

CONSUMER AWARENESS IN ELECTRICITY SECTOR

OVERVIEW:

The electricity sector is governed by the Central Electricity Authority of India. The sector abides to the Electricity Act, 2003. Owing to the immeasurable vastness of the sector, each State has its own grievance redressal mechanism. The Consumer redressal grievance mechanism adopted in Karnataka is elaborated in here.

THE GROUNDS FOR FILING A COMPLAINT:

The following are the grounds for filing a complaint.

- Interruptions/Failure of power supply
- Voltage variations
- Load shedding/Scheduled outage
- Metering complaints
- Billing complaints
- Disconnection and reconnection complaints
- Additional load
- Safety issues
- TC failure complaints
- Theft
- Allegation on staff
- Phase conversion
- Transfer of ownership and conversion
- Refund/ issue of certificates

PROCEDURE FOR FILING A COMPLAINT:

The complainant has to approach the Redressal Committee of the respective Electricity distribution licensee. Every distribution licensee should have a redressal committee within their organization. If the redressal committee failed to resolve the issue, the complainant can opt for the Ombudsman for speedy relief.

CONSUMER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL FORUM (CGRF):

Every licensee has a CGRF with three members (a chairperson and two members) to address to the issues. The highlight of this redressal mechanism is that the complainant won't be in need of the assistance of an advocate. He can file a complaint by himself. A complaint can be filed by filling in the complaint form as provided in the Form A¹ of the regulations. The forum might demand additional documents to be produced so that the complaint can be disposed at its earliest. The proceedings in the forum will be conducted in public. After the completion of the proceedings, if the forum feels that the allegations are true it would redress the complaint by passing an amount as award. If not the complaint would be dismissed.

¹ Refer PG no 13 in the PDF FORM A

<http://www.karnataka.gov.in/kercold/Regulations/Regulations/GRIEVANCE-REDRESSAL-COMMISSION.pdf>

COMPLAINT FORM:

Click the link below for the complaint form; refer pg. no. 13 for Form A.

<http://www.karnataka.gov.in/kercold/Regulations/Regulations/GRIEVANCE-REDRESSAL-COMMISSION.pdf>

JURISDICTION OF THE FORUM²:

The licensee has to mention the headquarters of the redressal forum. The sittings can be conducted in the headquarters.

THE LICENSEE'S OBLIGATIONS:

1. The licensee is obliged to notify the names and contact addresses of the forum members in the media.
2. The licensee should make copies of the procedure for filing a complaint free of cost.
3. The bills issued by the Licensee to the consumers shall contain the address of the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum. The statement 'Complainants whose grievance is not redressed by the official of the Licensee may approach the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, and Ombudsman thereafter" shall be printed on the Bills.³
4. The Licensee shall necessarily obtain a Post Box Number to facilitate easy registration of grievances by Complainants.

THE DETAILS OF REVENUE DISTRICTS, CHAIRPERSON, MEMBER NOMINATED BY BESCOM, MEMBER NOMINATED BY KERC AND FORUM HEAD QUARTERS WHERE CONSUMER CAN LODGE COMPLAINTS / GRIEVANCES⁴:

Name of the Revenue District	Chairperson of the Forum	Member nominated by BESCOM	Member nominated by KERC	Forum's Head Quarter
Bangalore Urban	Superintending Engineer (Ele.), West Circle, BESCOM Mobile No. : 9449847999	Executive Engineer (Ele.), (Office), East Circle, BESCOM. Mobile No. : 9449844866	Sri. Raviraj Shetty Bangalore Mobile No. : 9880276227	West Circle office, BESCOM, CA Site No. 05, West of Chord Road, 3rd Stage , BhimaJyothi, HBCS Layout, Next to Chord Road Hospital,

² Refer the Regulation 4 Jurisdiction of the forum.

<http://www.karnataka.gov.in/kercold/Regulations/Regulations/GRIEVANCE-REDRESSAL-COMMISSION.pdf>

³ Refer Regulation 5.3 The licensee's obligations

<http://www.karnataka.gov.in/kercold/Regulations/Regulations/GRIEVANCE-REDRESSAL-COMMISSION.pdf>

⁴ Referred from pg. no 3 of the PDF http://bescom.org/wp-content/uploads/rti/about%20CGRF%20english%20_new.pdf

