

**CODE OF PRACTICE
ON CUSTOMER
SERVICE & CODE OF
PRACTICE FOR
CONSUMERS IN
VULNERABLE
CIRCUMSTANCES**

**MONITORING AND REPORTING
FRAMEWORK
UTILITY REGULATOR INFORMATION PAPER
JUNE 2025**

About the Utility Regulator

The Utility Regulator is the independent non-ministerial government department responsible for regulating Northern Ireland's electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries, to promote the short and long-term interests of consumers.

We are not a policy-making department of government, but we make sure that the energy and water utility industries in Northern Ireland are regulated and developed within ministerial policy as set out in our statutory duties.

We are governed by a Board of Directors and are accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly through financial and annual reporting obligations.

We are based at Queens House in the centre of Belfast. The Chief Executive and two Executive Directors lead teams in each of the main functional areas in the organisation: CEO Office; Price Controls; Networks and Energy Futures; and Markets and Consumer Protection and Enforcement. The staff team includes economists, engineers, accountants, utility specialists, legal advisors and administration professionals.

OUR MISSION

To protect the short and long-term interests of consumers of electricity, gas and water.

OUR VISION

To ensure value and sustainability in energy and water.

OUR VALUES

ACCOUNTABLE:

We take ownership of our actions.

TRANSPARENT:

Ensuring trust through openness and honesty.

COLLABORATIVE:

Connecting and working with others for a shared purpose.

DILIGENT:

Working with care and rigour.

RESPECTFUL:

Treating everyone with dignity and fairness.

ABSTRACT

Following the appropriate consultation processes, the Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances and the Code of Practice on Customer Service were included in all energy suppliers' licences¹ on 25 November 2024 and 24 April 2025 respectively. In the decision papers for both Codes², we committed to publishing an information paper detailing our monitoring and reporting requirements for each Code and to streamline the reporting requirements where possible. This paper details that reporting and monitoring framework for the two Codes and the timelines in which we will require submissions to demonstrate compliance with them.

AUDIENCE

This document is most likely to be of interest to regulated companies in the energy and water industries, consumer organisations and representatives, community and voluntary organisations, natural gas/electricity consumers, water consumers, government, and other statutory bodies.

CONSUMER IMPACT

The measures included in the two Codes of Practice aim to provide enhanced protection for those consumers in vulnerable circumstances and to remedy customer service level failings impacting a significant number of consumers. Implementation of this reporting and monitoring framework will require licensees to demonstrate compliance with the Codes and will ensure that the aims of both Codes are achieved.

¹ The CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances was also introduced in NIE Networks licence, NI Water's licence and gas conveyance (distribution) licences.

² [Best Practice Framework decision – Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances; Decision paper - Code of Practice on Energy Supplier Customer Service Levels](#)

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Annex 2	SoLC Supplementary Report for CoP on Customer Service
Annex 3	Template for the accessible version of the annual report on compliance with the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances

Executive Summary

The Utility Regulator (UR) has a statutory responsibility for the regulation of gas, electricity, water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland.

We recently introduced two new Codes of Practice (CoP) into domestic energy suppliers' licences: the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances³ (effective 25 November 2024) and CoP on Customer Service (CS) (effective 24 April 2025). To support the delivery of these Codes and provide both necessary and useful insights into market outcomes, we have developed a monitoring and reporting framework in support of Code delivery.

The fact that some licensees are required to comply with both the new CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances and the new CoP on CS has resulted in a combined monitoring framework to streamline the requirements where possible. This will reduce unnecessary reporting requirements where feasible while still fulfilling our requirements of market and compliance monitoring.

This document sets out the specifics of the reporting and monitoring framework by:

- Setting out the overall reporting and monitoring framework for the Codes;
- Outlining our goals and objectives for the framework;
- Providing clarity on how current monitoring methods will factor into the new framework;
- Providing granular detail on how the measures will be monitored; and
- Outlining next steps for licensees.

We recognise the need to balance transparency and effective monitoring with the impacts of regulatory burden. We aim to strike a fair balance to ensure we can be satisfied that the obligations of the Codes and licence conditions are being met and we are able to effectively monitor what is happening in the market, whilst ensuring that any reporting requirements are proportionate.

From the outset, we will use a combination of methods to collect relevant information including: the Annual Statement of Licence Compliance (SoLC) process; the Retail Energy Market Monitoring (REMM) Framework; and an initial one-off information request.

³ The CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances was also introduced in NIE Networks licence, NI Water's licence and gas conveyance (distribution) licences.

Through the SoLC process, we will include new supplementary reporting requirements specifically requesting information on how licensees are compliant with the Codes. A template report will be provided for each Code which licensees will be required to complete and submit as part of their annual return. We will also use REMM to collect key pieces of quantitative data that will demonstrate how licensees are complying with both Codes and will provide valuable insight into how the market is performing, informing policy development as well as allowing us to respond in a timely way to market issues.

In addition, we will write to licensees during Autumn 2025 to request a one-off information submission for both Codes. These will be sent as two separate information requests seeking supplementary information to demonstrate compliance with the Codes.

Licensees may wish to note the key dates and actions in table 1 in relation to the next steps:

Table 1: Key dates and actions in relation to next steps

Code of Practice on Customer Service	
From July 2025 onwards	Energy Suppliers to continue to report monthly Customer Service KPIs, but this data will be collected as part of REMM. Therefore, the first submission via REMM will be for data for the month of June 2025 (up to and including the 30 June 2025). Submission dates will continue in line with current processes with returns required by the second Monday of each month covering the preceding month's data.
Early October 2025	We will issue a one-off information request seeking confirmation that processes/procedures and policies are in place to demonstrate compliance with the CoP on CS. This will be due for submission by 31 October 2025.

Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances	
From 1 July 2025 onwards	<p>Energy suppliers, Northern Ireland Electricity Networks, gas Distribution Network Operators and Northern Ireland Water to begin recording data for monitoring of the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances.</p> <p>The first quarterly return to REMM will be for the period 1 July to 30 September 2025, to be submitted by 31 October 2025.</p> <p>Quarterly and annual returns will be shared with licensees by the REMM team in advance of these submissions.</p>
November 2025	We will issue a one-off information request seeking supplementary information on compliance against three of the required measures for the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances. This will be due for submission by 24 November 2025.

Applicable to both Codes of Practice	
By 5 December 2025	Initiation of SoLC for 2025 reporting year. This will include the new required supplementary reports for both Codes.
27 February 2026	SoLC submission deadline.

1. Introduction

Statutory responsibilities

- 1.1 The UR has a statutory responsibility for the regulation of gas, electricity, water, and sewerage services in Northern Ireland.
- 1.2 We perform our statutory duties in accordance with the following key legislation:
 - The Energy (Northern Ireland) Order 2003;
 - The Gas (Northern Ireland) Order 1996;
 - The Electricity (Northern Ireland) Order 1992; and
 - The Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.
- 1.3 We hold the companies we regulate to account with these legislative requirements and as included in the above legislation.
- 1.4 We also issue licences, subject to the satisfaction of certain criteria, to a wide range of companies who wish to operate in the electricity, gas and water markets in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, we monitor the activity of those regulated companies to enable us to develop policy in line with market outcomes as well as respond effectively to emerging market issues. We also use relevant information to ensure compliance with licences and the conditions contained therein.

