

Customer Performance Report 2017



Gas
Networks
Ireland





Customer Performance Report 2017

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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 2017, 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 2013, the performance of these services is benchmarked against key performance indicators (KPI's) as per the Customer Charter¹. 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 Charter which provides assurance to customers of the company's dedication to ten performance commitments

Gas Networks Ireland has a Customer Charter 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 2017.

Ensuring the safety of customers and the general public is of prime importance to Gas Networks Ireland, 99.1% of reported escapes were attended to within the hour. The number of gas escapes reported has dropped over the past two years, which may possibly be attributed to milder weather conditions.

The volume of calls received by Gas Networks Ireland was 319,139 in 2017. This was circa a 4.5% increase on the previous year. Live call handling volumes increased by 2.8% this year: domestic line calls increased by 4.3%, emergency calls decreased by 6.8% and business link calls reduced by 4.1%. Dial a Read showed an increase of 9.5% in call volumes, or 7,000 additional calls. Coupled with an estimated 25,000 users accessing the Web a Read service, the continued promotion and utilisation of self-serve channels for meter reads diverted an additional 15,000 contacts compared to 2016, which represents a significant resource saving. The number of appointments managed in 2017 increased when compared with the previous year. The total number of complaints in 2017 was 1,850, down from 1,979 in 2016, showing an overall reduction of 6.5%. The complaint category that experienced the greatest reduction was gas supply.

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 proposes to introduce financial incentives for Gas Networks Ireland with respect to these key customer performance indicators. These indicators will be reported in future Customer Performance Reports.

Operationally Gas Networks Ireland has 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 2017.

A major outage, affecting approximately 9,000 natural gas customers, was declared in the Mayo / Galway area in September 2017 as a result of an issue at the Bellanaboy Bridge Gas Terminal in Co. Mayo where un-odourised gas was exported to the gas network. Gas Networks Ireland responded to the crisis by instructing customers to turn off their gas until the un-odourised gas had been removed from the system. This instruction was issued via text messages and direct phone calls. Only two complaints were received in relation to the issue which is believed to be a result of the pre-emptive action taken in notifying affected customers. Full service was restored three days after initial notification.

Throughout this report, data is presented in graphical form. The corresponding figures and statistics are located in the appendices presented in table format and may be referred to for interpretation of graphs and factual performance.

1 [Customer Charter](#)

Introduction

The Customer Performance report satisfies 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.

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.

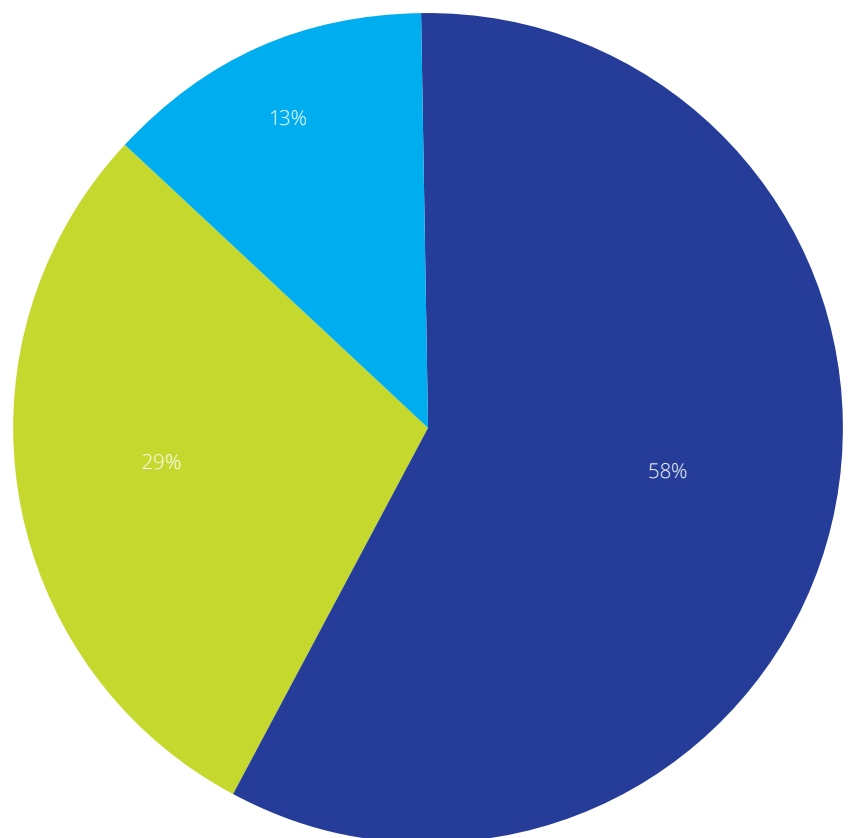
688,000 natural gas customers in over 175 population centres

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 688,000 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 58%, 29% and 13% 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 up to 60% 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.

Figure 2.1: Rol gas market demand

- Power
- I & C
- Residential



2 Percentages of gas market share calculated based on Gas Networks Ireland gas year 2016/17 data.

02. Introduction

**Transmission pipeline
2,427km**

**Distribution pipeline
11,745km**

Natural gas is transported through a total network of 14,172km 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 688,000 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 2,427km³); and
- Distribution network which operates below 16 barg (the total length of distribution pipeline is 11,745km).

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.

3 Total length of transmission pipeline is the entire network including pipeline in RoI, NI and on-shore Scotland

Figure 2.2: Overview of Gas Networks Ireland Transmission System

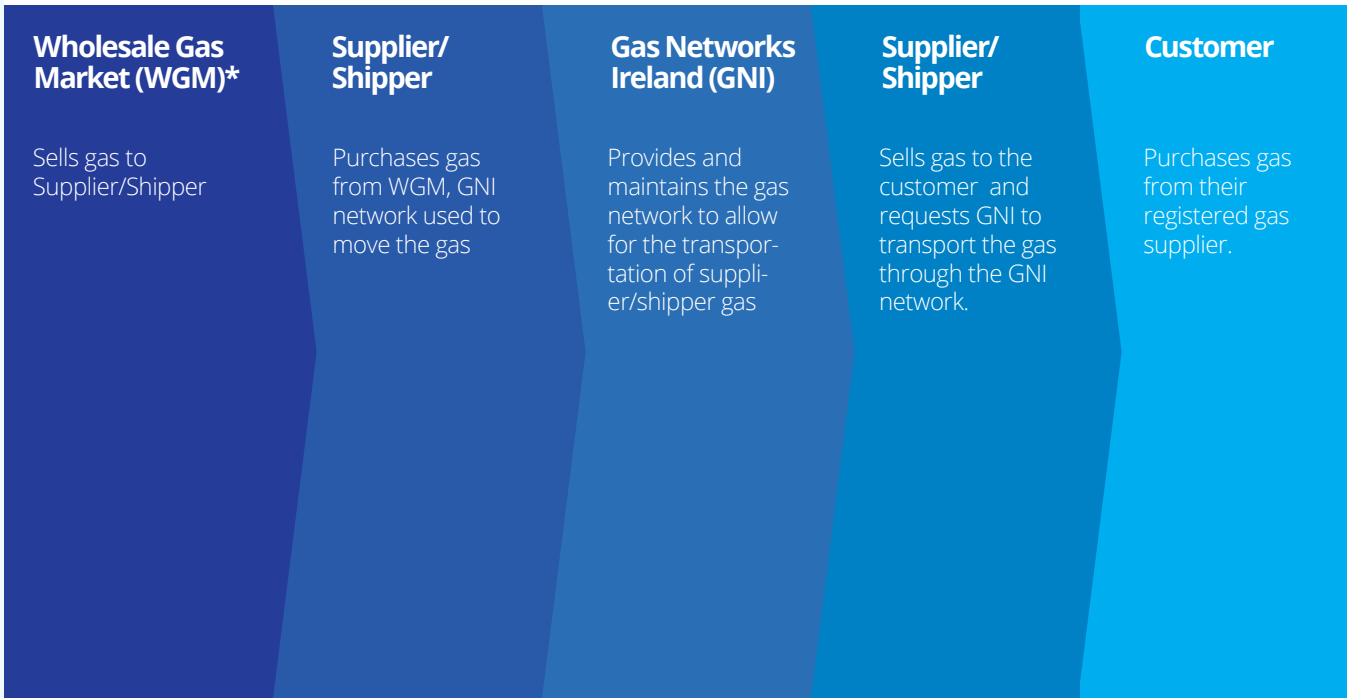
- Existing Pipelines ————
- Planned/Under Construction - - - - -
- Pipelines Owned by Others ————



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.

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. In 2017, construction on the connection of Listowel to the natural gas network was progressed to connect Kerry Foods and both residential and I & C connections along the feeder main. Contracts were secured for the Center Parcs Longford development in 2017 with the design and build phase beginning mid-year to bring the natural gas network from Athlone to the Ballymahon Holiday Village development. Work continued on the connection of Nenagh and Wexford towns.

4 [Gas Suppliers List](#)

5 [Connections Policy](#)

The clear benefits of gas for the customer are that it is cheaper, cleaner and more reliable than other fossil fuels

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 providing 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 2017, 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.

The benefits range from cheaper fuel for transportation, lower air pollution and reduction in noise pollution

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. Clean Ireland Recycling, a waste collection company based in Shannon, Co. Clare is the first commercial fleet to transition to CNG in Ireland. Their dedicated gas powered collection vehicles entered service in June 2017 and utilise a fast fill CNG refuelling station located at their premises, making clean heavy transport a reality in Ireland. During 2017, Gas Networks Ireland commenced the Causeway Project. This 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 will be assessed as part of the project. 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. 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

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

Renewable gas is a clean, renewable and carbon neutral fuel

Vehicle Fund, which was introduced in early 2017, is intended to support the uptake of CNG vehicles in Ireland. A number of dedicated CNG vehicles are currently in use in Ireland 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.

Gas Networks Ireland has set a target to have 20% of current gas demand supplied from renewable gas by 2030. This target is equal to circa 11.6 TWh of renewable gas in the gas network by 2030. Renewable gas can be produced from many indigenous feedstocks. Ireland can theoretically produce 81% of current gas demand from grass silage and cattle slurry alone¹⁰.

The International Energy Research Centre (IERC), Gas Networks Ireland and RGFI are jointly funding a project with Deutsche Biomasseforschungszentrum (DBFZ) and the German Energy Agency, to develop a certification scheme for renewable gas in Ireland. This project completed a comprehensive blueprint of the scheme in May 2018, which is now guiding the implementation phase of the project. Marine & Renewable Energy Ireland (MaREI) will be assisting DBFZ in engaging the relevant Irish government departmental and state authorities on this project. Green Gas Certificates will allow end users to purchase renewable gas in confidence and give government and regulators the certainty that the sales of renewable gas are transparent and accounted for. The scheme will be the first of its kind in Ireland, and will deliver a robust methodology for calculating and accounting for greenhouse gas emissions savings from various renewable gas technologies, in accordance with international best practice and European Union (EU) legislation. It will consider all generations of technologies, different feed stocks, processes, potential end uses and will be tailored to Irish conditions. The project will develop a blueprint for a renewable gas registry that will provide a secure, reliable means of verifying and tracing all transactions, to be accredited by the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI), the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project).

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](#)

10 [Assessing the total theoretical, and financially viable, resource of biomethane for injection to a natural gas network in a region](#)

Smart gas meters are the next generation of energy meter

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 2017, 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 2018, 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.

The customer experience provided by Gas Networks Ireland is delivered by the entire organisation

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 Programme¹¹ 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 we/our customers interact with to see how the overall customer experience can be improved. The users of the *Dial Before You Dig*¹² service are also surveyed.

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 survey is tailored to the journey they 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.

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

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

02. Introduction

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, 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.

Figure 2.4: Insights into action illustration



Initiatives are captured on a formal register and are tracked to completion, there were 48 initiatives implemented in 2017 some examples of which are:

Value	Initiative
Customer Service	Developed I & C Meter Fit and Turn On Escalation Process – daily reports shared to provide visibility of jobs put on hold or completed with 'extra works required' so that customers can be proactively contacted to advise next steps.
Performance	Email management system introduced in the Customer Contact Centre so that Customer Service Representatives will automatically get next contact no matter what channel it originates from and handling time can be tracked.
Collaboration	Tailored prior notification of works commencing next day now issued to each Local Authority.
Integrity	Combined meter protection quote into standard quotes so customers now only have to make one payment.
Safety	Survey undertaken of customers affected by un-odourised gas incident in Mayo to seek understanding regarding the effectiveness of communications and learn from this experience.

400,709
customer contacts

86,438
appointments

19,145
Re-instatements

Gas Networks Ireland has excellent levels of performance in respect of its published Customer Charter service standards and commitments

Some of the Customer Service highlights from 2017 are as follows:

- In 2017 Gas Networks Ireland handled 400,709 customer contacts, agreed and completed 86,438 appointments and conducted 19,145 temporary and permanent road surface reinstatements;
- In 2017, Gas Networks Ireland developed a set of Guiding Principles in an effort to encourage all staff to continue to consistently put customers (both internal and external) first. A programme of Customer Journey Mapping was commenced; initially focussing on Small/Medium I & C customers in an effort to ensure an understanding of what this journey feels like for customers; this exercise prompted a number of improvement initiatives which are being actioned.
- Peer recognition continued in 2017. A number of employees working in customer facing functions were shortlisted for Customer Contact Association (CCA) Awards, for demonstrating commitment and focus on consistently putting customers first and for implementing projects which have provided business efficiencies and improved customer experience. An award for CCA Member of the Year for outstanding commitment to customer service excellence was picked up by the Customer Care Manager.

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

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 supplier¹³. 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”.

Gas Networks Ireland supports initiatives from various industry bodies and ensures compliance with EU legislation

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. Shipper Services also manages the contracts of the companies licensed to ship gas through the transportation system.

