



ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION – SERVICE QUALITY PERFORMANCE FOR THE MARCH QUARTER 2007

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

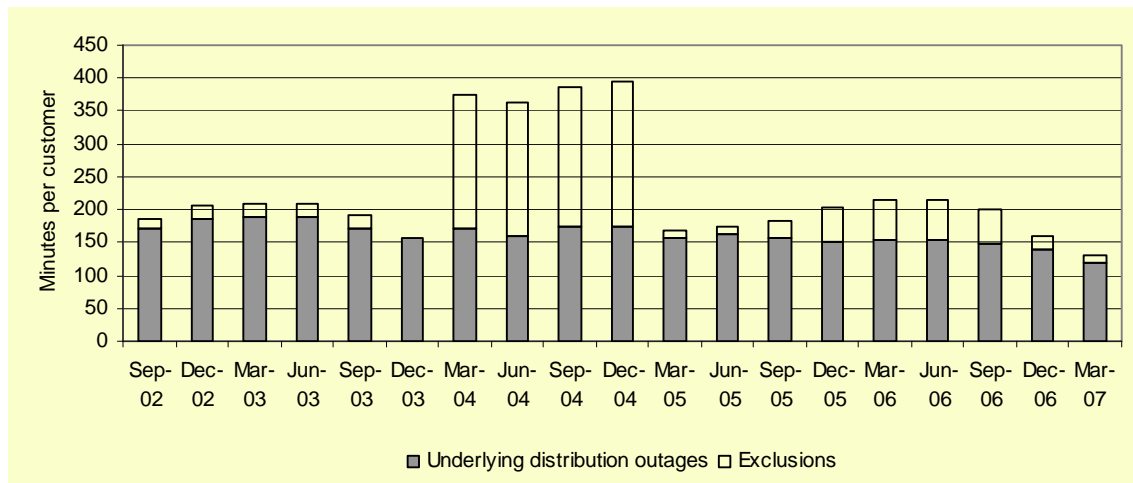
➤ *Underlying reliability at another record best.*

The average duration of distribution-related outages improved from around 40 minutes during the December quarter to around 31 minutes during the March quarter. This was 35 per cent lower than that experienced during the March quarter 2006.

For the 12 months to end March 2007, Energex customers experienced, on average, 1.48 distribution-related interruptions leaving them without power for a total of 132 minutes. As shown in Figure 1, this result was a significant improvement on the 12 months to end December 2006.

Removing the effect of unusual events, underlying distribution-related reliability also improved, with the average duration of outages (shaded) over the preceding 12 months, already at a record low last quarter, falling to a new low of 119.9 minutes.

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



Customer reliability complaints increased from 104 in the December quarter 2006 to 113 during the March quarter 2007. However, this result was well below the average for the previous four March quarters of 276 complaints.

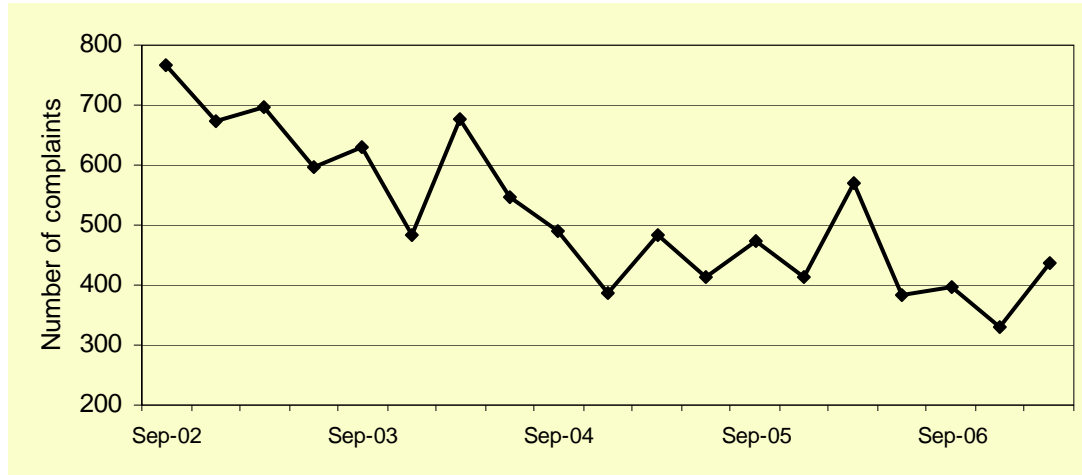
The average time taken to resolve reliability of supply complaints remained at 2 days, the equal shortest since reporting commenced in September 2002 and well below the average of 9.2 days since that time.

