Volume VI, Issue 5

Current News
மின் செய்திகள்

May, 2021

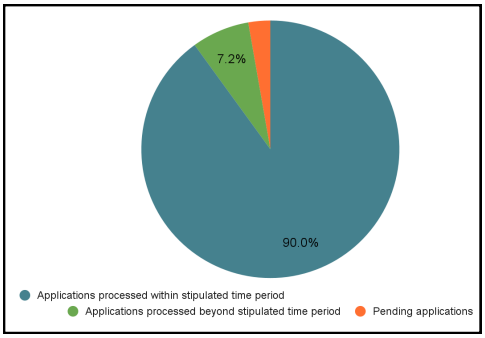
Assessing TANGEDCO's Compliance to Distribution Standards of Performance (DSOP): An Analysis of RTI Data for the Year 2016 (Part-12)

The previous issue presented TANGEDCO's level of performance in completing consumer requests for transfer of service connection. This section of the editorial will shed some light on TANGEDCO's overall performance in addressing consumer requests for five service areas - (i) new service connections and additional load (iii) transfer of service connections (iv) temporary supply (v) shifting of service connections

TANGEDCO does not meet the prescribed standards of performance while handling consumer requests for all five service areas mentioned above : Data around electricity consumers' requests/applications to TANGEDCO was collected from 43 distribution circles across five service areas.

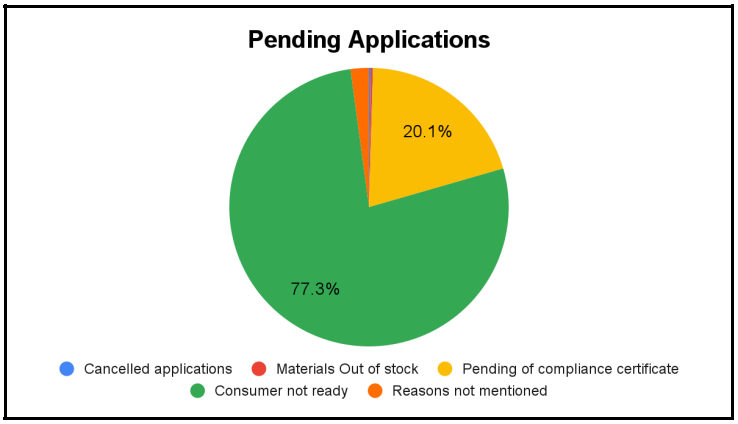
In 2016:

- Total applications received - 3,72,410
- Applications processed within stipulated time period- 3,35,211 (90.01%)
- Applications processed beyond stipulated time period - 26,963 (7.24%)
- Pending applications - 10,236 2.75%)



Although the majority of the applications (90%) are processed within the stipulated time period, it is still lower than the average target level of performance (95%) set by Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission (TNERC).

The process of handling consumer requests needs to be streamlined: It is observed that a total of 10,236 i.e 10,221 from new service connections & 15 from the additional load applications remain pending with TANGEDCO. When asked about the cause of delay via RTIs, the discom gave us the the following responses.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Please send your feedback to ecc@cag.org.in

Electricity Consumer Cells (ECCs)

ECC Tiruvallur
No. 118, Fourth Street, Kamaraj Nagar, Avadi, Tiruvallur District.
Chennai - 600 071,
Phone: 9382828286
Email: ecctiruvallur@gmail.com

ECC Tirunelveli
No.17/1,Shenbagavana Street,
Palayamkottai,
Tirunelveli - 627 006
Phone: 9443555097
Email: ecctirunelveli@gmail.com

ECC Cuddalore
No.23, Saraswathi Nagar,
Thirupapuliyur
Cuddalore - 607 002
Phone: 8608615621
Email: ecccuddalore@gmail.com

ECC Tiruvannamalai
Avalurpet Road,
Tiruvannamalai - 606 604
Phone: 04175 - 298033
Email: ecctiruvannama-lai@gmail.com

ECC Salem
31/20, Sree Rangan Street,
Gugai, Salem - 636 006
Phone: 9994941050
Email: eccsalem1@gmail.com

