

London Forum 2013

Introductory Remarks by Lord Mogg (12.45 - 13.00)

(Registration from 11.30 -12.30

You have 15 min to speak (12.45 -13.00) immediately following Commissioner Mimica)

12.30 -13.00 Opening Speeches

- Commissioner Neven Mimica, Consumer Policy Commissioner (*see his CV in your pack*)
- Lord Mogg, CEER President

Welcome

- Thank you Commissioner Mimica. We are delighted to have you with us in person this morning.
- On behalf of Ofgem, the hosts of today's event, welcome to London to the 6th Annual Citizens' Energy Forum.
 - EU Energy **Commissioner Oettinger** will also join us later to close today's proceedings.
 - Pleased to have several Member States represented (although as always we would like to see more of them coming to discuss the key energy consumer issues), the Commission, consumer bodies, Ombudsmen, regulators and industry around the table delving into the all-important energy consumer issues.
 - Particularly pleased to see Richard Adams from the European Economic and Social Committee, one of the lesser well known EU Institutions, here on the topic of involving consumers as we start on the path to deliver the 2020 Vision (I'll come back to the Vision in a moment).

Link CEER Interactive Customer Conference and (interactive) London Forum

- Last year the Commission adopted here at the London Forum the “tried and tested” interactive approach that works so well at our annual CEER Customer Conference.
 - Consumer association “testimonials” and “breakout sessions” are a winning formula. Consumer bodies have said many times that it is easier for them to have their voice heard at an event (and particularly an interactive event) than through written response to a public consultation. We’re glad to see the interactive nature repeated again this year, and in particular the customer body testimonials. It should reaffirm to consumer bodies in a very practical way that their voice will be heard.
 - May I congratulate the Commission also on their initiative of having **display booths/stands** for Forum participants to display their posters and other communications materials. It not only adds a splash of colour. It enables energy stakeholders to show and share their customer flyers and for participants to take away something concrete from the Forum.
 - We are delighted to see the efforts of Forum participants in stocking these display booths. Regulators, consumer bodies, Institutions and industry **collectively have a role to enhance consumer engagement** in energy markets and **improve how we communicate to energy customer issues about their rights**. Our joint efforts will reinforce each other.

Visit the CEER booth today and our dedicated customer website

- At the CEER booth, you will **find handy postcards** on issues like “Your Energy Rights”. Feel free to take them home with you.
- We also encourage you to visit the **CEER customer website** (which was launched here at the London Forum last year). It is packed with **games** which explain (very simply) the complex world of energy, an interactive map of your national points of contact and much more.
- Other examples of our efforts to bring energy regulation issues closer to consumers are
 - **Each CEER technical report now contains a consumer section** which explains the relevance of the topic to consumers and each report is
 - Each technical report is accompanied by **a Citizens Q & A memo** which is jargon-free.
 - I should add that we will hope in 2014 to have **many public workshops** (more than a dozen) all of which are free of charge as well as our **dedicated annual customer conference**.

What are we regulators doing to promote energy markets that take into account the needs and interests of consumers?:

Through CEER, we work together to put in place tools & rules to facilitate consumer engagement with (and fair treatment by) the energy market, by:

1. making **voluntary (Europe-wide) recommendations** to improve market services and the consumer experience on areas like:
 - price comparison websites
 - capabilities of smart meters
 - data management to improve retail market functioning
 - standards for distribution services (connection, disconnection, maintenance)
 - switching and billing practices
 - complaint handling, reporting and classification
2. Working to **improve consumer representative involvement in the regulatory process** and the voice of consumers being heard:
 - Advice on tools regulators can use to involve and engage consumer representatives in their national framework
 - 2020 Vision for Energy Consumers – creating, promoting and building a dialogue between consumers, policy-makers, regulators and the energy industry:
 - in order to better take into accounts the needs and wants of consumers.
 - To effect a change in the attitudes and practices within the energy sector
 - To ensure markets deliver reliability, affordability, simplicity and protect & empower consumers

So, what are Regulators talking about at this London Forum?

- First, I should clarify that both CEER and ACER sit here today representing energy regulator. Personally I wear three hats today, for Ofgem, as CEER President and Chair of the ACER Board of Regulators.
- To avoid any confusion. ACER is an EU Institution, an Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators. Its work focuses on issues that are mandated by legislation whereas CEER areas of interest (and indeed geographical scope) are much broader. CEER deals with issues such as international regulatory cooperation and sustainability issues which very much complement ACER's work.