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%. This level of service was delivered while successfully managing the new entrant process for three new Market Entrants (two retail and one wholesale).

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 their 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.

03. Gas Industry

There were 2,463 issues escalated to the Shipper Services Key Account Management department in 2017

3.3 Breakdown of issues by type

There were 2,463 issues escalated to the Shipper Services Key Account Management department in 2017. The main categories of issues recorded are shown in Table 3.1 below.

The “SPC & AQ query” issue type is new to the top 10 categories of shipper services issues. Its inclusion in the top 10 has been mostly driven by more volatile weather and economic conditions in recent years resulting in customers checking and querying standing charges. Shippers use the Transporter proposed AQ and SPC settings in their standing charges calculations. The Annual Quantity (AQ) and Supply Point Capacity (SPC) of all customers are reviewed by Gas Networks Ireland annually. Gas Networks Ireland send all shippers proposed AQ and SPC settings for their registered customer portfolio for the following gas year on the 1st business day of June. Following a review period, the agreed settings are set as of 1st October.

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 2017 is illustrated in Figure 3.1¹⁴.

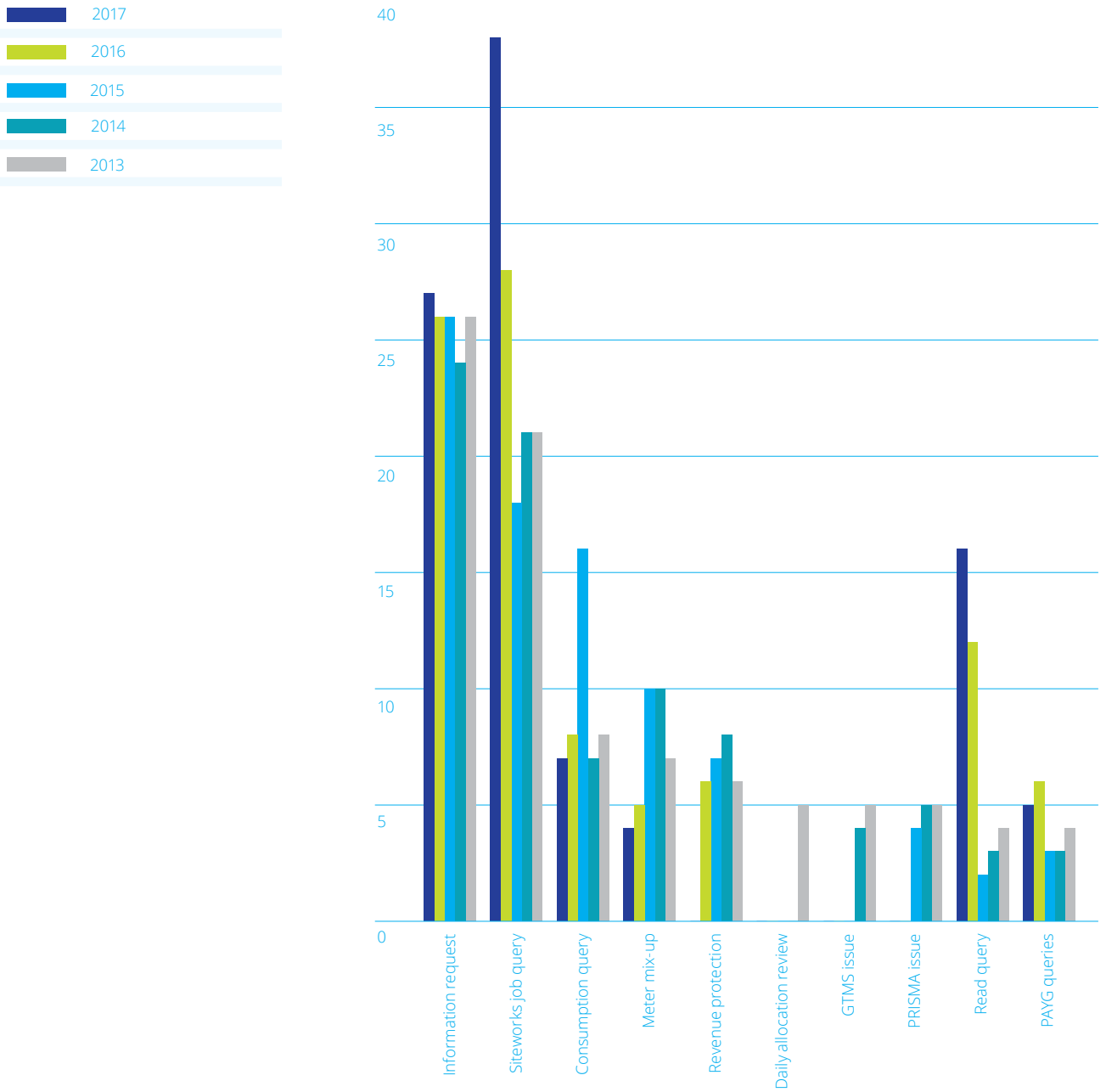
Table 3.1 Explanation of top 10 categories of Shipper issues

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

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

** Supply Point capacity and Annual Quantity

Figure 3.1: Main category of shipper issues recorded by %*

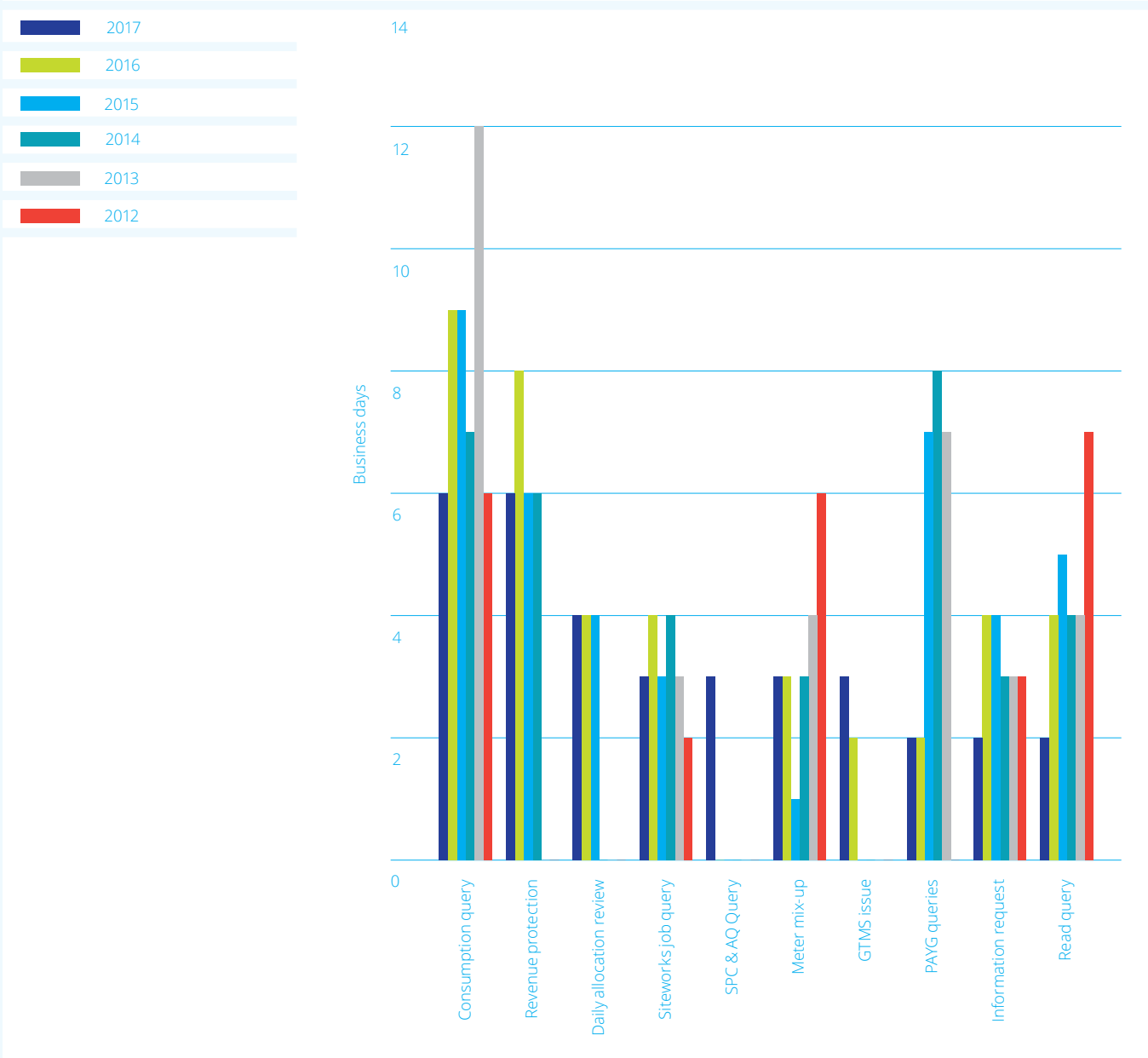


03. Gas Industry

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

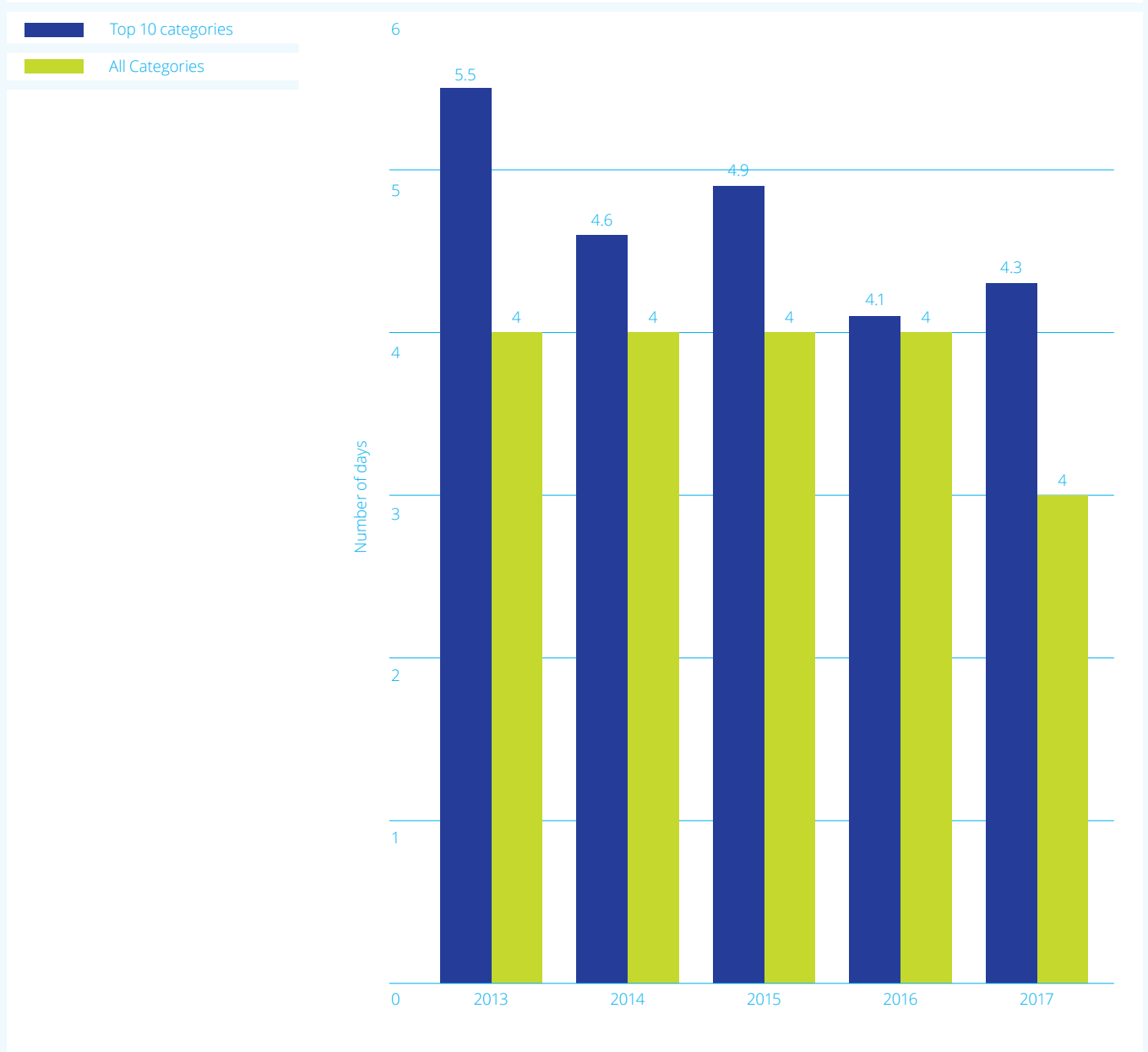
The average length of time that a shipper issue was open in 2017 was 3 business days, when all issues are included in the calculation. Gas Networks Ireland initiated a "Customer First" programme internally to increase customer focus, and also increase engagement with shippers resulting in improved resolution times for 2017. The average number of business days taken to resolve Shipper Services issues per category is shown in Figure 3.2 below. PAYG and Revenue Protection have only been recorded as categories since 2013 corresponding to regulatory changes around that date. Shipper issues are defined in Table 3.1.

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



Average 3 days to resolve all shipper issues in 2017

Figure 3.3: Average number of days to resolve Shipper Services Issues (top 10 categories)



Retail Market

Gas Networks Ireland provides access to the gas pipeline system for shippers. At the end of 2017 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 10 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.

