



SIMPLIFIED LEGAL *And* REGULATORY GUIDE:

**Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission -
Customer Service Standards of Performance for
Distribution Companies, 2007**





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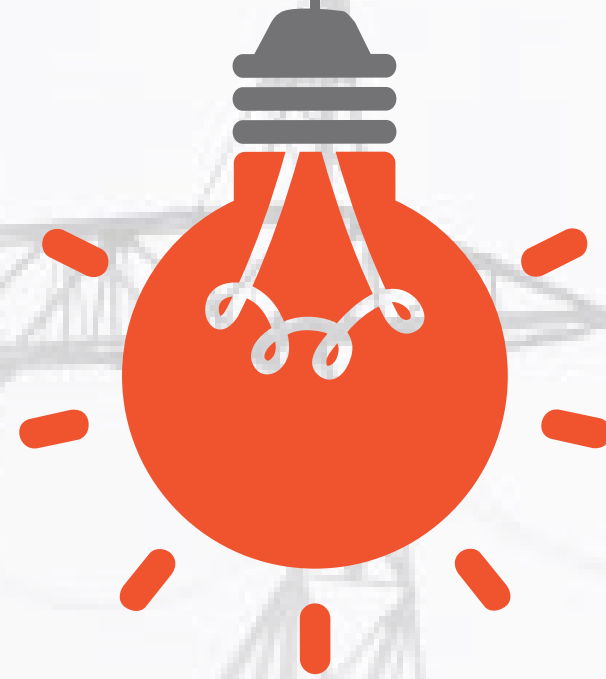
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OVERVIEW

**Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission -
Customer Service Standards of Performance
for Distribution Companies, 2007**



The Customer Service Standards of Performance for Distribution Companies, 2007 (referred to as the Regulations) details a set of directives established as performance standards to be adhered to by Distribution Companies (DisCos) in the delivery of electricity supply services to customers. The Regulations provides directives relating to connections, supply interruptions, complaints, disputes, meter reading, etc.

The Glossary of Terms referenced in this guide can be found in the main Regulation¹ and in our [Glossary of Industry Terms](#).



The Electric Power Sector Reform Act (EPSRA) of 2005² serves as the legal backing for the Regulations. The EPSRA vests power to make regulations to the Commission, which forms the foundation for the development of the Regulations.³ [Please refer to EL's guide on the Electricity Act.](#)



OBJECTIVE

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OBJECTIVE



The rationale behind the promulgation of the Regulations are as follows:

- The promulgation of guidelines constituting performance standards for distribution companies in electricity supply.



KEY PROVISIONS

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KEY PROVISIONS



The following are key provisions in the Regulations:

Restoring Electricity Supply to a Customer's Premises

Once a customer informs a DisCo during working hours that electricity supply to his premises had stopped, an authorized official from the DisCo is to visit the premises of the customer within 24 hours from the time of notification, to determine the cause of the outage. If the outage is a result of a fault associated with the DisCos equipment, adequate remedy would be executed in the following ways:⁴

Where there is a fault in the DisCos fuse, the fuse is to be replaced, and electricity supply reconnected within 24 hours from the time of original notification of the outage.

Where there is a minor fault in the equipment of the DisCo, the fault is to be rectified, and electricity supply reconnected within 24 hours from the time of notification of the outage.

If the cause of the outage is as a result of any other fault in the equipment of the DisCo, the fault is to be rectified, and electricity supply reconnected within 48 hours from the time of notification of the outage.

In certain cases, however, the DisCo will be exempted from the above obligations which include:⁵

- Where it is found that the customer did not inform the DisCo; or
- Where it is found that the problem or fault is from the customer's electrical installation; or
- Where it is discovered that due to the nature of the fault, it would be impracticable for the DisCo to restore electricity supply to the customer's premises the prescribed timeframe within the Regulations.

It must be noted however, that electricity supply can be disrupted for the purpose of maintenance of the equipment of the DisCo. Where such is the case, the DisCo must notify the customer of the disruption within a minimum of three (3) working days before the disruption.⁶

Providing New Connections

When a customer makes a request to a DisCo for a new connection to his or her premises, the DisCo will be required to take steps towards ensuring that the connection of power supply to the premises is undertaken within 10 working days from the date of receipt of the request. This is however subject to the DisCo inspecting and approving



associated electrical installations, the DisCo agreeing to connect the supply, and the Customer paying any approved charges.⁷

Cost of Connections

Regarding the cost of connection, if a customer requests information from the DisCo regarding an estimate of the cost of connecting the premises to the DisCos distribution network, the DisCo will be required to provide such estimate within three (3) working days from the date of receipt of the request. In other cases, the estimate is required to be provided within five (5) working days.⁸

