



**Customer
Performance
Report 2018**

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01 Executive Summary

The Gas Networks Ireland Performance Report has been published annually since 2008. There are now two specific performance reports;

- **A Systems Performance Report; and**
- **A Customer Performance Report.**

The Customer Performance Report provides an overview of how both the natural gas transmission and distribution systems have operated during 2018, in relation to customer oriented activities. This report analyses the key areas where Gas Networks Ireland provides services to customers over a five year period from 2014, the performance of these services is benchmarked against key performance indicators (KPI's) as per the Customer Charter . Gas Network Ireland's aims to provide customer services in a prompt, efficient, and safe manner and to a high standard. The levels of service provided to customers is continuously monitored on a daily basis and strives to achieve service excellence in all aspects of customer interactions.

Gas Networks Ireland has a Customer Charter¹ which provides assurance to customers of the company's dedication to 10 performance commitments, whereby in certain circumstances, compensation will be provided for failing to meet these standards. The programme of customer satisfaction monitoring, across these 10 different network activities, continued to score very favourably across all processes in 2018.

Ensuring the safety of customers and the general public is of prime importance to Gas Networks Ireland, 99.3% of reported escapes were attended to within the hour. The number of gas escapes reported in 2018 increased by 3.9% compared to 2017. The increase in reports may be attributed to severe weather experienced in March 2018, however despite the increase in the total number of escapes in 2018 the number is below those reported in the periods 2014, 2015 and 2016.

The volume of calls received by Gas Networks Ireland was 318,989 in 2018, a very slight decrease of 0.05% on 2017. *Dial a Read* showed an increase of 5.5% in call volumes, or 4,500 additional calls. However, when all channels of communication are included, the customer contact volume with Gas Networks Ireland has increased with circa 516,000 contacts in 2018. The total number of complaints in 2018 was 1,953 up from 1,850 in 2017, showing an overall increase of 5.6%. The largest number of complaints received fall into the meter related category, which is consistent with previous years. Gas Networks Ireland continues to monitor all customer complaints to seek improvements to the services offered. This includes using the Customer Experience (CX) Guiding Principles Programme to put customers first by working collaboratively with colleagues, stakeholders and customers. Customer processes are measured and insights gained are shared with stakeholders.

Following a consultation in 2016, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), formerly the Commission for Energy Regulation issued a decision in 2017 on Gas Networks Ireland's Customer Performance Indicators, deciding to incentivise Gas Networks Ireland in key areas of its customer service such as the customer contact centre response, complaints metrics and the results from customer surveys. During the PC4 price control period, which commenced in October 2017 and will continue for five years until September 2022, the CRU has decided to introduce financial incentives for Gas Networks Ireland with respect to these key customer performance indicators. For 2018 and 2019 GNI is collecting data on these metrics, in order to establish baseline performance. The CRU will review the baseline performance and use this information to inform the performance targets. Once the performance targets have been set, GNI will report on its performance for each metric versus these targets. This will be set out in a dedicated section of this report.

Operationally Gas Networks Ireland has generally performed within the KPI levels set out in the CRU approved Customer Charter¹, providing a consistent level of service to its entire customer base throughout 2018. There have however, been exceptions in meeting KPI's as follows, Appointment Granting for metering work came in at 99.96% against a KPI of 100% caused by capacity or Local Authority restrictions, Appointment Keeping for metering came in at 98.3% against a KPI of 100% and Appointment Keeping for Service came in at 93.86% against a KPI of 100% both due to a number of reasons including in day delay making the appointment, human error, called to an emergency response, materials issue or other operational reasons.

Gas Networks Ireland's ambition is to be capable of supporting 20% renewable gas in the network by 2030. Renewable gas is a clean, renewable and carbon neutral fuel and as such can make a significant contribution to Ireland's renewable energy and carbon reduction targets. It is produced from different sustainable organic materials, upgraded to bio-methane and can then be injected into existing gas transmission and / or distribution infrastructure. On a project which was co-funded by the EU Connecting Europe Facility, construction of the first grid injection facility for bio-methane into the existing gas network was completed in December 2018.

1 [Customer Charter](#)

02 Introduction

The Customer Performance report is produced to comply with the licence conditions pertaining to “overall standards and performance” of the four licences currently held by Gas Networks Ireland, granted by the CRU:

- **Distribution System Owner Licence;**
- **Distribution System Operator (DSO) Licence;**
- **Transmission System Owner Licence; and**
- **Transmission System Operator (TSO) Licence.**

Gas Networks Ireland
is responsible for

**developing,
maintaining
and operating**

the gas transmission
and distribution systems.



The performance standards have been developed by Gas Networks Ireland and approved by the CRU, these performance criteria may be amended by the CRU from time to time, by notice to Gas Networks Ireland.

The annual performance reports are produced under licence condition 17 of the TSO licence and condition 19 of the DSO licence. Reporting provides an opportunity for Gas Networks Ireland and the CRU to review the company performance over a twelve month period. The annual performance reports are published on the Gas Networks Ireland website, gasnetworks.ie.

Gas Networks Ireland has a Customer Charter where it outlines 10 commitments to the customer in terms of the services provided. Section 4 of this report illustrates Gas Networks Ireland's performance in these 10 areas over a 5 year period.

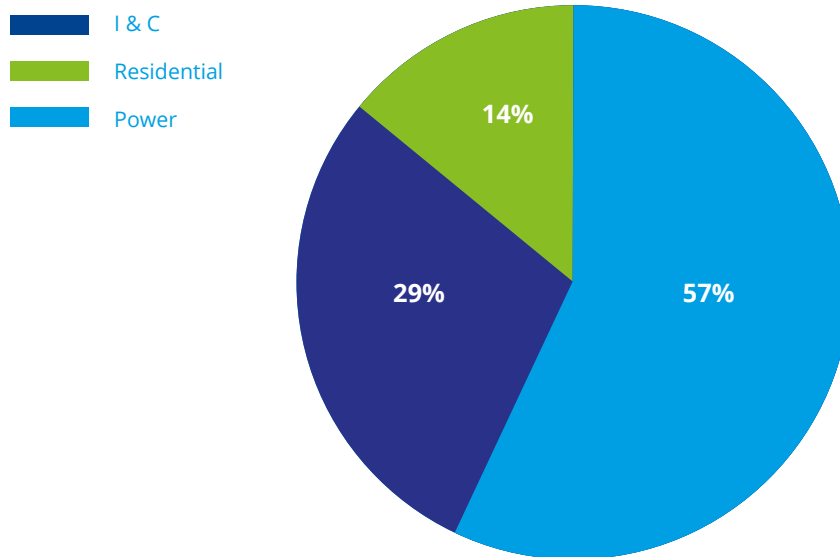
2.1 Company and network overview

Gas Networks Ireland is responsible for developing, maintaining and operating the gas transmission and distribution systems. Gas Networks Ireland ensures that over 697,000 natural gas customers in over 175 population centres in 20 counties throughout Ireland receive a safe, efficient and secure supply of natural gas, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Natural gas has played a vital role in Ireland's energy mix and in Ireland's social and economic progress. In terms of demand, natural gas accounts for 30% of Ireland's primary energy mix. The gas demand market is categorised into Power, Industrial and Commercial (I & C) and Residential sectors accounting for circa² 57%, 29% and 14% of the demand respectively. The Corrib gas field, which came into operation at the end of 2015, supplemented the existing indigenous supply of natural gas from Kinsale Energy Limited, while meeting circa 55% of Ireland's natural gas demand. Ireland's interconnection with the United Kingdom (UK) as a gateway to the European gas markets, ensures security of energy supply to the Irish economy.

2 Percentages of gas market share calculated based on Gas Networks Ireland gas year 2017/18 data.

02 Introduction

Figure 2.1: ROI gas market demand



Natural gas is transported through a total network of 14,390km of pipeline, both transmission and distribution. The pipeline network connects the Republic of Ireland (RoI) to, Scotland, Northern Ireland (NI) and the Isle of Man (IoM). The natural gas delivered to end users is not owned by Gas Networks Ireland. Gas Networks Ireland transports the gas on behalf of shippers and suppliers who purchase the gas from the wholesale market and use the transportation services of Gas Networks Ireland to deliver gas to businesses and homes throughout Ireland. The gas network supplies energy to 14 power stations and more than 697,000 businesses and homes.

The Gas Networks Ireland system includes infrastructure in RoI regulated by the CRU; in NI regulated by the Utility Regulator; and in South West Scotland regulated by Ofgem. The natural gas network is differentiated as transmission and distribution and this is determined by the prevailing pressure in the pipes:

- High pressure transmission network which operates above 16 barg (the total length of transmission pipeline is 2,477km³); and
- Distribution network which operates below 16 barg (the total length of distribution pipeline is 11,913km).

A map of the transmission system is provided in Figure 2.2.

The transmission pipes link Ireland’s major urban areas and also connects Ireland to the UK at Moffat in Scotland. Electricity generating power stations and some large industrial customers are also directly connected to the transmission network. Mostly residential and small to medium commercial customers are connected to natural gas in the distribution network.

Figure 2.2: Overview of Gas Networks Ireland Transmission System



Pipeline Map

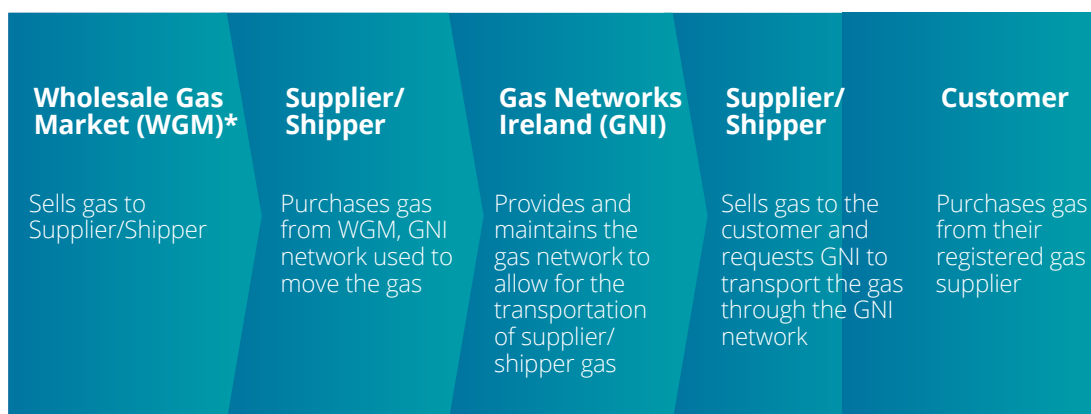


- Existing Pipelines —————
- Planned/Under Construction - - - - -
- Pipelines Owned by Others —————

02 Introduction

Suppliers⁴ are retail market players that sell gas and provide services to end users i.e. customers. Shippers include suppliers and also some large end users such as power stations. These power stations consume large amounts of gas allowing them to purchase gas directly from the wholesale market and use the Gas Networks Ireland natural gas transmission system to transport the gas directly to their sites to facilitate the generation of electricity.

Figure 2.3: Structure of Irish gas market



*The Wholesale Gas Market (WGM) is where the gas is purchased by energy traders and shippers

Gas Networks Ireland is responsible for connecting all customers to the network, regardless of their supplier. The company manages a 24 hour gas emergency service handling on average almost 17,000 call-outs a year. Through the Gas Networks Ireland Connections Policy⁵, Gas Networks Ireland continually brings the benefits of natural gas to new customers and new towns. The Connections Policy is a Gas Networks Ireland document which is approved by the CRU. The Connections Policy is based on high level objectives to encourage the connection of new customers; provide transparency around charges; treat connections consistently and minimise the impact on tariffs. The more customers that are connected to the gas network the more throughput there is on the system which in turn reduces the tariffs for the benefit of all gas customers.

4 [Gas Suppliers List](#)
 5 [Connections Policy](#)

Gas Networks Ireland actively promotes natural gas as a fuel of choice for homes, businesses and industry, encourages greater utilisation of the natural gas network and looks for opportunities to expand the network where economically viable. Growing the gas network sustainably by adding new towns where appropriate and focussing on connecting customers to the existing network has remained a key objective for Gas Networks Ireland. Construction was completed on the connection of Listowel, Nenagh and the Center Parcs Ballymahon Holiday Village to the natural gas network. The continued roll-out of the gas network to Wexford town will support this growth.

As a low carbon fuel with low energy costs, natural gas is appealing to multi-national organisations. Cities and towns that have natural gas infrastructure are attractive for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and can benefit through direct employment and investment in the local economy. The natural gas network developed by Gas Networks Ireland has sufficient capacity to meet the gas demands of a modern Ireland competing in the global economy, contributing to Ireland's social and economic progress.

The clear benefits of gas for the customer are that it is cheaper, cleaner and more reliable than other fossil fuels. It is also a versatile energy source that can play a significant role in decarbonising the nation's energy consumption. Natural gas already contributes to competitiveness being at a lower cost than oil for domestic consumers⁶; it produces approximately 22% less CO₂ than oil and 40% less than coal⁷. Natural gas provides energy security for Ireland through existing infrastructure. The indigenous sources at Corrib will continue to meet over 50% of RoI total gas requirements until 2019/20 when imports from the UK will re-emerge as the main supply source for RoI. Interconnectors to the UK market provide access to diverse gas sources ensuring a robust supply of gas and pricing liquidity.

Future Development

Growing the natural gas network is a key priority for Gas Networks Ireland, in order to ensure the existing natural gas network infrastructure can be more efficiently utilised. Gas infill aims to extend the distribution mains in urban areas to a greater number of 'within reach' properties and opportunities to expand the network are explored where viable. Sales and marketing activity included multiple initiatives in each market sector during 2018. The purpose of these initiatives was to grow the number of gas customers on the existing network, to increase the use of natural gas among existing gas users and to extend the network to areas not currently serviced with natural gas. There is considerable emphasis on investing in innovation and new business areas such as renewable gas and natural gas vehicles.