Gas Networks Ireland is committed to putting customers first

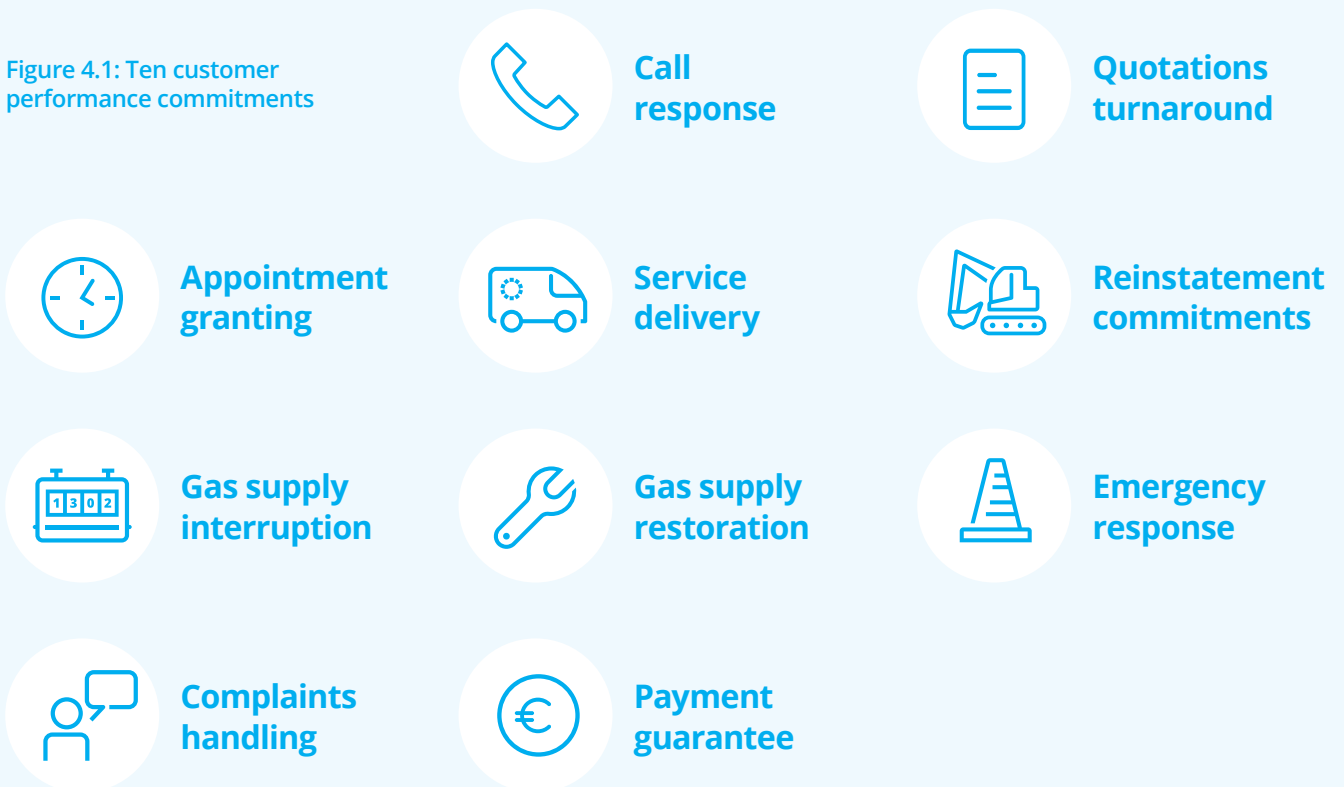
4.1 Customer service

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 Practice¹⁵ and the Gas Networks Ireland Customer Charter¹⁶.

The Codes of Practice include the Vulnerable Customer Guide¹⁷. 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 Practice 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



15 [Complaint Handling, Disconnection Code of Practice](#)
 16 [Customer Charter](#)
 17 <https://www.gasnetworks.ie/home/customer-care/vulnerable-customers/Vulnerable-Customer-Guide-English.pdf>

04. Retail Market

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 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 gasnetworks.ie, 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 a survey of gas shippers and suppliers in 2017 with a view to gauging sentiment towards Gas Networks Ireland and to identify ways in which these relationships could be improved. Improvement of relationships between Gas Networks Ireland and its customers, it was felt, would aid shippers and suppliers in their relationships with their end users. This survey took the form of interviews by an independent third party with each of the gas shippers and suppliers. Where possible, the interviews were carried out face to face with a small number taking place over the phone.

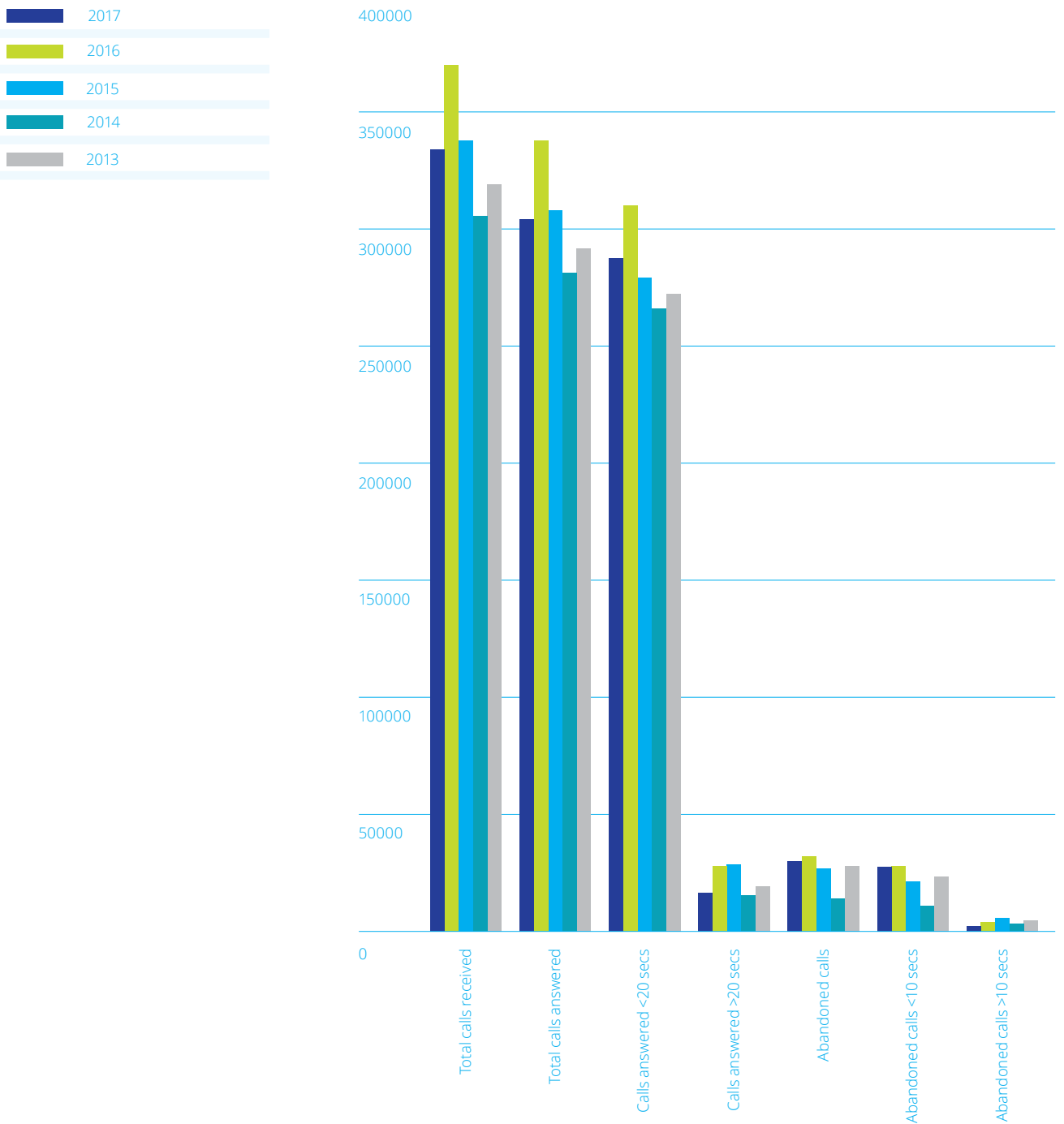
The following recommendations came out of this survey:

- Improved communication and information flow with the development of the Transparency platform;
- Commencement of shipper bi-lateral engagements;
- Development of a new industry process to manage supplier complaints;
- Refresh of the industry fora, the Code Modification Forum and the GMARG Forum;
- Upgrade of the Prepayment Meter (PPM) programme; and
- Programme to identify Daily Metered (DM) sites with persistent issues.

4.2 Call response

Gas Networks Ireland operates telephone lines¹⁸ 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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Considerable effort has been made to enhance customer experience

In 2017, Gas Networks Ireland handled 319,139 inbound calls. This total includes calls related to emergencies, domestic and business queries and meter readings. Out of the calls received, 93.4% were answered within 20 seconds and only 1.44% 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 will ask the caller to hang up if the call was 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 450,000 contacts in 2017. 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. The increased presence on Social Media, such as, going live on Boards.ie and Facebook has seen witnessed traffic; highlighting customers' preference for using these channels and the necessity to continue to provide and enhance digital channels as a contact option. Webchat was introduced in Q4 2017 further increasing the channel offerings to our customers. 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.

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. For example 42,000 texts were issued to update customers affected during the Corrib outage. The aim of outbound calls is to reduce the number of unnecessary inbound calls, help the customer through the connection process and improve customer service. No calls were recorded in relation to the situation that occurred in Mayo / Galway in September 2017 when service to customers had to be interrupted because of the injection of un-odourised gas into the Transmission System at the Corrib terminal.

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

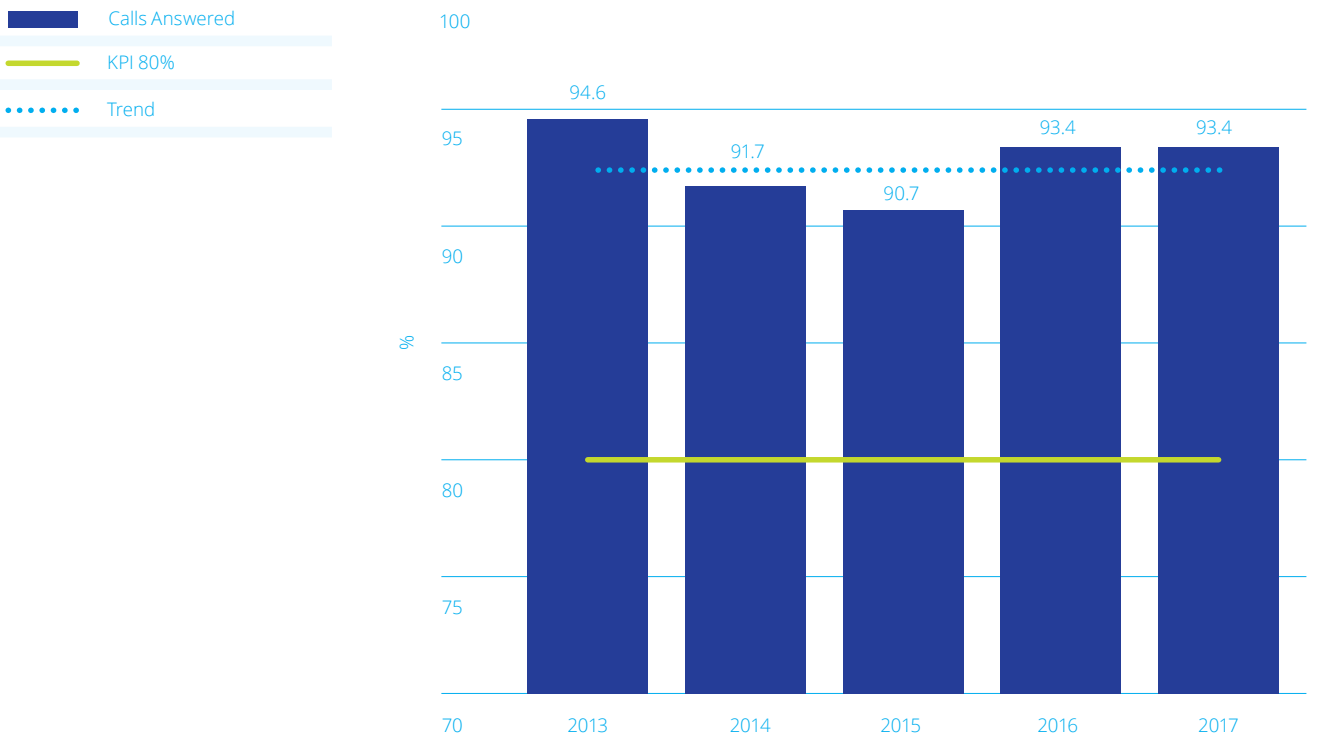
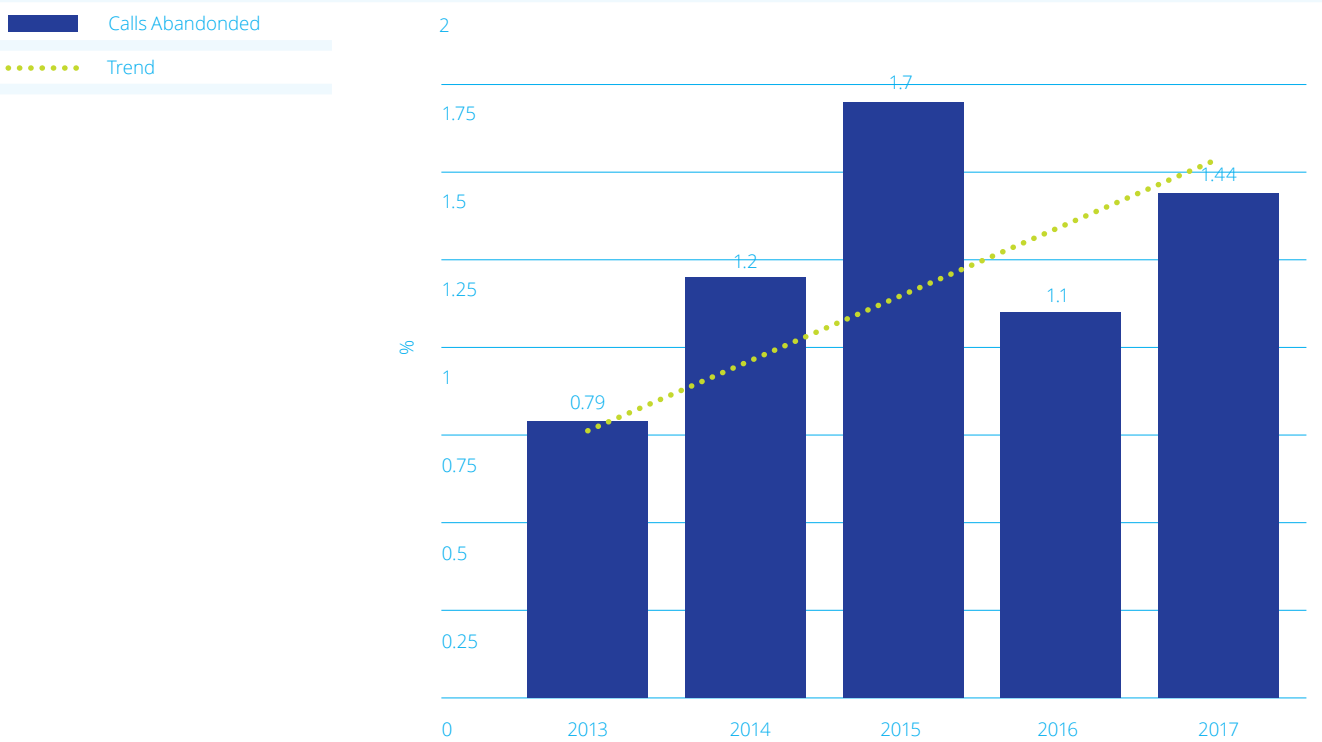