Our vision for protecting consumers on the way to net zero

- 1.5 We set out our vision for protecting consumers on the way to net zero in our Corporate Strategy 2024-2029. This strategy emphasises that the companies we regulate should aim to be the best, raising the bar on the services they provide to consumers both in terms of customer service and consumer protection.
- 1.6 Strategic objectives 3 and 4 of that strategy, enabling best in class energy and water companies and providing the highest level of consumer service and protection, focuses on that goal. We will ensure that our energy and water companies compare to the best, improve competition in energy markets through targeted regulatory frameworks, and ensure monitoring of licensees strengthens the culture of compliance across licenced companies and anticipates changing consumer needs.

- 1.7 To achieve these strategic objectives, we have identified several desired outcomes including:
- Energy and water companies are fully compliant with their licence obligations;
 - Measurable improvement in customer service experience for consumers;
 - Increased reporting on consumer metrics which highlight the performance of energy and water companies.
- 1.8 To attain these desired outcomes, we recently introduced two new Codes into domestic energy suppliers' licences: the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances⁴ (effective 25 November 2024) and CoP on CS (effective 24 April 2025). Additionally, to support the delivery of these Codes and effective monitoring of the market, we have developed this monitoring and reporting framework for the measures and requirements contained therein the Codes.

Purpose of this document

- 1.9 The CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances came into effect on 25 November 2024. This followed an extensive consultation process which included a [decision paper on the contents of the CoP](#) published on 27 March 2024, and a [Decision Notice on the licence modifications to implement the CoP](#) published on 30 September 2024.
- 1.10 On 27 February 2025, we published [our decision](#) regarding the licence modifications that introduced a new CoP on CS, processes for setting direct debits and the return of customer credit. This was following an extensive consultation process which reflected the [decisions detailed in our Code of Practice on Energy Supplier Customer Service Levels](#) published on 26 November 2024.
- 1.11 The CoP on CS and the new licence conditions place obligations on domestic gas and electricity suppliers in Northern Ireland to achieve what we consider to be the minimum level of customer service that energy suppliers must provide to their domestic customers. This came into effect on 24 April 2025.
- 1.12 The fact that some licensees are required to comply with both the new CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances and the new CoP on CS has resulted in us streamlining the reporting requirements where

⁴ The CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances was also introduced in NIE Networks licence, NI Water's licence and gas conveyance (distribution) licences.

possible. This will reduce unnecessary reporting requirements where feasible, as we recognise that licensees are required to submit a range of information to the UR through other reporting frameworks.

- 1.13 However, it is crucial that we establish key monitoring and reporting requirements as this data helps us to not only ensure licence compliance, but also to monitor market trends, react appropriately where we see evidence of consumer harm and/or detriment as well as supporting new policy development.
- 1.14 We committed to providing further information for licensees on how reporting and monitoring will be conducted for both Codes. The purpose of this document is to provide that information by:
- Setting out the overall reporting and monitoring framework for the Codes;
 - Outlining our goals and objectives for the framework;
 - Providing clarity on how current monitoring methods will factor into the new framework;
 - Providing granular detail on how the measures will be monitored; and
 - Outlining next steps for licensees.

2. Monitoring and Reporting Framework for both Codes of Practice

Overall approach

- 2.1 Our primary objectives of the new monitoring and reporting framework for both Codes are to:
- Ensure that we have the necessary reporting mechanisms in place to monitor licensees' compliance with both Codes and any new/amended licence conditions;
 - Provide insight into market outcomes, identify signs of consumer harm or inefficiencies, monitor market trends and contribute to policy development;
 - Reduce regulatory burden (where possible) for licensees to ensure that we are proportionate and targeted with our reporting requirements;
 - Measure licensees' performance with robust data; and
 - Allow scope for continuous review/improvement as the framework is embedded.
- 2.2 We recognise the need to balance transparency and effective monitoring with the impacts of regulatory burden. We aim to strike a fair balance to ensure we can be satisfied that the obligations of the Codes and licence conditions are being met, whilst ensuring that any reporting requirements are proportionate.
- 2.3 Therefore, our aim is to only require routine reporting on those aspects of the Codes that are critical in enabling us to effectively monitor the market and consumer outcomes. Keeping this in mind, we have conducted an analysis of licensees' existing reporting requirements and, where possible, we have used existing submissions and have only introduced additional reporting requirements where necessary. Our intention is that the new monitoring and reporting framework will not be onerous or overly burdensome; we will only collect information that is necessary to show compliance with both Codes and will allow us to carry out our regulatory responsibilities and duties effectively.
- 2.4 However, we fully expect licensees to have the systems and processes in place to implement, and be in compliance with, all measures and requirements of both Codes. Furthermore, if we identify any failings in the market in respect of either Code we retain the right to scrutinise how

licensees are meeting the requirements of their licence and may ask for additional evidence, if needed, under the relevant Provision of Information to Authority condition. Licensees should be prepared to demonstrate to us how they meet all requirements in the Codes as necessary.

- 2.5 Finally, a continuous review process will be applied to the monitoring and reporting framework to allow for ongoing improvement. This will help provide assurance, both internally and externally, that the new framework continues to be robust, efficient, effective and achieves the intended objectives.
- 2.6 We will continue to learn from the implementation of the framework and may add/remove reporting requirements as appropriate. For example, if we identify the need to include an additional regular reporting requirement to protect consumers, we will engage with licensees to initiate this. Conversely, if due to market changes and/or changes in customer/licensee behaviours, or we conclude that certain reporting requirements are no longer required, we will initiate a process to review and remove that reporting requirement as necessary. This continuous review process will ensure that the framework remains flexible, agile and most importantly, fit for purpose.
- 2.7 From the outset, we will use a combination of methods to collect information for the purpose of monitoring and reporting including: the Annual SoLC process; the REMM Framework; and an initial one-off confirmation of licence compliance via an information request.
- 2.8 Most licensees will be familiar with these methods of data collection; therefore, it is hoped that the use of these will assist licensees in embedding the new reporting requirements of both Codes.

Use of Annual Statement of Licence Compliance (SoLC)

- 2.9 In September 2024, we announced our new enhanced approach to compliance monitoring and reporting applicable to all licensees⁵, which included the Annual SoLC submission. The SoLC seeks confirmation of compliance at the highest level within the licenced companies and requires all licensees to provide assurance on an annual basis that they are fully compliant with their licence and/or highlight areas in which issues have been identified in the previous calendar year.
- 2.10 This process is not new for energy suppliers who have been completing the annual returns for many years. The SoLC process allows for the

⁵ [Licence compliance framework for all licensees: New approach to compliance monitoring and reporting](#)

effective and efficient monitoring of compliance and ensuring that regulated companies comply with their licence obligations. Failure to provide such information is considered itself a compliance issue and may be subject to further investigation in line with our compliance framework and/or our published enforcement procedure.

- 2.11 As part of the annual SoLC return, we may request additional supplementary information relating to a specific licence condition. Detail of any supplementary information required is provided to the licensee at the commencement of the annual SoLC process.
- 2.12 We will include new supplementary reporting requirements specifically requesting information on how licensees are compliant with the Codes. A template report will be provided for each Code which licensees will be required to complete and submit as part of the SoLC.