Voltage Complaints

Where a customer reports a problem to a DisCo to the effect that the problem was occasioned by electricity supply delivered at voltage levels outside the prescribed limits in the distribution code, an authorized official of the DisCo will be required to visit the premises of the customer to assess the issue or problem within 24 hours from the time of receipt of the complaint. If a determination or an official report cannot be made during the visit, it is required to be provided within 24 hours from the time of the visit.⁹

Meter Disputes

When a customer reports a problem to a DisCo based on a fault with the electricity meter used to record usage in the premises, thus resulting in an overcharge or an undercharge in the issued bill for the month in question in comparison with normal monthly bills received by the customer, an authorized official from the DisCo will be required to visit the premises of the customer to assess the issue or problem and also test the meter within three (3) working days from the date of notification of the issue by the customer. Where an official report cannot be generated within that timeframe, it is to be provided within five (5) working days following the visit.¹⁰ In other cases, the DisCo may have to take another route towards addressing the issue by installing a check meter to check the accuracy of the main meter, following which an official reply is to be provided to the customer once sufficient data becomes available. In such circumstance, the DisCo will be exempted from complying with the provisions of the Regulation.¹¹

In situations where a DisCo is notified during working hours that a customer's prepayment meter has a fault, an authorized official from the DisCo is required to visit the premises of the customer within 24 hours from the date of receipt of notification of the fault to:¹²



- inspect the meter; and
- if appropriate, fix or replace the meter;

However, where the prepayment meter is found to be working correctly, or the official of the DisCo is unable to gain access to the meter; the DisCo will be exempted from complying with the provisions of the Regulation.¹³

Reconnection of Electricity Supply upon Bill Payment

If a customer whose premises has been disconnected from electricity supply due to outstanding debts or reconnection charges, pays the outstanding debts and/or charges in full or enters into a payment agreement with the DisCo regarding the outstanding debts and requests for the reconnection of electricity supply, the DisCo is required to restore connection to the premises of such customer within 24 hours from the time of receipt of the request for reconnection.¹⁴

Repositioning of Meters

When a customer requests a repositioning of an electricity meter by the DisCo and pays the cost for such repositioning, the DisCo is required to undertake the repositioning of the meter within five (5) working days from the date of receipt of the request. Such repositioning must however take place within the premises and not outside of the premises.¹⁵

Meter Reading

DisCos are required to obtain through authorized representatives, actual readings of all meters in supply addresses within their areas of supply every month, but not later than once every three (3) months.¹⁶ However, where it is found that a customer has been provided with an unmetered supply by the DisCo or that the customer has a pre-payment meter, the above obligation will be inapplicable to the DisCo.¹⁷



Exceptions

The Regulation provides certain instances where DisCos will be exempted from having to comply or adhere with the standards as stipulated in the Regulation. These include instances where:

The Customer informs the DisCo that he no longer requires the DisCo to take an action previously requested;

Information is required to be provided by the customer to the DisCo and such information is not provided or it is not provided to the address required by the DisCo;

The customer has failed to pay charges due to the DisCo which is necessary before action can be taken; and

It is not reasonably practicable for the DisCo to take the action required within the timeframe.

Where it will not be reasonably practicable for the DisCo to take the action required within the timeframe, it must be based on the following set of conditions:

- a severe weather condition, or
- an industrial action by the DisCo's employees, or
- the inability of the DisCo to gain access to the customer's premises and or any premises to which access is required for the DisCo to undertake the work required to comply with the standard of service, or
- the fact that when trying to undertake the work requested, the DisCo encounters technical problems that could not have reasonably been foreseen and which prevented it from achieving the standard, or
- if by taking the action required by the customer, the DisCo would be in breach of its licence or any law for the time being in force, or
- any circumstances of an exceptional nature beyond the control of the DisCo.



Performance Standard Monitoring

DisCos are required to monitor their performance against each of the standards set out in the Regulations.¹⁸ In following this, DisCos are required to submit to the Commission monthly, a summary of its performance in accordance with the stipulated standards in the Regulations and in line with the format detailed in the Regulation;¹⁹ within 10 working days of the end of each calendar month.²⁰

Duty to Publish Standards of Service

Every DisCo has the duty to bring to the notice of its customers, by public notice, the existence and details of all Customer Service Standards of Performance.²¹ These Customer Service Standards of Performance will be published on the websites of the DisCos and printed copies of the Standards are to be made available free of charge to customers.²²



KEY STAKEHOLDERS

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KEY STAKEHOLDERS



Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC)

NERC established the Regulations through powers vested on the Commission as contained in the Electric Power Sector Reform Act, 2005. The Commission is responsible for giving effect to the provisions contained in the Regulation.

