16 March 2010

Sarah Friedel
Utility Regulator
Queens House
10-18 Queen Street
BELFAST
BT1 6ED

Dear Sarah,

Re: Charges to Suppliers for Use of the Electricity Transmission

The Consumer Council is a Non-Departmental Public Body set up in legislation to safeguard the interests of all consumers, and particularly the vulnerable and disadvantaged. The Consumer Council is an independent organisation which operates to promote and protect the consumer interest.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation on charges to suppliers for use of the electricity transmission.

With fuel poverty levels in Northern Ireland at 44 per cent, many households are struggling to adequately heat their home, it is important that the regulatory structures look to minimise the cost of energy to consumers.

The Consumer Council believes the chosen option should only be undertaken if it will benefit all consumers. The benefit will ultimately be realised through lower bills.

The proposals suggest that low voltage customers will face lower TUoS tariffs. It is important that the impacts of TUoS charges are lowered for all consumers and will assist in providing long term price stability for all electricity customers in Northern Ireland.

TUoS charges should accurately reflect the costs that users impose on the transmission system. Incentives for users of the transmission system to
reduce costs should ensure that consumers will benefit from lower charges on their final bills.

I hope that these comments are helpful and are given due consideration. Please contact me if you require any clarification.

Yours Sincerely,

Andrew Murray
Senior Consumer Affairs Officer