

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201202733, Business Stream Ltd  
**Sector:** water  
**Subject:** meter reading  
**Outcome:** some upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

### Summary

There was a leak in a pipe which fed a field trough. This was not detected and Ms C was faced with a large, unexpected bill. The leak was in pipework that was her responsibility. However, Business Stream had failed to read the meter for three years and Ms C felt this had made the situation worse.

When Ms C contacted Business Stream to complain, they apologised for the error and reduced the amount due by 50 percent. When she contacted us, we confirmed that, while we upheld her complaint that there had been a failure to read the meter, we considered that Business Stream had made an appropriate response and we did not recommend the bill be further reduced.

Ms C also complained that she had initially been offered a leak allowance only to be then told that this would not be given. This is because leak allowances are only available when the customer has water and a sewerage supply, and Ms C had a water only supply. (Although called a leak allowance, it amounts to a reduction in the sewerage bill when it is clear that water has leaked and not been taken away through the sewer system. As Ms C had no sewerage bill, there was no bill to reduce.) We did not uphold this complaint but did comment to Business Stream that the explanation they gave Ms C about why she was not eligible was unclear.