Use of Retail and Energy Market Monitoring (REMM) Framework

- 2.13 One of our statutory duties is to monitor the retail market and keep the development of the retail energy sector in Northern Ireland under review. The REMM [Framework](#) was introduced in June 2015, following consultation with stakeholders, and is the framework used for the collection, analysis and publication of key retail information.
- 2.14 From its introduction, we have improved and streamlined the submission of data from the companies we regulate. The companies have clarity around the information requirements and associated timelines for return. Consumers benefit from better regulation capabilities as a result of consistent and high-quality returns, and from increased transparency of retail energy market information. REMM is a robust and useful tool for informing policy and ensuring the highest levels of consumer protection.
- 2.15 We use the information gathered through REMM to publish a Quarterly REMM (QREMM) Report that provides a range of information about the retail energy market in Northern Ireland. This data relates mainly to market shares, market activity and domestic prices in the electricity and gas retail markets. The data also includes information on non-domestic, or industrial and commercial (I&C), prices.
- 2.16 For the monitoring and reporting framework, we will use REMM to collect key pieces of quantitative data that will demonstrate how licensees are complying with both Codes and to monitor the market.
- 2.17 We hope to publish information on the CS metrics in due course, and we will consult with relevant stakeholders in advance.

Use of Information Requests

- 2.18 Measures in both Codes include the requirement to have clearly documented processes/procedures and policies in place to meet the principles of these measures. For instance, Measure 12 of the CoP on CS states that, 'Written customer contacts (all mediums of written contact with consumers including webchat, social media platforms and emails but excludes postal correspondence) must receive timely responses within a maximum of 2 working days.' Therefore, we are requiring that energy suppliers, 'have documented processes in place to ensure that a consistent approach is taken for acknowledgement of receipt for all consumers across all written platforms.'
- 2.19 For the CoP on CS, we will write to licensees in October 2025 with a one-off information request seeking confirmation that any required processes/procedures and policies are in place which will demonstrate compliance with the Code. As indicated in our decision papers, by end October 2025, we fully expect licensees to have all processes/procedures and policies in place as required by the CoP on CS.
- 2.20 For the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances, we will write to licensees with a one-off information request seeking supplementary information on compliance against three of the required measures, to be submitted by 24 November 2025.
- 2.21 Once these processes/procedures and policies are in place, the likelihood of significant changes in the short-term should be minimal. Therefore, in order to be targeted in our approach of monitoring the Codes and to reduce regulatory burden, we will not require any further regular reporting on these specific requirements unless we identify an issue in the market or detrimental harm to consumers.

3. Monitoring and Reporting for Code of Practice on Customer Service

Background

- 3.1 Since November 2022 we have been monitoring suppliers' customer contact centre performance on a monthly basis. Analysis of the submissions from suppliers has offered an important insight into market-wide customer contact centre performance, provided further context to the reports we had received from individual customers and consumer representative bodies, and is an evidence base for enhancement of our regulatory framework in these areas.
- 3.2 In our [final decision paper](#), we stated that the reporting of monthly customer contact centre metrics/key performance indicators (KPIs) is an integral part of the reporting and monitoring process for the CoP on CS. This monthly reporting is not only for suppliers to identify issues at the earliest opportunity, but also allows us to identify issues at both a market and consumer level and deal with them quickly and effectively.
- 3.3 This early detection allows us to actively engage with the licensees so they can identify and remedy any issues to ensure that all consumers (but in particular those in vulnerable circumstances), receive the best customer service experience possible.
- 3.4 However, we also stated we recognise the need to balance transparency and effective monitoring with the impacts of regulatory burden. We aim to strike a fair balance to ensure we can be satisfied that the obligations of the Code and licence conditions are being met, while ensuring that any reporting requirements are proportionate.
- 3.5 This view, coupled with the fact that suppliers are also required to comply with the new CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances, led us to streamline the requirements where possible.

Reporting requirements through SoLC

- 3.6 As stated in our overall approach, there will be a new supplementary reporting requirement specifically requesting information on how licensees are compliant with the CoP on CS. A template report will be provided for the Code and licensees will be required to complete and submit it as part of their annual SoLC return.

- 3.7 For those measures in the CoP on CS that will be monitored through SoLC, table 2 below details the measures and questions that will be included in the supplementary report template⁶.

Table 2: SoLC reporting requirements for CoP on CS

Measure	Reporting Requirement
Measure 1 - Domestic consumers, in particular those in vulnerable circumstances, must be able to easily identify a method of contacting their energy supplier that meets their needs. The effectiveness of these methods must be regularly reviewed by suppliers.	In what year did you last conduct a review of the effectiveness of your available contact methods? Please provide the outcomes of the review.
Measure 5 - Customers must be able to easily identify methods of contacting their suppliers.	Please provide an anonymised copy of a customer bill.
Measure 6 - Suppliers must ensure customer contact centre services are open at times that meet the needs of their domestic customers.	<p>Please list the dates of planned closures for the year, which includes instances of planned early closures.</p> <p>Please list the dates of unplanned closures for the year, which includes instances of unplanned early closures.</p>

Reporting requirements through REMM

- 3.8 As part of our current monitoring activity, energy suppliers have been reporting monthly metrics (which we refer to as KPIs) relating to their customer service contact centres. We wrote to all suppliers in November 2024 confirming the metrics we currently collect are:

- Service level (% of calls answered within 30 seconds);
- Average handling time;
- Abandonment rate;
- Average call wait times;
- Total number of calls;
- Average number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) customer service agents taking calls; and

⁶ SoLC supplementary report for CoP on CS, included in Annexes.

- Number of domestic customers.
- 3.9 We collect this data via the relevant Provision of Information to the Authority licence condition and we appreciate the cooperation of suppliers in submitting information to us in a timely and accurate manner.
- 3.10 From July 2025, all customer service KPIs will be collected via REMM. The CS metrics will continue to be reported on via a monthly submission. In addition to the existing CS metrics we collect, from October 2025 we will start collecting one additional reporting requirement as part of this return. This will include:
- A monthly CS KPI submission for the mandated freephone/low cost phone number (to be compliant with Measure 3 of the CoP on CS).⁷
- 3.11 At this time, we will not be introducing any further KPIs to the monthly reporting requirements. However, we will continue to strenuously monitor the performance of customer service contact centres through the existing KPIs and may introduce new reporting measures in the future. If that occasion should arise, we will notify suppliers of any additional KPIs we plan to monitor.
- 3.12 At this time, we will not be introducing any further KPIs to the monthly reporting requirements. However, we will continue to strenuously monitor the performance of customer service contact centres through the existing KPIs and may introduce new reporting measures in the future. If that occasion should arise, we will notify suppliers of any additional KPIs we plan to monitor.

Required response through Information Request

- 3.13 We will issue a one-time information request to collect data on how licensees are complying with requirements to have processes/procedures and policies in place to meet the measures of the CoP on CS.
- 3.14 As stated, we will send this information request to licensees in October 2025 with a response deadline for 31 October 2025. This will give licensees sufficient time between May-October 2025 to develop and embed the necessary processes/procedures and policies required to be fully compliant with the CoP on CS and any new/amended licence conditions by end October 2025.