2. Quality of Supply Measures

- *Technical quality of supply complaints rise from record low.*

Total quality of supply complaints increased from a record low last quarter of 329 to 437 during the March quarter 2007 as shown in Figure 2. An increase in low supply voltage and minor voltage dips (which can cause flickering lights and require the resetting of digital clocks) accounted for the majority of the increase.

Figure 2 Total number of quality of supply complaints



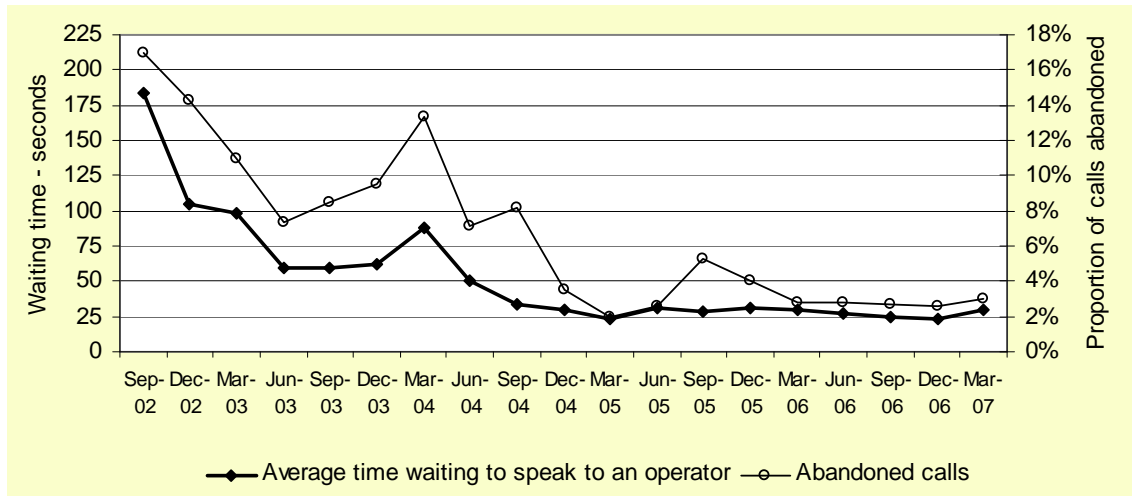
The average time taken to fix technical supply faults during the March quarter 2007 was 32.1 days, which is at the low end of the range for this measure over the past 2 years (31 to 42 days).

3. Customer Service Measures

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

On average, Energex customers had to wait 30 seconds to speak to an operator when calling the call centre during the March quarter 2007, which remains near the record best time as shown in Figure 3. The percentage of calls abandoned rose only slightly to 3.0 per cent, from 2.5 per cent last quarter.

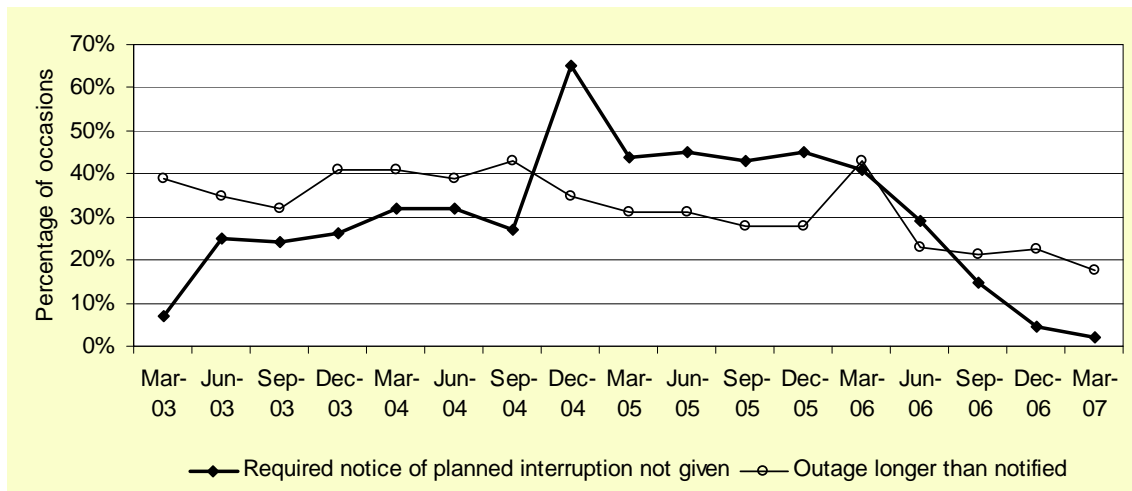
Figure 3 Waiting time to speak to an operator and abandoned calls



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 fell from 5 days in the December quarter 2006 to 4 days in the March quarter 2007.

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 1.9 per cent. Occasions on which the duration of a planned interruption exceeded the time specified in the notification was at a new record low of 18 per cent.