- Moreover, it is CEER who very much leads regulators' customer-related work. Indeed **CEER has been THE champion of consumer issues** for so long that this year, in refreshing our logo, **we've built an image of an active consumer into our logo and developed a tag line** of what CEER stands for namely "**fostering energy markets, empowering consumers**". This reflects CEER's efforts to place consumers at the heart of EU energy policy.
- ACER is required to produce an annual Market Monitoring Report of the Internal Energy Market. CEER works with ACER in producing the customer aspects of this report and it is published as a joint report. Later on today **Christina Veigl Guthann (CEER)** will present on behalf of CEER-ACER our recent findings on **the customer empowerment and protection, and retail market aspects of the ACER-CEER Market Monitoring Report.**
- **Dirk van Evercooren (CEER)** will provide you with a picture of the **current level of engagement of consumer bodies in the decision making process at national level.** This is based on research we conducted. I thank the BEUC members who inputted into this research. Rest assured that based on these findings we plan to develop advice on how to enhance the role that consumer bodies play in the regulatory process.
- We will of course actively participate and add expertise in each of the sessions. We particularly **welcome the session on how DSOs can add value for consumers in evolving retail markets tomorrow** as this is very much a core focus of our work in 2014. But more about that tomorrow! For now, I want to come back to the Energy Customer Vision.

Now that we've build together the 2020 customer vision –let's implement it (together)

Recap the 2020 Energy Customer Vision + its link to the IEM

- CEER took an initiative in 2012 to build (with stakeholders) a 2020 vision that puts energy customers first. BEUC, the European Consumer Body, also backed our initiative from the start. The result was the CEER-BEUC 2020 Vision for Energy Customers presented here to the London Forum in November 2012.
- Immediately, there was **widespread endorsement** of the vision by the energy sector and the European Commission.
 - Now some news ! This month **EuroCoop became the newest supporter** of the CEER-BEUC 2020 Energy Customer Vision. This brings the count to **16 supporters of the Vision.**
- The widespread support that our Energy Customer Vision has gained (16 supporters plus the European Commission) testifies that the four so-called **RASP principles** upon which our vision is based (reliability, affordability, simplicity, protection and empowerment) **are a touchstone for the Internal Energy Market.**

Important role of London Forum in monitoring the Vision

- Member States have set 2014 as the target for an Internal Energy Market.
- At the 2011 London Forum, I called on Forum participants to identify their priorities for the Internal Energy Market so that the IEM will work for **customers**, asking for concrete ideas (i.e. beyond generalisations) on actions to be taken.
- Now this today's high level panel will address the Question "Is the IEM working for consumer?"
- Our view remains that **the London Forum has an important role to play as a platform to monitor progress annually in delivering the Customer Vision**, and hence making sure that the IEM delivers for consumers.
- It is terrific that there is widespread support for the Vision. But becoming a supporter of the Vision also means demonstrating a commitment to achieving the Vision.
- Now the **focus is clearly on implementation of the Customer Vision**.
- We **call on the Commission to make sure that a focus of the Annual London Forum is clearly on implementation of the Customer Vision** so that supporters of the Vision have a chance to tell us how they intend to implement the Vision and apply its core principles and so regulators can report on their monitoring of retail markets and customer rights.
- CEER's commitment is clear – we have a rolling 3-year Action Plan which states what we are doing to implement the Vision. **We encourage supporters of the Vision to do likewise and to develop their own action plans for realising the Customer Vision.**

What's next for regulators?

- "Bringing the IEM home to consumer" is the **theme of the CEER Annual Conference** which takes place in Brussels on 21 January. As always with our event, participation is free of charge but seats are filling up fast so register now on www.ceer.eu
- It's time to develop strategic foresight to guide post-2014 work. To this end, ACER has recently launched a strategic initiative: "**Energy Regulation: a bridge to 2025**".
- The Bridge explores what needs to be done to provide a bridge of policy adaptation in the coming decade – covering gas, electricity and consumers – and building from our EU framework and existing commitments, whilst taking on board new developments and change. You'll hear more from me tomorrow on this "2025 Bridge"!
- **Empowering Consumers:** i.e. ensuring that consumers can participate in the market and its development in an informed way is a core part of CEER's work in the coming period.

- We are also working with regulators from around the globe – through the **International Confederation of Energy Regulators (ICER)** – to share experience and promote independent regulation in the public interest. We are currently benchmarking consumer empowerment and protection policies and practices in international markets. This is mutually beneficial to **learning from each other’s experiences and encouraging a consumer awareness among the world’s policy-makers and energy sector overall**. We will be publishing our findings at the May 2015 6th World Forum on Energy Regulation in Istanbul.
- As always, regulators are also here to listen and learn so let’s have another fruitful discussion over the next one and a half days.

Background: List of 16 current supporters of the 2020 Vision

Listed alphabetically (new one in bold):

- | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| 1. ANEC | 6. ENTSO-E | 12. GEODE |
| 2. CECODHAS | 7. ENTSG | 13. IGU |
| 3. CEDEC | 8. ESMIG | 14. NEON |
| 4. Cooperatives Europe | 9. EURELECTRIC | 15. SEDC |
| 5. EDSO for Smart
Grids | 10. Euro Coop | 16. UEAPME |
| | 11. Eurogas | |