⁷ Only applicable to those suppliers that **do not** have a freephone number for all customers. If a supplier has a separate freephone/low-cost number that is only allowed for used by certain customers, we will require a submission on that freephone/low-cost number.

4. Monitoring and Reporting for Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances

Background

- 4.1 The CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances was introduced into NIEN's distribution licence, gas conveyance (distribution) licences, Northern Ireland Water's (NIW) licence and all electricity and gas supply licences on 25 November 2024.⁸
- 4.2 The Code replaced existing licence requirements for electricity and gas suppliers on the 'Code of Practice on Provision of Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick' and the electricity distribution licence condition 'Provision of services for persons who are of pensionable age or disabled.'
- 4.3 We consulted on the Code between 22 June and 15 September 2023⁹ and published our final decisions on 28 March 2024.¹⁰
- 4.4 Within our final decisions paper on the Code, we set out that:
- Compliance with the Code will be recorded through the applicable UR compliance frameworks, including the SoLC process for suppliers and processes that apply to Distribution Network Operators (DNOs);
 - Monitoring of the Code will be conducted through REMM; and
 - Licensees with BSI ISO 22458:2022 will have reduced reporting requirements for their returns.
- 4.5 The Code consists of ten high level principles supported by thirty-nine required measures. The ten principles are applicable to all licensees while the required measures are industry specific.

⁸ [Decision on licence modifications to introduce a new Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances | Utility Regulator](#)

⁹ [Best Practice Framework Consultation Proposals: Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances | Utility Regulator](#)

¹⁰ [Best Practice Framework decision - Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances - March 2024 | Utility Regulator](#)

4.6 The new Code¹¹ includes three specific requirements for compliance monitoring:

- **Measure 9.1** - All companies to submit annual returns to the Authority which demonstrate compliance with the Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances. The returns will provide evidence of compliance with both the high level principles and the required measures. *Applies to all Licensees*
 - (i) The returns will be submitted in line with UR's compliance framework requirements.
- **Measure 9.2** - As part of their return, all companies must report on actions taken to increase awareness of the customer care registers (this will be tracked by UR through UR's annual domestic consumer insight tracker survey); and on the operation, outcomes and future review arrangements for their activities under the Code. *Applies to all Licensees*
 - (i) This is a self-review by companies on their operations in fulfilling this code and the outcomes achieved. It should include any identified improvements the company will make to improve their services to vulnerable customers.
- **Measure 10.2** - All companies to publish an accessible version of the returns submitted to the Authority on compliance with the Code of Practice for consumers in vulnerable circumstances on their own websites. These returns will also be published on the Authority's website. *Applies to all Licensees*

Reporting requirements through SoLC

- 4.7 Licensees will be required to provide high level sign-off that they are compliant with the new licence condition which implements the Code through their annual SoLC submission.
- 4.8 The requirement of Measure 9.1 (licensees to submit annual returns to the UR which demonstrate compliance with the CoP), will be added to the SoLC as a supplementary reporting requirement to the annual SoLC submission.
- 4.9 The annual supplementary return will require the licensee (to whom the required measure applies) to provide either further explanation or further explanation plus evidence against specified required measures.

¹¹ [Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances | Utility Regulator](#)

- 4.10 For some of these required measures, the request for additional information to demonstrate compliance will be a one off, rather than an annual requirement. This information will be requested for 25 November 2025 as the Code will then have been effective in licences for a full year.
- 4.11 Where a company has obtained BSI ISO 22458:2022 accreditation, this can be used as evidence for those measures where explanation or evidence is required and where the requirement is included as part of the ISO KM testing for accreditation.
- 4.12 For those measures in the Code that will be monitored through submission of the annual return required under measure 9.1, table 3 below details the measures and supplementary information that will be included in the annual return template. Measures that we consider to be fully assessed as part of the ISO testing are marked in the template with an asterisk. The supplementary report template is included in Annex 1.

Table 3 Annual supplementary reporting requirements under RM 9.1

Required Measure	Supplementary Information
<p>RM 1.2 - Obtaining the ISO 22458:2022 Consumer Vulnerability standard is recommended to all companies (but not required). The ISO standard will be aligned to the CoP requirements, so will evidence (for those companies who obtain it) compliance with a number of the CoP requirements.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Please confirm if you have obtained ISO 22458:2022 or not, when this was obtained (if applicable) and if you plan to obtain the ISO in future.</p>
<p>RM 2.1 - Ensure that all relevant staff (e.g. consumer facing staff, field staff, call centre handlers, and sub-contractors) and to include staff at a senior level, are adequately and frequently trained in the identification of consumers in vulnerable circumstances or /and who may be eligible for the customer care register, and in treating customers in an empathetic manner to encourage customers to self-identify. To include, but not exclusive to, disability training (in relation to hidden disabilities, learning difficulties or communication barriers), mental health awareness training and empathy training.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Please list the training that has been provided this year (to include the teams it has been provided to and the date it was provided on).</p>

Required Measure	Supplementary Information
<p>RM 2.4 - Ensure processes are in place to enable a warm handover of consumers in vulnerable circumstances who are in need of additional support.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Please list the consumer body(ies) that you are in partnership with to offer warm handovers. Please also confirm that formalised partnerships are in place with these consumer body(ies).</p>
<p>RM 5.5 - Provide special identification for employees authorised by the Licensee to visit households. This will include operation of a password scheme and another telephonic based identification scheme (such as the Quick Check 101 scheme).</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Please set out the methods your companies used to meet this requirement.</p>
<p>RM 5.7* - Provide alternative formats of communications for those domestic customers who require it, to be free of charge, including provision for customers who are blind or partially sighted or deaf or hearing impaired. This will include as a minimum, terms and conditions, billing information, Codes of Practice, complaints procedures and will include having facilities available to assist blind or partially sighted, or deaf or partially deaf customers to enquire or complain about any bill, statement or service provided to them.</p> <p>Applies to electricity and gas suppliers and the electricity DNO</p>	<p>Please list all the alternative formats of communication you have available.</p> <p><i>If you have obtained ISO 22458:2022, reporting against this measure is not required.</i></p>
<p>RM 6.1 - All companies to provide (free of charge and accessible) advice and information on the additional services available to customers because of their age, disability, or chronic illness and/or who are represented by UR's vulnerability definition. This should be provided through a number of channels to include, at minimum, the company's website and customer's bills. Advice and information provided must be accessible and displayed (if applicable) in a prominent position.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Please list and evidence where you have provided this information.</p> <p>Please include a list of the additional services available to your customers because of their age, disability, or chronic illness and/or who are represented by UR's vulnerability definition.</p>