6 [SEAI Domestic Fuels Comparison of Energy Costs](#)

7 [The Irish Academy of Engineering Policy Advisory The Future of Oil and Gas, published February 2013](#)

02 Introduction

CNG

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) in transport is a globally used technology, whereby natural gas is pressurised and used as an alternative vehicle fuel to diesel and petrol. Vehicle refuelling occurs at a standard refuelling station – providing vehicles with refuelling times and travel ranges similar to traditionally fuelled vehicles. The benefits range from cheaper fuel for transportation, lower air pollution and reduction in noise pollution. With more gas flowing through the network, the use of CNG may ultimately lead to lower tariffs for all natural gas users. CNG is a proven technology that is widely used in other countries with over 26 million gas powered vehicles in circulation. Circle K and Gas Networks Ireland have completed Ireland's first publicly accessible CNG station at the Circle K Service Station in Dublin Port. It is operational and available for use. This CNG station has the capacity to refuel up to 70 vehicles daily with the installation of CNG refueling dispensers in the truck/bus refueling area along with a dispenser to facilitate the refueling of cars/vans. This was completed as part of the Causeway Project which entails the installation of 14 high capacity fast fill CNG stations and one medium to large scale renewable gas injection point. The impact of this infrastructure on the gas network is being assessed as part of the project. The National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG) is a project partner. The CNG stations will be strategically located in line with the main motorway networks in ROI. Two further stations will be completed in 2019 with a further number to commence construction. Gas Networks Ireland continues to work with all stakeholders in the transport market including government departments, regulatory agencies, vehicle manufacturers and distributors, forecourt operators and most importantly end-users. The Innovation Fund continues to support research, renewable gas and CNG activities in Ireland, awarding funding to both academic and industry entities in Ireland. Gas Networks Ireland is committed to developing the infrastructure to facilitate the use of CNG in the transport sector in Ireland, delivering cleaner, cheaper transport to the truck, bus and van segments of the market. The CNG Vehicle Fund is fully subscribed with contracts for 39 vehicles in place and over 20 of them in daily operation on Irish roads across a range of operators including waste collection, laundry services and agricultural haulage. The data gathered through the Vehicle Fund will inform other vehicle operators as to the benefits of CNG for Irish operators.

Renewable Natural Gas

Renewable gas is a clean, renewable and carbon neutral fuel and as such can make a significant contribution to Ireland's renewable energy and carbon reduction targets. It is produced from different sustainable organic materials, upgraded to bio methane and then injected into existing gas distribution infrastructure. It is widely used in other European countries and Gas Networks Ireland believes it has a major role to play in assisting the country's' transition to a low carbon economy. Renewable gas represents the lowest cost alternative to decarbonising residential heat, at less than 1/3 cost of electrifying heat⁸. Renewable gas also has a role to play in attracting future FDI to Ireland as it provides an appealing solution to many multinationals that have mandatory targets set for renewable energy⁹, it also provides a solution for national waste management and a renewable indigenous fuel source.

8 Poyry report: "[Fully decarbonising Europe's energy system by 2050](#)" and KPMG report: "[Decarbonising Domestic Heating in Ireland](#)"

9 [World Business Council for Sustainable Development](#)

Gas Networks Ireland's ambition is to be capable of supporting 20% renewable gas in the network by 2030, circa 11.5 TWh. On a project which was co-funded by the EU Connecting Europe Facility, construction of the first grid injection facility for bio-methane was completed in December 2018, with the facility to be commissioned in 2019. A new Connection Policy was approved by the CRU in October 2018 to facilitate applications and projects for direct injection of bio-methane. Over 100 enquiries were received by the end of Q2 2019 with 3 projects advancing to pre-planning and initial contract stage in Q2. GNI has been shortlisted for €8.5 million of co-funding under the National Climate Action Fund for the construction and development of a large scale Central Grid Injection facility near Mitchelstown Co. Cork. This project will be submitted for planning permission approval in Q3 2019 and has a total value of €29 million. The project will also support 2 public access filling stations and a grant scheme for HGV fleet operators to support initial vehicle acquisitions.

Gas Networks Ireland is currently progressing the implementation of a Green Gas Certification Scheme for Ireland. This scheme will be designed to fulfil the requirements of the recast Renewable Energy Directive (RED), article 19 and issue Guarantees of Origin for biomethane injected into the gas grid. Funding from the Gas Networks Ireland Gas Innovation Fund to establish a pilot scheme has been approved, as a voluntary initiative. The obligations in the recast RED must be implemented by Member States by June 2021. The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) are the government department with responsibility in Ireland. The Government's Climate Action Plan was published in 2019 and Gas Networks Ireland continues to monitor its implementation with respect to Action 71 on setting a target for the level of energy to be supplied by biomethane injection in 2030.

Smart Metering

The National Smart Metering Programme (NSMP) is under the direction of the CRU. Smart gas meters are the next generation of energy meter. The smart meters will replace the traditional gas meter removing the need for a meter reader to visit the home. This will eliminate the need to use estimates whenever a meter cannot be read. Smart meters work by communicating with the customer and their energy provider, giving a view of near real-time actual energy usage. The benefits to the customer will be, timely information on their gas consumption so that they can be more economical by conserving cost and energy, which in turn helps the environment through reducing overall energy production.

In 2018 Gas Networks Ireland worked with the CRU and ESB Networks (ESBN) to define the detailed requirements of the end-to-end smart metering solution. In June, ESBN submitted a proposal to the CRU to deliver the NSMP in a phased approach. This proposal included fundamental changes to the existing programme and timelines with smart gas services becoming available in late 2024. Smart electricity service will be delivered in three phases from 2019-2024. This proposal was accepted by the CRU and led to a re-structure of the NSMP governance arrangements. A steering committee was put in place in late 2017 and includes the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE), CRU, ESBN, Gas Networks Ireland and a supplier representative.

In 2019, Gas Networks Ireland will continue to work with the CRU and all other key stakeholders to ensure delivery of the NSMP and smart gas services in late 2024. Gas Networks Ireland will engage with ESBN to ensure progress is made on the various procurements required to deliver the infrastructure to support the smart services. Gas Networks Ireland will engage with all other programme work streams to ensure the NSMP progresses in a timely fashion.

02 Introduction

2.2 Customer service overview

Engaging with and listening to customers, meeting their needs and delivering value for money are key priorities for Gas Networks Ireland. The customer experience provided by Gas Networks Ireland is delivered by the entire organisation, including outsourced business providers who together provide a range of services, from answering queries over the phone to connecting customers to the gas network and responding to gas emergency incidents.

Gas Networks Ireland through the Insights into Action Programme¹⁰ actively surveys customers to evaluate the experience of their interactions with the organisation. Customer feedback includes feedback from both domestic and commercial customers. Customer issues and complaints are analysed, statistics on calls and queries are interpreted to see if there are opportunities to introduce customer improvement initiatives. In addition, feedback is also gathered from employees and contractors that engage with customers on a daily basis, as well as key stakeholders who customers interact with to see how the overall customer experience can be improved. The users of the *Dial Before You Dig*¹¹ service are also surveyed.



Engaging with and listening to customers, meeting their needs and delivering value for money are key priorities for Gas Networks Ireland.

¹⁰ <https://www.gasnetworks.ie/home/customer-care/our-customers/>

¹¹ <https://www.gasnetworks.ie/home/safety/dial-before-you-dig>

A sample of customers is surveyed weekly following their transaction with Gas Networks Ireland. The sample surveyed covers customers who contacted Gas Networks Ireland regarding emergencies, domestic queries, meter replacement programme, complainants, siteworks and those issuing queries to the contact centre. The majority of surveys moved from calls/email to SMS in 2018, simplifying surveys and making it easier for customers to respond. Customers were incentivised to respond by offering a €2 donation to Gas Networks Ireland’s charity partners Age Action. Each survey is tailored to the journey customers take and to the customer segment to which they belong. Core metrics include; Net Promoter Score (NPS); Customer Satisfaction Scores (CSAT); and Net EASY Score (NES). In addition, performance measures across key touch points and against brand values are collected.

Customers provide a precise account of their customer interaction, these accounts are linked back to the internal references of the specific job to allow for root cause analysis and enable continuous process improvement. All surveys incorporate a service recovery loop, the Gas Networks Ireland Customer Care team contact the customer within 24 hours if requested, regarding any issues arising. Reporting is undertaken through an online portal to provide transparency for all staff and business partners. A structured face-to-face monthly session is attended by all process owners to gain employee engagement and commitment to change.

The Customer Service “Insights into Action Strategy” illustrated in Figure 2.4 shows how Gas Networks Ireland listens, communicates and works on solutions to action improvements that benefit customers. Surveys are analysed upon receipt of customer feedback to look at relevant trends, to identify areas for improvement and to also understand what works well. Consistent trends from customer insights to drive better experience/service delivery are, ensuring timely and effective communications, setting and managing customer expectations - do exactly what we commit to delivering - meeting appointment criteria, final reinstatement and close out of works carried out.

Figure 2.4: Insights into action illustration



02 Introduction

Initiatives are captured on a formal register and are tracked to completion, there were 38 initiatives implemented in 2018 some examples of which are:

Value	Initiative
Customer Service	Customer Checklist developed to highlight the steps Small/Medium Commercial Customers need to take to ensure a smooth gas connection. This is now provided to customers by Sales Representatives on initial visit.
Performance	Pre-construction team in Primary Contractor Balfour Beatty CLG (BBCLG) prepare full packs of all necessary paperwork for crew/fitters and save in a shared drive so all agents have access to the documents from the field. This initiative covers all domestic and commercial works.
Collaboration	Work to understand and develop relationships with all suppliers/shippers – survey of each undertaken and work underway to address issues raised and enhance these key relationships. This initiative also benefits Suppliers and their interaction with Domestic Customers. For example Gas Networks Ireland interacts with suppliers domestic areas on a regular basis and did have face to face meetings in 2018. Gas Networks Ireland also had a workshop with suppliers to give them an understanding of its business.
Integrity	New process implemented to notify all Local Authorities through MapRoad in advance of the construction projects in their areas. This initiative covers all works both domestic and commercial requested by customers. Roadmap is part of the process for applying for licences for all works in public areas.
Safety	Commercial brochure developed explaining key safety advice, how to read their meter and other important information relevant for the customer. This leaflet is provided to all new small/medium commercial customers.

Customer Experience Guiding Principles were developed to encourage all staff to put the customer first. These principles were rolled out to all staff through team workshops nationally where ways to collaborate and communicate more effectively were explored using these principles to guide putting the customer at the heart of all that Gas Networks Ireland does.

Customer Experience Guiding Principles

STAND IN THE customers SHOES	SEEK OPPORTUNITIES TO improve AND ADD VALUE FOR THE CUSTOMER	BE solutions FOCUSED	TAKE ownership AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR A POSITIVE OUTCOME
-------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------

Some of the Customer Service highlights from 2018 are as follows:

- In 2018 Gas Networks Ireland handled 516,435 customer contacts, agreed and completed 83,710 appointments.
- In 2018, Gas Networks Ireland carried out a number of roadshows as part of embedding the guiding principles encouraging all staff to continue to consistently put customers (both internal and external) first.
- Peer recognition continued in 2018, GNI were nominated for their Customer Experience programme at the Irish CX Impact awards. GNI also presented on their Customer Experience Programme at the World Gas Conference held in Washington. Gas Networks Ireland has excellent levels of performance in respect of its published Customer Charter service standards and commitments. Its programme of customer experience monitoring across 10 different network activities continues to score very favourably across all processes. The customer commitments and KPIs are shown in Table 2.1, these will be explored in greater detail in section 4 (Retail Market).

Table 2.1: Customer Commitments

Commitment	KPI	Measure/ Target	2017 Performance	2018 Performance
Call response	Call answered within 20 seconds	80%	93.4%	94.4%
Quotation turnaround	Respond within 7 working days	100%	100%	100%
Appointment Granting	Schedule appointment within 5 days	100%	99.95%	99.96%
Appointment keeping	Contact 1 working day prior	100%	98.3%	98.1%
Reinstatement commitments	Excavations back-filled & covered within 24hrs of completion	100%	97.5%	100%
Gas Supply interruption	2 days' notice of interruption due to essential maintenance	100%	100%	100%
Gas supply restoration	Restore as quickly as possible (less than 24hrs)	100%	100%	100%
Emergency response	Arrive within 1 hour of report	97%	99.91%	99.3%
Complaints handling	Resolve within 10 working days	85%	96.9%	96.3%
Payment Guarantee	Aim to process payment following claim within 10 working days	100%	100%	100%

03 Gas Industry

3.1 Market overview

The CRU has responsibility for regulating the natural gas market in Ireland. Gas Networks Ireland connects all customers to the network regardless of which natural gas supply company the customer chooses. Additionally, Gas Networks Ireland transports gas on behalf of the suppliers who sell the gas to the end users. The role of Gas Networks Ireland is also to facilitate meter readings for end-users. In July 2007 the Irish retail gas market was opened to competition allowing all gas customers to switch their gas supplier¹². The domestic gas market was subsequently fully deregulated in July 2015 allowing suppliers to set their own tariffs. The intrinsic benefits to consumers are increased choice, greater efficiency, lower prices and higher standards of service.

There are a number of large end-users of gas such as power stations who engage Gas Networks Ireland to transport the gas on their behalf. Collectively the suppliers and these large end users who use the transportation service are known as “Shippers”.

3.2 Shipper queries

Gas Networks Ireland provides transportation services to shippers operating in the wholesale and retail markets. The shippers/suppliers and large end users (circa 270 industrial customers), are supported by the Shipper Services Department. In addition to this, Shipper Services also supports the development of new entrants to both the retail and wholesale markets. It does so by facilitating and mentoring their entry into the gas market through information provision, system setup, training and implementation of the necessary legal and contractual arrangements.