Figure 4.4: Abandoned calls after 10 seconds



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In 2017, a total of 3,890 quotations were issued within the 7 day period, achieving the KPI of 100% performance rate

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 2017, a total of 3,890 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 2017, there was a slight decrease in domestic quotations of 1.3% and an increase in I & C quotations of 36%.

Although quotation requests decreased in 2016, there was an increase in the overall 2017 numbers from 3,708 to 3,890 covering both Domestic and I&C Siteworks. As confidence returns to the economy and as growth is experienced in the property, manufacturing and industrial sectors, Gas Networks Ireland expects that requests for quotations will mirror developments in the wider economy.

Figure 4.5: Quotations

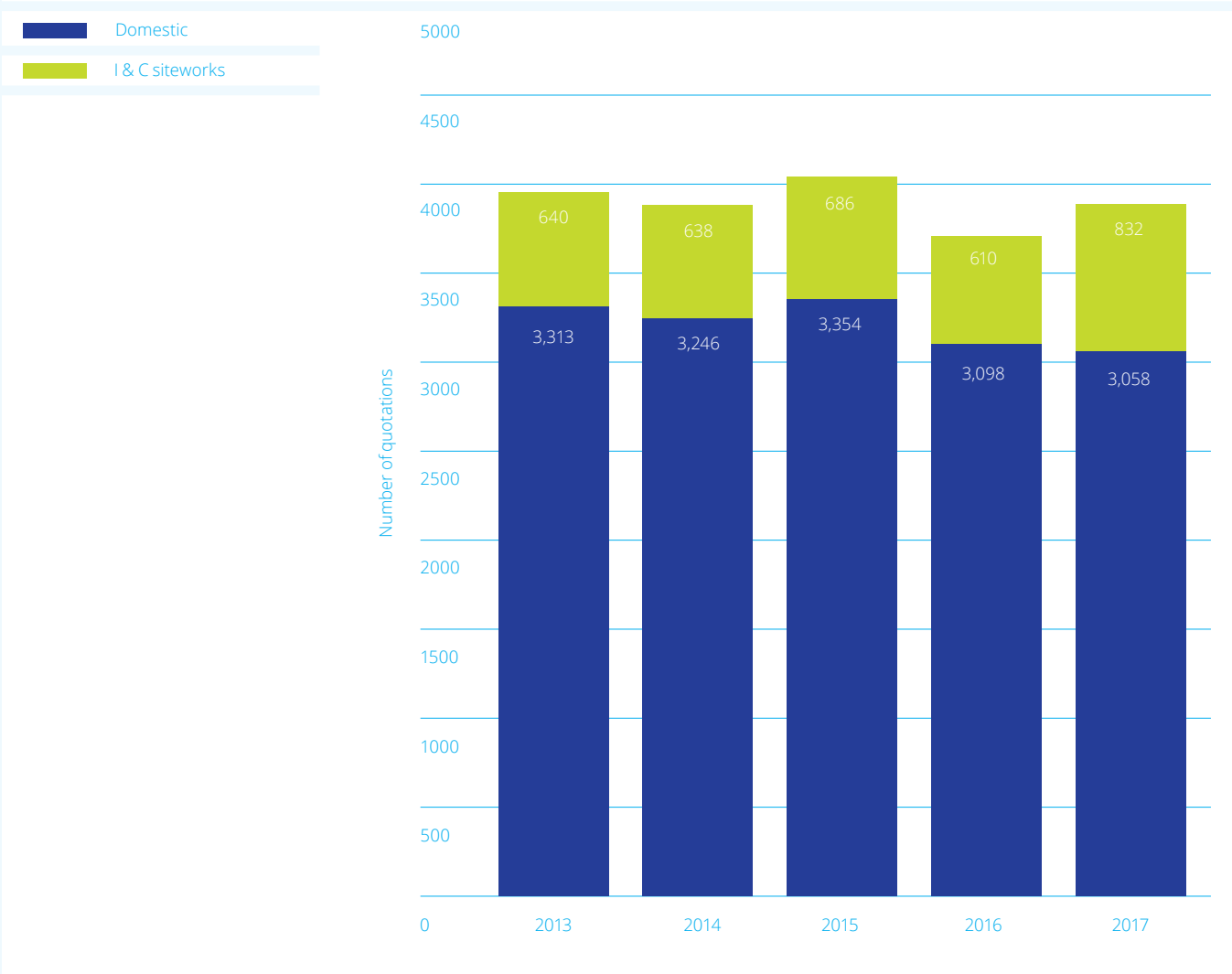
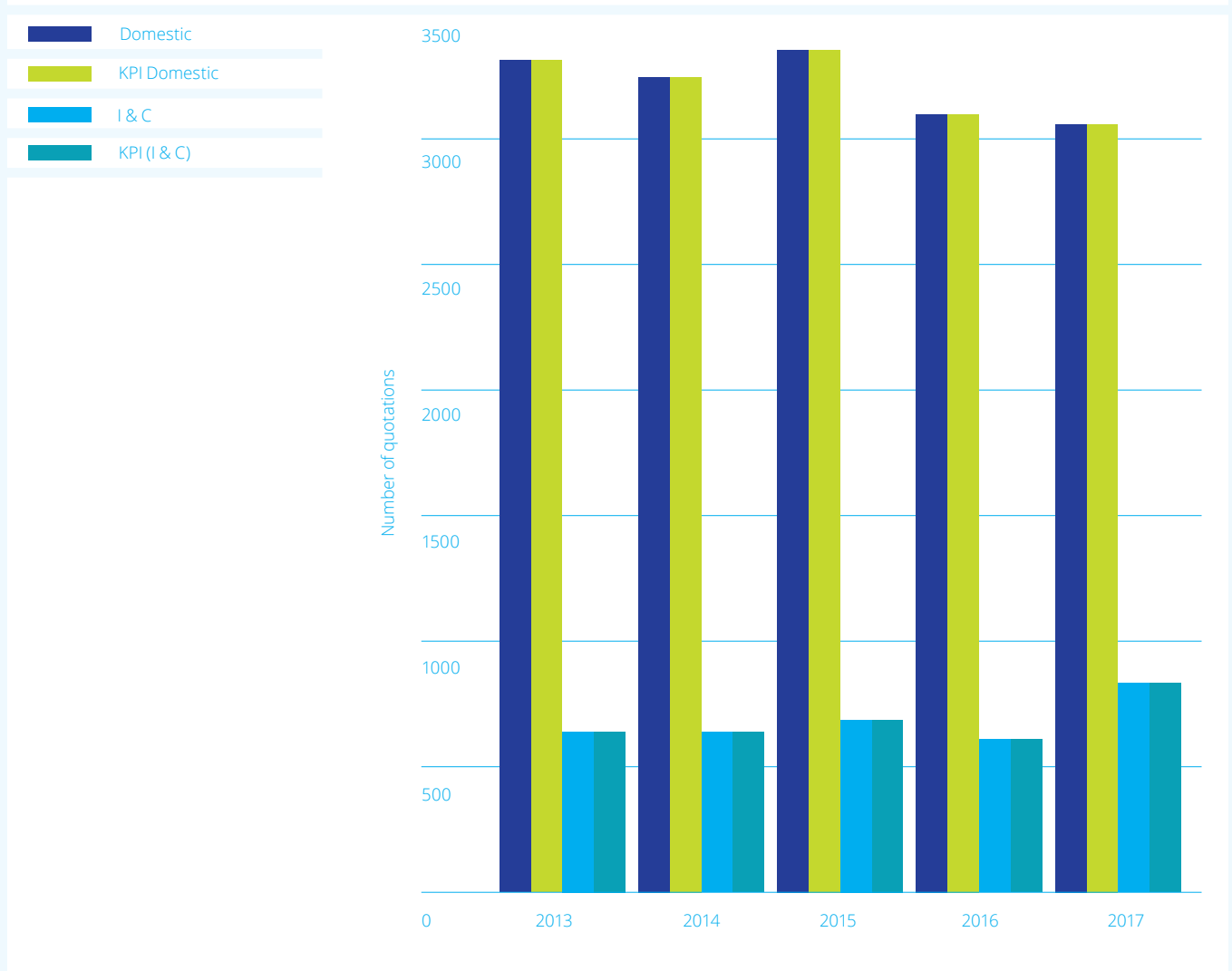


Figure 4.6: Quotation turnaround against performance



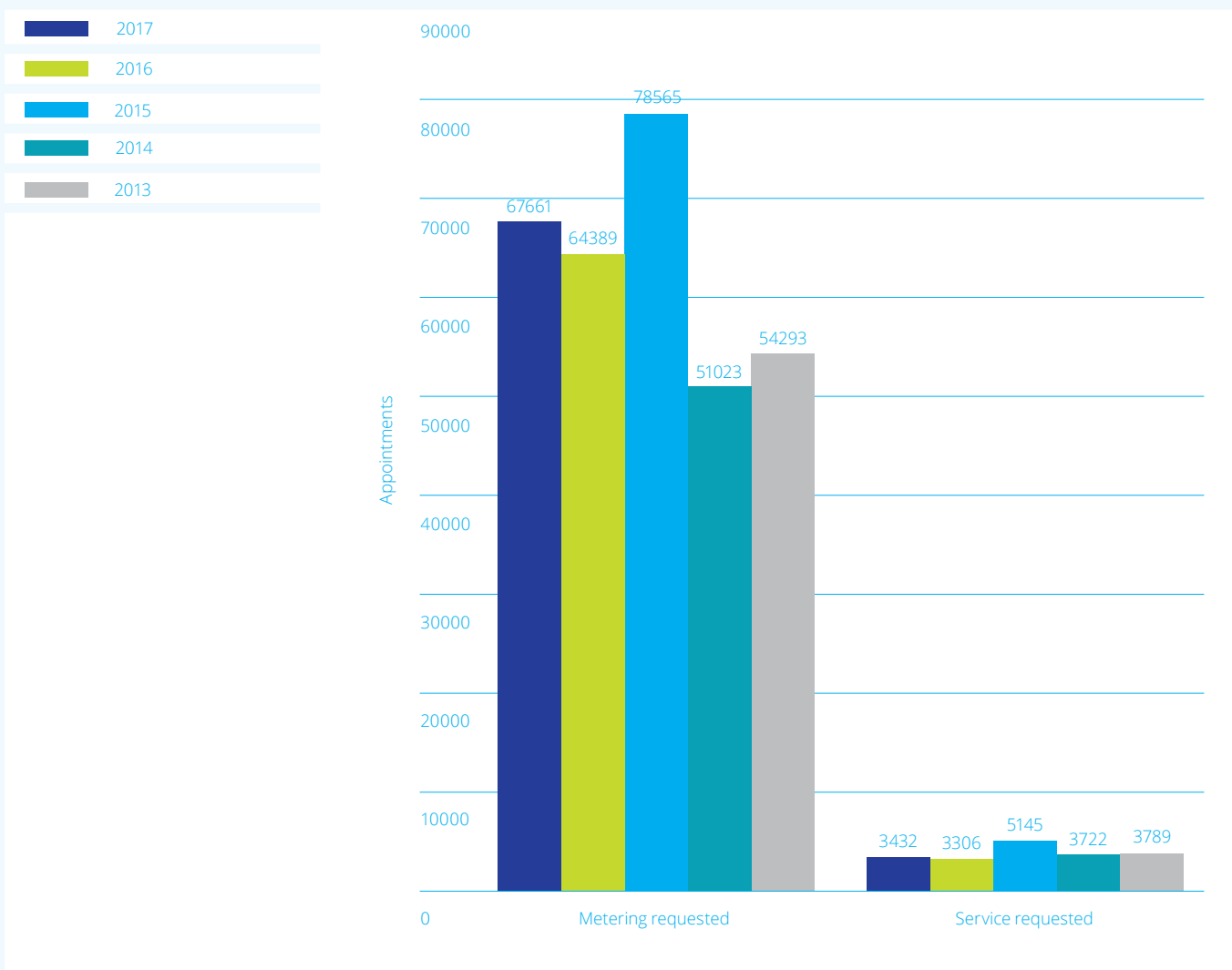
4.4 Appointment granting

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. An indicative time-frame of within 4 weeks, in which work will commence, will be given for domestic pipe laying appointments on receipt of payment. 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 weeks (domestic works), applicable compensation can be claimed (subject to conditions which may be in place by local authorities etc. from time to time). This request will adhere to the Customer Charter process.