ECC Vellore
No: 10, Pillayar Koil Street
GriblesPet Arakkonam
Vellore District - 631 002
Mobile : +91 98946 32302
Email id: eccvellore@gmail.com

ECC Trichy
No: 4/74, Sangililyandapuram
Pettavaithalai & Post
Tiruchirapalli District - 639 112
Landline : 0431-2612597
Mobile : +91 9788203997
Email id : ecctiruchirappalli @ gmail.com

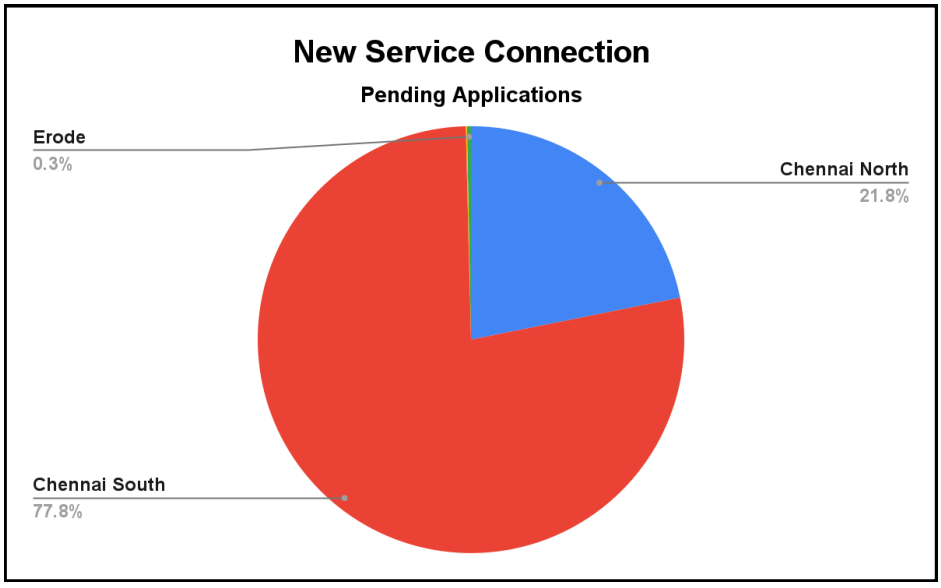
Out of the pending applications, for:

- 7917 applications (77.34%) - Consumer was not ready. Consumers did not complete necessary steps to avail service connections. For example, the consumer might have not completed the wiring for the building, not paid the security deposit or not submitted the required documents for availing service connections
- 2054 applications (20.07%) - consumers had not submitted a compliance certificate. (compliance certificate is the document submitted by a consumer when requesting a new service connection/additional service connections for multi-storied buildings. The consumer also submits a various certificate, to confirm compliance with standards set by other government agencies, e.g. Town and Country Planning Department, Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority, Fire Department, etc.
- 218 applications (2.13%) - no reasons were cited.
- 25 applications (0.24%) - the required materials were claimed to be out of stock meaning the infrastructure materials like meter, pole, EB wires would have not been supplied to the consumer.
- 22 applications (0.21%) - cancellations were received from consumers.

77.3% of pending service requests appear to have been delayed due to delays from the consumers and not the department. 20.3% of applications that were kept pending pertains to the non submission of the completion certificate. Both the reasons speak of the lack of an effective line of communication between the discom and the consumers. It also highlights the need to streamline the process of request handling.

There is a need to expedite consumer requests for new service connections: TANGEDCO's published data on its statewide level of performance (2016) reveals that the distribution company (discom) surpassed its target of performance while handling all of its consumer requests/applications. Whereas, RTI data collected on the same suggests that TANGEDCO did not meet the target set by TNERC while processing requests for new service connections. I.e. The discom took longer than the prescribed timeline to provide new service connections to its consumers.

Distribution circle, Chennai South can perform better while handling consumer requests for new service connections: Among the pending applications, 10,221 were requests to avail new service connections.



On comparing the four regions, it is observed that Chennai South has 7948 (77.8%) pending applications which is the highest. Chennai North has 2233 (21.8%) pending applications, Erode has 31(0.3%) and Coimbatore has 9 (0.1%) pending applications.

