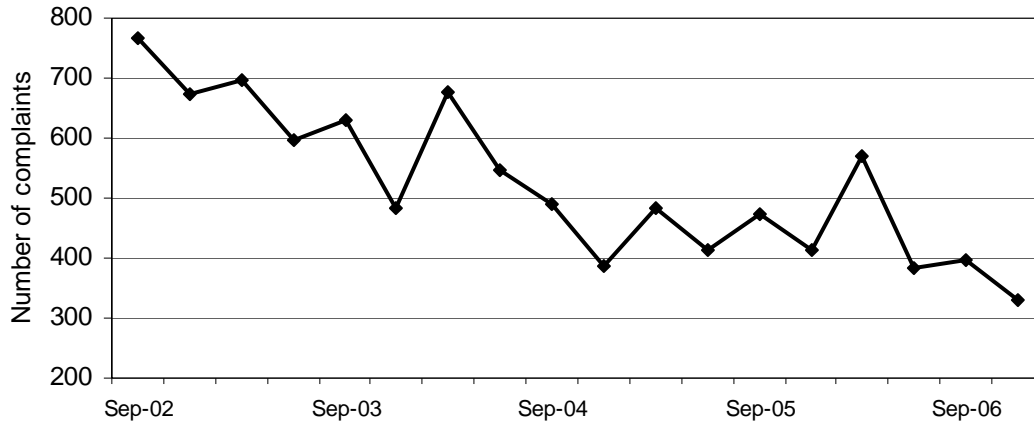
The average time taken to resolve reliability of supply complaints remained at 2 days, the equal shortest since reporting commenced and well below the average of 10 days.

2. Quality of supply measures

- *Technical quality of supply complaints fall to historic low.*

During the December quarter 2006, total quality of supply complaints decreased significantly to 329, the lowest level on record as shown in Figure 2. A decrease in minor voltage dips (which can cause flickering lights and require the resetting of digital clocks) accounted for the majority of the improved result.

Figure 2 Total number of quality of supply complaints



The average time taken to fix technical supply faults during the December quarter was 31.6 days, which is at the low end of the range for this measure over the past 2.5 years (31 to 45 days).

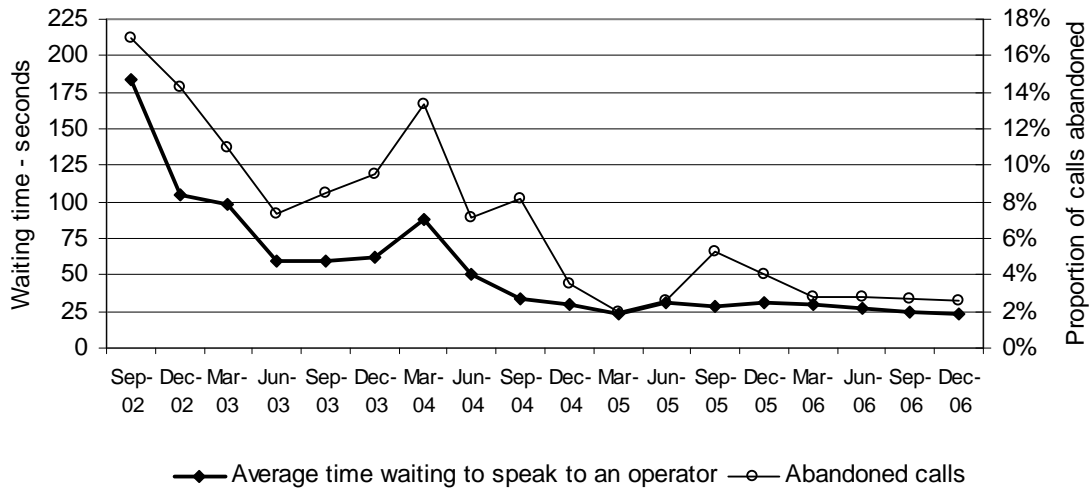
3. Customer service measures

- *Call centre performance near record best, while notification of planned interruptions improves.*

On average, Energex customers had to wait 23 seconds to speak to an operator when calling the call centre during the December quarter, which is the equal lowest time on record as shown in Figure 3.