04. Retail Market

Figure 4.7: Appointment granting



Compliance with services standards was 100% for 2017

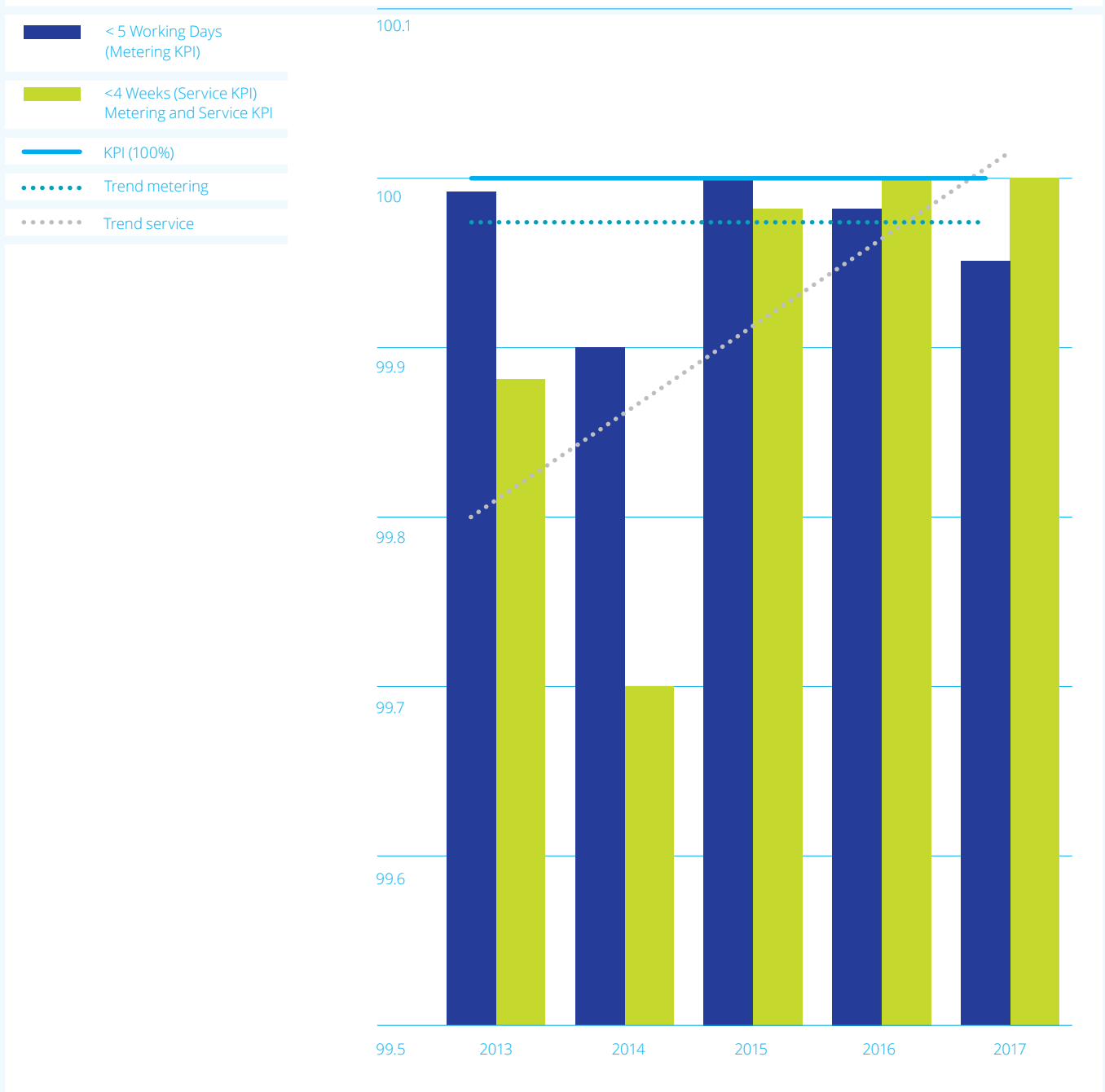
Appointment requests in 2017 were higher than 2016 by 6.09%, meter appointment requests totalled 54,293 and service appointment requests totalled 3,789, versus 51,023 and 3,722 in 2016 respectively.

Compliance with services standards was 100% for 2017, while metering compliance was at 99.95%. Gas Networks Ireland endeavours to achieve 100% compliance with Customer Charter performance commitments with regard to the granting of appointments. During 2017, no service appointments were granted outside the 20 working day standard. There were 28 meter appointments granted outside the 5 working day criteria. (See Table 4.4).

In 2017 Gas Networks Ireland granted 3,789 service appointments

In 2017 Gas Networks Ireland granted 3,789 service appointments. This represents a slight increase of 6.4% on the 2016 figures. The number of appointments granted in 2017 was in line with 2016 levels 3,789 versus 3,722 the previous year. This is mostly attributable to steady economic growth. The performance rate of meter appointment requests was 54,293 in 2017, this was comparable with 2016 figures of 51,023. The performance for service requests was 100% which is in line with 2016 results. (See Figure 4.8 and Table 4.4).

Figure 4.8: Appointment granting performance against KPI



04. Retail Market



In 2017, there were 83,135 metering appointments which was an increase of 24.9% on the 2016 figures

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 2017, there were 83,135 metering appointments which was an increase of 24.9% on the 2016 figures. This increase was driven by a combination of reasons, including:

- An upturn in the economy meaning more new houses and apartments leading to a rise in the number of new meter fits both domestic and Industrial & Commercial; and
- An increase in volumes on capital programs such as the meter replacement programme / G10 meter replacement programme / two part meter replacement program and / Polyethylene (PE) pipes in porches.

Compliance for these was at 98.30%, which was a slight decrease of 1% on the same result for 2016. In 2017, there were 3,303 service appointments which represents an increase of 13.15% on 2016, the compliance rate of 97.30% is a decrease of 1.2% on 2016 figures. These decreases in compliance were 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 2017 took place to enhance our 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) and the Road Management Office (RMO); regarding the online licencing system, temporary Traffic Management Plans and the national payment mechanism for ROL in 2017. The inaugural Joint Utility Local Authority User Group Meeting took place in November 2017 and will continue to occur quarterly in 2018. This forum allows Gas Networks Ireland to raise issues on a national basis and work through them with the User Group and other key utilities. On-going engagement will continue throughout 2018 to continue to provide service excellence to customers.

Gas Networks Ireland continues to engage with the local authorities to understand reasons why ROL applications can be delayed. This has resulted in giving customers a more realistic date of when their appointment will commence, thus achieving better completion rates. Most of the Local Authorities introduced a national online ROL system in mid-2015 called the MapRoad online MRL system supported by the RMO. Gas Networks Ireland has engaged collaboratively with the RMO and several Local Authorities to work through any issues with its on-going development. In some Local Authorities MapRoad has lengthened the time taken to get ROL's. Gas Networks Ireland is working with DTTAS, RMO, Customer Contact Management Association (CCMA) and other key utilities on this system, as it will in time give customers a better service. Just three of the bigger Local Authorities continue using their own online system and the planned migration of these key authorities is planned for 2018 with two of them to migrate before the end of Q2 2018. Engagement with all Local Authorities will continue to enhance relationships and to provide a better service to all customers.

Figure 4.9: Appointment keeping (metering)

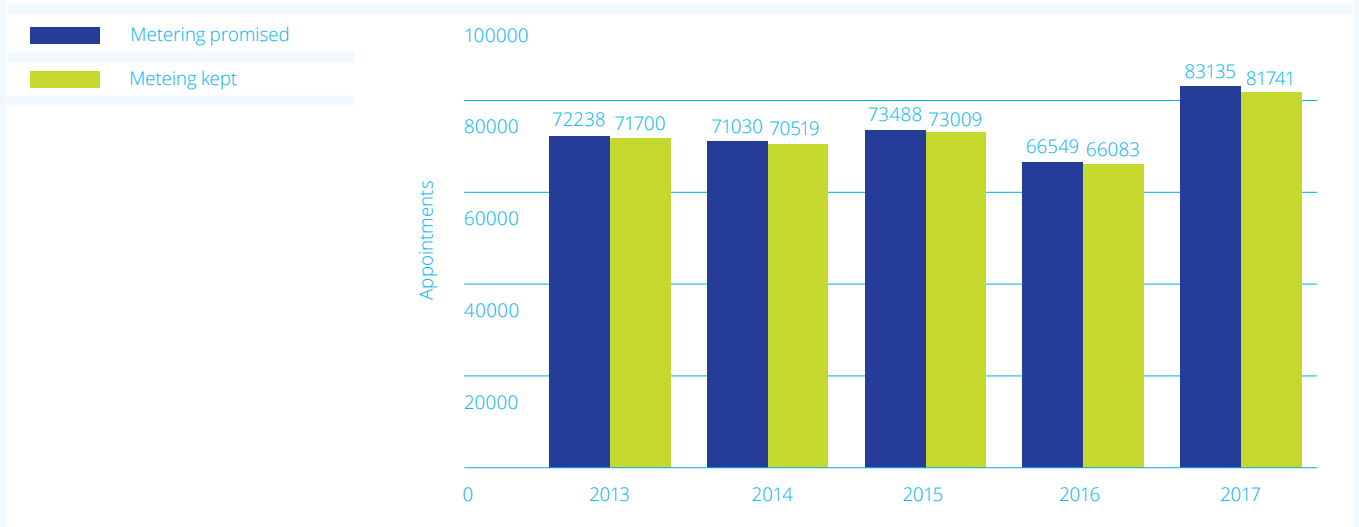


Figure 4.10: Appointment keeping (service)

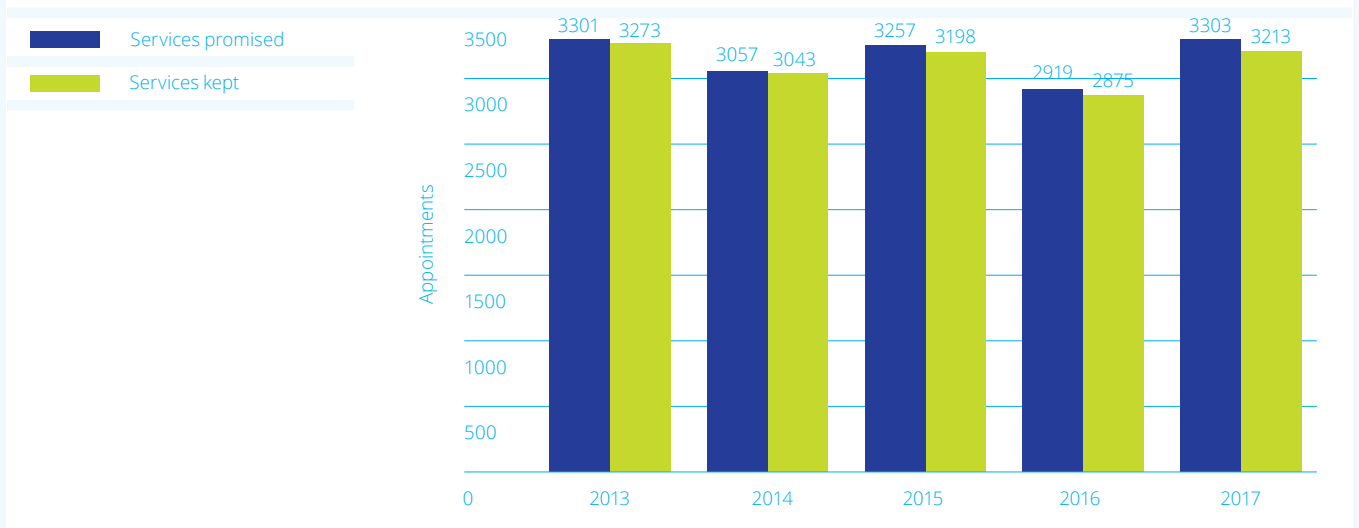
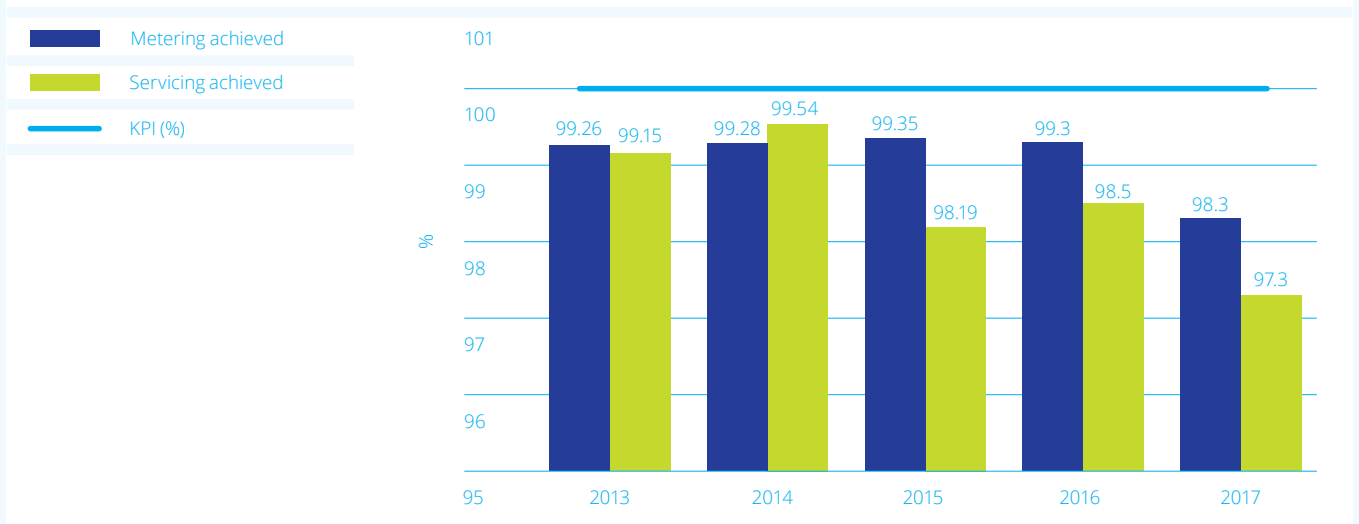