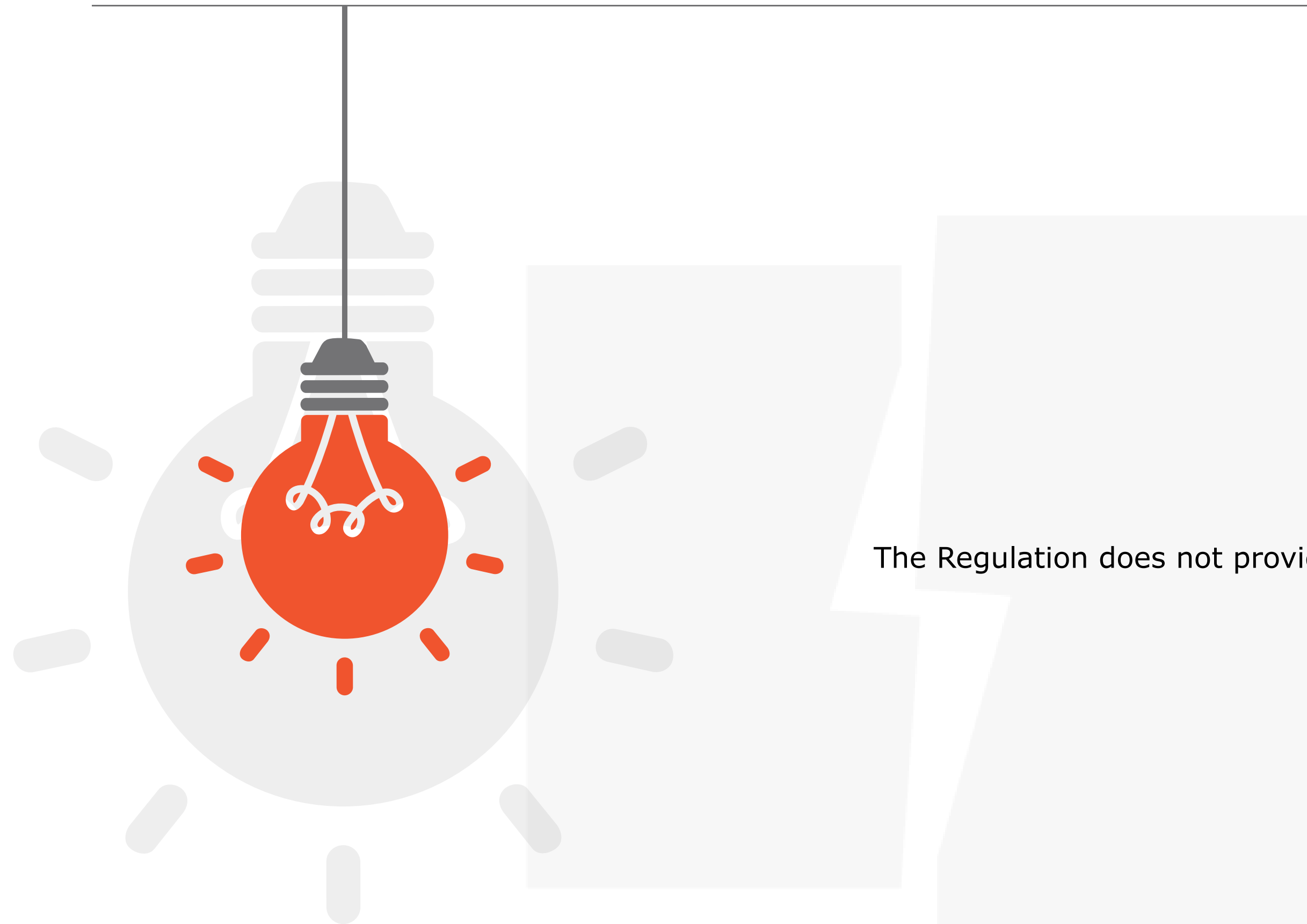
NERC receives monthly reports from DisCos indicating the latter's performance in accordance with standards established in the Regulations,²³ and publishes such performance of the respective DisCos on a regular basis.²⁴

The background of the slide features a faint, dark silhouette of a high-voltage power transmission tower, also known as a pylon, which is a lattice structure. It is positioned centrally and extends from the bottom towards the top of the frame, serving as a thematic backdrop for the text.