The percentage of calls abandoned fell slightly to 2.5 per cent, the second lowest level on record.

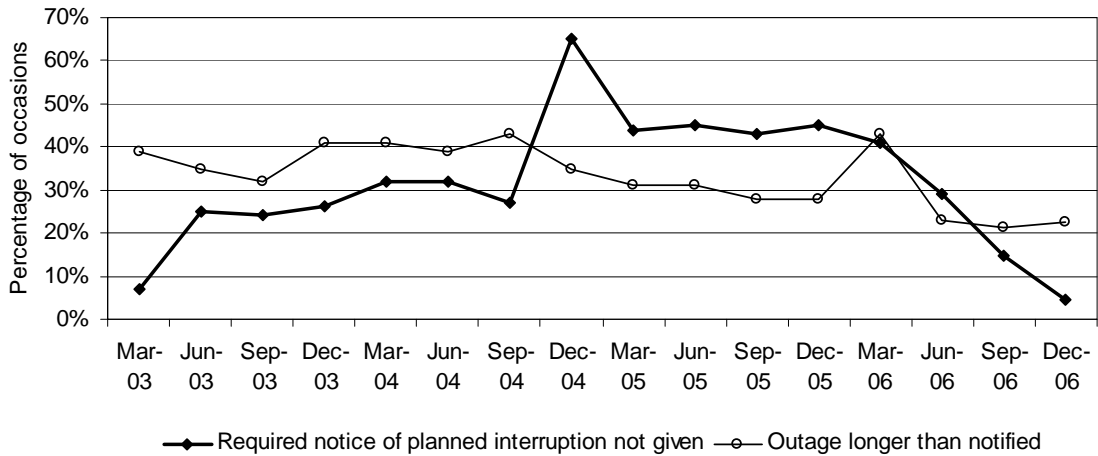
Figure 3 Waiting time to speak to an operator and abandoned calls



The time taken for new connections and re-connections remained close to long term levels of around 4 days and 4.1 hours respectively. The average time taken to repair faulty street lights remained at 5 days.

As shown in Figure 4, occasions on which Energex did not provide the required notice of a planned interruption continued to decrease, to a record low of 4.7 per cent. Occasions on which the duration of a planned interruption exceeded the time specified in the notification remained close to the record low level recorded during the previous quarter.

Figure 4 Insufficient notification of planned interruptions



The reported number of customer service complaints increased from 1,754 in the September quarter to 1,858 in the December quarter. This increase was due mainly to more complaints about trees touching or growing near powerlines and the timeliness of service delivery. The average time taken to resolve customer service complaints remained at the record low level of 2 days.

ERGON ENERGY

1. Reliability measures

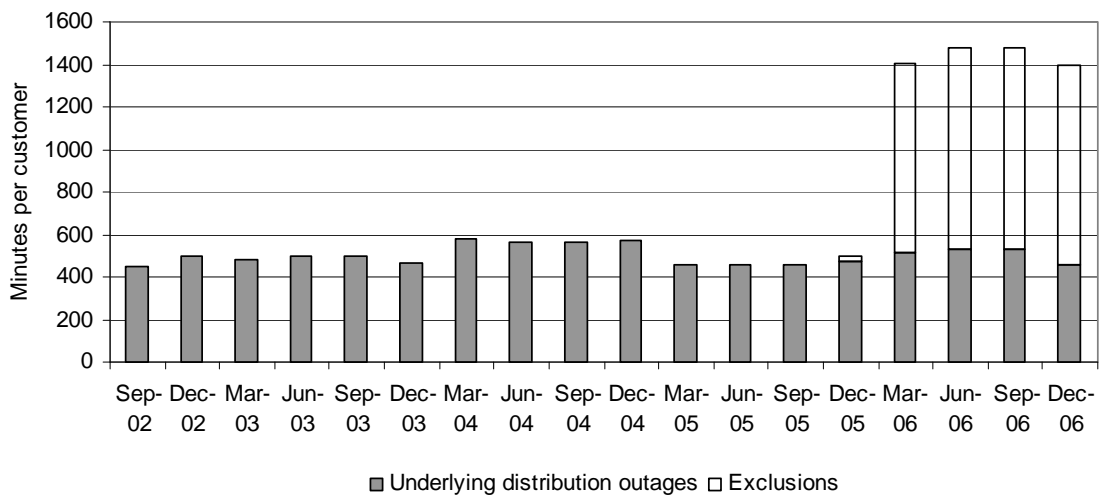
➤ *Underlying reliability near record best.*