Figure 4 Insufficient notification of planned interruptions



Customer service complaints increased significantly from 1,858 in the December quarter 2006 to 2,569 in the March quarter 2007. This increase was due largely to a significant increase in complaints about unread meters, which Energex advised was the result of access difficulties (such as dogs on premises, locked meter boxes or locked gates) for meter readers. The average time taken to resolve customer service complaints was 3 days, which remained near the record low level of 2 days.

ERGON ENERGY

1. Reliability Measures

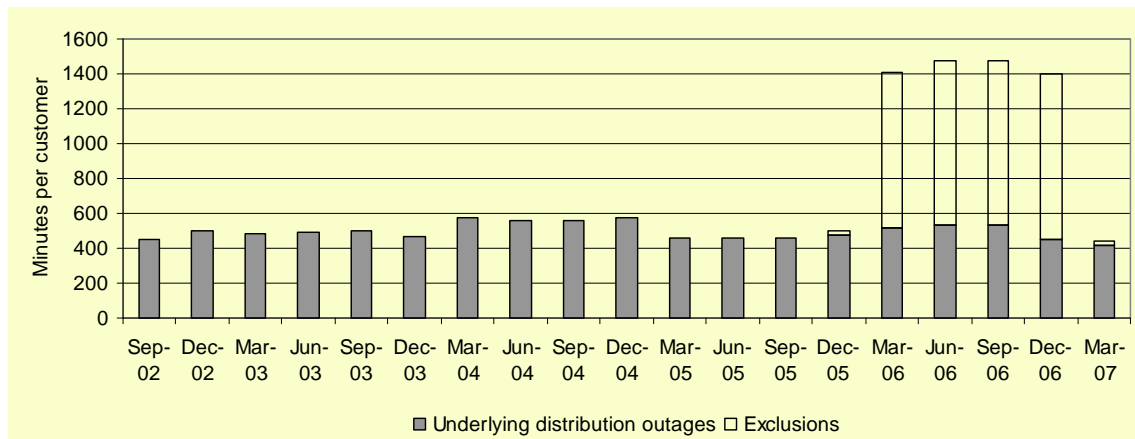
➤ *Underlying reliability at record best.*

The average duration of distribution-related outages was around 120 minutes during the March quarter 2007, up from around 115 minutes during the December quarter 2006 but around 42 minutes lower than the result for the previous March quarter.

During the 12 months to end March 2007, Ergon Energy customers experienced, on average, 3.69 distribution-related interruptions leaving them without power for a total of 442 minutes. This result represents a return to more normal conditions with the residual impacts of Cyclone Larry in March 2006 having worked through the data as shown in Figure 5.

Removing the effect of exclusion events, the underlying distribution-related outages (shaded) fell during the March quarter to its 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 460, more than double the December quarter 2006 result but only around 9 per cent higher than the average for this time of year.

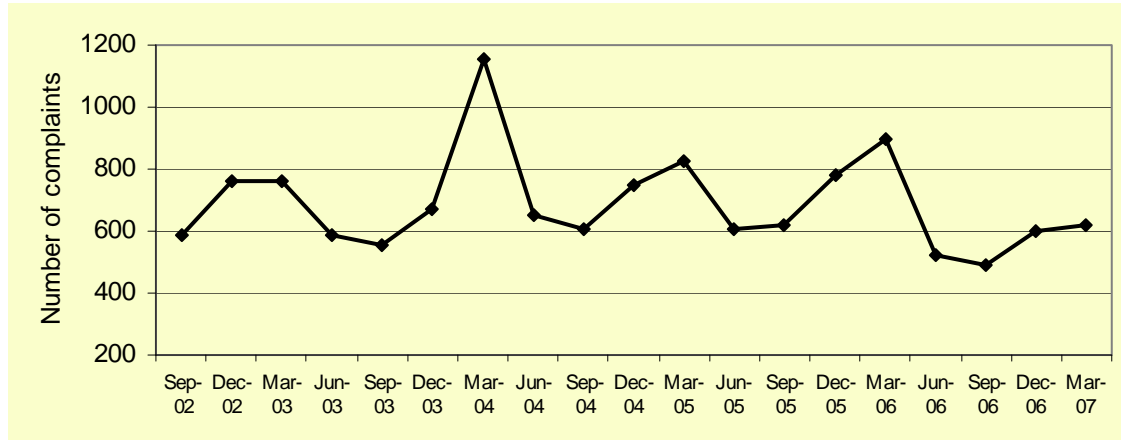
Despite the increase in the number of reliability of supply complaints, the average time taken to resolve complaints decreased to a record low of 1.7 days during the March quarter 2007, down from 1.9 days during the December quarter 2006.