PRICING **AND TARIFFS**

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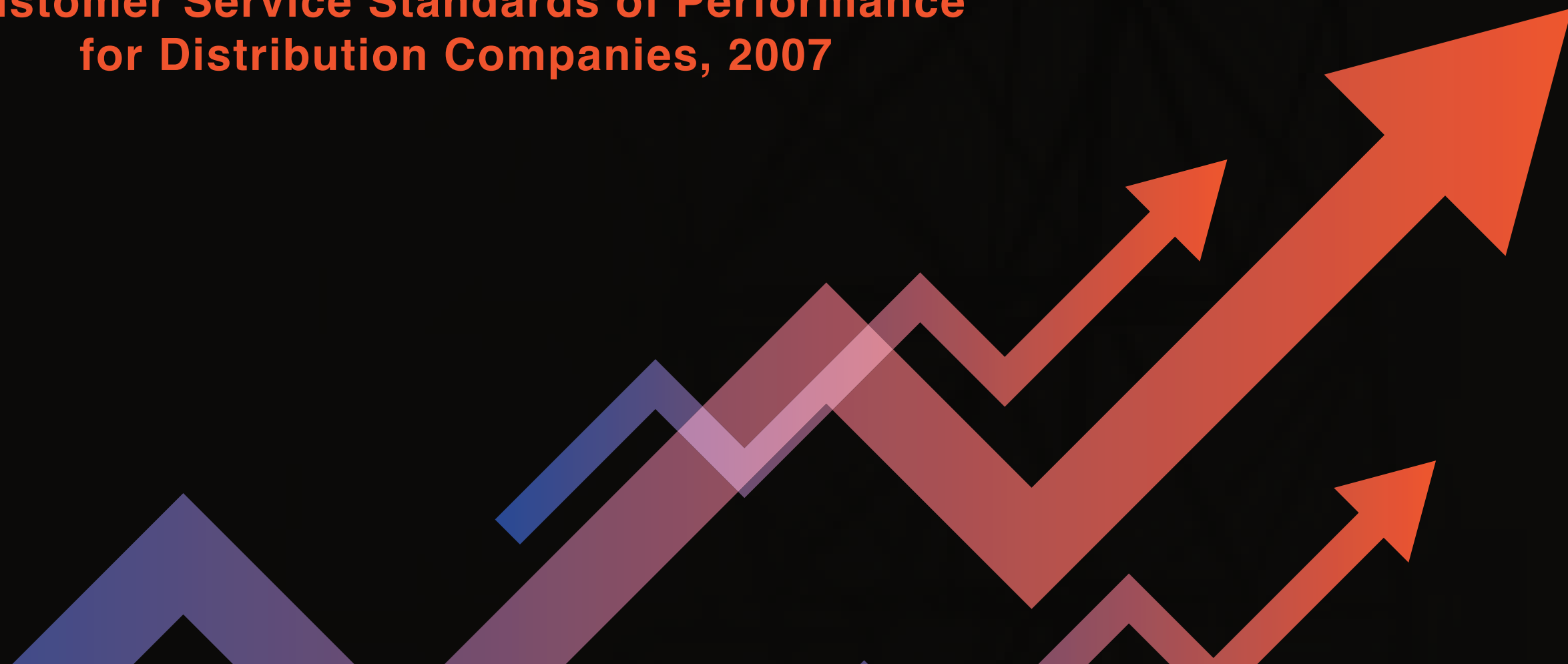
PRICING AND TARIFFS



The Regulation does not provide for pricing and tariffs.

INCENTIVES AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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INCENTIVES AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES



The Regulation does not contain provisions relating to investment opportunities.



SANCTIONS AND PENALTIES

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SANCTIONS AND PENALTIES



The Regulation does not contain provisions on sanctions and penalties.

Referenced Statutory Instruments

- Electric Power Sector Reform Act, 2005

Endnotes

1 NERC, Customer Service Standards. Available at <https://nerc.gov.ng/index.php/library/documents/Regulations/Customer-Service-Standards/>

2 NERC, Electric Power Sector Reform Act (EPSR), 2005. Available at [https://nerc.gov.ng/index.php/component/remository/Regulations/Electric-Power-Sector-Reform-Act-\(EPSR\)-2005/?Itemid=591](https://nerc.gov.ng/index.php/component/remository/Regulations/Electric-Power-Sector-Reform-Act-(EPSR)-2005/?Itemid=591)

3 Section 96, EPSRA

4 Section 1(1)

5 Section 1(2)

6 Section 4

7 Section 2

8 Section 3

9 Section 5

10 Section 6

11 Ibid

12 Section 9(1)

13 Section 9(2)

14 Section 7

15 Section 8

16 Section 10(1)

17 Section 10(2)

18 Section 12(1)

19 Section 12(3)

20 Section 12(3)

21 Section 13(1)

22 Section 13(2)

23 Section 12(2)

24 Section 12(4)

DISCLAIMER

This document titled the “Simplified Legal and Regulatory Guide” of the referenced country is not expected to form the basis of, or be construed as standard legal advice; nor should any of its contents and representations be strictly relied upon for any activities. Electricity Lawyer (EL) will not be liable for decisions whatsoever that are made based on the contents of the document.

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