The average duration of distribution-related outages was around 115 minutes during the December quarter 2006, up from around 85 minutes during the September quarter but around 78 minutes lower than the result for the previous December quarter.

During the 12 months to end December 2006, Ergon Energy customers experienced, on average, 4.21 distribution-related interruptions leaving them without power for a total of 1,398.7 minutes. However, as shown in Figure 5, the impact of Cyclone Larry in March continues to influence the 12-month reliability data.

Removing the effect of exclusion events, including Cyclone Larry, underlying distribution-related outages (shaded) fell during the December quarter to the second lowest level on record.

Figure 5 Average duration of outages per customer for the 12 months to end of quarter



The number of reliability complaints received from Ergon Energy customers increased to 228, up 17 per cent on the September quarter result but around 28 per cent lower than the average for this time of year.

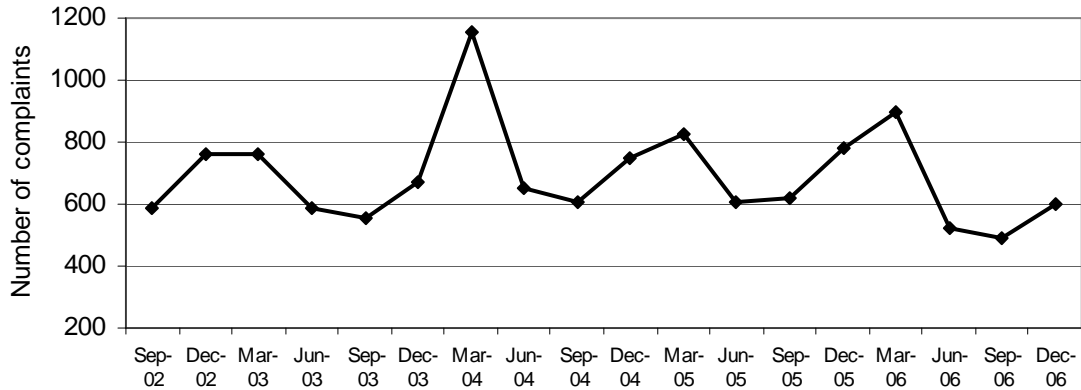
Despite the increase in the number of reliability of supply complaints, the average time taken to resolve complaints decreased to a record low of 1.9 days during the December quarter, down significantly from 4.7 days during the September quarter.

2. Quality of supply measures

- *Technical quality of supply complaints up, but low for this time of year.*

The total number of technical quality of supply complaints increased during the December quarter, as shown in Figure 6. However, this result was the best for December quarters to date. An increase in complaints about low supply voltage (which can cause light dimming and motor starting problems) accounted for the majority of the extra complaints.