(To be continued)

Tamil Nadu News

Tangedco lets self-billing by low-tension consumers

In an order dated May 20, the previous month's billing can be deleted and entry of actual reading made to resolve the consumers' representation. "Superintending engineers are instructed to arrange to accept the self-assessment reading furnished by the LT consumers through WhatsApp photo, SMS, WhatsApp message, letter, email to the section officer (AE or JE) in form of text or photo. Mobile numbers of the section officers are available on Tangedco's website," the order said. Based on the self-assessment reading furnished by LT consumers, the previous month's billing would be deleted and a new bill for May 2021 would be raised and sent back. "The LT consumers may be advised to make use of internet banking, mobile banking, payment gateway, Bharath Bill Pay System and others for the payment of current consumption charges and other arrears as a precautionary measure," the order said. During the last year's lockdown, the Tangedco adopted the previous bi-monthly billing but it became a major issue when the actual reading was taken in the subsequent summer period, resulting in huge bills.

Source: DTNext, May 21, 2021

India News

India's power consumption up nearly 19% in first fortnight of May from last year

Power consumption in the country grew by around 19 per cent in the first fortnight of May to 51.67 billion units (BU) over the same period last year, showing recovery in industrial and commercial demand of electricity, according to the power ministry data. Power consumption in the first fortnight of May 2020 was 43.55 BU. The power consumption in the entire month of May last year was 102.08 BU. During the first fortnight of May this year (from May 1 to 14), peak power demand met or the highest supply in a day touched the highest level of 168.78 GW (on May 6, 2021) and recorded growth of over 15 per cent over 146.54 GW (peak met) recorded in the same period in 2020 (on May 13, 2020). The power consumption in April grew nearly 40 per cent to 118.08 BU. Power consumption in April 2020 had dropped to 84.55 BU from 110.11 BU in the same month in 2019, mainly because of fewer economic activities following the imposition of lockdown by the government in the last week of March 2020 to contain the spread of deadly COVID-19.

The power consumption also fell in May 2020 to 102.08 BU from 120.02 BU in May 2019. Similarly, peak power demand met or the highest power supply in a day also slumped to 132.73 GW in April last year from 176.81 GW in the same month in 2019, showing the impact of lockdown on economic activities. The fewer economic activities also resulted in a fall of peak power demand in May 2020 to 166.22 GW from 182.53 GW in May 2019. Taking to PTI, Davinder Sandhu, Advisor Primus Partners said, "Energy is derived demand, and with onset of summer and the productive pre-monsoon cycle of the Indian economy, an uptick is always expected." Sandhu who is also a former Advisor at World Bank said, "Both energy demand and supply have risen by 25-40 per cent over March-May 2021, with thermal PLFs (plant load factor or capacity utilisation) rising to 75 per cent and more, after many quarters. This is aided by the opening of the economy in Q1 (January-March 2021), with rising economic output as well as sharp uptick in exports."

The second wave of lockdowns will certainly impact economic activity, and in turn, energy demand. The larger than usual increase in part is attributed to lower base, and as well as to the pent up demand being executed now, he added. After a gap of six months, power consumption had recorded a 4.6 per cent year-on-year growth in September 2020 and 11.6 per cent in October 2020.Power consumption in February this year recorded at 103.25 BU compared to 103.81 BU last year. But 2020 was a leap year. In March this year, the power consumption grew nearly 22 per cent to 120.63 BU compared to 98.95 BU in the same month of 2020.

Source: Hindustan Times , May 16, 2021

Consumer Focus

The petitioner is a consumer from Sithalapakkam who applied for a new service connection for his premises under a domestic tariff. On 21.03.2020, the petitioner applied for a single phase connection online by paying registration fee and uploading the settlement document along with his photo. Since the petitioner did not get the service even after 60 days, he approached the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF), stating that he needed compensation for the delay in effecting the new service connection. The petitioner was dissatisfied with the CGRF, who were late in taking up his matter. Therefore, he appealed before the Electricity Ombudsman.

