

SPSO decision report

Case: 201200876, Business Stream Ltd
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: complaints handling
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

In May 2011, Ms C received a bill from a reading of a meter that did not belong to her. Business Stream apologised to her for this in October 2011 and confirmed that they had wrongly billed her for this meter. They said they were crediting her account with £20 in recognition of a failure in service standards to reply. However, Business Stream then credited the wrong account and continued to invoice her for the wrong meter. Ms C complained by email, phone and letter to Business Stream over the next year. When she brought her complaint to us, she said that the matter was unresolved and Business Stream had not responded to her recent correspondence.

Our investigation found that Business Stream had written to Ms C in July 2012, confirming that she had been wrongly invoiced and that all charges for this meter would be credited back to her account. Business Stream told us that they were now satisfied that the billing was on the correct meter and the charges were correct. However, there had been a long delay in resolving the matter, and we did not consider that Business Stream had provided Ms C with a clear explanation of how her current account balance had been calculated. Also, we found that Business Stream delayed in replying to Ms C's correspondence, and had not compensated her in accordance with their complaints procedure for the failure to reply to correspondence.

Recommendations

We recommended that Business Stream Ltd:

- apologise for the long delay in resolving the matter;
- set out clearly in writing how Ms C's current account balance has been calculated;
- pay £20 for the delay in responding, in line with service standards; and
- pay a further £20 for the delay in responding, again in line with service standards.