Gas Networks Ireland supports initiatives from various industry bodies and ensures compliance with EU legislation as well as playing a driving role in the development of market arrangements to meet with industry best practice. Gas Networks Ireland coordinates industry meetings at both retail and wholesale levels in Ireland; at the Gas Market Arrangements Retail Group (GMARG) and Code Modification Forum respectively. These groups process changes that are agreed to reduce issues that shippers may have. Gas Networks Ireland continues to work proactively with shippers on initiatives to identify possible issues in advance of problems occurring.

Gas Networks Ireland continued its engagement with shippers to maintain the levels of service achieved in previous years. This was evidenced by the meeting of KPI's for the 'number of calls answered within 10 seconds' at 93.4% against a KPI of 80% and the 'turnaround for quotations within 7 days' at 100% against a KPI of 100%.

All issues received by the Shipper Services Key Account Management function are logged on the Shipper Services Issues system and issue resolution is managed to successful conclusion. This includes stakeholder management of internal and external departments. Every issue is assigned a unique issue number and an email confirmation is sent where requested, regarding the status of an issue within three business days. Gas Networks Ireland provides each shipper with an issue update every 20 business days thereafter, as long as the issue remains open on the Gas Networks Ireland system.

3.3 Breakdown of issues by type

There were 2,556 issues directed to the Shipper Services Key Account Management department in 2018.

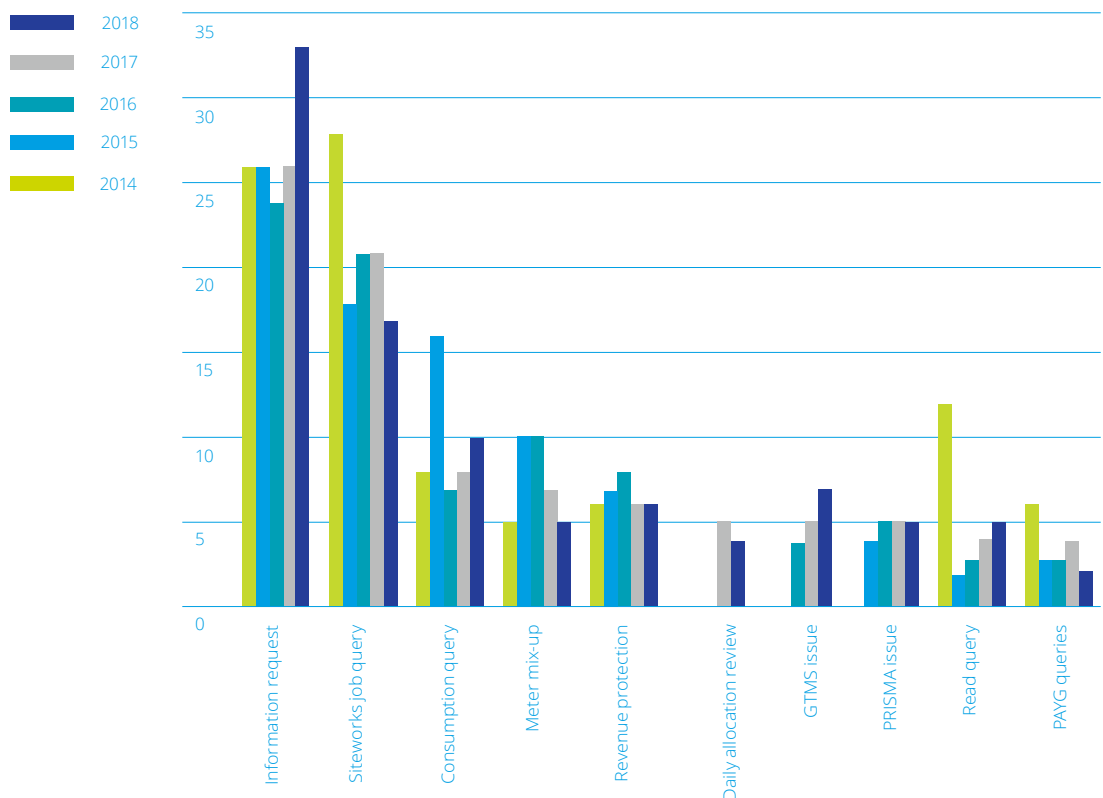
A definition of the types of issues experienced by shippers is provided in Table 3.1. The breakdown in the main categories of issues as a percentage of the total recorded in 2018 is illustrated in Figure 3.1.

03 Gas Industry

Table 3.1: Explanation of top 10 categories of Shipper issues

Issue type	Definition
Information Request	Information requests (e.g. Code of Operations, European directives, code developments and PRISMA capacity auctions)
Siteworks job query	Queries on siteworks activity raised (e.g. fit meter, exchange, lock and unlock jobs)
Meter Mix up	Issues relating to mismatch of details on Gas Networks Ireland systems and the meter details on the ground
Consumption query	End user queries on consumption history
Revenue protection	Revenue protection issues (e.g. locked consuming reports, meter tampering,)
SPC & AQ query	Queries on Supply Point Capacity and Annual Quantity settings.
GTMS Issue	3 rd Party user requests for access to GTMS system and queries on wholesale capacity bookings and nominations
Daily Allocation review	Query relating to the published daily consumption allocations for Large Daily Metered (LDM) / Daily Metered (DM) customers
Read Query	Query on a meter read
PAYG queries	Issues relating to prepayment meters, end user queries relating to meter or gas card issues

Figure 3.1: Main category of shipper issues recorded by %



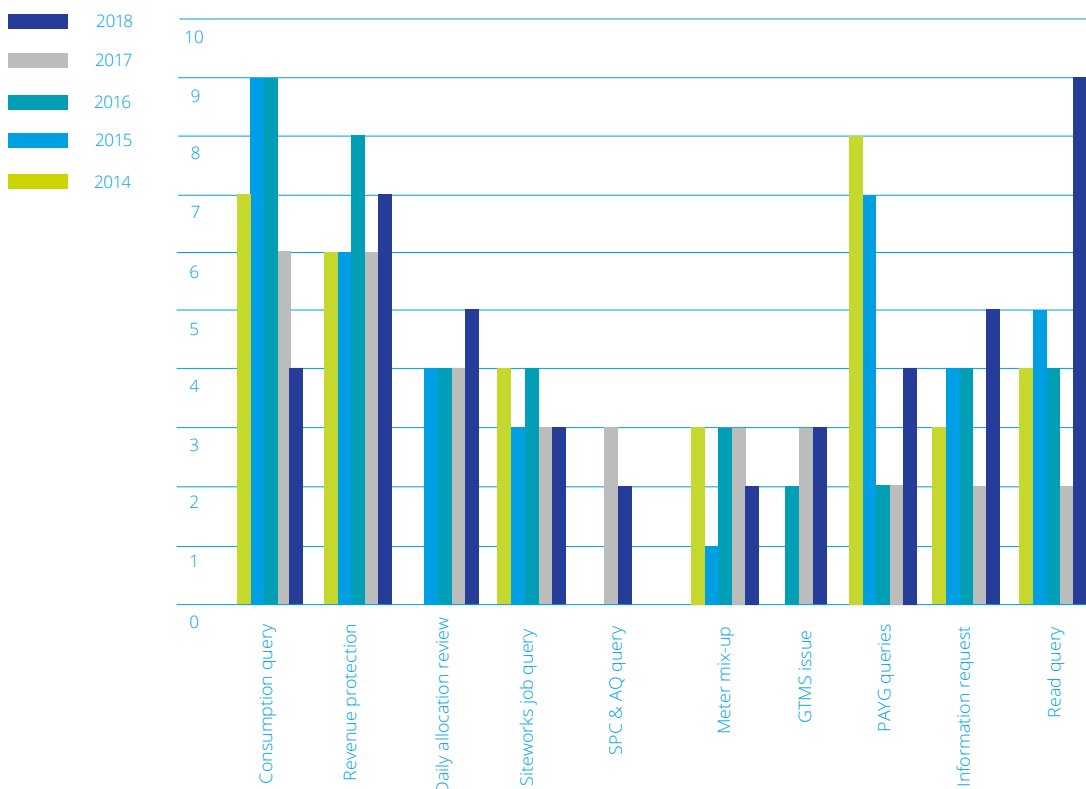
There were 2,556 issues directed to the Shipper Services Key Account Management department in 2018.



3.4 Average number of days that issue was opened (by issue type)

The average length of time that a shipper issue was open in 2018 was 5 business days as opposed to 3 business days in 2017. The severe weather of March 2018 led to a considerable increase in the number of issues raised by customers in relation to their meter reads. This led to an increase in the volume of issues being raised by suppliers with GNI on behalf of their customers. This increase in volume in turn led to an increase in the issue resolution time. The average number of business days taken to resolve Shipper Services issues per category is shown in Figure 3.2 below. Shipper issues are defined in Table 3.1.

Figure 3.2: Average number of business days to resolve shipper issues by category



04 Retail Market

Gas Networks Ireland provides access to the gas pipeline system for shippers. At the end of 2018 there were 27 shippers active in the Irish gas market, supplying and selling gas to customers in all segments of the market from power generation to residential. Of the total 27 shippers there are 12 who engage in the retail supply market. Gas Networks Ireland connects all natural gas customers to the network no matter which supplier they choose.

Gas Networks Ireland is also responsible for works on service pipes and meters to customers' premises and operates a full 24-hour emergency response service 365 days a year. A range of supporting customer services is managed by Gas Networks Ireland to deliver these activities to its customers, their customers and the general public.

4.1 Customer service

Gas Networks Ireland is committed to putting customers first. This commitment is reflected in its day to day operations and in both the Gas Networks Ireland Codes of Practice¹³ and the Gas Networks Ireland Customer Charter¹⁴.

The Codes of Practice include the Vulnerable Customer Guide. This outlines Gas Networks Ireland's commitment to providing the best customer service possible for all customers; specifically the provisions made for those who require special services. Customers are encouraged to register, if necessary, on the Special Services Register with their gas supplier to automatically avail of these provisions.

The Customer Complaint Handling Guide provides guidance to customers on how their complaint will be handled. It details the steps Gas Networks Ireland will take to handle all customer complaints. The Disconnection Code of Practice¹⁵ outlines Gas Networks Ireland's obligations towards customers when disconnecting their occupied property; following a request from their gas supplier. The Customer Charter provides assurance to customers of Gas Networks Ireland's commitment to these standards and in certain circumstances, compensation will be provided for failure to meet these standards. Details of these standards are outlined in Table 2.1 Customer Commitments.

Figure 4.1: Ten customer performance commitments



¹³ [Complaint Handling, Disconnection Code of Practice](#)

¹⁴ [Customer Charter](#)

¹⁵ [Disconnection Code of Practice](#)

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The customer guides have been translated into six different languages with input from disability groups to ensure that they are accessible to all customers. The guides are available to download on the Gas Networks Ireland website, or by contacting the Gas Networks Ireland Contact Centre. They may be requested in braille if required.

In addition to the above, Gas Networks Ireland carried out two surveys of gas shippers and suppliers in 2018. The first survey was aimed at operational staff in supplier organisations with a specific focus on how Gas Networks Ireland handles day-to-day queries from suppliers in the retail market. The second survey, aimed at management level staff in both shipper and supplier organisations, had a much broader remit across wholesale and retail activities.

The purpose of the surveys was to gauge shipper and supplier sentiment towards Gas Networks Ireland and to look at ways in which these relationships could be improved, ultimately feeding down to the end customers. Based on the outcomes of these shipper/supplier surveys a plan has been formulated with the following initiatives for improvement identified;

- Customer Service
- Information & Knowledge Management
- Gas Market Arrangements Retail Group (GMARG) Secretariat
- Pay As You Go (PAYG) Metering
- Long Term No Access
- Future of Gas

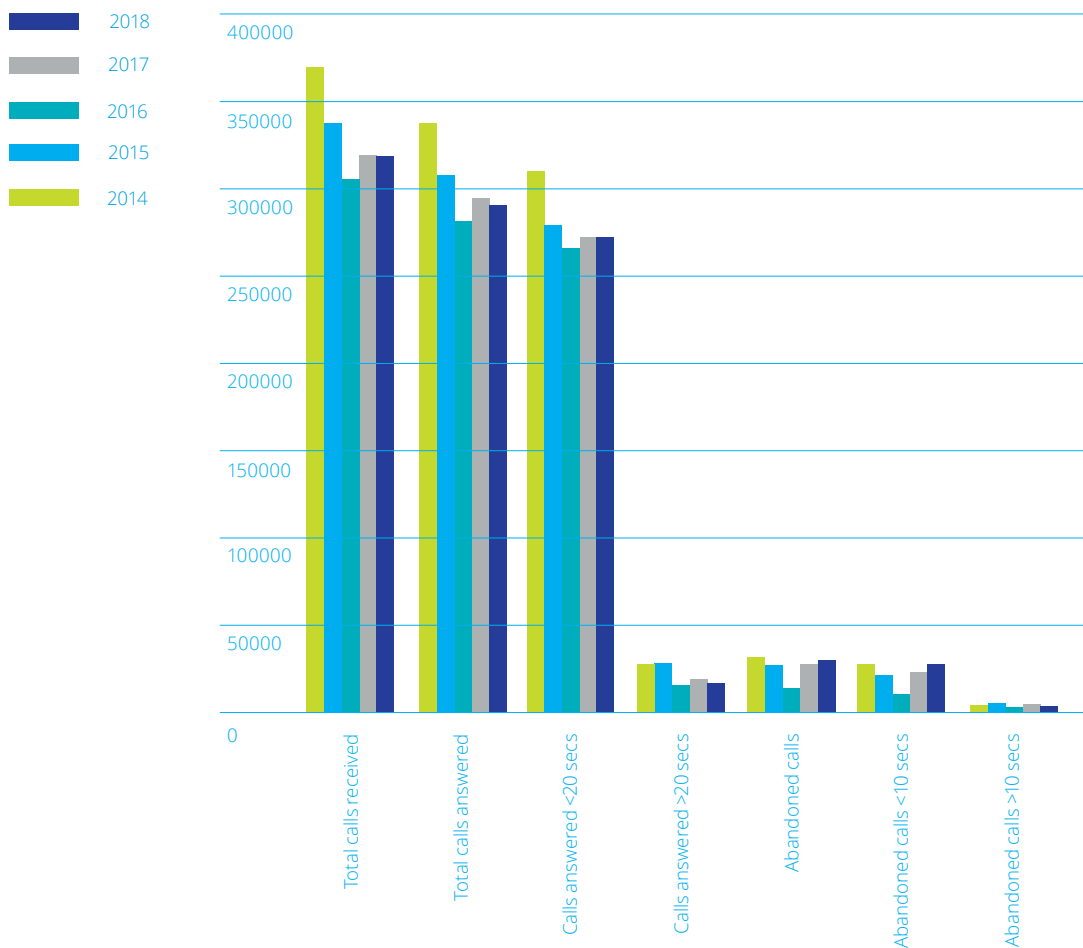
It is expected that implementation of the recommendations of this survey will enable shippers/suppliers to better serve their end customers. The proposed initiatives include but are not limited to the following:

- In 2019, Gas Networks Ireland will develop an information and knowledge sharing portal where suppliers can access information relating to the retail market e.g. all materials for the Gas Market Arrangements Retail Group (GMARG).
- Gas Networks Ireland will also work with suppliers to update the terms of reference of the GMARG to improve the effectiveness of the group's activities and governance.
- Gas Networks Ireland will establish and lead a collaborative working group with subject matter experts from each supplier to develop new market processes to address 'Long Term No Access' (LTNA), an issue which has been highlighted by suppliers as a priority via the survey.
- Gas Networks Ireland will host a series of training and networking sessions aimed at bringing Gas Networks Ireland and supplier operational staff together to share knowledge and work towards better outcomes for our shared customer.

