

SPSO decision report

Case: 201105183, Scottish Water
Sector: water
Subject: damage caused / compensation
Outcome: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C runs a business that relies solely on customers visiting his workshop. He complained that work carried out by Scottish Water resulted in disruption to, and closure of, the road that provides access to the workshop. Mr C said that, as a result, he did not have any customers for a period of three months. The road works were originally scheduled to take two weeks, but were extended on more than one occasion. Mr C was dissatisfied with the reasons Scottish Water gave for the closure of the road and their rejection of his claim for compensation.

We accepted Scottish Water's position that the road works had to be extended due to the contractors hitting rock when excavating. We were satisfied that exploratory work had been carried out to assess the ground and that the delays to the work were unforeseeable. We were also satisfied that Scottish Water took reasonable steps to minimise the impact on Mr C's business by ensuring access remained possible to his property and by erecting 'business as usual' signs on the main road.

That said, we found that Scottish Water failed to communicate with Mr C about the extensions to the road closure. We also found that they dismissed his claim for compensation without passing on the details to their claims handlers in line with their customer charter.

Recommendations

We recommended that Scottish Water:

- pay Mr C £20.00 in line with their service standards in recognition of their failure to notify him of the delay to completion of the mains installation; and
- in line with their customer charter, pass Mr C's claim for compensation to their claims handlers for consideration in terms of the inconvenience caused.