



The Consumer Council

Elizabeth House
116 Hollywood Road
Belfast
BT4 1NY

Jean Pierre Miura
Utility Regulator
Queens House
14 Queen Street
Belfast
BT1 6ED

27 January 2012

Dear Jean Pierre,

Re: Treatment of losses in the SEM

The Consumer Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

The Consumer Council is an independent consumer organisation set up in legislation to safeguard the interests of Northern Ireland consumers, particularly the vulnerable and disadvantaged. We work to promote and protect consumer interest and bring about change to benefit consumers. Our aim is to make the consumer voice heard and make it count.

We represent consumers in the areas of transport, water and energy. We also have responsibility to educate consumers on their rights and responsibilities and to equip them with the skills they need to make good decisions about their money and manage it wisely.

It is the position of the Consumer Council that any change to the regulatory structure of the Northern Ireland Energy Market should only be undertaken if it is in the interest of the Northern Ireland consumer. With fuel poverty levels in Northern Ireland reaching crisis levels, with one in two households struggling to adequately heat their home, it is important that the regulatory structures look to minimise the cost of energy to consumers.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind both Regulatory Authorities of their commitment to act in the interests of consumers.

The Regulatory Authorities must ensure that whichever proposal is adopted across the island of Ireland that Northern Ireland consumers

do not pay additional costs for the recent construction of power stations in ROI or the East-West interconnector. The decisions to proceed with these projects were not ones that Northern Ireland consumers had a voice in.

Therefore, the proposals under consideration should only proceed if they can be shown to be in the interests of the end users of energy in Northern Ireland.

If you wish to discuss the attached in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9067 4895 or by email to rwilliams@consumercouncil.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Williams', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

RICHARD WILLIAMS
Senior Consumer Affairs Officer