Figure 4.11: Metering and service delivery performance against KPI



04. Retail Market



5,876
temporary works

10,709
permanent works

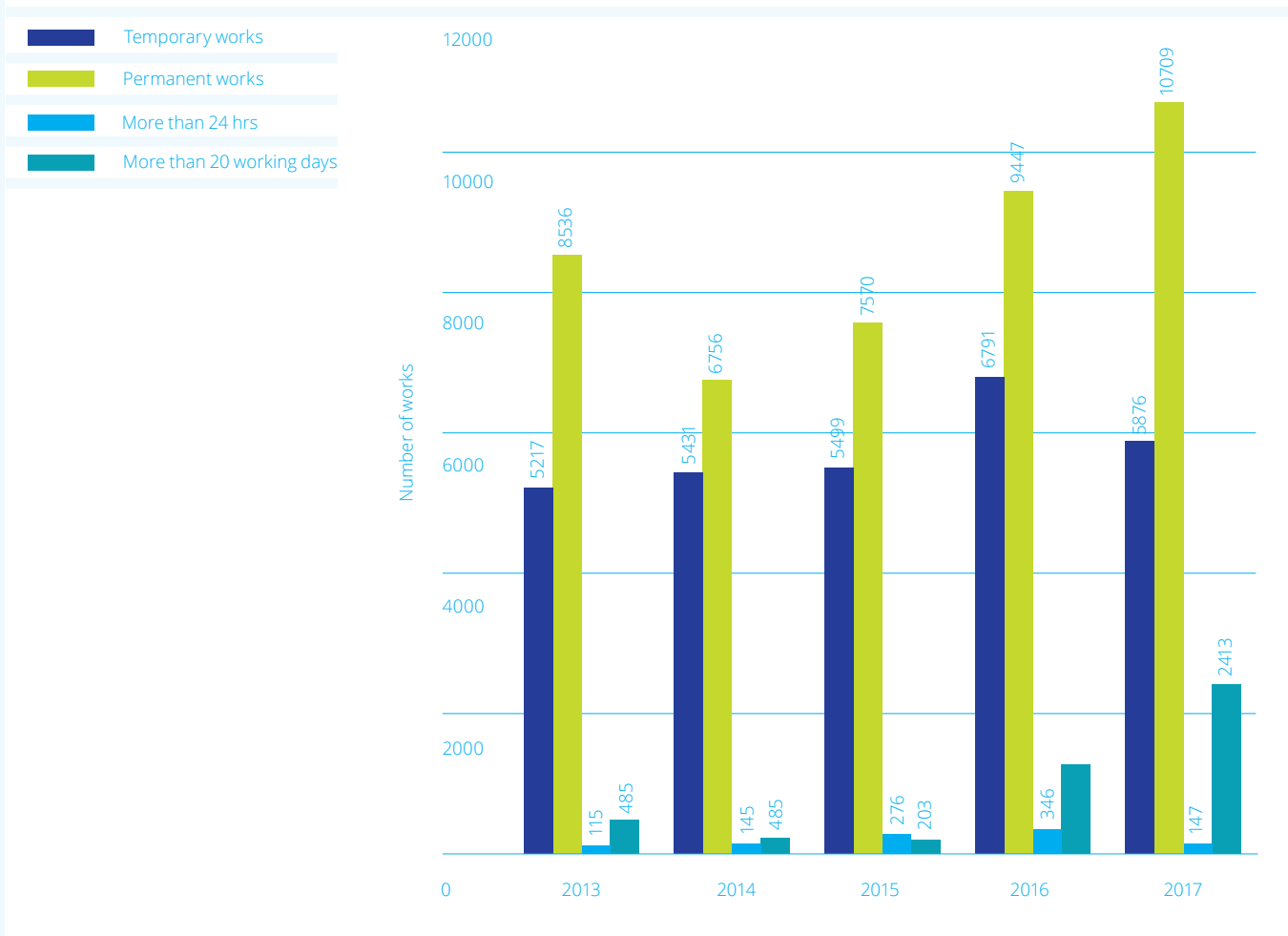
4.6 Reinstatement commitments

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 2017, there were 5,876 temporary works completed, 147 of these were completed outside the 24 hours commitment, performance against the KPI was at 97.5%; this is an improvement of 2.59% on the 2016 performance of 94.91%. The total permanent works carried out in 2017 were 10,709; 2,413 of these were completed outside the 20 working days commitment, an increase of 89% on 2016. 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

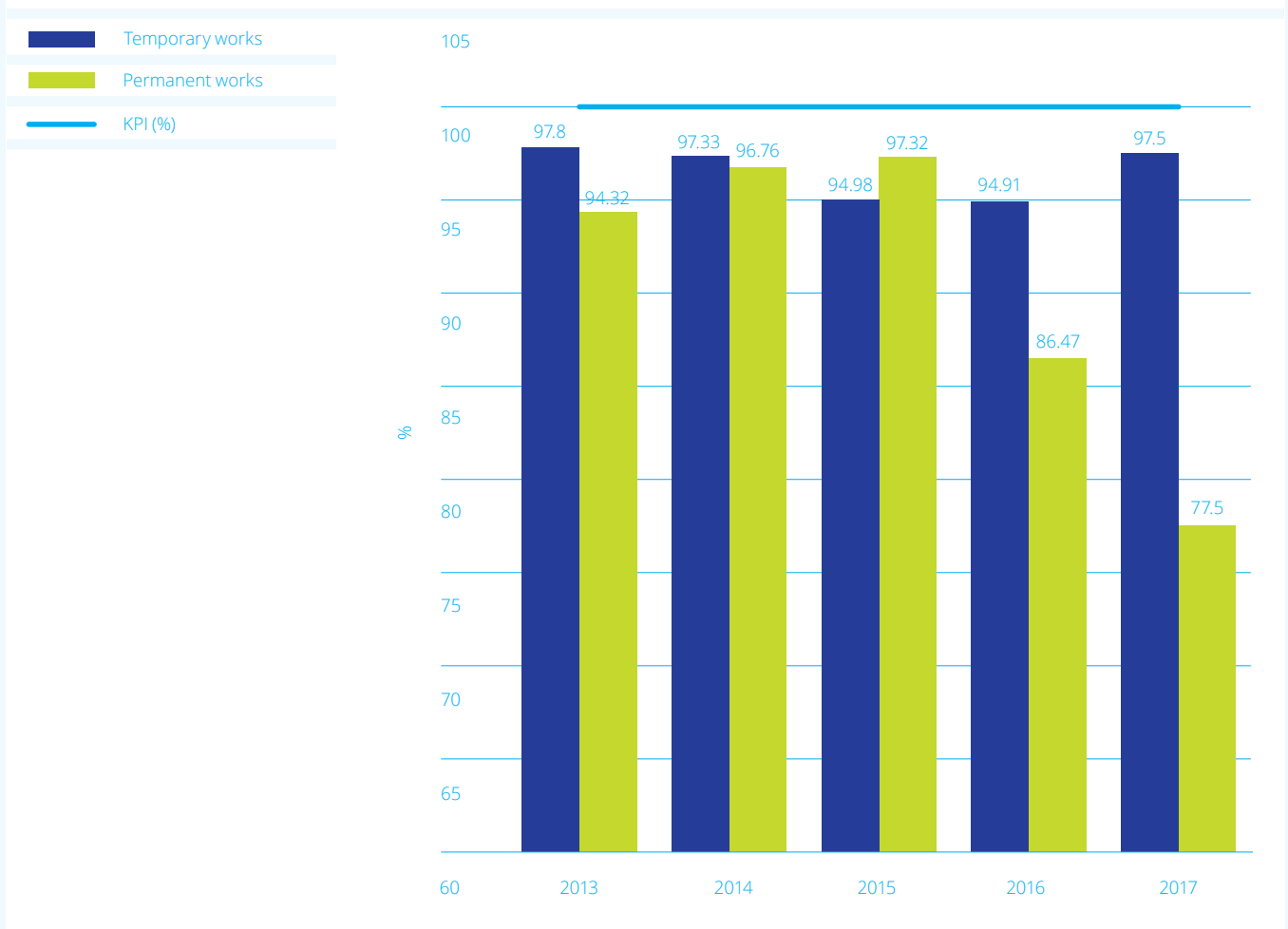


Temporary reinstatement KPI percentage is improved on that of 2016. The permanent reinstatement KPI has reduced and can be attributed to some of the following issues:

- The introduction of the national MapRoad system by some Local Authorities has presented some challenges with ROL conditions. These challenges have resulted in permanent reinstatement lead times going outside of KPI criteria. Gas Networks Ireland is engaging with the relevant Local Authorities on the issues;
- Longer ROL approval times is now the norm with tighter and shorter licence durations. This has caused the licence to lapse before the permanent reinstatement is completed; and
- Through to 2017 Gas Networks Ireland has been working closely with its business partner to review the whole reinstatement process to better meet the current needs of customers and the KPI.

Gas Networks Ireland is engaged with DTTAS and the RMO in the development and updating of the purple book, "Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads". This was revised in April 2017 and once fully implemented nationally, this will greatly help to deliver a better service to customers and aid completion of reinstatements in a timely manner.

Figure 4.13: Reinstatement performance against KPI



04. Retail Market



One of Gas Networks Ireland's primary objectives is to respond to all emergencies as soon as possible

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 vulnerable¹⁹ on the Special Services Register (as nominated by their natural gas supplier); Gas Networks Ireland will offer alternative heating and cooking facilities during planned gas supply interruption or network outage. In 2017, there were 10,560 vulnerable customers registered. See Figure 4.15 – Gas supply interruption and restoration and Table 4.7.

4.8 Response to emergencies

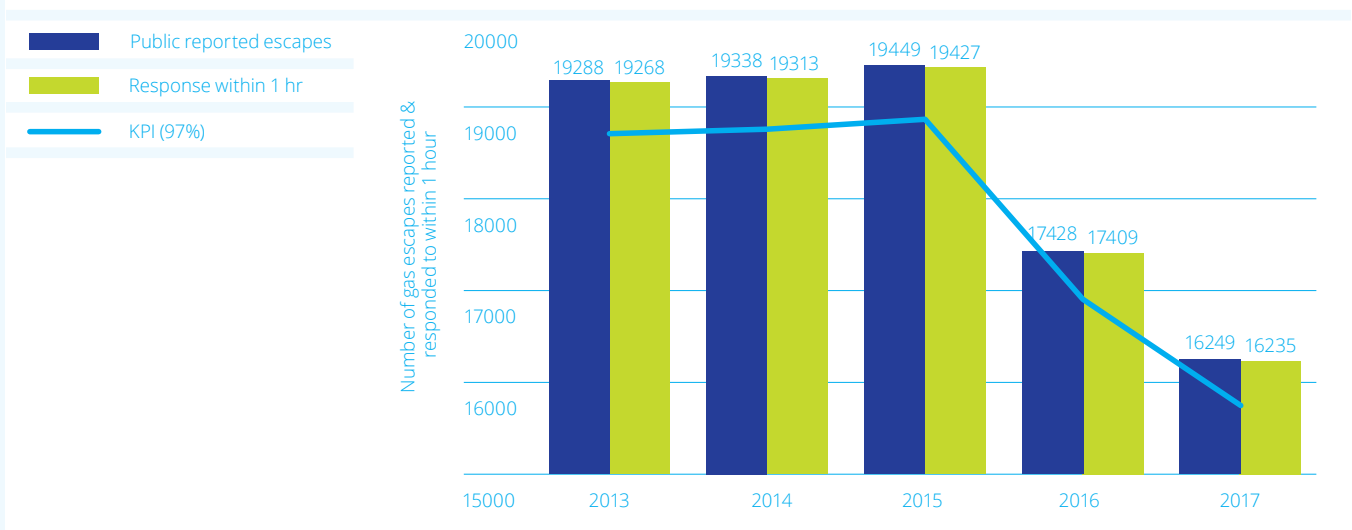
One of Gas Networks Ireland's primary objectives is to respond to all emergencies as soon as possible. On notification of an actual or suspected gas escape report, one of the emergency response personnel will be dispatched immediately. The objective is for the response personnel to arrive on site within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

At Gas Networks Ireland safety is a key priority. There are a number of ongoing safety campaigns 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 16,249 in 2017, 99.9% of these were attended to within one hour. Annually this has been a consistent achievement (see Table 4.8). The average response time for 2017 was 28 minutes. The breakdown of incidents is as follows;

- No Trace – 9,085;
- Internal – 3,712; and
- External – 3,452.

Figure 4.14: Response to emergencies



The number of reported gas escapes in 2017 was down circa 7% when compared to 2016. It is possible that the reduction in reports may be attributed to milder weather experienced in 2017.

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 2 years, with the number of instances reported declining. This is due to mild winters and all interruptions being resolved within 24 hours in 2017.

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 2017 with all restorations taking place within a 24 hour period. It should be noted that there was a slight increase of 2.18% in the number of gas interruptions in 2017, even though there was a decrease of 25.02% for the period from 2013 to 2016.

