

Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham B5 4UA
21 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3HF

By email

31 October 2017

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 -Request For Information

Reference: FOI 20171093

Dear 

Thank you for your request for information concerning Castle Water.

Ofwat confirms it does hold the information.

Castle Water has two licences; one for the provision of Water and/or Sewerage (WSSL) and one for retail services. Each of the WSSL licenses are subject to a set of Standard License Conditions set by the Secretary of State, the link to which is above the box with all the licenses on that page:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-supply-and-sewerage-licencing-regime-standard-licence-conditions>

Part B 2(1) of the Standard License Conditions (page 16) sets out the requirement that the licensee complies with the Customer Protection Code of Practice, further information on which is posted on this page:

<https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/customer-protection-final-code-practice-non-household-retailers/>

In relation to your questions 3 and 4 whilst these fall outside of the scope of FOI, Ofwat can confirm that we have received some complaints about Castle Water's services

- Between April-September 2017 Castle Water was the most complained about retailer in terms of enquiries / complaints received. The majority of these complaints were in relation to answering calls. The Consumer Council for Water (CCW) and Ofwat have raised this with Castle Water. It confirmed that an average call waiting time was 21 minutes. It is now aiming to reduce this to one minute. Since September 2017 it has deployed 40 extra customer service

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staff and Ofwat will review the situation at the end of October to monitor progress.

- Ofwat has also received a complaint from another retailer that some of their customers were continuing to receive bills from Castle Water despite having switched to them, and that this bill is based on “in advance” charges rather than for actual usage based on a meter reading. We are currently seeking further information from Castle Water to clarify the issue.

If you have any specific concerns or complaints regarding Castle Water do feel free to contact our Management Office at CaseManagementOffice@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk so that they can look into it further and have the opportunity to raise them with Castle Water if needed.

Furthermore you may find it helpful to look at the Guaranteed Standards of Service which retailers are also subject to, under which customers should receive automatic payments if a company fails some of the basic customer service aspects.

<https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/households/supply-and-standards/standards-of-service/>

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Further information concerning your rights is available from the Information Commissioner’s Office at:

Freedom of Information/EIR Provide the Information

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<https://ico.org.uk/>

or

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow

Yours sincerely,

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