4.2 Call response

Gas Networks Ireland operates telephone lines¹⁶ for customers to contact the company in relation to a number of key activities including: the 24 hours emergency service; domestic connections; commercial connections; Dial Before You Dig; carbon monoxide information; and the meter replacement programme.

Figure 4.2: Call response



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In 2018, Gas Networks Ireland handled 318,989 inbound calls. This total includes calls related to emergencies, domestic and business queries and meter readings. Out of the calls received, 94.4% were answered within 20 seconds and only 1.32% of calls were abandoned by the caller after more than 10 seconds; meaning all call handling targets were achieved. Calls abandoned after more than 10 seconds are defined as those calls where the caller ends the call having been on the line more than 10 seconds. Reasons for abandoning calls are not entirely clear but can vary from a wrong number to a strong message on the emergency line. A strong message is one that outlines to the caller that they are onto an Emergency Line for the reporting of suspected gas emergencies. This line will not be able to assist with general enquiries such as those related to billing or direct debits. The message asks the caller to hang up if the call is not emergency related. Gas Networks Ireland continues to track the statistics of these calls and refine the messaging on its lines as required. The target for calls abandoned after more than 10 seconds is less than or equal to 7%. The volume of inbound calls over the last few years has remained steady with a peak at 369,864 in 2014 and the lowest volume in 2016 at 305,388. However, when all channels of communication are included, the customer contact volume with Gas Networks Ireland has increased over this time with circa 516,000 contacts in 2018. A number of initiatives and improvements have been introduced to reduce unnecessary customer contacts and to serve customers through more efficient and cost effective channels. The key elements are; enhanced Interactive Voice Recording (IVR) information messages for customers, proactive outbound calling and engagement with Gas Suppliers on shared customer processes. Gas Networks Ireland is continuing to increase its social media presence through creating unique content, highlighting customers. The popularity and engagement on these channels highlights the trend towards using them and the necessity to continue to provide and enhance digital channels as a contact option. Facebook in particular is the strongest social customer service tool. An email management system was introduced to drive a more efficient and enhanced customer experience. These improvements have been a response to understanding both the importance of and effectiveness of digital channels with regard to displacing unnecessary contacts. The main areas of increased contact are Dial A Read, Email and Outbound calls. The outbound calls were as a result of the severe weather in March 2018.

Considerable effort continues to be made in enhancing the customer experience by displacing inbound calls with planned outbound calls and the use of text messages to customers at key stages of their interactions with Gas Networks Ireland.

The consistent focus on driving efficiencies in customer communications has mitigated the anticipated increase in customer inbound calls over the past five years and ensured that calls are answered promptly for customers. Fexco are contracted to provide the contact centre service on behalf of Gas Networks Ireland. The contract with Fexco is in place until 2020.

Figure 4.3: Calls answered < 20 seconds

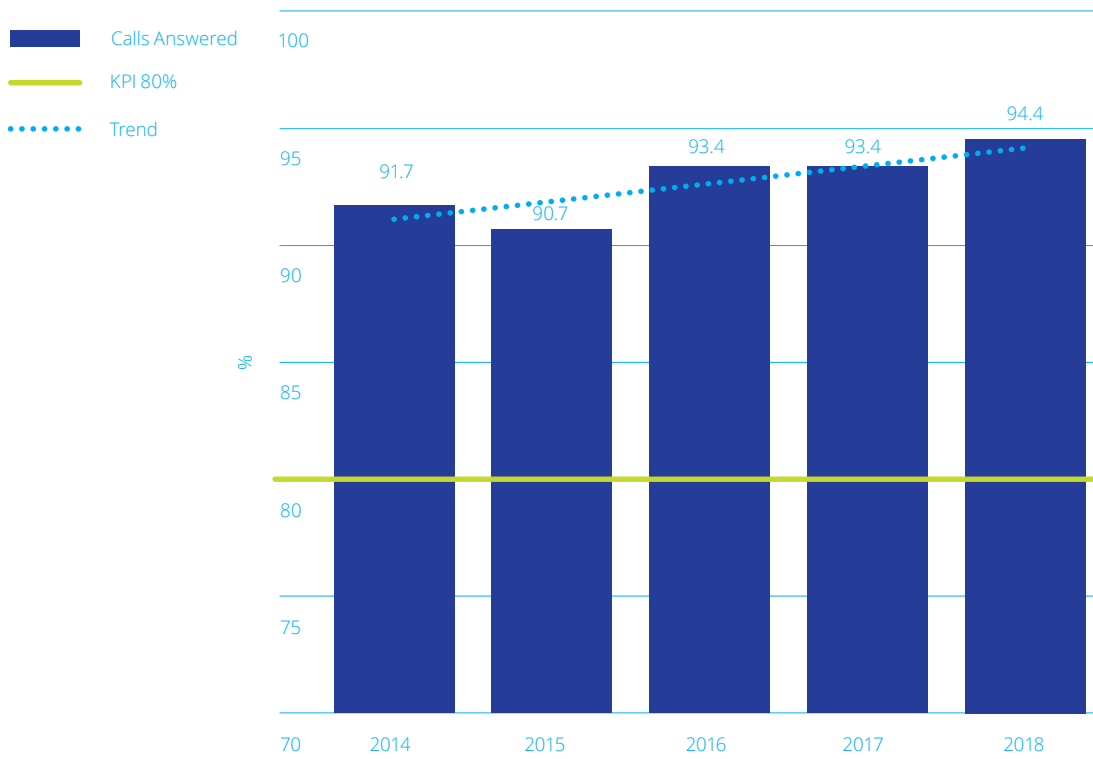
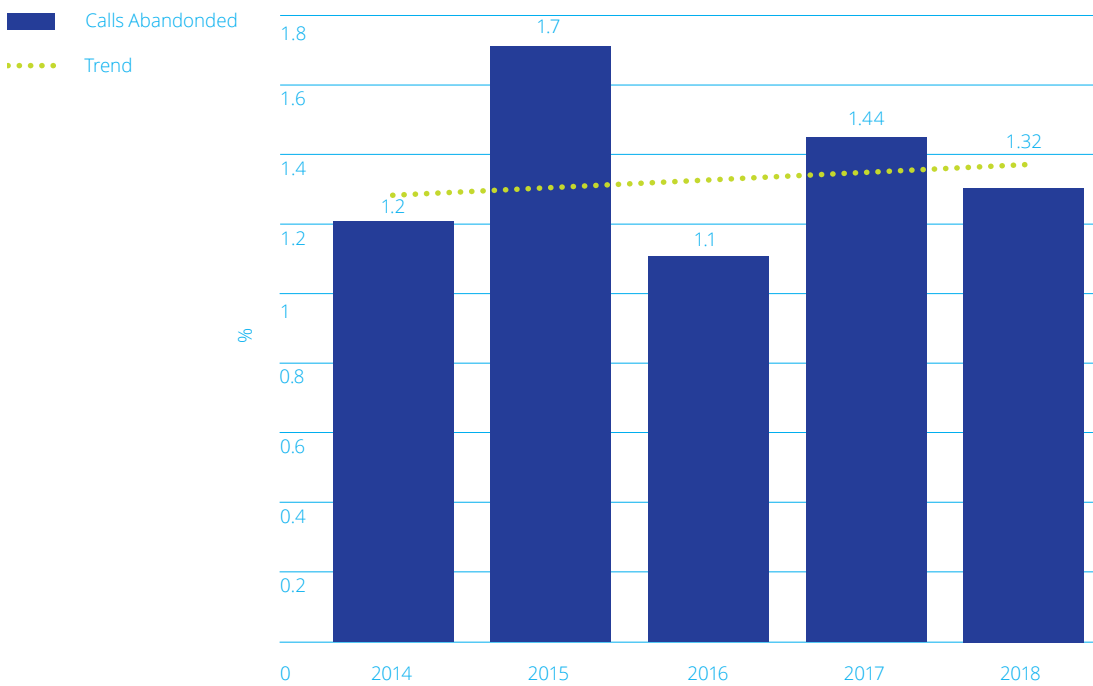


Figure 4.4: Abandoned calls after 10 seconds



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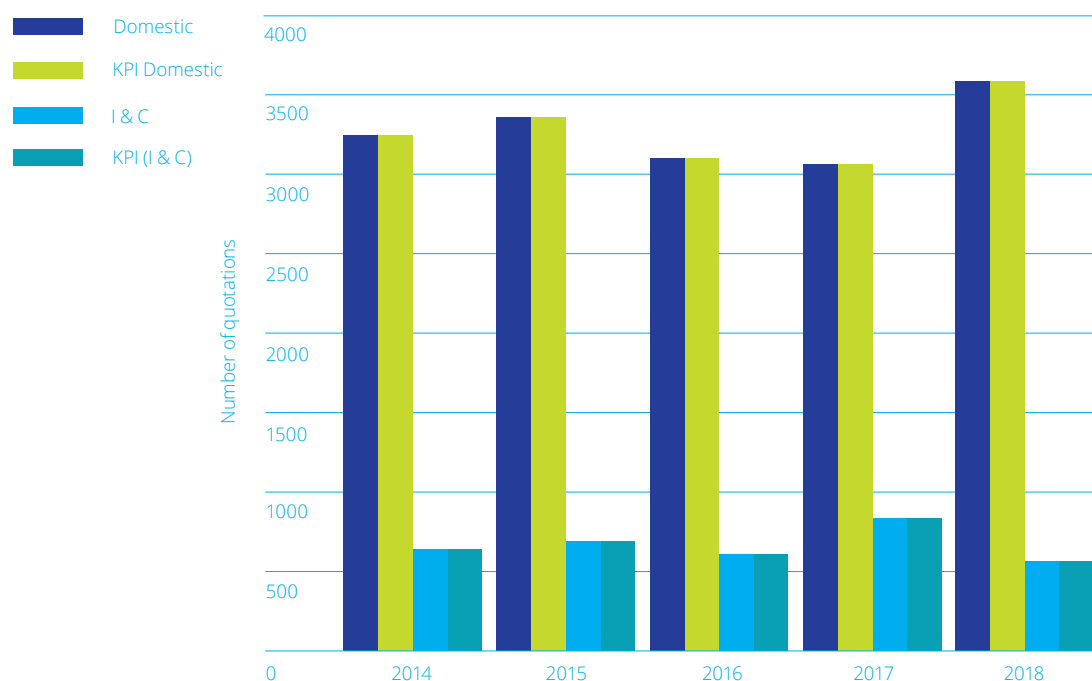
4.3 Quotations turnaround

Many of the services provided by Gas Networks Ireland are standard and quotations can be provided quickly over the telephone with minimal information. If the job requirements are more complex, a company representative may need to make a visit to the site in advance of a quotation being issued. For domestic and small commercial service pipe connections (where no design work is required) or connection alteration/reconfiguration involving no main laying activity, the KPI is that quotations will be available within 7 working days from receipt of all necessary data. In 2018, a total of 4,149 quotations were issued within the 7 day period, achieving the KPI of 100% performance rate. The KPI of 100% has been achieved consistently over the past 4 years, see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.5. In 2018, there was an increase in domestic quotations of 11% and a decrease in I & C quotations of 14%.

There was an increase in Domestic and I&C siteworks quotations between 2017 and 2018 with numbers rising from 3,890 to 4,149. This is as a result of the return of confidence to the economy with the growth experienced in property, manufacturing and industrial sectors.