Required Measure	Supplementary Information
<p>RM 7.1 - Provide consumers who are represented by UR's definition of vulnerability and are experiencing affordability difficulties with their energy bills with the option of a 'warm handover' to a consumer body which can assist them with a benefit entitlement check facility.</p> <p>Applies to electricity and gas DNOs and electricity and gas suppliers</p>	<p>Please list which of the partnerships evidenced for RM 2.4 are applicable to this measure.</p>
<p>RM 9.2 - As part of their return, all companies must report on actions taken to increase awareness of the customer care registers (this will be tracked by UR through UR's annual domestic consumer insight tracker survey); and on the operation, outcomes and future review arrangements for their activities under the Code.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Please report on actions taken to increase awareness of the customer care registers this year. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How you informed your customers of the existence of CCRs (as required under RM 3.3). For example, as part of their bill, direct communication etc; and - A list of promotional activity you have conducted on CCRs throughout the year (as required under RM 3.4). Please provide evidence of each promotional activity. <p>Please provide a self-review on your operations in fulfilling this Code and the outcomes achieved. Please include any identified improvements for your service to vulnerable customers and the steps you are taking to implement these improvements.</p>
<p>RM 10.1 - All companies to conduct research and engagement with consumers in vulnerable circumstances, to include those on customer care registers (every two years at a minimum). A copy of the final research report must be submitted to the Authority and a public version made available.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Please provide a copy of your research report and evidence where you have provided a public version.</p> <p>The research must have been conducted, reported on and published within the last two years. The same research and report can be applicable to meet this requirement for two subsequent years in a row.</p>

* Aligns fully with ISO 22458

Required response through Information Request

- 4.13 In November 2025, we will request the following information as a one-time compliance reporting requirement.

Table 4 One-time supplementary reporting requirements under RM 9.1

Required Measure	Supplementary Information
<p>RM 1.3* - All companies should have a specialist vulnerability team or person (dependent on the size of the business) within the appropriate part of the business to champion innovative strategies for the treatment of consumers displaying signs of vulnerability (including the use of inclusive design principles). This vulnerability team should include a staff member at a senior level and will represent, mentor and oversee the company's work on vulnerability.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Please provide the number of staff within the team and the level of the most senior member of staff within the team.</p> <p>You may wish to provide examples of any innovative strategies the vulnerability team has introduced and/or implemented over the year.</p> <p><i>If you have obtained ISO 22458:2022, reporting against this measure is not required.</i></p>
<p>RM 2.4 - Ensure processes are in place to enable a warm handover of consumers in vulnerable circumstances who are in need of additional support.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Please provide evidence of ongoing formalised and regular interaction with the appropriate advice agencies such as, but not limited to, Memorandum of Understanding, referral process or policy, record of correspondence at management and operational levels and key account contacts identified.</p>
<p>RM 7.4 - Target consumers with a PPM debt on or over a specified amount (£200) and provide an incentive to engage to discuss debt repayment that will include a package of support measures (e.g. warm handover to organisation who can carry out a benefit entitlement check).</p> <p>Applies to electricity and gas suppliers</p>	<p>Please set out your procedures for identification of customers with a PPM debt over £200, to include how these customers are identified and your steps following identification.</p>

* Aligns fully with ISO 22458

Reporting requirements through REMM

- 4.14 Within the decision paper on the Code, we stated that 'We have not added any new monitoring requirements for the CoP in this Decision Paper. Any metrics that are currently collected for the CoP on Provision of

Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick will continue to be collected.'

- 4.15 There are a number of metrics collected through REMM which are applicable to the new Code.
- 4.16 Under the CoP of Provision Services for Persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick, the following metrics have been collected from electricity and gas suppliers:
- 4.17 Electricity and gas supply company quarterly reports¹²:

Metric	Metric Description
Customer Care Registers	Number of customers listed on customer care registers at beginning of the quarter
	Number of customers added to customer care registers during the quarter
	Number of customers listed on customer care registers at end of the quarter

- 4.18 Electricity and gas supply company annual reports¹³:

Section	Metric Description
Customer Care Registers	Number of different services offered to customers on customer care registers at end of the year
	Description of different services offered to customers on customer care registers during the year
	Actions taken to promote customer care registers during the year

- 4.19 Gas supply company annual reports:

Section	Metric Description
Safety Inspections (gas only)	How many safety inspections of the gas appliances and other gas fittings have been completed in accordance with licence condition 2.11.3(f) ¹⁴ throughout the year?

¹² [Template - Electricity Supplier Quarterly Return \(REMM\) | Utility Regulator](#)
[Template - Gas Supplier Quarterly Return \(REMM\) | Utility Regulator](#)

¹³ [Template - Electricity Supplier Annual Return \(REMM\) | Utility Regulator](#)
[Template - Gas Supplier Annual Return \(REMM\) | Utility Regulator](#)

¹⁴ Condition 2.11: Code of Practice on Provision of Services for persons who are of Pensionable Age or

- 4.20 NIEN do not currently report on their medical care register as part of their REMM quarterly or annual reporting obligations.¹⁵
- 4.21 NI Water do not report through REMM. As part of their Annual Information Return (AIR) to UR, Northern Ireland Water provide the numbers of customers on the special assistance register during the reporting year.
- 4.22 Gas DNOs do not hold customer care registers (CCRs) therefore do not presently have any CCR reporting requirements.
- 4.23 For electricity and gas supplier quarterly REMM returns, we will continue to collect two of the three metrics that are currently submitted. For the electricity and gas supplier annual returns, we will remove three of the metrics that are currently submitted and introduce three new metrics to be collected.
- 4.24 For NIEN's REMM returns, we will introduce two new quarterly metrics.
- 4.25 For Gas DNO REMM returns, we will introduce three new annual metrics.
- 4.26 For NI Water, we will introduce two new quarterly metrics which will be collected by the REMM team.

Changes to REMM metrics that UR currently collects

- 4.27 We will continue to collect for this Code, the quarterly REMM metrics from suppliers that were collected for the CoP for Provision of Services for persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick on customer care register totals [specified in paragraph 4.17]. We consider these metrics offer valuable insight for our monitoring of the Code and market outcomes to identify potential consumer harm and provide relevant market insights.
- 4.28 However, we will reduce the number of metrics collected on a quarterly basis from three to two. As the number of customers listed on CCRs at the end of the quarter will be the same the number listed at the beginning of the next quarter, we will no longer collect the number of customers listed at the beginning of the quarter. Only the number of customers on CCRs at the end of the quarter will continue to be collected from suppliers.

Disabled or Chronically

3 (f) where all of the occupants of the household are either of pensionable age, disabled, chronically sick or minors, arrange for a safety inspection of the gas appliances and other gas fittings on the consumer's side of the meter to be undertaken by a person possessing appropriate expertise on at least an annual basis, other than an appliance for which the landlord of the consumer is responsible for the annual inspection in accordance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004.

¹⁵ [Template - Electricity Network Company Quarterly and Annual Return \(REMM\) | Utility Regulator](#)

- 4.29 We will continue to collect annual data from gas suppliers on the number of safety inspections of gas appliances and other gas fittings that have been completed. The reporting template will be updated to refer to the relevant required measure in the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances licence condition (Condition 2.11, RM 5.4¹⁶).
- 4.30 We will no longer collect three of the metrics that are currently collected for the annual REMM CoP monitoring [specified in paragraph 4.18]. These are the number of different services offered to customers on customer care registers at end of the year, descriptions of these services and actions taken to promote the new CCRs.
- 4.31 We consider this information will be evidenced through the annual supplementary information that will be provided against RM 6.1 and RM 9.2 and there is no additional value in monitoring through REMM.