During the Ombudsman hearing, the TANGEDCO officials stated the following: For processing the application, Assistant Engineer (AE) visited the premises and found that the petitioner's premises was a four floor building (ground + three floors) which already has 9 service connections - six domestic tariffs and three commercial tariffs. The construction plan layout, approved by the local panchayat, indicated that the house had a partly constructed second floor and open terrace on the third floor. However, the petitioner had constructed rooms on the third floor instead of a terrace. Since this was not in compliance with the approved plan, the petitioner was requested to submit a revised copy of the approved plan along with the completion certificate. Considering this, his application was cancelled on 17.07.2020.

The TANGEDCO officials further cited the CE/Commercial instruction dated 14.05.2020, which insists on Completion Certificate issued by the local authority for effecting service connections to buildings anywhere in Tamil Nadu. This instruction was given based on the Tamil Nadu Combined Development and Building Rules, 2019 and G.O.(Ms) No.18 on Municipal Administration and Water Supply (MA.I) Department, dated 04.02.2019. In this regard, when a building exceeds Ground + 3 floors, the consumers are expected to provide (i) approved plan layout, and (ii) completion certificate from the competent authority before initiating the application for effecting the service connection. Since the petitioner failed to produce the required documents, the TANGEDCO officials requested the Ombudsman to dismiss the case.

On hearing the arguments from both the sides, the Ombudsman stated the following:buildings constructed before 04.02.2019 need to follow the CE/Commercial instruction on Planning Permit and Compliance Certificate dated 04.05.2017. As per the guidelines, the petitioner's premises comes under the Special Building category. Hence the Electricity Ombudsman ordered that the petitioner needs to submit the completion certificate from the competent authority for processing the application and dismissed the request for effecting the service connection.. Regarding the compensation stated by the petitioner, the Ombudsman referred to Tamil Nadu Distribution code Clause 27(1) - *Requisitions for Supply of Energy i.e.,to supply electricity on request, a consumer needs to submit the application to the distribution licensee, along with documents showing payment of necessary charges and other compliances. Since the petitioner failed to submit the necessary documents, the Ombudsman dismissed the request for compensation by the petitioner.*

Source - **Ombudsman case, TNERC**

ECC VOICE

திருவண்ணாமலை மாவட்டம், சோபள்ளம் கிராமத்தில் வசிக்கும் திரு. அருள்குமார் அவர்கள், விவசாய சர்விஸ் இணைப்பு தன் தந்தை பெயரில் இருப்பதால், அதனை தன் பெயருக்கு மாற்றுவதற்கு சோமாசிபாடியில் உள்ள மின் அலுவலகத்தில் மனு அளித்தார். பலமுறை அணுகியும், அவரின் மனு மீது எந்தவித நடவடிக்கையும் மேற்கொள்ளப்படவில்லை. ஏப்ரல் 2021 மாதத்தில், திருவண்ணாமலை மின் நுகர்வோர் மையத்தின் சார்பாக மின்சாரம் சம்பந்தப்பட்ட கலந்தாய்வு கூட்டத்தில் கலந்துகொண்டு தனது பிரச்சனையை புகாராக சமர்ப்பித்தார்.

புகாரினை பெற்றுக்கொண்ட மின் ஆலோசகர், திரு. ஆனந்தன் அவர்கள் பெயர் மாற்றுவதற்கு தேவையான ஆவணங்களை (பெயர் மாற்றம் விண்ணப்பம், பாகப்பிரிவினை பத்திரம், தந்தையின் இறப்பு சான்றிதழ், மற்றும் வாரிசு சான்றிதழ் ஆகியவற்றினை) புகார் மனுவுடன் இணைத்து வேங்கிக்கால் நிர்வாக பொறியாளர் (Executive Engineer) அவர்களிடம் சமர்பிக்குமாறு அறிவுறுத்தினார். மின் ஆலோசகரின் அறிவுரைத்தலின்படி திரு. அருள்குமார் தனது பிரச்சனையை புகாராக சமர்ப்பித்தார். பிறகு, மின் ஆலோசகர் சோமாசிபாடி இளநிலை பொறியாளரை (Junior Engineer) தொடர்பு கொண்டு இந்த புகாரினைப் பற்றி விவரித்தார். அதற்கு JE இந்த பெயர் மாற்ற விண்ணப்பத்தின்மீது நடவடிக்கை எடுப்பதாக உறுதி அளித்தார்.