Figure 4.5: Quotations



Figure 4.6: Quotation turnaround against performance

4.4 Appointment granting

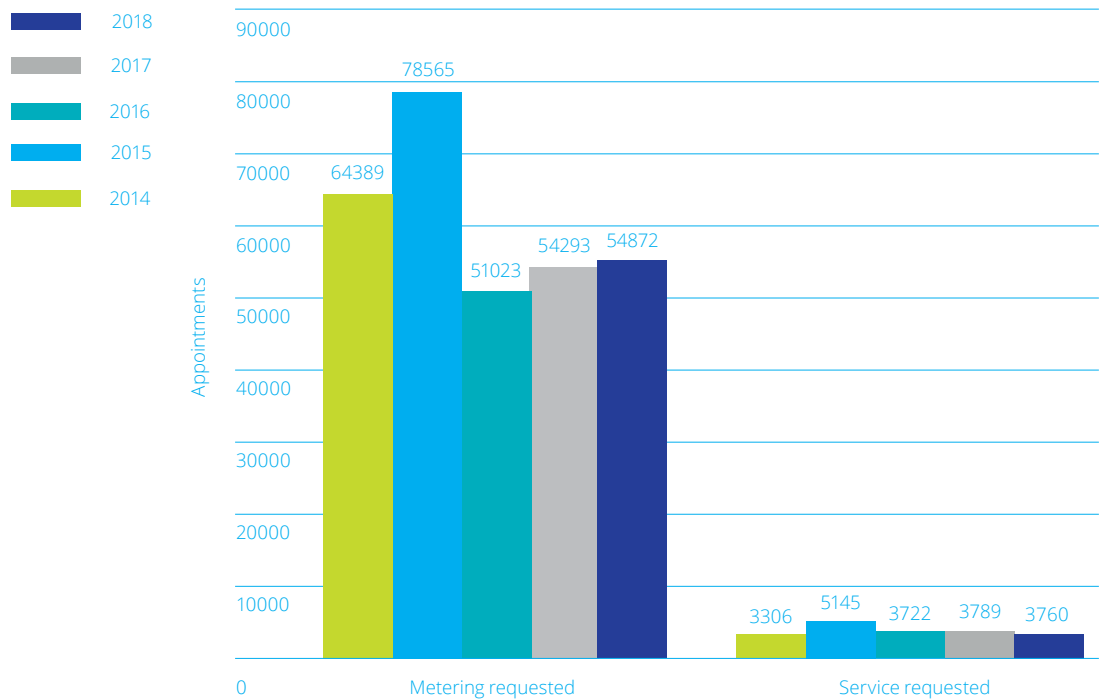
For quotation site visits and domestic metering service appointments, a choice of morning or evening day appointments will be scheduled within 5 days of receipt of request. For domestic pipe laying appointments, an appointment will be given, on receipt of payment which takes into account the realistic timeframe to acquire a Road Opening Licence (ROL) if required. If no ROL or additional restrictions are required, Gas Networks Ireland endeavours to offer an appointment within 4 weeks. Closer to the time a firm date will be agreed with the customer ensuring that sufficient notice is given.

If Gas Networks Ireland fails to grant an appointment commitment within 5 days (quotation) or 4 Week's (domestic works), applicable compensation can be claimed, subject to conditions. These conditions include, but are not limited to restrictions put in place by local authorities including road closures, moratoriums, operation free flow and severe weather restrictions on certain roads. These conditions would preclude the operation of charter payments. This request will adhere to the Customer Charter process.

Appointment requests in 2018 were higher than 2017 by 1%, meter appointment requests totalled 54,872 and service appointment requests totalled 3,760, versus 54,293 and 3,789 in 2017 respectively.

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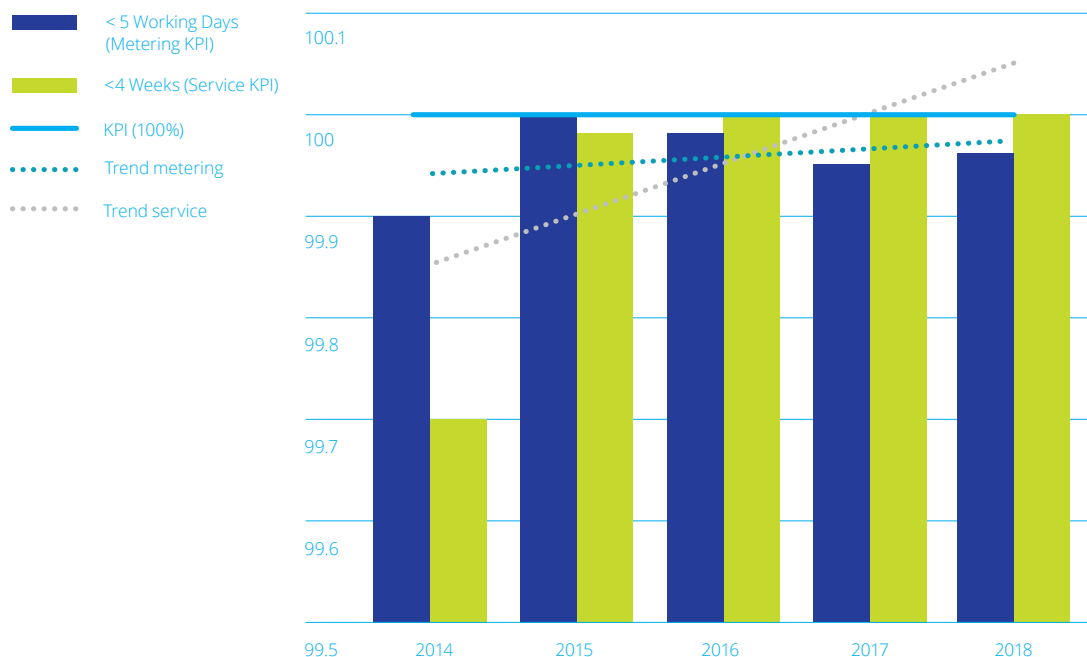
Figure 4.7: Appointment granting



In 2018 Gas Networks Ireland’s compliance around pipe laying was adhered to and customers advised as necessary, while metering compliance was at 99.96%, just below the KPI of 100%, where 21 requests were not granted. Gas Networks Ireland endeavours to achieve maximum compliance with Customer Charter performance commitments with regard to the granting of appointments. (See Table 4.4).

In 2018 Gas Networks Ireland granted 3,760 service appointments. This represents a slight decrease of 0.77% on the 2017 figures. The number of appointments granted in 2018 was in line with 2017 levels 3,760 versus 3,789 the previous year. The performance rate of meter appointment requests was 54,872 in 2018, this was comparable with 2017 figures of 54,293. The performance for service requests was 100% which is in line with 2017 results. (See Figure 4.8 and Table 4.4).

Figure 4.8: Appointment granting performance against KPI



4.5 Appointment keeping

Gas Networks Ireland endeavours to keep all appointments with customers on the assigned day and within the nominated timeframe (morning, afternoon, or all day). If unable to keep this appointment, contact will be made with the customer a minimum of one working day prior to the scheduled appointment.

Failure to make the appointment or notify the customer of the cancellation on or before the working day prior to the scheduled appointment results in the customer being able to make a request for a compensation claim. This request will adhere to the Customer Charter process.

In 2018, there were 79,944 metering appointments which was a decrease of 3.84% on the 2017 figure. This decrease was driven mainly by the fact that Gas Networks Ireland have changed the process of making some appointments to enable site crews to interact directly with customers to make appointments suitable to both parties and to take advantage of the fact that the site crew may be in the area carrying out other site works activities.

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Compliance for these was at 98.30%, which was the same as the result for 2017. In 2018, there were 3,766 service appointments which represents an increase of 14% on 2017, the compliance rate of 93.9% is a decrease of 3.4% on 2017 figures. This decrease in compliance was due to the increase in volume of work being undertaken.

The KPI of 100% is the ultimate service level that Gas Networks Ireland strives to achieve in collaboration with business partners and key stakeholders.

Gas Networks Ireland is actively engaged with all relevant Local Authorities. Meetings throughout 2018 took place to enhance that relationship and improve the Road Opening Licence (ROL) applications process. Gas Networks Ireland is also engaged with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS); City & County Managers Association (CCMA) and the Road Management Office (RMO); regarding the online licencing system, temporary Traffic Management Plans and the national payment mechanism for ROL in 2018. Four scheduled meetings of the Joint Utility Local Authority User Group (JULA) were held in 2018 as well as a number of workshops. Through this process, significant progress has taken place on fees, licence conditions and turnaround times. Members of this forum include the utilities, RMO, CCMA, IBEC and Construction Industry Federation (CIF). On-going engagement will continue throughout 2019 to continue to provide service excellence to customers and to improve the customer experience.

Figure 4.9: Appointment keeping (metering)

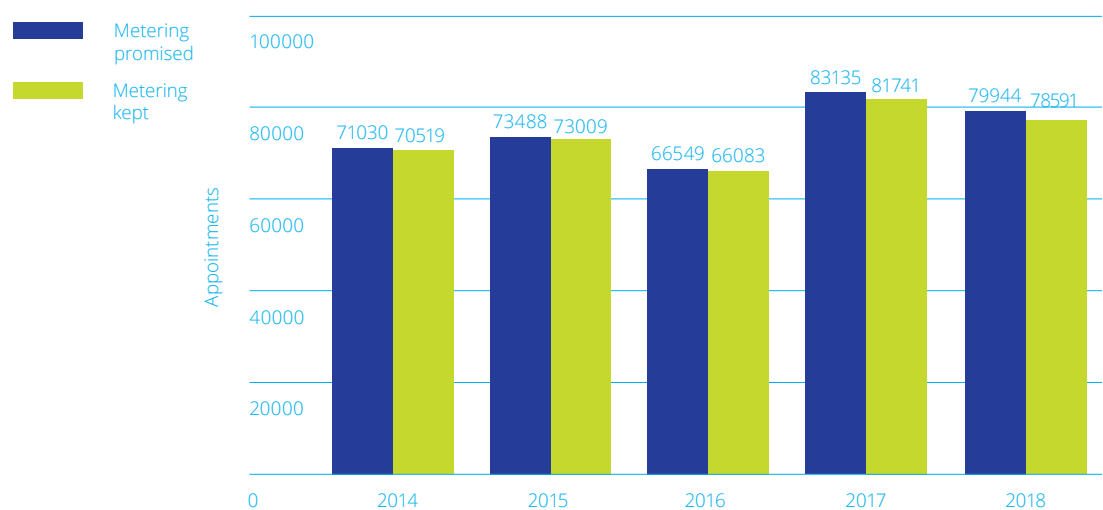


Figure 4.10: Appointment keeping (service)

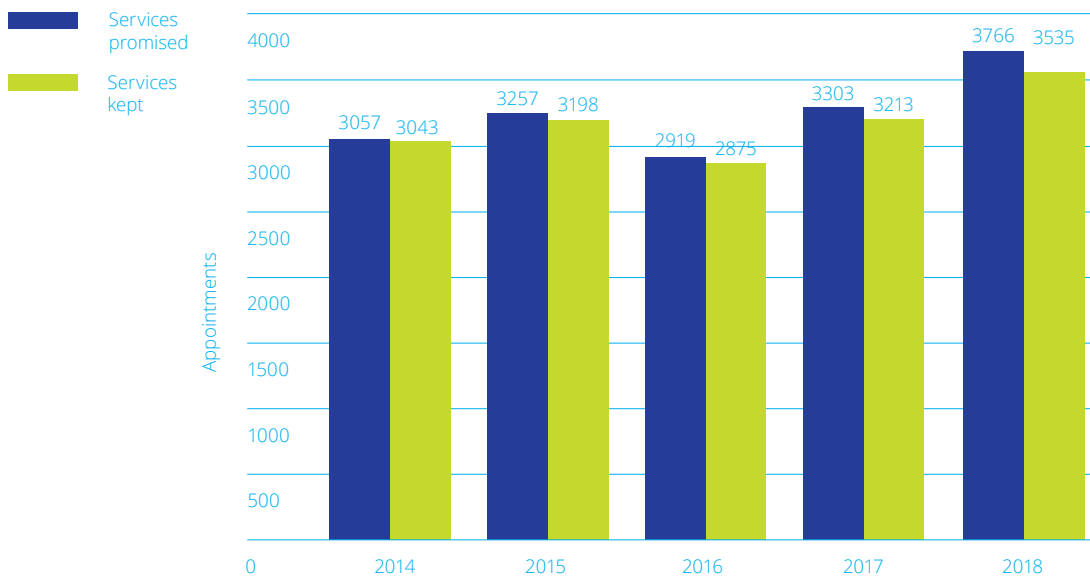
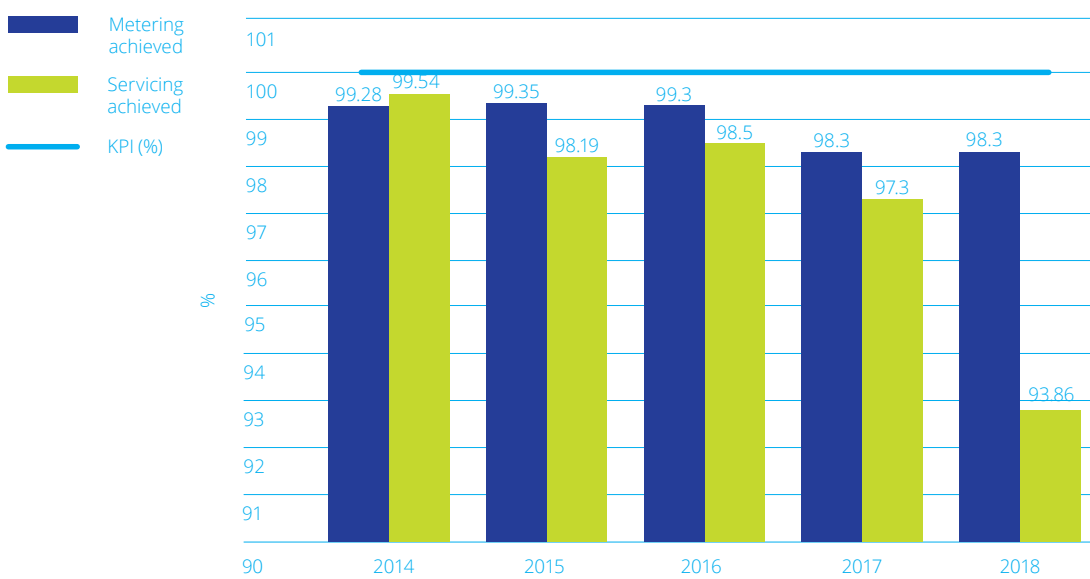


