

PROCEEDINGS OF THE III MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 30.7.01.

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List of members present is at Annex.

Shri H.R.Gopal, Member of the Commission chaired the meeting in the absence of Mr.Philipose Matthai, Chairman of the Commission.

Shri Gopal welcomed all the members to this meeting.

3.1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS;

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23.2.01 and special meeting held on 25.4.01 were confirmed without any modifications.

3.2. REVIEW OF PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORKSHOP ON IMPROVING QUALITY OF POWER SUPPLY TO RURAL AREAS;

The Chairman informed the meeting that the Hon'ble Chief Minister had agreed to be present at the concluding function of the workshop on 21.8.01 at 12 noon. The Chairman then requested the Secretary to inform the Committee about the arrangements made in this regard. The Secretary placed before the members of the Committee the tentative programme drawn up for the workshop and explained the details of the various sessions proposed to be held and the papers to be presented at each of these sessions. Based on this, the members of the Committee made the following suggestions:

- (1) The Workshop should be focused clearly on problems faced by IP set consumers in rural areas and the solutions suggested for removing such problems. Accordingly the title for the workshop had to be changed. The Committee members suggested that the Workshop could be called "**Workshop on power supply to IP sets, tariffs and related issues**".
- (2) Rapporteurs for each technical session (at least 2 persons) should be nominated in order to note the important points emerging from out of the presentations and discussions.
- (3) A Committee consisting of Secretary/KERC, CE(Gen)/KPTCL and Shri M.S.Shankarikoppa and Shri S.Mune Gowda should be asked to prepare the summary of the recommendations of the workshop that would be placed before the open house discussions in Session 6 and thereafter to be presented to the Hon'ble Chief Minister at the concluding session.
- (4) A request should be made to all the speakers to speak, as far as possible, only in Kannada.

- (5) The Committee also discussed briefly about the problems involved in regularization of un-authorized IP sets. Chairman mentioned that some instances have come to the notice of the Commission where regularization had been delayed even after the fee payable therefor had been remitted to the KPTCL. Shri Rangaswamaiah, Member mentioned that there were also cases where connections to IP sets were inordinately delayed. Responding, CMD/KPTCL clarified that the KPTCL first provides connections to IP sets as per their annual programme and only thereafter takes up cases of regularization of un-authorized IP sets. The Chairman mentioned that this prioritization could perhaps be reviewed. CMD/KPTCL also clarified that large parts of Tumkur District have been classified as either dark or grey areas and therefore no new pump sets could be serviced in those areas. Committee members were advised by the Chairman to bring specific cases of undue delay in servicing of IP sets to the notice of the CMD/KPTCL for suitable action.

3.3. DISCUSSION ON KERC PAPERS ON TARIFF POLICY AND CAPTIVE GENERATION CONSENTS;

Since the Committee had already discussed KERC's papers on Tariff Policy and on Captive Generation consents at length in the earlier meeting, it was decided that further discussion on the same was not necessary and the subject was taken as concluded.

3.4. DISCUSSION ON REGULATIONS RELATING TO DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION U/S 35 OF THE ACT & COMPLAINT HANDLING & REDRESSAL STANDARDS RELATING TO DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLY OF POWER;

The following points were discussed regarding Disclosure of information to consumers under section 35 of the Act:

- (1) It was generally agreed that with the printing of the 7 days notice on the reverse of the bill itself a further individual notice before disconnection was not necessary. Chairman explained to the Committee that this kind of procedure had also been viewed favourably by the Bombay High Court.
- (2) Regarding disconnection in the case of usage of appliances causing interference with the system or efficient working of the licensee's system or with the supply of energy to any other person, Chairman informed the Committee that KPTCL had urged that no notice need be given. After discussion, there was general agreement in the Committee that no notice is required; however, the Chairman said that the Commission may give a short notice of one or two days in all such cases.
- (3) Regarding the annual statement of deposits held, Committee members were of the opinion that this may be provided to consumers at their cost (which cost may be determined and notified by KPTCL) on the demand of the consumer concerned.

It was also felt that since the cost of pass books would be substantial, providing a statement to the consumer at his cost would be sufficient.

Regarding the Complaint Handling and Redressal Standards, the following suggestions were made in the meeting:

- 1) Though the maintenance of street lights is not with the KPTCL in the case of Bangalore Mahanagara Palike and certain other Municipal areas, the standards should include complaint redressal relating to street lights also and the KERC should take steps to get such standards implemented.
- 2) As far as appeal cases are concerned Mr.K.C.Naikwadi mentioned that the Secretary at the Corporate office of the licensee would not be suitable as the primary responsibility center for redressal. After discussion the Committee agreed that the CE(Gen) could be nominated as the primary responsible center for redressal.
- 3) Maj.Gen.Vombatkere (Retd) drew the attention of the Committee to the time limits prescribed for redressal of poor voltage complaints and opined that these were very lenient. This matter was explained that in the present circumstances the standards fixed are reasonable.
- 4) Mr.V.Narayana Gowda, highlighted the problems faced by KPTCL staff in complying with the standards especially in view of the large number of vacancies. CMD/KPTCL suggested that the standards should include a saving clause to provide for cases where the standards cannot be complied with going to problems beyond the control of the concerned persons. Chairman explained that the guidelines are not intended to fix responsibility. However, the CMD/KPTTCL and Mr.K.C.Naikwadi felt that consumers courts and other courts may nevertheless take action based on the standards. Shri Naikwadi suggested that the Committee should recommend to Govt of Karnataka to fill up vacant posts in the KPTCL. This was agreed to by other members of the Committee as well.

3.5. TARIFF ORDER, 2000 DT.18.12.2000;

There was a brief discussion on the following issues arising out of the Tariff Order 2000:

- (1) Maj.Gen.Vombatkere (Retd) wanted to know why arrears have been allowed to mount and prompt action to disconnect installations is not taken. CMD/KPTCL

explained that fixed charges continued to be levied even after disconnection and until the termination of the agreement and that interest also is levied on this amount . As a result arrears keep mounting.

3.6. ANY OTHER SUBJECT, WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR;

Maj.Gen.Vombatkere (Retd) drew attention to the note he had placed before the Committee and which had been circulated to all the Committee Members.

- (1) He specifically mentioned that the documents that are said to be available with Circle Offices in the case of the purchase of power from Jindal Tractebel Power Co., Ltd., were not available at the Mysore Circle office. Shri Y.G.Muralidharan also said that the said documents were not available from the KPTCL office. CMD/KPTCL assured the members that the documents would be made available.
- (2) Maj.Gen.Vombatkere (Retd) has also raised the issue of back billing on coconut and areca net gardens that had been brought up before the Vidyut Adalat in Mysore recently. CMD/KPTCL clarified that the Vigilance cases should not be discussed in the Vidyut Adalat and should be taken up only on appeal.
- (3) Shri Naikwadi raised the issue of non availability of copies of the new KERC (Electricity Supply and Distribution) Code, 2001 with field officers even up to the end of June 01, though the Code had come in to force with effect from 29.3.01. Chairman clarified that any difficulties arising as a result could be administratively sorted out by CMD/KPTCL.

The meeting concluded with a request to all the Committee members to attend and take part in the Workshop to be held on August 20th and 21st, 2001.

Sd/-
(H.R.Gopal),
Chairman