Figure 6 Total number of quality of supply complaints



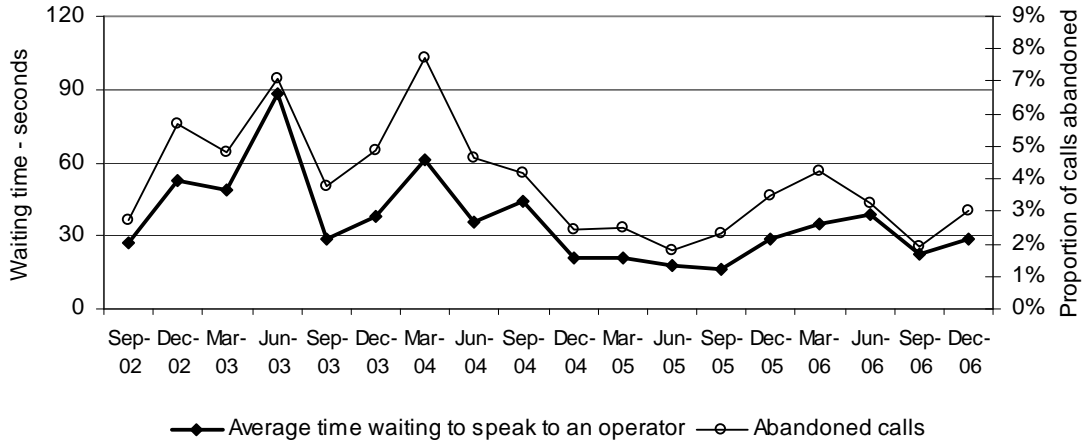
The average time taken to fix technical supply faults increased slightly during the December quarter to 74 days, which is consistent with Ergon Energy's performance on this measure over recent years.

3. Customer service measures

- *Call centre performance dips with higher number of calls.*

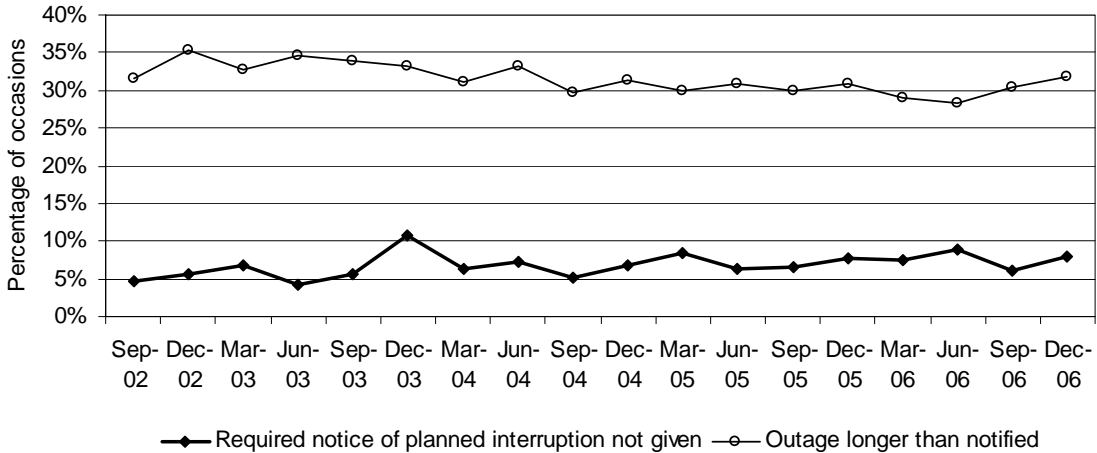
The length of time customers had to wait to speak to an operator increased from 22 seconds in the September quarter to 28.5 seconds during the December quarter (Figure 7). The percentage of calls abandoned also increased, from 1.9 per cent to 3.0 per cent during the December quarter. These results are likely due in part to the 24 per cent increase in the number of calls to the call centre during the quarter.

Figure 7 Waiting time to speak to an operator and abandoned calls



As shown in Figure 8, occasions on which Ergon Energy did not provide the required notice of a planned interruption increased from 6 per cent in the September quarter to 8 per cent in the December quarter. Occasions on which the duration of a planned interruption exceeded the time specified in the notification also increased, to 32 per cent.

Figure 8 Insufficient notification of planned interruptions



The number of customer service complaints remained almost unchanged at 697 in the December quarter. The average time taken to resolve these complaints increased slightly from 4.8 days in the September quarter to 5.0 days in the December quarter.