Figure 4.11: Metering and service delivery performance against KPI



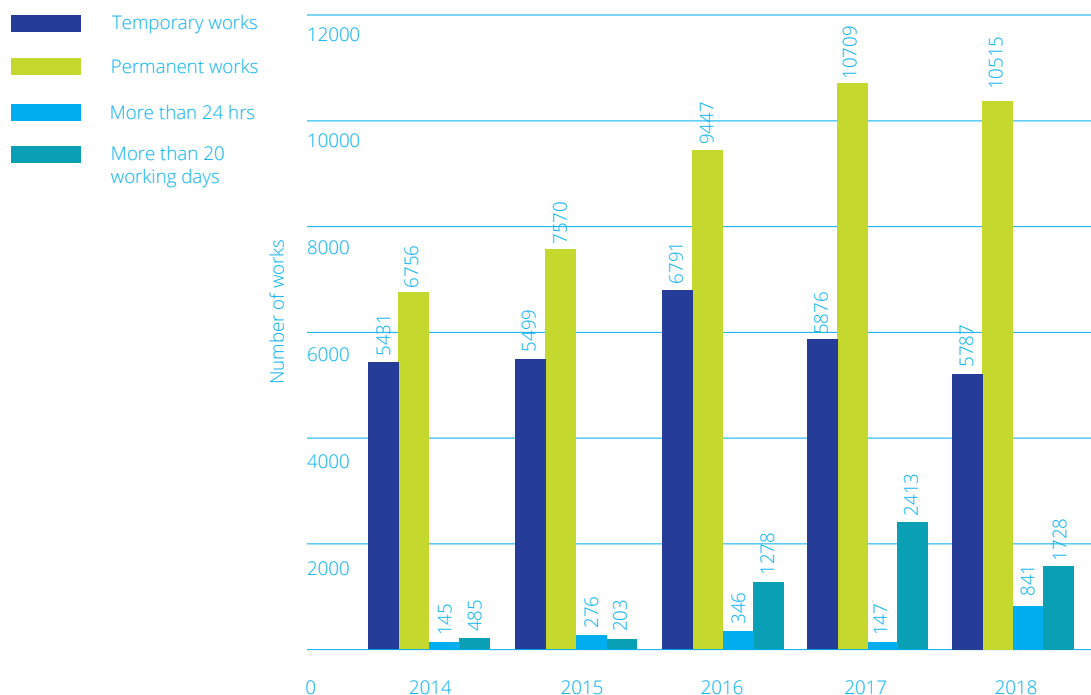
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4.6 Reinstatement commitments

In order to facilitate the laying of the gas connection pipework, Gas Networks Ireland may need to excavate ground on the premises. It is the aim of Gas Networks Ireland to back-fill and securely cover all excavations within 24 hours of work completion.

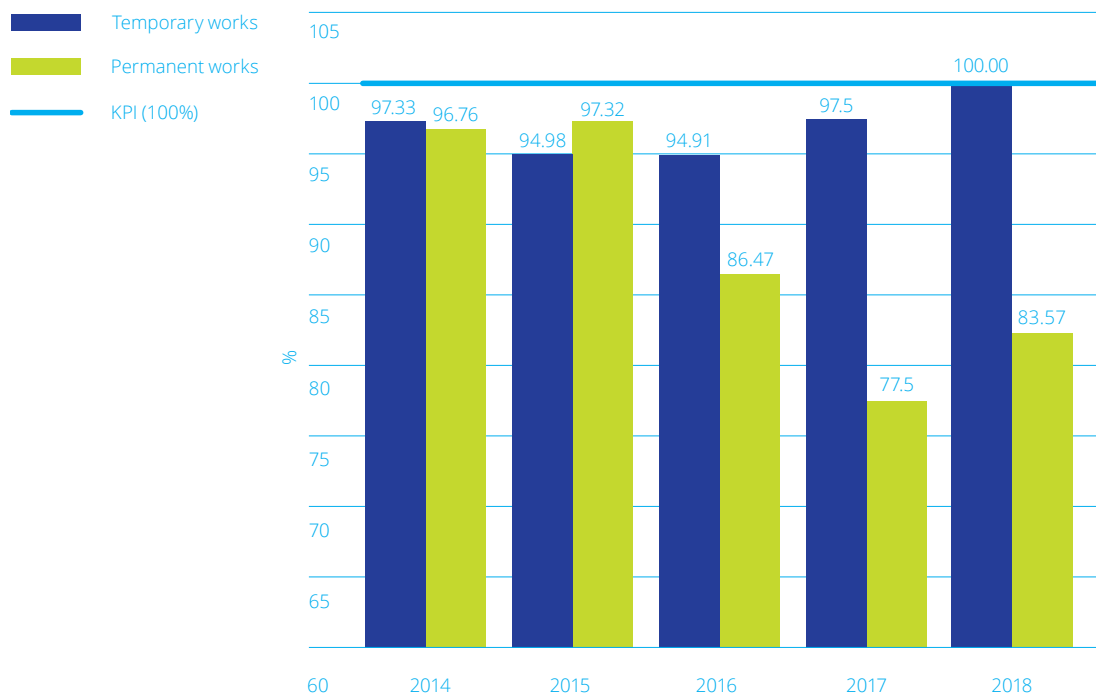
If there is a failure to complete a temporary reinstatement within 24 hours (as per the KPI) of the work completion, compensation will be paid to the customer, if applied for. Commitments apply only to circumstances where clear access to the site and premises has been provided. Reinstatement commitments do not extend to excavations arising from emergency, renewal or unplanned work. In 2018, there were 5,787 temporary works completed, all of which were completed within the 24 hours commitment, which shows that performance against the KPI was at 100.00%. They are all either permanently reinstated first time (D+2); temporarily reinstated; or selected openings are backfilled, secured with barriers/steel plates or footpath boards and reinstated within 2 days. The total permanent works carried out in 2018 were 10,515, 1,728 of these were completed outside the 20 working days commitment, the majority of these were addressing legacy reinstatements. Progress was made in 2018 on D+2 reinstatement which represents permanently reinstating works within 2 working days of carrying out the original work. By carrying out permanent reinstatement sooner, it provides better customer service and has less of an impact on the customer. This progress will continue into 2019 with a target of achieving D+2 permanent reinstatement on 60% of works. Figure 4.12 illustrates the re-instatement commitments over the past 5 years and Figure 4.13 shows the re-instatement performance against the KPI.

Figure 4.12: Reinstatement commitments



The KPI of 100% is the ultimate service level that Gas Networks Ireland strives to achieve in collaboration with business partners and key stakeholders.

Figure 4.13: Reinstatement performance against KPI



4.7 Gas supply interruption

In some instances when carrying out essential planned maintenance work or connecting new customers, Gas Networks Ireland may need to interrupt the gas supply. If this is necessary, customers will be given at least 2 days’ notice. Failure to do so allows the affected customer(s) to claim for compensation. However, very short supply interruptions and interruptions arising from network faults or third party actions are exempt from the guarantee. Every effort is made to minimise the inconvenience caused to customers in these instances. For customers listed as vulnerable¹⁷ on the Special Services Register (as registered by their natural gas supplier); Gas Networks Ireland will offer alternative heating and cooking facilities during planned gas supply interruption or network outage. In 2018, there were 8,466 vulnerable customers registered. See Figure 4.14 – Gas supply restoration and Table 4.7. The Register of Vulnerable Customers is managed by the gas suppliers (shippers). In 2018 there was no system wide need to draw down the vulnerable customer list but it may have been required for local incidents, though these are not recorded.

17 [Vulnerable customers](#)

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4.8 Response to emergencies

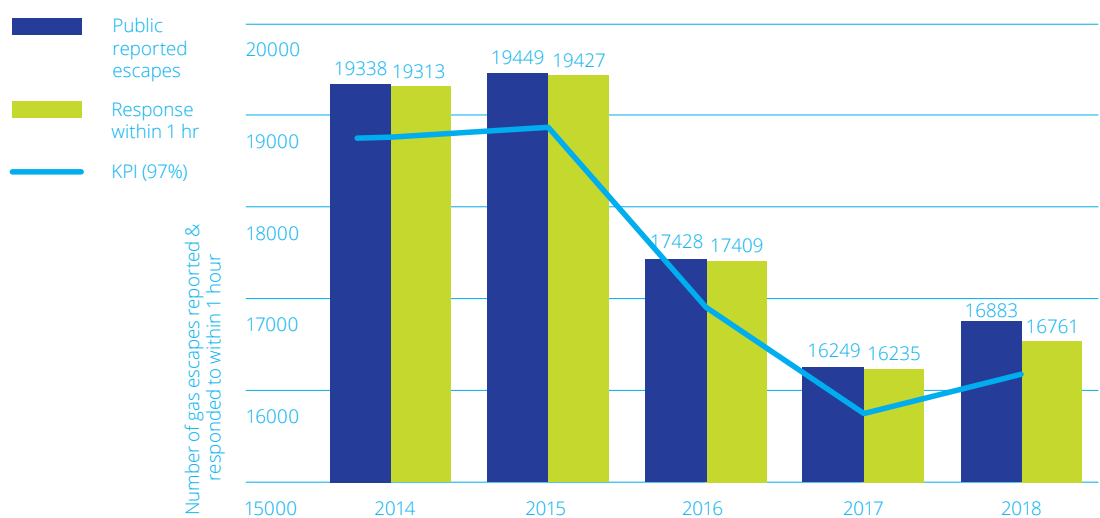
One of Gas Networks Ireland's primary objectives is to respond to all emergencies as soon as possible. On notification of an actual or suspected gas escape report, one of the emergency response personnel will be dispatched immediately. The objective is for the response personnel to arrive on site within one hour of the gas escape report being notified, the KPI for arriving and dealing with such incidents is 97%.

At Gas Networks Ireland safety is a key priority. There are a number of ongoing safety campaigns¹⁸ to advertise the steps to take in case of a gas emergency and to promote the emergency number (1800 20 50 50), for instances where a response is required. The aim is to make the general public aware of what to do if they smell gas on a premises or on the street.

The number of reported emergency gas escapes was 16,883 in 2018, 99.3% of which were attended to within one hour. Annually this has been a consistent achievement (see Table 4.8). The average response time for 2018 was 32 minutes, an increase from 28 minutes in 2017, due mainly to the difficulty in accessing premises during the severe weather in March. The breakdown of incidents is as follows;

- No Trace – 9,578;
- Internal – 3,771; and
- External – 3,534.

Figure 4.14: Response to emergencies



The number of reported gas escapes in 2018 was up circa 4% when compared to 2017. This increase in reports was due to the severe weather experienced in March 2018 where the number of Public Reported Escape Responses (PRER) increased by 31% over the number for the same month in 2017. The number of reported escapes in 2018 is still significantly lower than those encountered in 2014 and 2015. This is due to maintenance and meter replacement programmes which finished in 2015.

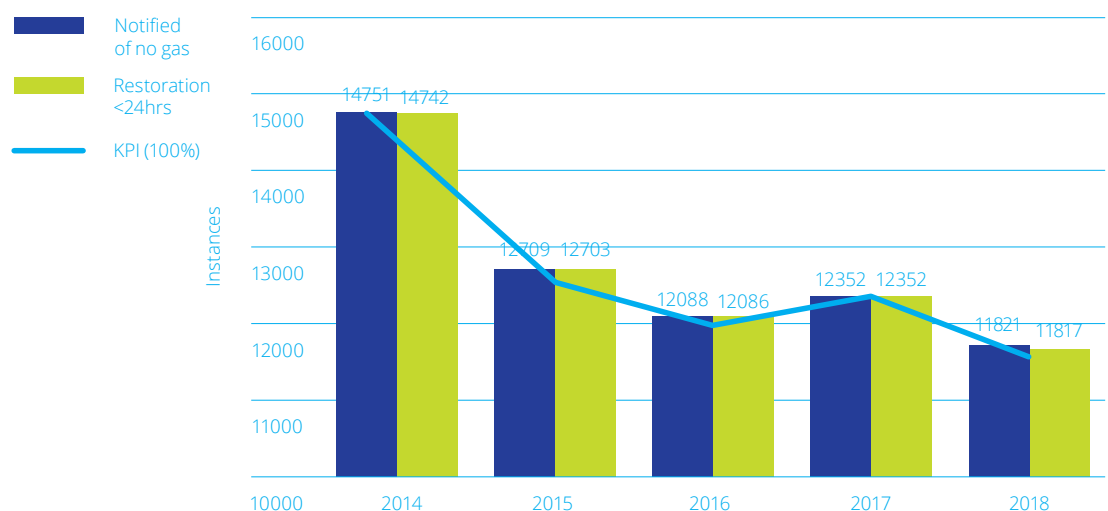
Gas Networks Ireland has been appointed the National Gas Emergency Manager (NGEM) by the CRU in accordance with Statutory Instrument (SI) 697 of 2007, should a major gas incident occur. The NGEM has responsibility for declaring a natural gas emergency, as well as coordinating planning arrangements and any emergency response in accordance with the Natural Gas Emergency Plan (NGEP). The scope of the NGEP covers emergency arrangements, emergency planning and operational response.

4.9 Gas supply restoration

Occasionally faults may occur on the gas network and as a result there may be an interruption to supply. On receiving a report, Gas Networks Ireland will do everything possible to restore the supply as quickly as possible. However, if there is a failure to restore the supply by the end of the following day after notification and it is a network fault, customers may make a claim for compensation per day, for each 24 hour period without gas subject to a maximum amount. Where there are exceptional circumstances such as extreme weather conditions or extensive disruption to gas supplies, the guarantee and the compensation will not be offered. The number of gas supply interruptions has decreased over the past 5 years, with the number of instances reported declining. This is due to mild winters and all interruptions being resolved within 24 hours in 2018.

Gas Networks Ireland has consistently improved its restoration performance since 2013. The number of customers who had service restored outside 24 hours has been steadily declining. The performance was at 100% in 2018 with restorations taking place within a 24 hour period, Due to the severe weather and problems with access in March 2018, 0.03% were restored after 24 hours. It should be noted that there was a decrease of 4% in the number of gas interruptions in 2018 and there was a decrease of 28% for the period from 2013 to 2018.