New REMM metrics introduced

- 4.32 We will introduce three new annual monitoring requirements against RM 5.3.

Measure 5.3 – Ensure a domestic premises which includes an occupant who is of pensionable age, disabled, terminally ill, chronically sick or who are represented by UR's vulnerability definition can avail of a flexible payment plan for any reconnection charges. This repayment plan must be based on the customer's ability to pay and is to include but not exclusive to the use of instalments. If the reconnection is following disconnection or isolation from the network to ensure safety, the DNO can request an agreement with the customer to regular meter checks for the first year of reconnection.

Applies to gas DNOs and electricity and gas suppliers

- 4.33 The three new metrics that will be gathered annually from gas DNOs and from electricity and gas suppliers are:
- a) The number of reconnections over the year who were eligible for this flexible payment plan.
 - b) The number of reconnections who availed of payment plan.

¹⁶ Measure 5.4 – Arrange a free annual gas safety inspection of the gas appliances and other gas fittings on the customer's side of the meter for households where all occupants are either of pensionable age, disabled, have a terminal illness, chronically ill, minors or are represented by UR's vulnerability definition. This does not apply where the landlord of the customer is responsible for the annual inspection in accordance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004. The safety inspection must be undertaken by a person possessing appropriate expertise. *Applies to gas suppliers*

c) The number of reconnections with meter checks.

4.34 Table 5 summarises the monitoring metrics that will be collected for this Code.

Table 5 REMM metrics that will be collected against the Code

Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances	
Metric	Metric Description
Customer Care Registers (<i>applicable to electricity and gas suppliers and NIEN</i>)	Number of customers added to customer care registers during the quarter
	Number of customers listed on customer care registers at end of the quarter
Safety Inspections (<i>gas only</i>)	How many safety inspections of the gas appliances and other gas fittings have been completed in accordance with licence condition 2.11 (RM 5.4) throughout the year?
Flexible payment plan for any reconnection charges (<i>applicable to gas DNOs and to electricity and gas suppliers</i>)	The number of reconnections over the year who were eligible for this flexible payment plan
	The number of reconnections who availed of payment plan
	The number of reconnections with meter checks

4.35 Updated REMM quarterly and annual returns will be shared with licensees in advance of these submissions. The first quarterly returns will cover the period 1 July to 30 September 2025.

4.36 For NI Water, we will introduce two new quarterly reporting requirements for the customer care registers as below:

- a) Number of customers added to customer care registers during the quarter.
- b) Number of customers listed on customer care registers at end of the quarter.

4.37 A return template will be shared with NI Water in advance of the first quarterly submission. The first quarterly return will cover the period 1 July to 30 September 2025.

4.38 We will also continue to collect the data that is currently collected through NI Water's Annual Information Return.

Gas Supplier Standards of Performance report

- 4.39 For gas suppliers, as part of their annual SoLC submission, they provide a Standards of Performance report, as required under 'Condition 2.15: Standards of Performance' of their gas supply licence.¹⁷ This report records the licensee's general operation of the arrangements mentioned in Conditions 2.10-2.12 (Efficient use of Gas, Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances and Payment of Bills) and compliance with Condition 2.13.
- 4.40 The current Standards of Performance report template covers requirements relative to the CoP on Provision of Services for persons who are of Pensionable Age, Disabled or Chronically Sick under the 'Energy Care' section (which was replaced by the new Code).
- 4.41 The Gas Standards of Performance Report template which is submitted as part of the gas SoLC, will be updated to refer to the new Code, where the report references the Code that it has replaced (rows 12 and 13).

Accessible version of the returns for publication

- 4.42 All companies are required to publish an accessible version of the returns submitted to the UR on compliance with the Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances on their own websites. These returns will also be published on UR's website.
- 4.43 The intention of RM 10.2 is to enable consumers to be aware of what each company provides for consumers in vulnerable circumstances. For this reason, in the accessible version of the return, companies will not have to report against all the RMs that are in the annual return. Rather we have identified the information and evidence provided in the annual returns (for RM 9.1) that we consider will provide consumers the most value (to inform the consumer of the provisions the company has for consumers in vulnerable circumstances).

¹⁷ 2.15.2 Record of arrangements

The Licensee shall keep a record of its general operation of the arrangements mentioned in Conditions 2.10-2.12 and compliance with Condition 2.13 and, if the Authority so directs in writing, of its operation of Condition 2.13 in particular cases specified, or of a description specified, by it. The Licensee shall also keep a statistical record of its performance in relation to the provision of gas supply services to domestic consumers including services related to:

- (a) the giving of, and the continuation of the giving of, supplies of gas;
- (b) the ascertainment of quantities of gas supplied and the recovery of gas charges; and
- (c) the making of visits to consumers' premises and the response made to enquiries.

2.15.3 Report to Authority and General Consumer Council

As soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of each year ending on 31 December, the Licensee shall submit to the Authority and General Consumer Council a report dealing with the matters mentioned in Condition 2.15.2 which shall include a comparison of the Licensee's performance against the established standards in relation to that year

- 4.44 For those measures in the Code that will be monitored through submission of the accessible version of the annual return required under measure 10.2, table 6 below details the supplementary information that will be included in the accessible version of return template.
- 4.45 We will provide a reporting template for licensees (Annex 3). However, licensees may choose to present the information in a different way and to include additional information on their services and supports. Licensees will be required, at a minimum, to include information against the required measures in table 6.

Table 6 Supplementary Information that will be included in the accessible version of the annual return

Required Measure	Supplementary Information that will be included in the accessible version
<p>RM 1.2 - Obtaining the ISO 22458:2022 Consumer Vulnerability standard is recommended to all companies (but not required). The ISO standard will be aligned to the CoP requirements, so will evidence (for those companies who obtain it) compliance with a number of the CoP requirements.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Confirmation if ISO 22458:2022 has been obtained.</p>
<p>RM 2.1 - Ensure that all relevant staff (e.g. consumer facing staff, field staff, call centre handlers, and sub-contractors) and to include staff at a senior level, are adequately and frequently trained in the identification of consumers in vulnerable circumstances or /and who may be eligible for the customer care register, and in treating customers in an empathetic manner to encourage customers to self-identify. To include, but not exclusive to, disability training (in relation to hidden disabilities, learning difficulties or communication barriers), mental health awareness training and empathy training.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>The training that has been provided (to include the teams it has been provided to).</p>

Required Measure	Supplementary Information that will be included in the accessible version
<p>RM 2.4 - Ensure processes are in place to enable a warm handover of consumers in vulnerable circumstances who are in need of additional support.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>The consumer body(ies) that you are in partnership with to offer warm handovers.</p>
<p>RM 5.5 - Provide special identification for employees authorised by the Licensee to visit households. This will include operation of a password scheme and another telephonic based identification scheme (such as the Quick Check 101 scheme).</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Methods used to meet this requirement.</p>
<p>RM 5.7 - Provide alternative formats of communications for those domestic customers who require it, to be free of charge, including provision for customers who are blind or partially sighted or deaf or hearing impaired. This will include as a minimum, terms and conditions, billing information, Codes of Practice, complaints procedures and will include having facilities available to assist blind or partially sighted, or deaf or partially deaf customers to enquire or complain about any bill, statement or service provided to them.</p> <p>Applies to electricity and gas suppliers and the electricity DNO</p>	<p>All the alternative formats of communication available.</p>