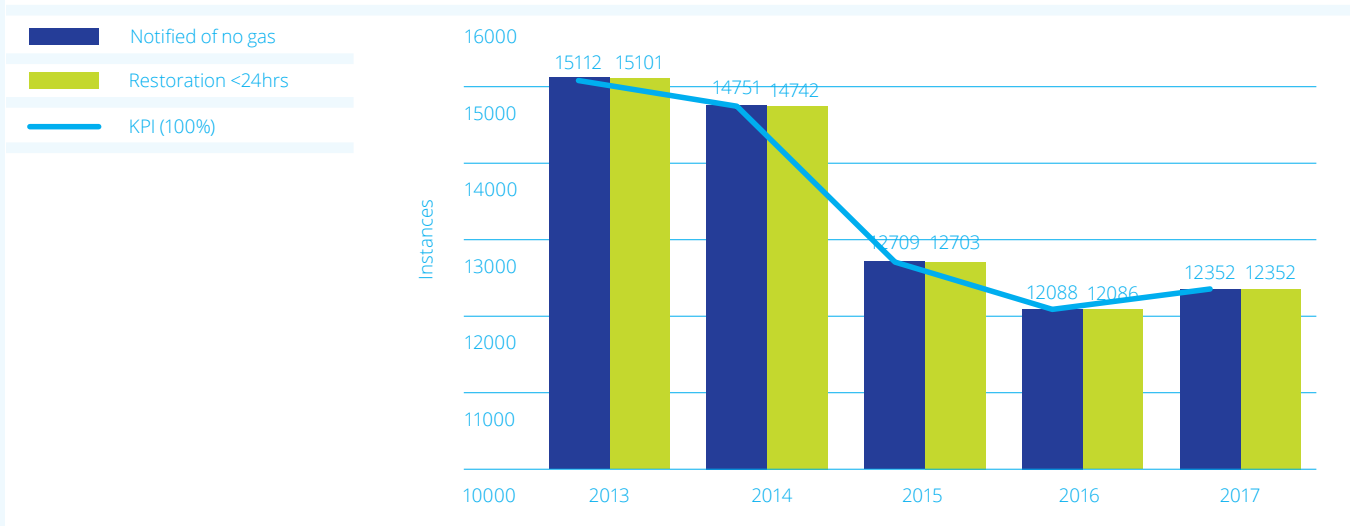
A gas interruption event occurred at the Bellanaboy Bridge Gas Terminal in Co. Mayo on the 21st September 2017, which led to un-odourised gas being exported to Gas Networks Ireland's gas network, contrary to normal operating procedures. There was no additional risk of a gas escape as a result of this incident, however, as the gas was not odourised it would not have been possible to detect an escape by smell in the event that one occurred. As a result, and as part of the response to the incident, approximately 9,000 natural gas customers in the Galway-Mayo region were instructed by Gas Networks Ireland to turn their gas off until the un-odourised gas had been removed from the system.

This instruction was issued by Gas Networks Ireland to the affected gas user via text messages and direct phone calls. These outbound calls from Gas Networks Ireland reduced the number of calls that would have been received from the affected gas users.

Full service to affected customers was restored by the 24th September.

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Figure 4.15: Gas supply interruption and restoration



(Note: This graph shows customer notifications to Gas Networks Ireland therefore Corrib odourisation issue not reflected in 2017 figures as Gas Networks Ireland had notified customer)



In 2017, Gas Networks Ireland received a total of 1,850 complaints, of this number 1,566 were closed out in less than 10 working days and 271 within 30 working days

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 resolve. 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 24% since 2015, from 2,494 to 1,850. The complaints handling process is illustrated in Figure 4.17.

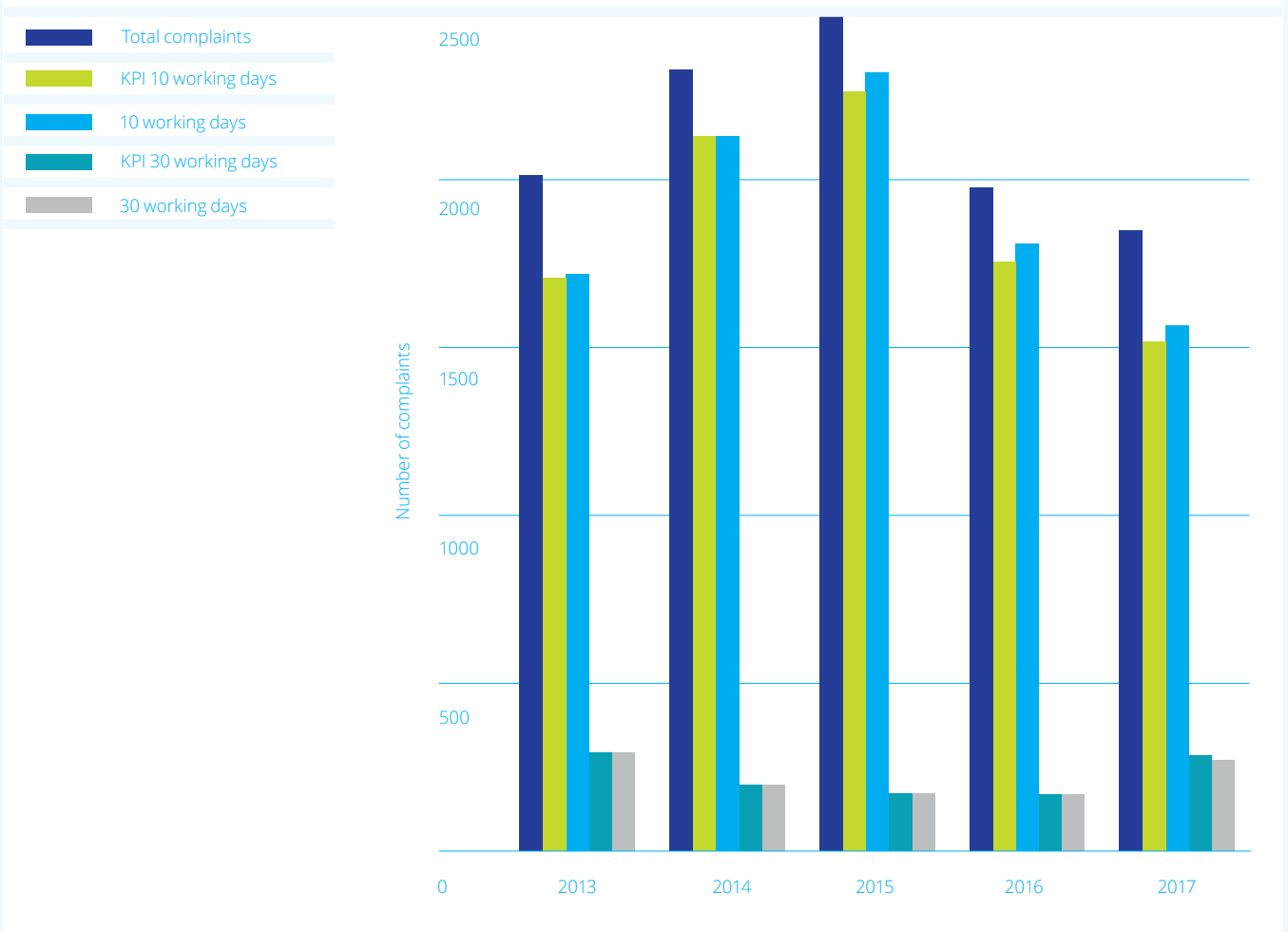
In 2017, Gas Networks Ireland received a total of 1,850 complaints. Of this number 1,566 were closed out in less than 10 working days and 271 within 30 working days. In 2017, Gas Networks Ireland achieved 96.9% and 95.4% performance, respectively. The KPI for both is 85%. While compliance with the KPI is high, the performance on both of these measures was in line with 2016 figures, the type of complaint and length of time to resolve can vary from year to year (see Figure 4.17 and Table 4.9), which can affect the resolution time scales.

Two complaints were received, dealt with and closed in relation to the Corrib odourisation issue. The low call volume with respect to this issue is believed to be due to the work undertaken by Gas Networks Ireland staff on the ground and in the contact centres in supporting customers through the process.

Figure 4.16: Complaints handling process



Figure 4.17: Complaints handling



96.9% of complaints closed out within 10 days

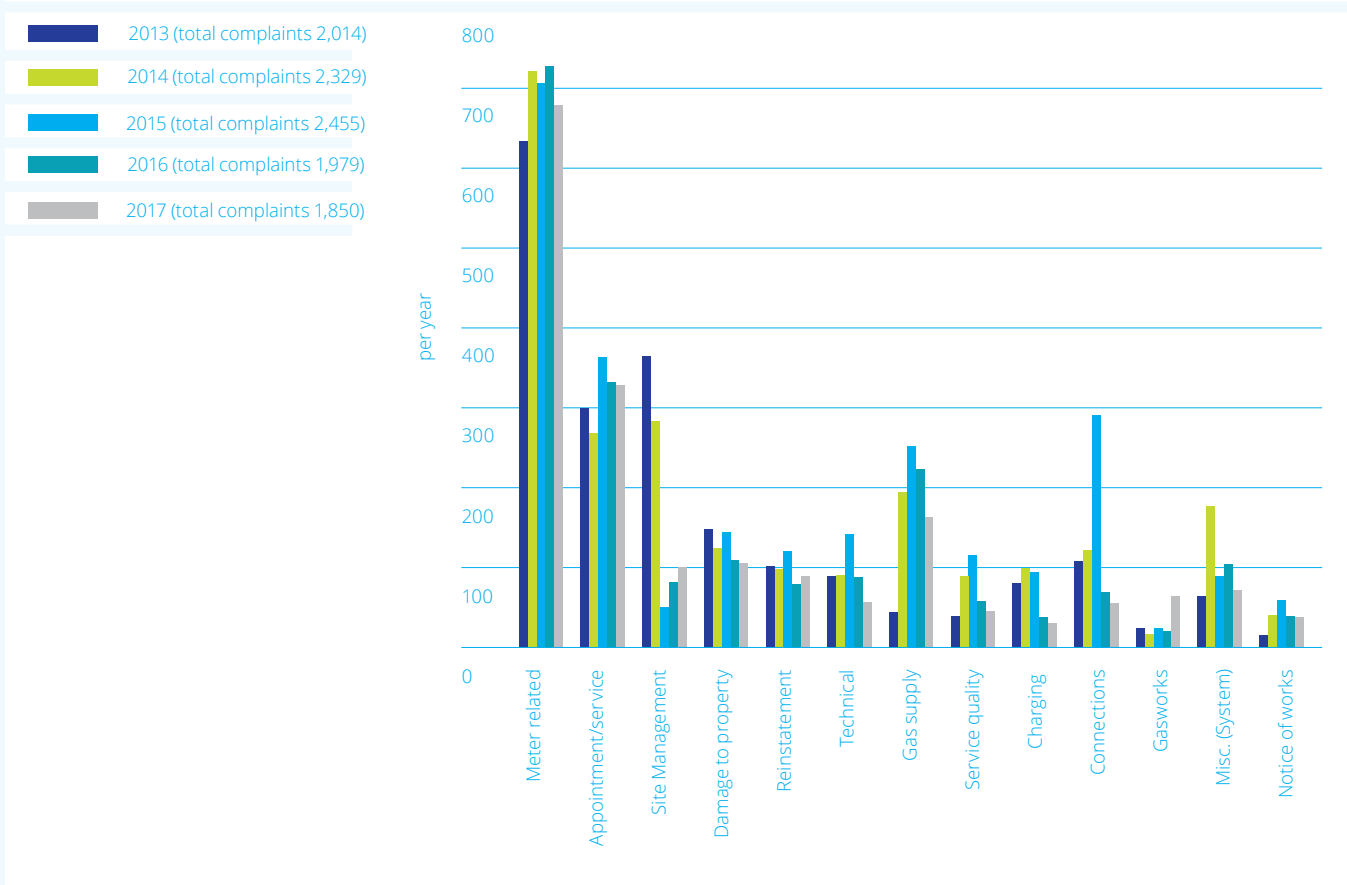
Under the terms of the Natural Gas Distribution Licence, Gas Networks Ireland published a Complaint Handling Procedure²⁰ as agreed with the CRU. This document outlines how Gas Networks Ireland handles complaints.

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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 1,850 in 2017. 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 non-customers who are affected by the works undertaken by Gas Networks Ireland in their locality.

Figure 4.18: Customer complaints by category



The 2017 figure for complaints decreased compared to the previous three years

The figure for complaints decreased compared to the previous three years (the total number of complaints was 2,455 in 2015, 1,979 in 2016 and 1,850 in 2017). 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.

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 2017 were paid within the required time frame.

Every effort is made to provide services in a prompt, efficient, and safe manner and to a high standard

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. There were 40 compensation payments paid to customers in 2017. The total value of these payments was €2,450. There was an increase in value of compensation payments in 2017 of 87%. The number of payments increased by 81% from 22 payments in 2016.