Figure 4.15: Gas supply interruption and restoration



4.10 Complaints handling

Complaints may be registered with Gas Networks Ireland. The company endeavours to resolve all complaints within 10 working days of registration of the complaint. However, property damage or meter mix-ups may take up to 30 days from notification to resolution. Complaints are acknowledged within one day from receipt and the complainant will be contacted by Gas Networks Ireland within 4 working days of registering their complaint to check on the progress of the issue. Gas Networks Ireland has exceeded the complaint handling performance measure since 2011. The number of complaints has fallen by approximately 22% since 2015, from 2,494 to 1,953. The complaints handling process is illustrated in Figure 4.16.



The company endeavours to **resolve all complaints within 10 working days** of registration of the complaint

In 2018, Gas Networks Ireland received a total of 1,953 complaints. Of this number 1,554 were closed out in less than 10 working days and the remaining 399 within 30 working days. In 2017, Gas networks Ireland modified its turnaround time for licencing complaints from 10 to 30 days. These are customer complaints where Gas Networks Ireland are unable to progress a job because of issues encountered in obtaining a licence from a Local Authority related to road works. This resulted in a 40% increase in the number of complaints requiring resolution within 30 days. In 2018, Gas Networks Ireland achieved 96.2% and 97.2% performance, versus 96.9% and 96.3% performance in 2017 for 10 and 30 working days respectively. Gas Networks Ireland's performance for resolution of all complaints was 96.5% in 2018 against a CRU approved KPI of 85%.

Figure 4.16: Complaints handling process

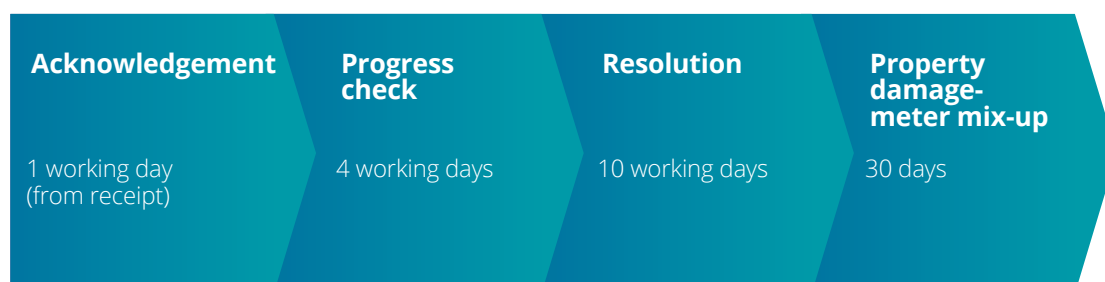
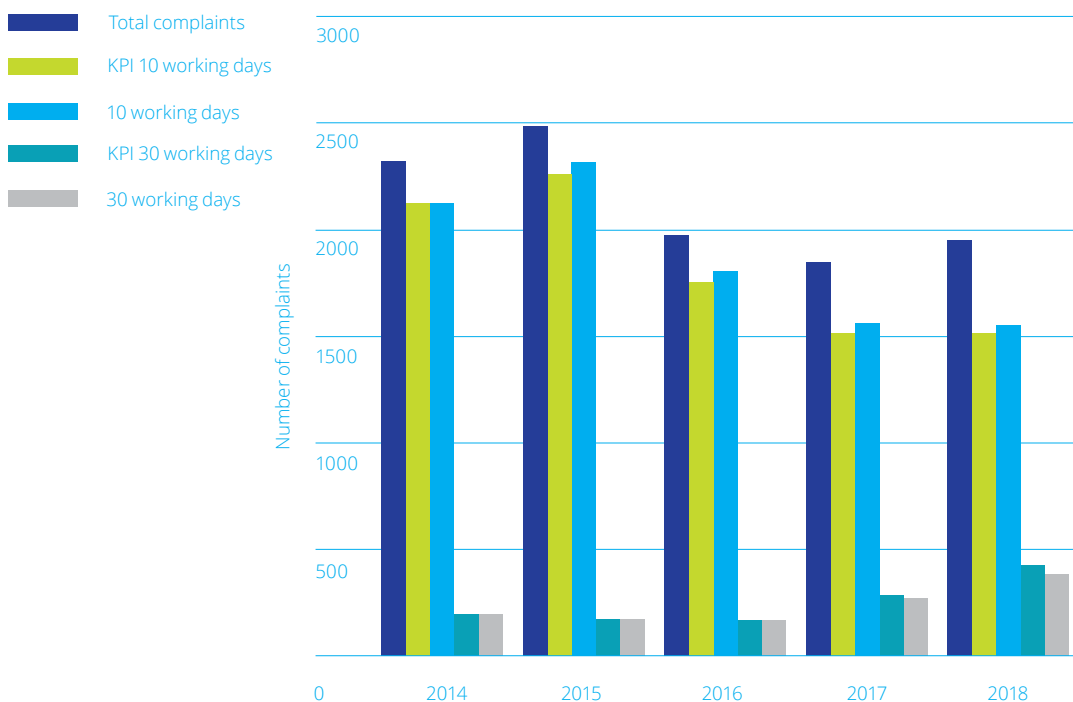


Figure 4.17: Complaints handling



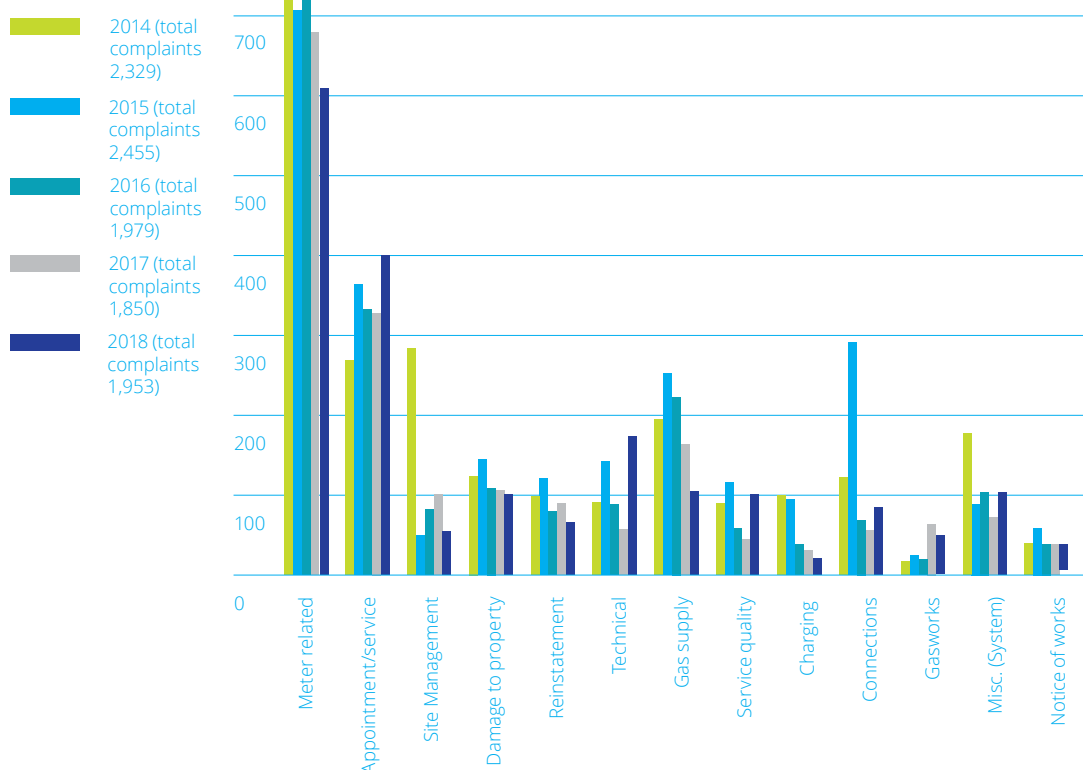
Under the terms of the Natural Gas Distribution Licence, Gas Networks Ireland published a Complaint Handling Procedure¹⁹ as agreed with the CRU. This document outlines how Gas Networks Ireland handles complaints.

4.11 Categories of complaints

Due to the diversity of the work that Gas Networks Ireland engages in, there are many categories of complaint types. The total number of complaints received was 1,953 in 2018. Complaints can vary across all the types of services delivered by Gas Networks Ireland. Complaints are received from both customers who are having services installed and may also come from others affected by the works undertaken by Gas Networks Ireland in their locality.

¹⁹ [Complaints Handling](#)

Figure 4.18: Customer complaints by category



The figure for complaints increased slightly on 2017 but is still a large decrease since 2015 (the total number of complaints was 2,455 in 2015, 1,979 in 2016, 1,850 in 2017 and 1,953 in 2018). The largest number of complaints received fall into the meter related category, which is consistent with previous years. Gas Networks Ireland continues to monitor all customer complaints to seek improvements to the services offered and address any issues that are within its control. As a result of these reviews, Gas Networks Ireland have appointed a Customer Advocate in the Contact Centre to be a single point of contact for complaints. In addition, Individual reports are issued to departments highlighting the volume and type of complaint received. This helps to highlight areas in need of improvement.

4.12 Payment guarantee

Gas Networks Ireland will issue a cheque for the appropriate sum in respect of a requested or notified refund or any validated Charter compensation claim within 10 working days. If the KPI of 10 working days is not met then compensation will be made in respect of failure to meet this standard. The performance rate payment guarantee has been 100% since 2012. All claims and refunds in 2018 were paid within the required time frame.

4.13 Customer Charter payments

Gas Networks Ireland connects all natural gas customers to the network and is responsible for carrying out related work at the customer’s premises. Every effort is made to provide services in a prompt, efficient, and safe manner and to a high standard. The Customer Charter provides assurances to customers regarding the standards to which these services are provided. In certain circumstances, compensation will be provided for failing to meet these standards where the customer makes a claim. In such instances, the customer is directed to the Customer Charter page on the Gas Networks Ireland website where instructions on making a claim are available. In 2018, 12 compensation payments were made to customers. The total value of these payments was €770.

Figure 4.19: Customer Charter payments and compensation claims

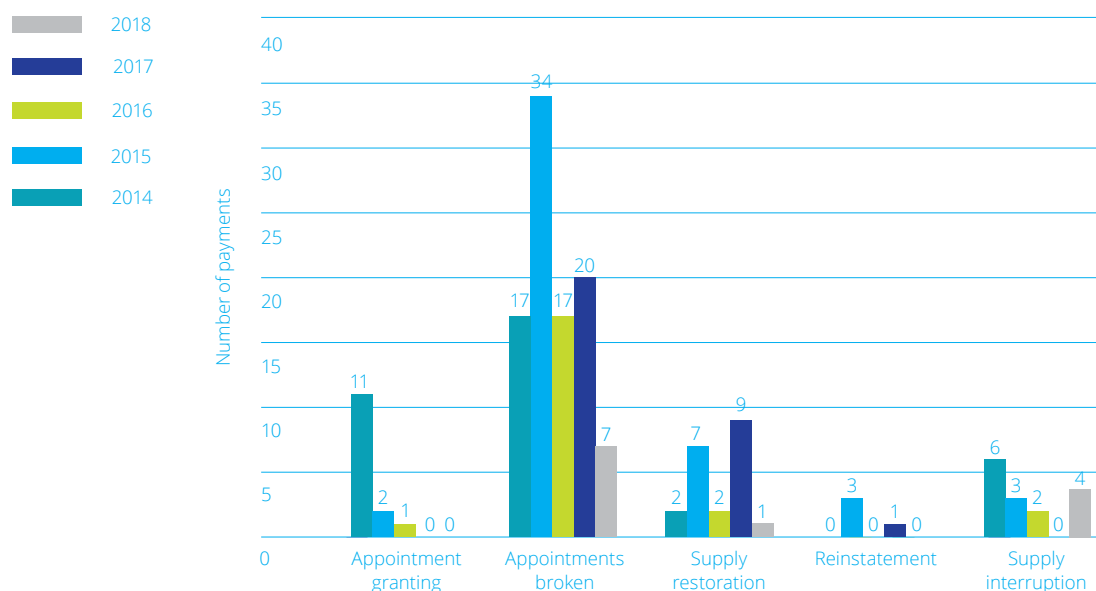
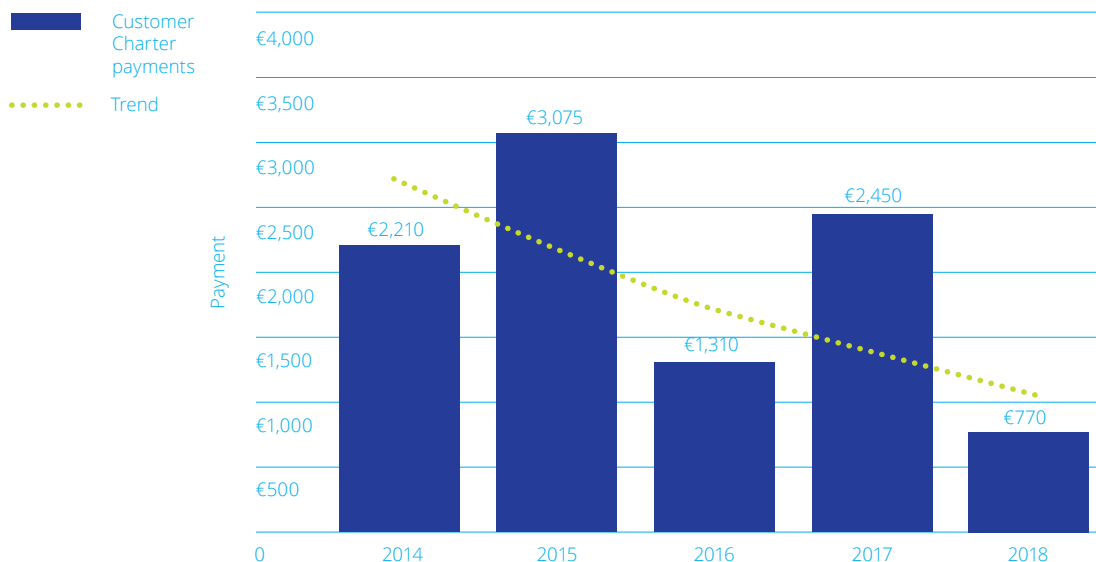


Figure 4.20: Customer Charter payments



05 Conclusion

The Customer Charter commitments are to the fore of Gas Networks Ireland customer interactions, and are a means to measure performance; the results for 2018 have been positive overall. The operating environment is constantly changing, presenting opportunities and challenges. The business is continually adapting to meet customers' needs and to identify areas for improvement. Customers have the facility to make contact through various means of communication which include telephone and digital channels, their input is also encouraged through surveys. Regular active participation with shippers takes place through the GMARG and Code Modification Forums. Gas Networks Ireland continuously seeks and monitors customer feedback, analyses results and KPI metrics.

