

Consumer Dispute Resolution in Algeria

Summary

- A. CREG's duties in terms of consumer protection.
- B. Mechanisms in place to handel dissatisfied consumers.
 1. Distributor handling complaints procedure.
 2. Appeal procedure for unsatisfied customers of processing their complaint.
 3. Conciliation service procedure.

A-CREG's duties in terms of consumer protection

The law 02-01 provides the Algerian Electricity and Gas Regulatory Commission "CREG" an important mission in safeguarding the consumers energy interests.

- Controls and assesses the public service obligations ;
- Examines the complaints and appeals of operators, network users and clients ;
- Determines administrative sanctions against the non-respect of rules and standards as well as the indemnities to be paid to consumers ;
- Publishes useful information for the defence of consumer's interests.

A-CREG's duties in terms of consumer protection

The law also predicts the institution within the Commission:

- ❑ A **conciliation department** for conflicts resulting from the implementation of the regulations particularly, those related to networks access, tariffs and remuneration of operators.
- ❑ An **arbitration chamber**, on request from the parties, rules on conflicts which may arise among operators except for those related to contractual rights and obligations.
- ❑ An **Advisory Board** where associations are represented in it.

B-Mechanisms in place to handle dissatisfied consumers

In fact, CREG has developed a set of documents related to the following :

Distributor

1. Handling complaints procedure ;

CREG

2. Appeal procedure for unsatisfied customers of processing their complaint ;

CREG

3. Conciliation service procedure.

B-Mechanisms in place to handle dissatisfied consumers

1) Distributor handling complaints procedure

- ❑ Approved by CREG in 2013.
- ❑ It concerns household and non-household, tertiary and industrial customers (LV/LP, MV/MP and HV/HP).
- ❑ It deals with complaints related to:
 - Electricity and/or gas connection.
 - Quality and continuity of energy supply.
 - Customer management.
- ❑ Complaint can be oral or written.

B-Mechanisms in place to handle dissatisfied consumers

1) Distributor handling complaints procedure

- ❑ Consumer has the possibility of claiming at several levels (commercial agency, distribution direction and central level).
- ❑ A receipt is given to the claimant within 3 days following receipt of the claim.
- ❑ Complaints that are urgent, are handled by an accelerated procedure (electrocution, gas leak, explosion, individual and collective breakdowns, etc.)
- ❑ The time limit for any definitive response to the customer depends on the reason for the complaint and its complexity and in all cases, should not exceed one month.

B-Mechanisms in place to handle dissatisfied consumers

2) Appeal procedure before CREG

□ In which case consumer can contact CREG?

- If unsatisfied with the treatment given to his request by the distributor.
- If no response from his supplier after a maximum period of three (3) months.

□ How to apply to the CREG?



B-Mechanisms in place to handle dissatisfied consumers

2) Appeal procedure before CREG

CREG is often contacted for the following reasons :

Disputing invoice (excessive amount, incorrect index, cumulative consumption, etc).

Connection request, moving an energy structure (connection studies, quotes and completion times).

Restoration following a cut-off, due to unpaid debt.

Power outage, troubleshooting or security problem.

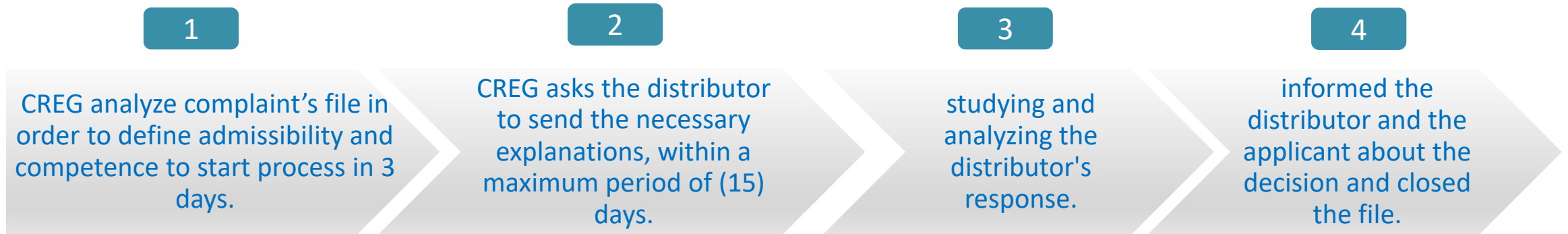
Request for modification of the supply contract (changing the tariff type and power or flow rate, etc).

Voltage/pressure drops and compensation for incidents.

B-Mechanisms in place to handle dissatisfied consumers

2) Appeal procedure before CREG

□ Processing of consumer's appeals :



- If either party is not satisfied with CREG's decision, the dispute could be taken before the competent judicial authorities.

B-Mechanisms in place to handle dissatisfied consumers

3) Conciliation service

CREG has established by decision a conciliation service within its organization to resolve disputes arising from the enforcement of regulation, particularly disputes related to network access, tariffs, and operator remuneration.

Composition	Designate among the employees of CREG (Members + secretariat).
Cost	The service is free.
Case of referral	Applicant required conciliation from the beginning or during the appeal treatment procedure before CREG.
Case of rejection	Dispute is being dealt with in court.
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organize conciliation hearings. ▪ Formulate and transmit to the parties a proposal for a settlement.

B-Mechanisms in place to handle dissatisfied consumers

3) Conciliation service

Outputs / results

- A settlement agreement, signed by both parties.
- The failure of conciliation.
- Notification by one of the parties to terminate the conciliation procedure.
- The parties shall be informed in writing of the reasons and results of the conciliation.

The conciliation service's recommendations are based on consensus. They do not have any legal force.

By the end of 2023, once it's internal regulation is approved, the conciliation service will be operational and will hold conciliation sessions for complainants.



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Electricity and Gas Regulatory Commission

Thank you for your attention