Required Measure	Supplementary Information that will be included in the accessible version
<p>RM 6.1 - All companies to provide (free of charge and accessible) advice and information on the additional services available to customers because of their age, disability, or chronic illness and/or who are represented by UR's vulnerability definition. This should be provided through a number of channels to include, at minimum, the company's website and customer's bills. Advice and information provided must be accessible and displayed (if applicable) in a prominent position.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>List of the additional services available to your customers because of their age, disability, or chronic illness and/or who are represented by UR's vulnerability definition.</p>
<p>RM 7.1 - Provide consumers who are represented by UR's definition of vulnerability and are experiencing affordability difficulties with their energy bills with the option of a 'warm handover' to a consumer body which can assist them with a benefit entitlement check facility.</p> <p>Applies to electricity and gas DNOs and electricity and gas suppliers</p>	<p>Consumer body(ies) in partnership with to offer warm handovers.</p>
<p>RM 10.1 - All companies to conduct research and engagement with consumers in vulnerable circumstances, to include those on customer care registers (every two years at a minimum). A copy of the final research report must be submitted to the Authority and a public version made available.</p> <p>Applies to all Licensees</p>	<p>Link to the most recent published research report.</p> <p>The research must have been conducted, reported on and published within the last two years. The same research and report can be applicable to meet this requirement for two subsequent years in a row.</p>

5. Next Steps

Key dates and actions

- 5.1 This information paper details of and provides clarity on what is required from licensees as part of the monitoring and reporting framework for the CoP on CS and CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances.
- 5.2 Licensees may wish to note the following key dates and actions in relation to next steps:

Code of Practice on Customer Service	
From July 2025 onwards	Energy Suppliers to continue to report monthly CS KPIs, but this data will be collected as part of REMM. Therefore, the first submission via REMM will be for data for the month of June 2025 (up to and including the 30 June 2025). Submission dates will continue in line with current processes with returns required by the second Monday of each month covering the preceding month's data.
Early October 2025	We will issue a one-off information request seeking confirmation that processes/procedures and policies are in place to demonstrate compliance with the CoP on CS. This will be due for submission by 31 October 2025.

Code of Practice for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances	
From 1 July 2025 onwards	<p>Energy suppliers, Northern Ireland Electricity Networks, gas Distribution Network Operators and Northern Ireland Water to begin recording data for monitoring of the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances.</p> <p>The first quarterly return to REMM will be for the period 1 July to 30 September 2025, to be submitted by 31 October 2025.</p> <p>Quarterly and annual returns will be shared with licensees by the REMM team in advance of these submissions.</p>
November 2025	We will issue a one-off information request seeking supplementary information on compliance against three of the required measures for the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances. This will be due for submission by 24 November 2025.

Applicable to both Codes of Practice	
By 5 December 2025	Initiation of SoLC for 2025 reporting year. This will include the new required supplementary reports for both Codes.
27 February 2026	SoLC submission deadline.

- 5.3 Should a licensee have any questions regarding the monitoring of either Code, please contact **Sohui Donaldson** at Sohui.Donaldson@uregni.gov.uk for the CoP on CS and **Rachel Strong** at Rachel.Strong@uregni.gov.uk for the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances.

Annex 1 - SoLC Supplementary Report for CoP on Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances

Annual Supplementary Report on compliance with Code of Practice (CoP) for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances	
Applicable to:	All licensees must complete this supplementary annual report and submit it as part of the Annual Statement of Licence Compliance (SoLC).
Instructions:	<p>Please complete the licensee name and reporting year sections below.</p> <p>Additionally, please complete the sections under each required measure (RM) included in this report. Under each RM is a question/questions, that, when answered, will demonstrate a licensee's compliance with requirements within those measures. Under each RM we state which licensees the RM applies to, if the RM is not applicable to your licence, please answer N/A. Licensees must complete this report in full.</p>
Licensee name:	
Reporting year:	

RM 1.2: Obtaining the ISO 22458:2022 Consumer Vulnerability standard is recommended to all companies (but not required). The ISO standard will be aligned to the CoP requirements, so will evidence (for those companies who obtain it) compliance with a number of the CoP requirements.

Applies to all Licensees

Confirm if you have obtained ISO 22458:2022 or not, when this was obtained (if applicable) and if you plan to obtain the ISO in future.

If you have obtained ISO 22458:2022, this can be used as your evidence for those RM where evidence is required and where the requirement is included as part of the ISO KM testing.

RM 2.1: Ensure that all relevant staff (e.g. consumer facing staff, field staff, call centre handlers, and sub-contractors) and to include staff at a senior level, are adequately and frequently trained in the identification of consumers in vulnerable circumstances or /and who may be eligible for the customer care register, and in treating customers in an empathetic manner to encourage customers to self-identify. To include, but not exclusive to, disability training (in relation to hidden disabilities, learning difficulties or communication barriers), mental health awareness training and empathy training.

Applies to all Licensees

- i. Companies should prioritise frontline or customer facing staff when implementing this measure across all staff members.
- ii. The training provided to staff should be proportionate to their area of work, responsibilities, and level of interaction they may have with consumers.

List the training that has been provided (to include the teams it has been provided to and the date it was provided on).

RM 2.4: Ensure processes are in place to enable a warm handover of consumers in vulnerable circumstances who are in need of additional support.

Applies to all Licensees

- i. Relevant consumer representative bodies include, but are not limited to, those who specialise in fuel poverty, debt or energy efficiency. The relevant consumer representative body will vary depending on the support and individual circumstance the consumer is in.
- ii. Licensees and consumer representative bodies can establish partnerships in the manner that suits both parties in delivering this measure. This may include the development of formal referral partnerships.

Please list the consumer body(ies) that you are in partnership with to offer warm handovers. Please also confirm that formalised partnerships are in place with these consumer body(ies).

RM 5.5: Provide special identification for employees authorised by the Licensee to visit households. This will include operation of a password scheme and another telephonic based identification scheme (such as the Quick Check 101 scheme).

Applies to all Licensees

Please set out the methods your companies used to meet this requirement.

RM 5.7: Provide alternative formats of communications for those domestic customers who require it, to be free of charge, including provision for customers who are blind or partially sighted or deaf or hearing impaired. This will include as a minimum, terms and conditions, billing information, Codes of Practice, complaints procedures and will include having facilities available to assist blind or partially sighted, or deaf or partially deaf customers to enquire or complain about any bill, statement or service provided to them.

Applies to electricity and gas suppliers and the electricity DNO

Please list all the alternative formats of communication you have available.

RM 6.1: All companies to provide (free of charge and accessible) advice and information on the additional services available to customers because of their age, disability, or chronic illness and/or who are represented by UR's vulnerability definition. This should be provided through a number of channels to include, at minimum, the company's website and customer's bills. Advice and information provided must be accessible and displayed (if applicable) in a prominent position.

Applies to all Licensees

Please list where you have provided this information.

Please include a list of the additional services available to your customers because of their age, disability, or chronic illness and/or who are represented by UR's vulnerability definition.

