



## Audit of Scottish Water Consumer Contacts

<b>Date of Audit</b>	26 August 2015
<b>DWQR Staff Present</b>	Matt Bower, Bill Byers, Moira Malcolm, Alison Seton
<b>Scottish Water Staff Present</b>	Kenny Laing; Dougie King, Nathan Wield, Miriam Deakin, David Hill

### Summary of Audit

#### Overall Summary

The audit investigated records of 23 cases covering the range of consumer complaint types, 12 of which had required a site visit and investigation by field staff. The remaining 13 were fully addressed within the contact centre. This audit has shown the handling of water quality consumer contacts to be of a high standard. Compared to the last audit in 2011, there is a clear improvement in the accuracy of advice provided to consumers calling with reports or complaints of discoloured water and milky/cloudy water. These categories of complaint form the greatest volume of calls to Scottish Water and it is encouraging to see the more consistent advice being demonstrated by different call agents.

Call agents had shown in all cases, an excellent level of recording of the consumer's details and the nature of their complaint. Good use was made of support tools to prompt questioning and provision of local activity information. There were examples however of inappropriate advice being offered to consumers in relation to some water quality issues and DWQR considers there to be scope for refresher training in basic water science to bring accuracy and consistency to the subject areas highlighted. Of most concern is the view held within the organisation, that levels of chlorine in supplies are dictated by Scottish Government or DWQR and therefore that Scottish Water are not responsible for the consequent issues.

<b>Number of Recommendations:</b>	13
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#### Quality of Customer Information Gathered

**Positives**

Details of customer information is well recorded in the Promise system and there were no examples of failure to fully record details. In many cases there were examples of additional information taken which would aid understanding of the situation for attending or investigating staff. There were no examples of wrongly categorised contacts.

**Negatives**

None noted

#### Quality of Water Quality Information Gathered

**Positives**

The quality of information gathered from consumers was good. In most cases, Agents were able to ask appropriate questions to gain a clear understanding of the problem and it's duration. There were many examples where attempts were made to define the extent of the problem in a neighbourhood.

**Negatives**

Some examples of over-lengthy questioning to gain clear description of a taste problem to the point in one case, of seeming reluctance to accept the complaint and necessity for investigation.

#### Quality of Water Quality Information/Advice Given

**Positives**

Examples of Agents referring to Team Coach to gain information and correct responses - carried out in professional manner. There is a greater consistency shown over the last audit, in the explanations provided for discoloration and milky/cloudy water complaints.

**Negatives**

Some examples of call Agents and Scientific staff avoiding responsibility by providing erroneous advice that chlorine levels are dictated by Government or DWQR. Chlorine levels are determined by Scottish Water to meet the requirements of adequate disinfection of individual supplies. Other minor examples of technically incorrect scientific advice being provided to consumers, particularly in relation to microbiology.

**Recommendations**

Review scripts and training for sampling requirements

Consider guidance on the appropriateness of stating 100% safe to drink when consumers are reporting problems and no investigations have been carried out.

Refresh advice to all staff that disinfection is required under the Regulations and that Scottish Water must ensure adequate disinfection is provided to ensure the water is safe to drink. *(Occurs in 2 cases).*

Refresh messages for call handlers for dealing with various subjects - Chlorine, Biofilms & boiling water. *(Occurs in 3 cases).*

#### Follow Up Action of Call Agent

**Positives**

Generally good use of systems to determine any SW activity or other utility streetworks in the vicinity of contact addresses. Many examples of use of appointments to ensure investigation of consumer problems. Where calls had been dealt with internally by the call agent, these had been call-wrapped appropriately.

**Negatives**

Single case where the issue should have been escalated to scientific colleagues for a more substantial investigation and response to the consumer.

**Recommendations**

Reinforce need to confirm appointments and to explain how they work.

Ensure that recurring issues are passed forward to PHT to enable prompt, full resolution.

## Follow Up Action of NSO

### **Positive**

Where investigation was required by an NSO, there were some good examples of thorough follow up activity with good notes on interaction with the consumer, remedial activity and outcomes. Sample numbers were recorded in all cases where these were taken.

### **Negative**

Some examples where fuller notes providing feedback from site would assist Contact Centre Agents and others in the event of further calls from consumer(s). Good number of cases where appointment slots were missed.

### **Recommendations**

All NSOs need to ensure full notes are made on system to record discussions held with consumer, actions taken and whether the issue is resolved.

Review field response template to enable NSO to describe how the investigator finds the taste & odour of the water for such complaints.

NSOs should explicitly record whether taste/odour is detected by them at time of visit.

## Customer Experience

### **Positive**

In the majority of cases, Call Agents displayed empathy with the consumer and consideration for their problems.

### **Negative**

In a very few cases an extended period of time passed with the consumer on hold whilst checks were being made on various systems.

In a significant number of cases where a field visit was arranged, the appointment was not met. Although meetings were held at a different time in the day or on an alternative agreed date, the failure to meet appointment times is a concern as it detracts from Scottish Water's customer service standards.

### **Recommendations**

Consider providing clearer guidance to call handlers for dealing with difficult illness complaints