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 to 620 during the March quarter 2007, as shown in Figure 6. However, this result was the best for March quarters to date. An increase in complaints about low supply voltage and severe voltage dips accounted for the majority of the extra complaints.

Figure 6 Total number of quality of supply complaints



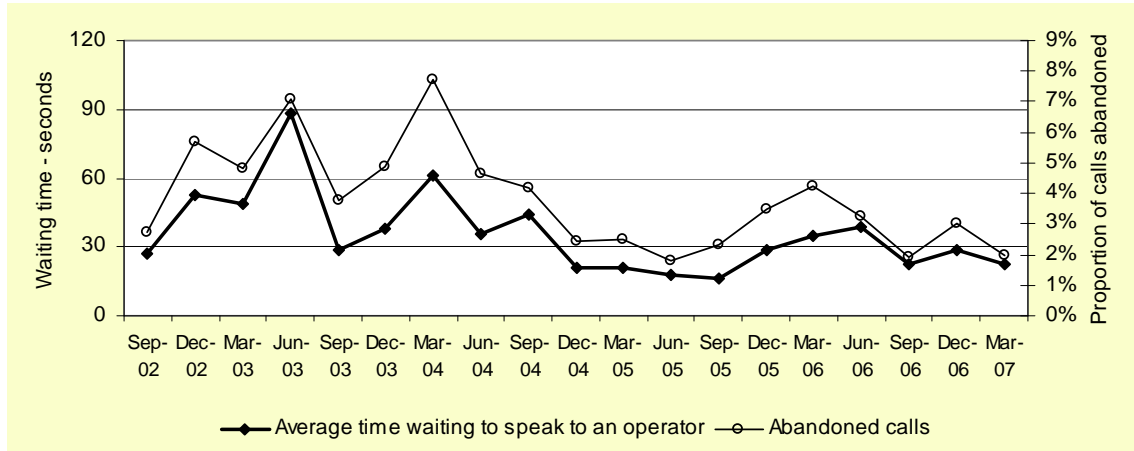
The average time taken to fix technical supply faults remained at 74 days during the March quarter 2007, which is consistent with Ergon Energy's performance on this measure over recent years.

3. Customer Service Measures

- *Call centre performance improves.*

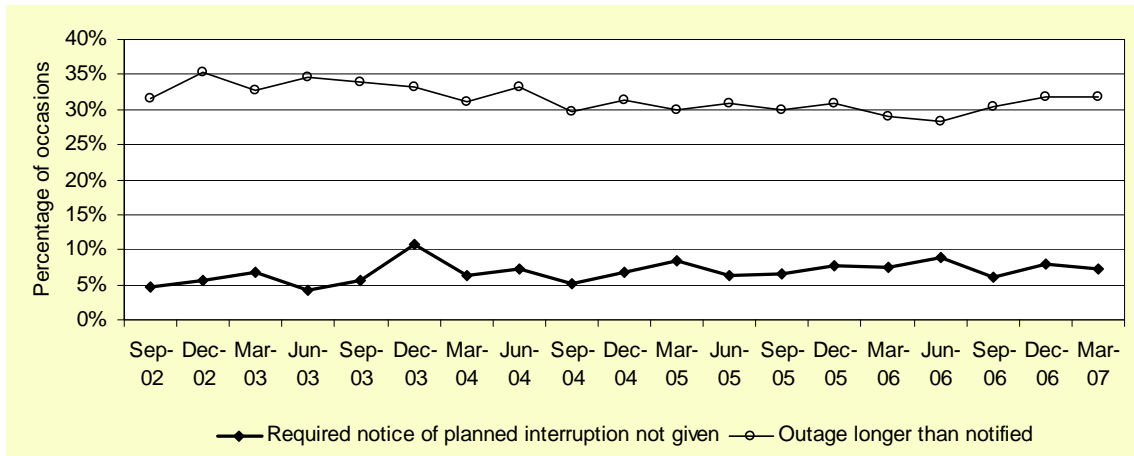
The length of time customers had to wait to speak to an operator improved from 28 seconds in the December quarter 2006 to 23 seconds during the March quarter 2007 (Figure 7). The percentage of calls abandoned also improved, from 3.0 per cent to 2.0 per cent during the March quarter 2007.

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



Occasions on which Ergon Energy did not provide the required notice of a planned interruption decreased from 8 per cent in the December quarter 2006 to 7 per cent in the March quarter 2007 as shown in Figure 8. The duration of a planned interruption that exceeded the time specified in the notification was unchanged at 32 percent.

Figure 8 Insufficient notification of planned interruptions



The number of customer service complaints increased to 810 in the March quarter 2007 compared to 697 complaints in the December quarter 2006. The average time taken to resolve these complaints decreased from 5.0 days in the December quarter 2006 to 4.5 days in the March quarter 2007.