RM 7.1: Provide consumers who are represented by UR's definition of vulnerability and are experiencing affordability difficulties with their energy bills with the option of a 'warm handover' to a consumer body which can assist them with a benefit entitlement check facility.

Applies to electricity and gas DNOs and electricity and gas suppliers

- i. Companies should proactively offer the warm handover service to any customer they determine are experiencing affordability difficulties with their energy bills.

Please list which of the partnerships evidenced for RM 2.4 are applicable to this measure.

RM 9.2: As part of their return, all companies must report on actions taken to increase awareness of the customer care registers (this will be tracked by UR through UR's annual domestic consumer insight tracker survey); and on the operation, outcomes and future review arrangements for their activities under the Code.

Applies to all Licensees

- i. This is a self-review by companies of their operations in fulfilling this code and the outcomes achieved. It should include any identified improvements the company will make to improve their services to vulnerable customers.

Please report on actions taken to increase awareness of the customer care registers this year. To include:

- How you informed your customers on the existence of CCRs (as required under RM 3.3). For example, as part of their bill, direct communication etc; and

<p>- A list of promotional activity you have conducted on CCRs throughout the year (as required under RM 3.4). Please provide evidence of each promotional activity.</p> <p>Please provide a self review on your operations in fulfilling this Code and the outcomes achieved. Please include any identified improvements for your service to vulnerable customers and the steps you are taking to implement these improvements.</p>	
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RM 10.1: All companies to conduct research and engagement with consumers in vulnerable circumstances, to include those on customer care registers (every two years at a minimum). A copy of the final research report must be submitted to the Authority and a public version made available.

Applies to all Licensees

- i. The purpose of this measure is for regulated companies to review how effective their processes are for their vulnerable customers and identify any ways they could improve.
- ii. The type, scale and format of engagement and research is to be decided by each company. Companies can choose to conduct research across their whole customer base, or they may focus on a particular cohort of customers. The research can be qualitative or quantitative or a mixture of both.

Please provide a copy of your research report and evidence where you have provided a public version. The research must have been conducted, reported on and published within the last two years. The same research and report can be applicable to meet this requirement for two subsequent years in a row.

RM 10.2: All companies to publish an accessible version of the returns submitted to the Authority on compliance with the Code of Practice for consumers in vulnerable circumstances on their own websites. These returns will also be published on the Authority's website.

Applies to all Licensees

Please provide an accessible version of this return, for UR to publish on UR's website and please publish the same version on your website.

Optional: Any additional Information

Any further information relating to compliance with the Code of Practice on for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances to be provided below.

Annex 2 - SoLC Supplementary Report for CoP on Customer Service

Supplementary Report on compliance with Code of Practice (CoP) on Customer Service (CS)	
Applicable to:	All domestic electric and gas suppliers must complete this supplementary report and submit it as part of the Annual Statement of Licence Compliance (SoLC).
Instructions:	<p>Please complete the licensee name and reporting year sections below.</p> <p>Additionally, please complete the sections under each measure included in this report. Under each measure is a question/questions, that, when answered, will demonstrate a licensee's compliance with requirements within those measures. Licensees must complete this report in full.</p>
Licensee name:	
Reporting year:	

Measure 1: Domestic consumers, in particular those in vulnerable circumstances, must be able to easily identify a method of contacting their energy supplier that meets their needs. The effectiveness of these methods must be regularly reviewed by suppliers.

<p>In what year did you last conduct a review of the effectiveness of your available contact methods? Please provide the outcomes of the review.</p> <p>Were any new contact methods implemented as a result of the review? If so, please list them.</p>	

Measure 5: Customers must be able to easily identify methods of contacting their suppliers.

Please provide an anonymised copy of a customer bill.

Measure 6: Suppliers must ensure customer contact centre services are open at times that meet the needs of their domestic customers.

Please list the dates of planned closures for the year, which includes instances of planned early closures.

Please list the dates of unplanned closures for the year, which includes instances of unplanned early closures.

Optional: Any additional Information

Any further information relating to compliance with the Code of Practice on Customer Service to be provided below.

Annex 3 – Template for the accessible version of the annual report on compliance with the CoP for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstance

Annual Report on compliance with Code of Practice (CoP) for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances	
Instructions:	<p>Please complete the licensee name and reporting year sections below.</p> <p>This template requests the information that is required to be included in the publicly accessible version of the report on compliance with the Code of Practice for consumers in vulnerable circumstances. You may wish to use an alternative reporting format for this report and to include your own branding. However, the information required (highlighted in italics) must be included.</p> <p>If the RM is not applicable to your licence, please remove this section from your report. Licensees must complete this report in full.</p> <p>A copy of this return is to be published on the licensees website and will also be published on the UR's website.</p>
Licensee name:	
Reporting year:	

We have obtained the BSI ISO 22458:2022 Consumer Vulnerability standard. This is an international standard on the design and delivery of inclusive services for vulnerable consumers. The standard covers organisational culture and strategy, inclusive design and how to identify and respond to consumer vulnerability.

If applicable, the wording above can be used in this report. Licensees may wish to add further information on the standard. If not obtained, please remove this section from the report.

Applies to all Licensees

The following training has been provided to our staff over the last year.

List the training that has been provided (to include the teams it has been provided to and the date it was provided on).

Applies to all Licensees

We have partnered with the following organisations who we can refer to you for further support, if needed.

Please list the consumer body(ies) that you are in partnership with to offer warm handovers.

Applies to all Licensees

We provide a special identification service for our employees when they are visiting your home. This includes the operation of a password scheme and a telephone based identification scheme.

Please set out the methods your companies used to meet this requirement (for example, information on the Quick Check 101 scheme, if applicable).

Applies to all Licensees

We provide the following alternative formats of communications for those customers who require it. These are free of charge.

Please list all the alternative formats of communication you have available.

Applies to electricity and gas suppliers and the electricity DNO

We provide the following additional services for consumers in vulnerable circumstances.

Please include a list of the additional services available to your customers because of their age, disability, or chronic illness and/or who are represented by UR's vulnerability definition.

Applies to all Licensees

For vulnerable consumers who are experiencing affordability difficulties with their energy bills, we can refer you a consumer body who can assist you with a benefit entitlement check facility.

Please list which of the partnerships evidenced for RM 2.4 are applicable to this measure.

Applies to electricity and gas DNOs and electricity and gas suppliers

We conduct research and engage with consumers in vulnerable circumstances to help us understand how effective our processes are for vulnerable customers and to identify any ways we can improve.

Please provide a copy of your research report. The research must have been conducted, reported on and published within the last two years. The same research and report can be applicable to meet this requirement for two subsequent years in a row.

Applies to all Licensees

Optional: Any additional Information

Licensees may wish to include any further information relating to the Code of Practice on for Consumers in Vulnerable Circumstances.

Glossary

AIR	Northern Ireland Water's Annual Information Return
CCR	Customer Care Register
CoP	Code of Practice
CS	Customer Service
DNO	Distribution Network Operator
FTE	Full time equivalent
I&C	Industrial & Commercial
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
MCR	Medical Care Register
NIEN	Northern Ireland Electricity Networks
NIW	Northern Ireland Water
REMM	Retail Energy Market Monitoring
RM	Required Measure
SoLC	Statement of Licence Compliance
UR	Utility Regulator