

## Response to consultation on a three-digit number for the national power cut and electricity network safety service

Submitted by: Gas Task Group

### **Question 1: Do you agree with Ofcom's proposal to designate 105 for "Access to the national power cut and electricity network safety service" in the Numbering Plan? Please state your reasons.**

The Gas Task Group, which reports to the Energy Emergency Executive Committee (E3C) have had chance to review the recommendation above and can comment as follows:

The Gas Task Group is supportive of a 3 digit number for customers to contact their electricity network operator if they experience a power cut, have an associated welfare related issue or encounter an electricity network safety issue. A 3 digit number is memorable and will help overcome the confusion that currently exists in this sector of energy supplies.

Such confusion, however, does not exist for the gas sector. The national gas emergency number – accessed through our memorable 0800 111 999 number – is widely known and is very easily found. The number is embedded within existing legislation (IE the Gas Safety (Management) Regulations 1996), in telephone directories, on energy bills, on thousands of fleet vehicles, on carbon monoxide detectors and on every gas meter throughout the UK. Each year we attend circa 3 million gas escape incidents from calls to this number.

Operation of the gas safety service is very different from the routing service being proposed for electricity. The service for gas is delivered from a single national call centre that is also responsible for scheduling job orders for gas engineers to be in attendance at the site of the escape or issue within one hour.

For these reasons a single emergency number covering gas and electricity would not be at all beneficial to customers. It would compromise the existing gas safety regime, would create significant confusion and, most importantly, would be hugely costly to implement.

In conclusion we are supportive of a 3 digit number for electricity – but would be very much opposed to this number being used for gas also. Furthermore, we believe that it is very important that the consumer awareness initiatives that will accompany the 3 digit number service should make it very clear that the service is just for electricity. We would wish to avoid the situation where customers call the 3 digit number when they have a gas leak – mistakenly thinking the service covers gas also.

### **Question 2: Do you have any comments on how we consider that we have met the legal tests and/or on the proposed modification to the Numbering Plan set out in Annex 2?**

We have not considered these points in detail and have no comments.