

**MINUTES OF THE 2<sup>nd</sup> MEETING OF  
THE SECOND STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF OERC**

**PRESENT:**

- Shri B.K. Das, Chairperson, OERC - [ in the Chair ]
- Shri S.K. Jena, Member, OERC
- Shri K. C. Badu, Member, OERC
- 1 Shri S.B. Dash, Director, Consumer Affairs and ex-officio Joint Secretary, representing Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Food Supplies & Consumers Welfare Deptt.
  - 2 Shri S.K. Paikray, Additional Secretary, representing Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Department of Energy
  - 3 Ms. (Dr.) Arati Mohanty, Satyanagar, Bhubaneswar
  - 4 Shri K.N. Jena  
Orissa Consumer Association, Cuttack
  - 5 Shri Bansidhar Acharya, President, Anchalika Khauti Surakhya Sangha Jagatsinghpur
  - 6 Ms. Rama Subudhi, Advocate  
Institute of Women's Welfare, Ganjam
  - 7 Shri Maheswar Baug,  
Nagarika Adhikar Surakhya Committee & Durniti Nibarana Sangha
  8. Shri G. N. Agarwal, General Secretary,  
Sbl. Dist. Consumers Federation, Sambalpur
  - 9 Shri Pranakrishna Dash, Advocate  
Orissa Krusak Mohasangha
  - 10 Shri S.C. Mohanty, General Secretary  
Nikhila Orissa Bidyut Shramik Mohasangha
  - 11 Shri M.V. Rao, President  
M/s. UCCI, Bhubaneswar
  - 12 Shri Bibhuti Ranjan Mohapatra, President  
Orissa Small Scale Industries Association  
Cuttack
  - 13 Shri B. K. Mohapatra  
Orissa Small Scale Industries Association  
Cuttack

- 14 Shri S.K. Nanda, CII
- 15 Shri Gobardhan Pujari, General Secretary  
Sundargarh Dist. Employers Association, RKL
- 16 Shri N. K. Mohanty, CESE  
East Coast Railway, Bhubaneswar
- 17 Shri S.C. Mahalik. Ex-Chairman, OERC
- 18 Prof. (Dr.) Gyana Chandra Kar, Ph.D. (Econ.)  
Bhubaneswar
- 19 Dr. D.V. Ramana, Professor  
Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar
- 20 Shri G. K. DHAL, IAS  
CMD, GRIDCO & OPTCL
- 21 Shri P.K. Sahoo, Company Secretary, OHPC
- 22 Shri D. Biswal, CEO, CESU
- 23 Shri S.D. Bhanja, Asst. General Manger,  
NESCO
- 24 Shri P. K. Pradhan, CEO I/c, WESCO
- 25 Shri K.C. Behera, General Manger, SOUTHCO

**OERC SECRETARIAT :**

1. Shri M P Mishra, Secretary
2. Shri N C Mohapatra, JD (Law)
3. Ms Purabi Das, PAO

**TIME : 3:00 PM**  
**DATE : 28<sup>TH</sup> July 2007**  
**VENUE : CONFERENCE HALL, OERC**

**INTRODUCTORY**

The Chairperson, OERC welcomed all the Members and explained the purpose of the meeting. He indicated that following agenda would be taken up for discussion in today's meeting of the SAC.

- (i) Consumer Service Documents such as
  - a) Consumer Rights Statement

- b) Complaint Handling Procedure
- c) Code of Practice on Payment of Bills.
- (ii) Progress of consumer satisfaction survey
- (iii) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- (iv) Deteriorating Standards of Performance of WESCO

Thereafter discussion was made agenda wise. A resume of the discussion held and suggestions made is indicated below against each of the agenda items:

### **Agenda1 - Consumer Service Documents**

2. The Chairperson placed the three consumer service documents, namely, (a) Consumer Rights Statement, (b) Complaint Handling Procedure, and (c) Code of Practice on Payment of Bills for views of the SAC. These matters were deliberated and all the members participated in the discussion and the following opinions were expressed:
3. The documents are lengthy and adequate time has not been allowed to examine the same in order to facilitate quality inputs.
4. **Consumer Rights Statement** - All members insisted that copies of the consumer rights statement should be provided to all consumers free of cost. CEO, CESU informed that the cost of publishing these documents would be approximately Rs. 2.5 cr. If each set of documents cost Rs. 10/- to print. This cost would automatically be passed on in tariff. Members felt that complaints should be given a tracking number as in BSNL and mooted the idea of an "Interactive voice response system". They also felt that updated information on consumer service documents should be provided in the website.
5. **Complaint Handling Procedure** - The upper time limit for attending the services is too liberal. It should be stringent. All time limits for the Complaint Handling Procedure should be reduced by 50% reiterated the members. Also compensation should be per day instead of one time. Compensation amount where due should be automatically adjusted in the next bill. It was also suggested that there was a need to classify generic & individual complaints separately and that the former should be monitored and penalized by the Commission at a macro level. It was clarified that the Complaint Handling Procedure is meant for disposal of individual

complaints at the licensee's level. Some members also objected to distinction between standards for rural and urban consumers while members representing industry felt that there should be separate time limits for industrial consumers as an outage of short duration can also cause huge loss. It suggested that all complaints should be lodged with a customer care centre which can forward them to the concerned unit for action. just like telephone bills. The consumers should have right to inspect the complaint register, the members interacted.