Gas Networks Ireland works in partnership with its stakeholders, including the CRU and shippers to ensure the safe, secure and reliable delivery of gas to all users. Commitment to excellent customer service remains a key priority for Gas Networks Ireland.

2018 marked a year of expansion and growth. By maximising the natural gas infrastructure, all users will benefit through tariff sharing, reducing emissions and realising the economic opportunities that natural gas can deliver. Growing the gas network sustainably by adding new towns where appropriate and focussing on connecting customers to the existing network has remained a key objective for Gas Networks Ireland. Construction was completed on the connection of Listowel, Nenagh and the Center Parcs Ballymahon Holiday Village to the natural gas network. The continued roll-out of the gas network to Wexford town will support this growth.

In 2018 Gas Networks Ireland carried out two further surveys of key contacts including gas shippers and suppliers following on from a similar survey undertaken in 2017. The purpose of the surveys (aimed at operational and management staff) was to gauge shipper and supplier's sentiment towards Gas Networks Ireland and to look at ways in which these relationships could be improved, ultimately feeding down to the end customers. To ensure impartiality, Gas Networks Ireland contracted an external company to carry out the surveys on its behalf. In excess of 70 responses were received during November and December 2018 across both surveys. Shippers and suppliers welcomed a general improvement by Gas Networks Ireland in 2018 with an increase in the overall satisfaction score. Based on the outcomes of these shipper/supplier surveys a plan has been formulated with the following initiatives for improvement identified;

- Customer Service
- Information & Knowledge Management
- GMARG Secretariat
- PAYG Metering
- Long Term No Access
- Future of Gas

It is expected that implementation of the recommendations of this survey will enable shippers / suppliers to better serve their end customers.

Some of these initiatives include, but are not limited to:

- The development of an information sharing portal where suppliers can access information relating to the retail market
- Working with suppliers to update the terms of reference of the Gas Market Arrangements Retail Group (GMARG)
- Developing new market processes to address 'Long Term No Access' (LTNA)
- Hosting a series of training and networking sessions with supplier operational staff to work towards better outcomes for shared customers

Gas Networks Ireland's customer service performance is benchmarked against key performance indicators (KPI's) as per the customer Charter. In 2018, Gas Networks Ireland fell just short of the KPI's for Appointment Granting because of capacity issues on the system and Appointment Keeping because of delays in previous appointments and availability of materials. Ireland's first publicly accessible Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) station at the Circle K Service Station in Dublin Port became operational and available for use in 2018. This CNG station has the capacity to refuel up to 70 vehicles daily and was completed as part of the Causeway Project which entails the installation of 14 high capacity fast fill CNG stations and one medium to large scale renewable gas injection point. Gas Networks Ireland's work on its ambition to be capable of supporting 20% renewable gas in the network by 2030 continued in 2018 with construction completed of the first grid injection facility for bio-methane in December 2018. The site has the capacity to inject up to 200GWh per annum of renewable gas onto the gas network. Developments in innovation provides customers with a choice and an opportunity to make a positive impact on emissions. Renewable gas is a clean, renewable and carbon neutral fuel and as such can make a significant contribution to Ireland's renewable energy and carbon reduction targets. These are very positive developments for Gas Networks Ireland, the energy industry and the environment, providing real solutions to many of the economic and environmental challenges currently faced by policy makers and industry and has a major role to play in assisting the country's transition to a low carbon economy.

06 Appendices

6.1 Glossary of Terms

ACE	Achievements in Customer Excellence
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
CCA	Customer Contact Association
CES	Customer Effort Score
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CRU	Commission Regulation of Utilities
CSAT	Customer Satisfaction Scores
DBFZ	Deutsche Biomasseforschungszentrum
DM	Daily Metered
DSO	Distribution System Operator
DTTAS	Department of Transport Tourism and Sport
EU	European Union
ESBN	ESB Networks
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GMARG	Gas Market Arrangements Retail Group
GTMS	Gas Transportation Management System
IERC	International Energy Research Centre
IGU	International Gas Union
IoM	Isle of Man
IRC	Irish Research Council
IVR	Interactive Voice Recording
I & C	Industrial & Commercial
I/C	Interconnector
Km	Kilometre
KPI	Key Performance indicator
LDM	Large Daily Metered
MaREI	Marine Energy Ireland
MPD	Market Process Documents
NGEM	National Gas Emergency
NGEP	Natural Gas Emergency Plan
NI	Northern Ireland
No.	Number
NPS	Net Promoter Score
NSAI	National Standards Authority of Ireland
NSMP	National Smart Metering Programme
NUIG	National University of Ireland Galway
PAYG	Pay as you Go
PRISMA	PRISMA operates the internet platform where capacity rights for natural gas transport can be traded or marketed
RGFI	Renewable Gas Forum Ireland
RMO	Road Management Office
RoI	Republic of Ireland
ROL	Road Opening Licence
SFI	Science Foundation Ireland
SI	Statutory Instrument
TCBB	Technology Centre for Biorefining and Bioenergy
TMP	Traffic Management Plan
TSO	Transmission System Operator
UCC	University College Cork
UK	United Kingdom
WRI	World Resources Institute

06 Appendices

6.2 Tables used for Chart Graphics

Table 3.2: Main categories of shipper issues recorded*

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Information request	26%	26%	24%	26%	33%
Siteworks job query	28%	18%	21%	21%	17%
Meter mix-up	8%	16%	9%	8%	10%
Consumption query	5%	10%	10%	7%	5%
Revenue protection	6%	7%	8%	6%	6%
SPC & AQ Query**	-	-	-	5%	4%
GTMS issue	-	-	4%	5%	7%
Daily allocation review	-	4%	5%	5%	5%
Read query	12%	2%	3%	4%	5%
PAYG queries	6%	3%	3%	4%	2%
Total %	93%	90%	89%	90%	94%

*Top 10 of 36 categories are used for charting purposes – the 90% total shown in Table 3.2 and Figure 3.1 is for the top 10 only

** Category did not feature in top 10 in previous years

Table 3.3: Average number of business days to resolve shipper issues by type

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Consumption query	7	9	9	6	4
Revenue protection	6	6	8	6	7
Daily allocation review	-	4	4	4	5
Siteworks job query	4	3	4	3	3
SPC & AQ Query	-	-	-	3	2
Meter mix-up	3	1	3	3	2
GTMS issue	-	-	2	3	3
PAYG queries	8	7	2	2	4
Information request	3	4	4	2	5
Read query	4	5	4	2	9

Table 4.1: Call response

	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		
	KPI %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %		
Total calls answered		337,918		307,925		281,423		291,701	289,342		
<20 secs	80	310,027	91.7	279,290	90.7	265,884	94.5	272,378	93.4	273,137	94.4
Abandoned >10 secs	7	4,055	1.2	5,697	1.7	3,396	1.1	4,593	1.44	4,010	1.26

Table 4.2: Quotations turnaround

KPI 100% (<7 working days)	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %
Domestic	3,246	100	3,354	100	3,098	100%	3,058	100%	3,589	100%
I & C site works	638	100	686	100	610	100%	832	100%	560	100%
Total quotations	3884		4,040		3,708		3,890	100%	4,149	100%

Table 4.3: Complaints categories

Complaint type	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall
Meter related	722	31%	707	29%	728	36.8%	679	37.8%	621	31.8%
Appointment/service	269	12%	364	15%	332	16.8%	328	17.7%	405	20.7%
Site management	284	12%	50	2%	82	4.1%	101	5.5%	60	3.1%
Damage to property	124	5%	145	6%	109	5.5%	106	5.7%	104	5.3%
Reinstatement	98	4%	121	5%	80	4%	90	4.9%	73	3.7%
Technical	91	4%	142	6%	88	4.5%	57	3.1%	157	8.0%
Gas supply	195	8%	252	10%	223	11.3%	163	8.8%	108	5.5%
Service quality	90	4%	116	5%	58	2.9%	45	2.4%	95	4.9%
Charging	100	4%	95	4%	38	1.9%	31	1.7%	30	1.5%
Connections	122	5%	291	12%	69	3.5%	56	3.0%	79	4.1%
Gasworks	17	1%	24	1%	24	1.2%	64	3.5%	58	3.0%
Misc. (system)	177	8%	89	4%	104	5.3%	72	3.9%	105	5.4%
Notice of works	40	2%	56	2%	44	2.2%	38	2.1%	58	3.0%
Grand total	2329	100%	2455	100%	1,979	100%	1,850	100%	1,953	100%

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Table 4.4: Appointment granting

	KPI %	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
		No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %
Metering requested		64,389	99.9	78,565	100	51,023	99.98%	54,293		54,872	
< 5 working days (Metering compliant)	100	64,325	99.90	78,562	100	51,012	99.98%	54,265	99.95	54,851	99.96
Service requested		3,306	99.70	5,145	99.98	3,722	100%	3,789		3,760	
< 4 weeks (service compliant)	100	3,296	99.70	5,144	99.98	3,722	100%	3,789	100.00	3,760	100.00

Table 4.5: Appointment keeping

	KPI %	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
		No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %
Metering promised		71,030		73,488		66,549		83,135		79,944	
Metering achieved	100	70,519	99.28	73,009	99.35	66,083	99.3%	81,741	98.3	78,591	98.3
Service promised		3,057		3,257		2,919		3,303		3,766	
Service achieved	100	3,043	99.54	3,198	98.19	2,875	98.5%	3,213	97.3	3,535	93.86

Table 4.6: Reinstatement commitments

Works	KPI %	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
		No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %
Temporary works	100	5,431	97.33	5,499	94.98	6,791	94.91	5,876	97.5	5,787	100
>24 hours		145	2.66	276	5.02	346	5.09	147	2.5	0	
Permanent works	100	6,756	96.76	7,570	97.32	9,447	86.47	10,709	77.5	10,515	
>20 Working days		225	3.24	203	2.68	1,278	13.52	2,413	22.5	1,728	83.57

Table 4.7: Gas supply interruption and restoration

	KPI %	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
		No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %
Notified of no gas		14,751		12,709		12,088		12,352		11,821	
Restoration <24 hours	100	14,742	99.93	12,703	99.95	12,086	99.98	12,352	100.0	11,817	100.0

Table 4.8: Response to emergencies

	KPI %	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
		No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %
Public reports		19,338		19,449		17,428		16,249		16,883	
Within 1 hour	97	19,313	99.99	19,429	99.99	17,409	99.98	16,235	99.91	16,761	99.3

Table 4.9: Complaints handling

	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018			
	KPI rate		KPI rate		KPI rate		KPI rate		KPI rate			
	KPI %	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
To be resolved <10 working days	85	99.3	2,132	100	2,265	97.6	1,758	97.1%	1,518	96.9%	1,496	96.2%
Actual			2,132		2,321		1,810		1,566		1,554	
To be resolved <30 working days	85	100	197	100	173	100	169	100%	271	95.4%	388	97.2%
Actual			197		173		169		284		399	
All complaints	85	99.4	2,329	100	2,494	97.8	1,979	97.4%	1,850	96.7%	1,953	96.5%

Table 4.10: Complaint type

Complaint type	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	% of		% of		% of		% of		% of	
	No.	Overall	No.	Overall	No.	Overall	No.	Overall	No.	Overall
Meter related	722	31%	707	29%	728	36.8%	679	37.8%	621	31.8%
Appointment/service	269	12%	364	15%	332	16.8%	328	17.7%	405	20.7%
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Damage to Property	124	5%	145	6%	109	5.5%	106	5.7%	104	5.3%
Reinstatement	98	4%	121	5%	80	4%	90	4.9%	73	3.7%
Technical	91	4%	142	6%	88	4.5%	57	3.1%	157	8.0%
Gas supply	195	8%	252	10%	223	11.3%	163	8.8%	108	5.5%
Service quality	90	4%	116	5%	58	2.9%	45	2.4%	95	4.9%
Charging	100	4%	95	4%	38	1.9%	31	1.7%	30	1.5%
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Misc. (System)	177	8%	89	4%	104	5.3%	72	3.9%	105	5.4%
Notice of works	40	2%	59	2%	39	2.2%	38	2.1%	58	3.0%
Grand total	2329	100%	2455	100%	1,979	100%	1800	100%	1953	100%

Table 4.11: Payments guarantee

	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	No.	KPI %	No.	KPI%	No.	KPI %	No.	KPI %	No.	KPI %
Payments	36	100	49	100	22	100%	40	100%	22	100%

Table 4.12: Customer Charter payments

Claim by category	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Appointment granting	11	2	1	0	0	
Appointments broken	17	34	17	30	7	
Supply restoration	2	7	2	9	1	
Reinstatement	0	3	0	1	0	
Supply interruption	6	3	2	0	4	
Total claims	36	49	22	40	12	
€ Value		2,210	3,075	1,310	2,450	770

Table 4.13: Compensations claims

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Paid	36	49	22	40	12
Rejected	0	0	0	0	0
>10 working days	0	0	0	0	0

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