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DRAFT **NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTRICITY** **STANDARDS OF SERVICE CODE**

The Commission has today published a Draft Code.

This follows the Commission's consideration of submissions received in response to the August 2004 Issues Paper entitled *Developing a Standards-Of-Service Framework*, and its further consideration of the requirements of relevant legislation.

The Draft Code will now be subject to consultation consistent with section 24 of the *Utilities Commission Act 2000*. Submissions are sought from interested parties on the Draft Code by **30 September 2005**.

The Commission expects the finalised Code to commence on 1 January 2006.

The Code will apply only to the Power and Water Corporation for the foreseeable future.

The Code will establish both:

- minimum standards of service benchmarks, by 30 June 2006; and
- reporting of actual standards of service against each of the benchmarks, commencing after the end of each financial year from 2005-06.

The Commission will publish an annual compliance report, commencing after Power and Water has reported to the Commission on actual standards of service attained during the 2005-06 financial year. The Commission expects its annual compliance report to play an important role in facilitating customers, media and other stakeholders in critically assessing and making a judgment on the level of performance by Power and Water compared to the minimum standards of service benchmarks as well as similar service providers elsewhere in Australia. It will also play a role in facilitating informed discussion between consumers and Power and Water on local or generalised standards of service improvements.

The Draft Code does not include any incentive or penalty mechanisms, such as:

- price control adjustments in response to service performance; or
- customer compensation (or guaranteed service level) schemes.

The scope for such mechanisms is more appropriately considered in the context of the next network's regulatory reset, due to take effect from July 2009. Decisions on these matters at this later time will also be better informed by the reporting to be required under the Code.

Alan Tregilgas
Utilities Commissioner
(for the Utilities Commission)
5 August 2005