				Basaveswarnagar, Bangalore-560 079. Phone No. : 080- 23225161
Bangalore Rural	Superintending Engineer (Ele.), East Circle, BESCOM Mobile No. : 9449877999	Executive Engineer (Ele.), (Office), West Circle, BESCOM. Mobile No. : 9480811290	Sri. B.Bhagavan Bangalore Mobile No. : 9448046184	East Circle office, BESCOM, JP Avenue, Karur Road, Tasker Town, Shivajinagar, Bangalore-560 051 Phone No. : 080- 22863433
Ramnagar	Superintending Engineer (Ele.), Bangalore Rural Circle, BESCOM Mobile No. : 9448279007	Executive Engineer (Ele.), Kolar Division, BESCOM. Mobile No. : 9448279019	Sri. M. Beeresh Ramnagar Mobile No. : 9845022980	Ramanagar Division office, BESCOM, Near Railway station, Ramanagar-571 511. Phone No. : 080- 27271385/ 27271391
Kolar	Superintending Engineer (Ele.), Kolar Circle, BESCOM Mobile No. : 9448279008	Executive Engineer (Ele.), Ramanagar Division, BESCOM. Mobile No. : 9448279026	Smt.R. Sukanya Kolar Mobile No. : 9901071533	Kolar Circle office, BESCOM, Main Road, Kolar- 563101 Phone No. : 08152 220641/ 220642

KARNATAKA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION [CONSUMER COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE] REGULATIONS 2004:⁵

This table enunciates the time limit within which a complaint has to be addressed by the forum.

Nature of Service	Standard(Indicative Maximum time limit for rendering service)	Primary responsibility centers where to lodge	Next Higher Authority
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⁵ Referred from pg. no. 5 of the PDF http://bescom.org/wp-content/uploads/rti/about%20CGRF%20english%20_new.pdf

		complaint	
1. Normal Fuse-off a) Cities and Towns b) Rural areas	Within 6 hours Within 24 hours	Central Consumer Complaints Division (CCCD) Service Station of the Sub-Division AE/ JE (O&M)/ Section Officer/ Line Man in Lineman camp	AEE (E1)of the Sub-Division
2. Line Breakdowns a) Cities and Towns b) Rural areas	Within 6 hours (10 hrs. if poles are broken down) Within 24 hours in all cases	CCCD/Service station of the Sub-Division/AE (O&M)/ JE (O&M)/ Section Officer/ Lineman in Lineman camp	AEE (E1)of the Sub-Division
3. Distribution Transformer Failure a) Cities and Towns b) Rural areas	Within 24 hours Within 72 hours	CCCD/Service station of the Sub- Division/ AE(O&M)/ JE(O&M)/Section Officer/ Lineman in Lineman camp	AEE (E1)of the Sub-Division
4. Voltage Variations a) Where no expansion or enhancement of network is involved b) Where up-gradation of distribution system is required c) Opening of neutral and voltage exceeding 2% of supply voltage	Within 7 days Within 120 days Within 6 hours in Cities Within 24 hours in Rural areas	CCCD/Service station of the Sub-Division/ AE(O&M)/ JE(O&M)/Section Officer/ Lineman in Lineman camp - do - - do -	AEE (E1) of the Sub-Division - do - - do -
5. Meter Complaints a) Inspect and check correctness b) Replace slow, creeping or stuck meters	Within 7 days Within 10 days	AE (O&M)/JE (O&M)/ Soujanya counter of the Sub-Division/ Section Officer - do -	AEE (EI) of the Sub-Division - do -

OMBUDSMAN SCHEME:

If the complainant feels unsatisfied with the forum's order, he can further make a representation before the OMBUDSMAN. The ombudsman should have knowledge in the field of electrical

engineering in power sector, finance, law, and administration and he should be able to converse in Kannada.

JURISDICTION:

The jurisdiction the ombudsman will extend to the whole of Karnataka.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE OMBUDSMAN:

- The ombudsmen have the power to address against the orders passed by the CGRF.
- The ombudsman bring settlement through mediation and conciliation

PROCEDURE FOR FILING A COMPLAINT:

The complainant has to fill in a form, FORM B⁶ and file it before the ombudsman. The ombudsmen have the power to demand additional documents and certificates in order to reach to a conclusion with respect to the issue. The ombudsman can maintain the confidentiality of any documents which is in their possession.

THE CONTACT INFORMATION OF THE OMBUDSMAN:

The Electricity Ombudsman

Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission,

No. 9/2, 6th Floor,

Mahalakshmi Chambers,

MG Road,

Bangalore- 560 001

Tele-fax: 080 41692617

E-mail: ombkar@gmail.com

PROCEDURE FOR FILING A COMPLAINT VIA BESCOM – IPGRS

One can file an online complaint by clicking the link below. One has to register their mobile number and mention their issue by selecting the dialog box.

<http://www.bescom.ipgrs.org/>

⁶ Refer Pg. 15 in the PDF doc

<http://www.karnataka.gov.in/kercold/Regulations/Regulations/GRIEVANCE-REDRESSAL-COMMISSION.pdf>

STATISTICS ON THE NUMBER OF CASES DEALT VIA BESCOM IPGRS⁷

S.NO	CATEGORY	NO. OF CASES
1.	TOTAL COMPLAINTS	209035
2.	NO. OF RESOLVED	206984
3.	TOTAL PENDING	2051

THE ACTS GOVERNING THE SECTOR:

THE ELECTRICITY ACT, 2003

<http://www.cercind.gov.in/Act-with-amendment.pdf>

⁷ Referred from <http://www.bescom.ipgrs.org/>