Figure 4.19: Customer Charter payments and compensation claims

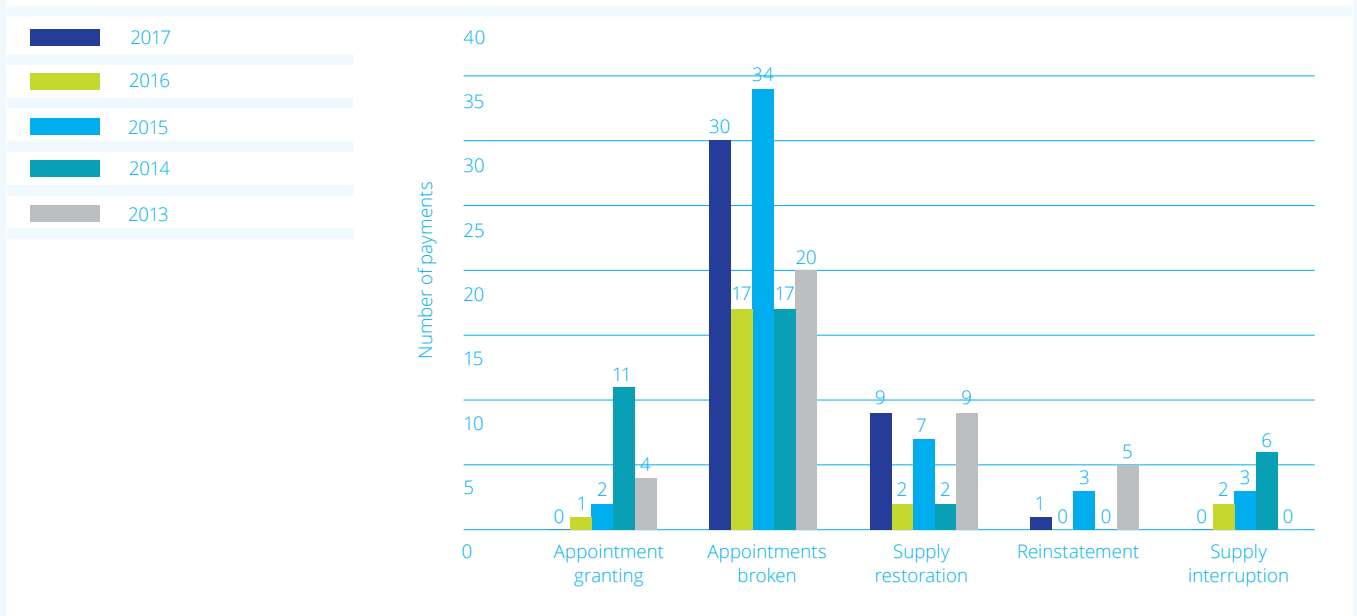
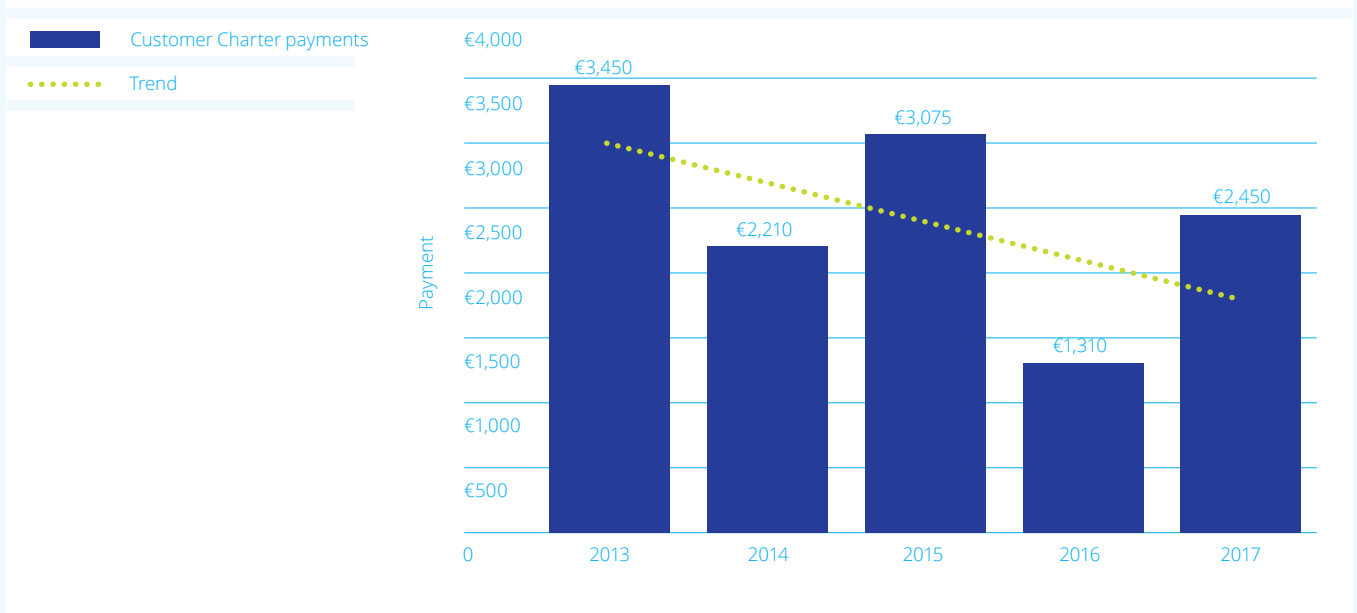


Figure 4.20: Customer Charter payments



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 2017 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.

Commitment to excellent customer service remains a key priority for Gas Networks Ireland

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.

2017 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. The continued roll-out of the gas network in Nenagh and Wexford will support this growth. Construction on the connection of Listowel to the natural gas network was progressed in 2017, connecting Kerry Foods and both residential and I & C connections along the feeder main. Contracts were secured for Center Parcs Longford, bringing the natural gas network from Athlone to the Ballymahon Holiday Village development. Gas Networks Ireland also completed the construction of the first publicly accessible CNG fuelling station in Ireland. The station, located in Dublin Port, will be operated by Topaz and have a capacity to fuel up to 70 heavy goods vehicles per day.

In 2017 Gas Networks Ireland carried out a survey of key contacts including gas shippers and suppliers. The purpose of this survey 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 survey on its behalf. Twenty four interviews were conducted during November and December 2017 with the majority of these interviews being conducted face to face.

Based on the outcomes of this shipper/supplier survey, the following initiatives were implemented:

- Improved communication and information flow with the development of the Transparency platform;
- Commencement of shipper bi-lateral engagements;
- Development of a new industry process to manage supplier complaints;
- Refresh of the industry fora, the Code Modification Forum and the GMARG Forum;
- Upgrade of the Prepayment Meter (PPM) programme; and
- Programme to identify Daily Metered (DM) sites with persistent issues.

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

Developments in innovation provides customers with a choice and an opportunity to make a positive impact on emissions. Renewable gas is a sustainable indigenous form of fuel, planning was granted for a renewable gas injection point at Cush, Co. Kildare in 2017. This marked the first real step in the development of the renewable gas infrastructure in Ireland. The site, when operational, will have the capacity to inject up to 200GWh per annum of renewable gas onto the network. 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.

Appendices

06.



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 for 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

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6.2 Tables used for Chart Graphics

Table 3.2: Main categories of shipper issues recorded*

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Information request	27%	26%	26%	24%	26%
Siteworks job query	38%	28%	18%	21%	21%
Meter mix-up	7%	8%	16%	9%	8%
Consumption query	4%	5%	10%	10%	7%
Revenue protection	-	6%	7%	8%	6%
SPC & AQ Query**	-	-	-	-	5%
GTMS issue	-	-	-	4%	5%
Daily allocation review	-	-	4%	5%	5%
Read query	16%	12%	2%	3%	4%
PAYG queries	5%	6%	3%	3%	4%
Total %	99%	93%	90%	89%	90%

*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

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Consumption query	12	7	9	9	6
Revenue protection	-	6	6	8	6
Daily allocation review	-	-	4	4	4
Siteworks job query	3	4	3	4	3
SPC & AQ Query	-	-	-	-	3
Meter mix-up	4	3	1	3	3
GTMS issue	-	-	-	2	3
PAYG queries	7	8	7	2	2
Information request	3	3	4	4	2
Read query	4	4	5	4	2

Table 4.1: Call response

	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		
	KPI %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %		
Total calls answered		303,973		337,918		307,925		281,423	291,701		
<20 secs	80	287,594	94.6	310,027	91.7	279,290	90.7	265,884	94.5	272,378	93.4
Abandoned >10 secs	7	2,401	0.79	4,055	1.2	5,697	1.7	3,396	1.1	4593	1.44

Table 4.2: Quotations turnaround

KPI 100% (<7 working days)	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %
Domestic	3,313	100	3,246	100	3,354	100	3,098	100%	3,058	100%
I & C site works	640	100	638	100	686	100	610	100%	832	100%
Total quotations	3953		3884		4,040		3,708		3,890	100%

Table 4.3: Complaints categories

Complaint type	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall
Meter related	634	31%	722	31%	707	29%	728	36.8%	679	37.8%
Appointment/service	300	15%	269	12%	364	15%	332	16.8%	328	17.7%
Site management	365	18%	284	12%	50	2%	82	4.1%	101	5.5%
Damage to property	148	7%	124	5%	145	6%	109	5.5%	106	5.7%
Reinstatement	102	5%	98	4%	121	5%	80	4%	90	4.9%
Technical	90	4%	91	4%	142	6%	88	4.5%	57	3.1%
Gas supply	44	2%	195	8%	252	10%	223	11.3%	163	8.8%
Service quality	39	2%	90	4%	116	5%	58	2.9%	45	2.4%
Charging	81	4%	100	4%	95	4%	38	1.9%	31	1.7%
Connections	108	5%	122	5%	291	12%	69	3.5%	56	3.0%
Gasworks	24	1%	17	1%	24	1%	24	1.2%	64	3.5%
Misc. (system)	64	3%	177	8%	89	4%	104	5.3%	72	3.9%
Notice of works	15	1%	40	2%	56	2%	44	2.2%	38	2.1%
Grand total	2014	100%	2329	100%	2455	100%	1,979	100%	1,850	100%

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Table 4.4: Appointment granting

	KPI %	No.	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
			KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.
Metering requested < 5 working days (Metering compliant)	100	67,661	99.99	64,389	99.9	78,565	100	51,023	99.98%	54,293		
Service requested < 4 weeks (service compliant)	100	3,432	99.88	3,306	99.70	5,145	99.98	3,722	100%	3,789		
	100	3,428	99.88	3,296	99.70	5,144	99.98	3,722	100%	3,789	100.00	

Table 4.5: Appointment keeping

	KPI %	No.	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
			KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.
Metering promised		72,238		71,030		73,488		66,549		83,135		
Metering achieved	100	71,700	99.26	70,519	99.28	73,009	99.35	66,083	99.3%	81,741	98.3	
Service promised		3,301		3,057		3,257		2,919		3,303		
Service achieved	100	3,273	99.15	3,043	99.54	3,198	98.19	2,875	98.5%	3,213	97.3	

Table 4.6: Reinstatement commitments

Works	KPI %	No.	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
			KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.
Rate %	No.	KPI	98.38	5,217	97.8	5,431	97.33	5,499	94.98	6,791	94.91	
Rate %		134	1.62	115	2.2	145	2.66	276	5.02	346	5.09	
Temporary works >24 hours	100	5,217	97.8	5,431	97.33	5,499	94.98	6,791	94.91	5,876	97.5	
Permanent works >20 Working days	100	8,536	94.32	6,756	96.76	7,570	97.32	9,447	86.47	10,709	77.5	
		485	5.68	225	3.24	203	2.68	1,278	13.52	2,413	22.5	

Table 4.7: Gas supply interruption and restoration

	KPI %	No.	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
			KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.
Notified of no gas		15,112		14,751		12,709		12,088		12,352		
Restoration <24 hours	100	15,101	99.27	14,742	99.93	12,703	99.95	12,086	99.98	12,352	100.0	

Table 4.8: Response to emergencies

	KPI %	No.	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
			KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.
Public reports		19,288		19,338		19,449		17,428		16,249		
Within 1 hour	97	19,268	99.99	19,313	99.99	19,429	99.99	17,409	99.98	16,235	99.91	

Table 4.9: Complaints handling

	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		
	KPI %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %	No.	KPI rate %		
To be resolved <10 working days	85	1,709	99.3	2,132	100	2,265	97.6	1,758	97.1%	1,518	96.9%
Actual		1,721		2,132		2,321		1,810		1,566	
To be resolved <30 working days	85	293	100	197	100	173	100	169	100%	271	95.4%
Actual		293		197		173		169		284	
All complaints	85	2,014	99.4	2,329	100	2,494	97.8	1,979	97.4%	1,850	96.7%

Table 4.10: Complaint type

Complaint type	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall	No.	% of Overall
Meter related	634	31%	722	31%	707	29%	728	36.8%	679	37.8%
Appointment/service	300	15%	269	12%	364	15%	332	16.8%	328	17.7%
Site management	365	18%	284	12%	50	2%	82	4.1%	101	5.5%
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Reinstatement	102	5%	98	4%	121	5%	80	4%	90	4.9%
Technical	90	4%	91	4%	142	6%	88	4.5%	57	3.1%
Gas supply	44	2%	195	8%	252	10%	223	11.3%	163	8.8%
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Connections	108	5%	122	5%	291	12%	69	3.5%	56	3.0%
Gasworks	24	1%	17	1%	24	1%	20	1.2%	64	3.5%
Misc. (System)	64	3%	177	8%	89	4%	104	5.3%	72	3.9%
Notice of works	15	1%	40	2%	59	2%	39	2.2%	38	2.1%
Grand total	2014	100%	2329	100%	2455	100%	1,979	100%	1800	100%

Table 4.11: Payments guarantee

	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	No.	KPI%	No.	KPI %	No.	KPI%	No.	KPI %	No.	KPI %
Payments	38	100	36	100	49	100	22	100%	40	100%

Table 4.12: Customer Charter payments

Claim by category	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	
Appointment granting	4	11	2	1	0	
Appointments broken	20	17	34	17	30	
Supply restoration	9	2	7	2	9	
Reinstatement	5	0	3	0	1	
Supply interruption	0	6	3	2	0	
Total claims	38	36	49	22	40	
€ Value		3,450	2,210	3,075	1,310	2,450

Table 4.13: Compensations claims

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Paid	38	36	49	22	40
Rejected	0	0	0	0	0
>10 working days	0	0	0	0	0

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