

In order to assess the level of Consumer Satisfaction with the services offered by the Distribution Companies viz. BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd. (BRPL), BSES Yamuna Power Ltd. (BYPL) and North Delhi Power Ltd.(NDPL), DERC got a Consumer Satisfaction Survey carried out among the domestic consumers. The actual field survey took place in January and February, 2007. In the Survey, 10,391 domestic consumers across three categories having sanctioned load upto 2 KW, between 2-10 KW and above 10 KW including domestic consumers being served under Single Point Delivery (SPD) system, were covered.

2. The objectives envisaged to be achieved from the Survey were to ascertain the performance of the Electricity Distribution Companies in Delhi on the following parameters:-

- Specific problems pertaining to supply of power including voltage fluctuations, load shedding, metering, billing, time taken to give new connection/disconnect/load enhancement/reduction, etc.
- Awareness of Consumers on Complaint Redressal Mechanism and Consumer Grievance Forums
- Effectiveness of Complaint Redressal Mechanism and Consumer Forums for Grievance Redressal
- Perception of the consumers on the quality of the existing Grievance Redressal Mechanism
- Overall Satisfaction among consumers on the whole range of Services provided by the DISCOM in the process of power distribution.

3. Stratified random sampling was used to select consumers from the entire geographical area of the three Distribution Companies covering every Division of each Discom, irrespective of socio-economic categorization. The salient findings of the Survey were as follows:-

- The consumers have expressed their concern about load shedding.
- Consumers have also complained about fast running electronic meters and other problems of billing wherein inflated bills were being received.
- The consumers were, generally, not satisfied with the complaint redressal mechanism in place.

- The Call Centers set up by the DISCOMs were not yet popular among consumers as they preferred to lodge their complaints at the nearest office of the DISCOM.

- The consumers were generally not aware about the existence of the institution like Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC), the Consumer Grievances Redressal Forums (CGRFs) and the appellate institution of the Electricity Ombudsman.

- However, it was felt that the private distribution companies were a success and the Consumers preferred the services of private DISCOMs to that of the erstwhile DESU/DVB.

- The overall rating of the performance of DISCOMs as indicated by the consumers in the Survey on a scale of 1 to 10 ranged from 5.1 to about 5.7.

4. The Consumer Satisfaction Survey Report has been discussed with the CEOs of the DISCOMs. The Electricity Ombudsman and the Chairmen, CGRFs were also associated in the discussions on the findings of the Survey Report. Since load shedding had emerged as the largest consumer concern, the Commission sought the reasons for the same from the DISCOMs. It was informed that the outages, which consumers more often associate with load shedding, occur due to the followings reasons:-

- i. when there is a shortfall in supply to the DISCOMs from generators;
- ii. in the event of carrying out certain repair and maintenance works on the system scheduled shut-down is taken; and
- iii. sometime owing to system breakdown, which is generally not predictable, there are outages.

5. Since Delhi was having supply deficits during certain hours i.e. at the time of peak demand, load shedding had to be carried out to a limited extent. The Discoms clarified that but for shortages at certain hours there was no load shedding and neither was there any infrastructural problems due to which load shedding had to be carried out.

6. On the issue of electronic meters, it may be mentioned that the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) Notification entitled the Central Electricity Authority (Installation and Operator of Meters) Regulations, 2006 makes it mandatory for the Distribution Companies across the country to install Static (electronic) type meters only for metering of power supply to the consumers. Further, several meter testing

drives have been carried out by the DISCOMs, GoNCTD and DERC (by associating Bureau of Indian Standards and the Central Power Research Institute), and more recently the Public Grievances Cell (PGC), set up by Department of Power, GoNCTD, have conducted Meter Testing drive to test the Meters of consumers suspecting their Meters to be fast. All these drives have clearly brought out that there is nothing wrong with these electronic meters and that they are correctly recording the consumption. Further, it would be pertinent to add that the DERC had got the billings software of the DISCOMs audited by STQC, a Govt. of India institution under the Deptt. of Electronics and no major problems came to notice as far as the software was concerned.

7. The Commission gives publicity to the institutions like Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum (CGRF) and the appellate institution of the Electricity Ombudsman set up for redressing consumer grievances by bringing out Public Notices in leading newspapers from time to time. The details of these institutions are indicated on the reverse of every electricity bills also. In view of the fact that these institutions are still not well known by the consumers, more such public notices are going to be brought out by the DERC.