6. **Code of Practice on Payment of Bills** - Members opined that the language of the electric bills should be both in Oriya and English. They said there should be longer period for payment of bills. In the format of the bill, receipt format should be at the bottom. Group billing at a point was suggested for certain groups of consumers like BSNL employees, etc. Members demanded that on the spot cheque payment facility should be extended to all consumers with spot billing. Some Members felt that energy arrears are not a public demand and cannot be collected under the Orissa Public Demand Recovery Act. Delayed Payment surcharge should not be charged on previous arrears. Distcoms clarified that this is not being done and that the payment against dues is adjusted first towards the principal.
6. The Chairperson said that the consumer service documents are those of the licensees and have been submitted by them for the approval of the Commission. He pointed out that time limit and compensation amount in the consumer service document is as per the OERC Regulations. While finalizing and framing those regulations, views of public and stakeholders were taken. Hence if SAC members want that time limit allowed to the licensees should be more stringent, they should give in writing for suitable amendment of the OERC Distribution (Conditions of Supply) Code, 2004 and OERC (Licensee's Standards of Performance) Regulations, 2004. However, they should keep the provisions of the Electricity Act, 2003 in mind while suggesting for the amendment. He also agreed that another meeting of the SAC should be convened on standards of performance of the utilities to give the

SAC the opportunity to study the above documents in depth and to suggest improvements.

### **Agenda 2 - Progress of consumer Satisfaction Survey**

7. A presentation on the genesis and progress of the consumer satisfaction survey under taken by OERC as per its Long Term Tariff Strategy order dtd. 18.6.2003 was made by the Public Affairs Officer, OERC.
8. Members were of the view that the credential of the institute which had been awarded the work should be scrutinized and it should be ensured that the surveyors carry out the survey properly. They opined that Rs. 2.02 lac is a very meagre amount for such a huge task. However, it was clarified that comparative quotations had been sought from leading agencies and work order was issued on four criteria namely, size of sample, duration of survey, budget and objectives of the survey. Member suggested that the Orissa Consumer Association may be involved in the survey. The surveyors should liaison with the 13 district offices of the OCA for qualitative results. The addresses need to be provided to the surveyors for the purpose.

### **Agenda 3 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) in the field of electricity.**

9. A presentation on the FAQ was made by the PAO. The forum appreciated the effort for framing such Questions.
10. Members were of the view that the FAQ must be distributed to all consumers and must be in Oriya.  
The Chairperson explained that further value addition can be made by Members if they so like. They can also submit it in writing to be included thereafter for being discussed in next SAC.

### **Agenda 4 - Any other:**

11. Deteriorating Standards of Performance of WESCO - The deteriorating standard of performance in Wesco was brought to the notice of the Commission by SAC member from Rourkerla, Sri Gobardhan Pujari. He said that the people in general are expressing their discontentment against the functioning of WESCO which may create law and order problems. Due to high handedness

of Wesco functionaries, members of the Sundergarh Bar Association., Sambalpur Bar Association and consumer associations of Bargarh, Bolangir and Rourkela had taken the matter to the streets. The Chairperson assured that the subject will be taken to consideration at the appropriate level.

12. Amendment of Regulations 80(5) - It was pointed out that the Small Scale Industries have not been considered by the Commission for concessional tariff. In order to eliminate discrimination, a category may be created to include all Small, Tiny, Cottage, Khadi and Village Industries for consideration for concessional tariff. As Poultry and Cold Storage are considered a trading activity, they should not be given any concessions. However, Pisci-Culture, Horti-Culture, Flori-Culture and Seri-Culture may be included in Agriculture category. All these can be looked after in the tariff hearing, it was reiterated.
13. Sri S C Mohanty of the Nikhil Orissa Bidyut Mahasangh brought to the notice of the Commission that the CEOs of all three REL Distcoms have been removed from service and junior officers placed in-charge. This tantamounts to a withdrawal of REL from its obligations and may lead to a collapse of the system. He pointed out that there was gross violation of the service standards and codes by the REL managed utilities and demanded that the state Govt. should take appropriate action. Members were informed that OERC had taken steps to regulate the REL managed Distcoms on violation of Standards of Performance and the matter is now sub-judice in the Supreme Court. Further the Govt. nominee informed that the matter was discussed before the Standing Committee of Parliament and action as deemed proper will be taken on the same by the State Govt. which is already a party in the case.
14. Members were requested to submit their proposals, amendments if any to all the documents circulated within a period of one month. Their suggestion will be compiled and circulated well in time before the next SAC for finalization of these documents.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair and the Members.

Sd/-  
**K. C. BADU**  
**MEMBER**

Sd/-  
**S. K. JENA**  
**MEMBER**

Sd/-  
**B. K. DAS**  
**CHAIRPERSON**