நீண்ட காலமாக தொடர்ந்து வந்த பிரச்சனைக்கு தக்க ஆலோசனை மற்றும் நடவடிக்கையினால், புகார் கொடுத்த 10 நாட்களில், தந்தை பெயரில் இருந்த விவசாய மின் இணைப்பு திரு. அருள்குமார் பெயருக்கு மாற்றித் தரப்பட்டது. திரு. அருள்குமார் தனது நன்றியினை திருவண்ணாமலை மின் நுகர்வோர் மையத்திற்கு தெரிவித்தார்.

Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG)
New #246 (Old #277B),
TTK Road (J.J. Road),
Alwarpet, Chennai 600 018
INDIA

Phone: 91-44-24660387
Telefax: 044-24994458
Email: ecc@cag.org.in

www.cag.org.in

Initiative of

CAG
Citizen consumer and civic Action Group

Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG) is a non-profit, non-political and professional organization that works towards protecting citizen's rights in consumer and environmental issues and promoting good governance processes including transparency, accountability and participatory decision making.

World News

Current News

Dubai launches region's 'first industrial scale' green hydrogen plant

A Dubai-based project described as the "first industrial scale, solar-driven green hydrogen facility in the Middle East and North Africa" has been inaugurated, with those behind the development hoping it will help catalyze the region's renewable energy sector. In a statement Wednesday, Siemens Energy said power for the pilot project — a collaboration with the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority and Expo 2020 Dubai — would come from the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, a vast solar facility slated to have a production capacity of 5,000 megawatts by 2030.

Described by the International Energy Agency as a "versatile energy carrier," hydrogen has a diverse range of applications and can be deployed in sectors such as industry and transport. It can be produced in a number of ways. One method includes using electrolysis, with an electric current splitting water into oxygen and hydrogen. If the electricity used in the process comes from a renewable source, such as wind or solar, then some call it "green" or "renewable" hydrogen. Currently, the vast majority of hydrogen generation is based on fossil fuels, and "green" hydrogen is expensive to produce. In an interview with CNBC's Dan Murphy, Siemens Energy CEO Christian Bruch was asked when the plant in Dubai — which is based at a DEWA testing facility at the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park — would be commercially viable.

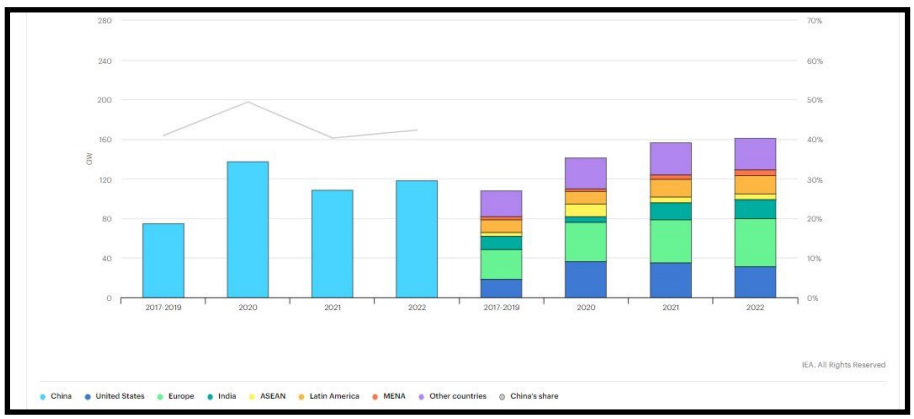
"I wouldn't see the limitation, really, on it from the UAE perspective, seeing also the massive resources you have on the renewable side." "I do believe it must be, it will be, it should be, one of the key future commercial models in the UAE and the wider region, to be also, in future, an energy exporter for the world."

Source: CNBC, May 20, 2021

Publications / Regulations

- Amendment on Implementation of CPSU Scheme Phase-II (Government Producer Scheme) for setting up grid-connected Solar Power Projects, MNRE, 2021.
- Renewable energy and electricity interconnections for a sustainable NorthEast Asia, IRENA, 2021
- Renewable Energy Policies for Cities: Buildings, IRENA, 2021

Annual renewable capacity additions in China compared to the rest of the world, 2017-2022



Source: IEA