

Planned Activities

Good Practice Guide



Guide Summary

To provide standardisation and clarity for both Retailers and Wholesalers in relation to planned work activities.

Planned Timeframes and Activities

General Communication

Impacts and Level of Interaction

Specific Information

This document has been deemed as a Water Retail Market Guidance or Good Practice Document by the Trading Parties involved in the Retailer Wholesaler Group (RWG). The document is designed to bring together in one simplified guidance/good practice document the different Wholesaler or Retailers Policies or Practices.

It is important to note that Wholesaler or Retailer policies and practices change from time to time and whilst effort is made to maintain the currency of this document, if there is any doubt, the current policy or practice should be checked with the relevant Wholesaler or Retailer.

This good practice guide relates to Part D of the Wholesale Contract Schedule 1, Part 3: Operational Terms.



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Target audience: Retailers, including Self-Supply Licensees, and Wholesalers in the Water Market.

Objective

This document, authored by a sub-group of the Retail Wholesale Group (RWG), aims to provide industry good practice guidance in relation to planned activities with a view to encouraging standardisation where possible.

Introduction

Planned activities can impact significantly on the operations of Non-Household (NHH) customers.

Part D of the Wholesale Contract Schedule 1, Part 3: Operational Terms sets out the processes to be followed in relation to the long-term planning, short-term planning and reactive activities carried out by the Wholesaler in relation to the provision of Water Services and/or Sewerage Services.

Lack of clarity on the roles and responsibilities of Retailers and Wholesalers in relation to this area of the market has resulted in different interpretations and expectations of individual trading parties. This, combined with a lack of consistency in the quality, terminology and delivery mechanisms used in communicating these messages, has resulted in the concern that Retailers may not be able to effectively relay information to NHH customers and/or that NHH customers may not be notified of planned activities carried out by the Wholesaler in a timely manner.

Although Part D as currently written in the Operational Terms relates primarily to those planned activities that may affect the provision of water services and/or sewerage services, this document acknowledges that Wholesalers undertake works that do not impact on the provision of water and/or sewerage services but may have the potential to otherwise impact a NHH customer's normal business, for example road closures, road diversions or access restrictions.

This document acknowledges the need for Wholesalers and Retailers to work together to ensure that NHH customers receive appropriate and timely notification in respect of planned activities undertaken by the Wholesaler.

1. Planned Timeframes and Activities
2. Impacts and Level of Interaction between Parties
3. General Communication
4. Specific information

Appendix 1: Planned Activities Process Summary

Note: Wholesalers should apply the same processes and communicate notifications to all Retailers, regardless of whether they are Self Supply or Third Party Retailers.

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1.0 Planned Timeframes and Activities

Parts D1 to D3 of the Operational Terms categorise the different timeframes related to the notification of planned activities.

The table below provides further guidance on the types of activity that fall under each category. The types are owned by the Wholesaler and the usage of consistent terminology is designed to alert the Retailer to the nature of the event and for all parties to co-ordinate more effectively.

Code	Timeframe	Nature of Work
D1	Notification of capital works having an effect on NHH Customers - long-term planning. At least 3 months advance notification	Capital Water Works
		Capital Sewerage Works
D2	Short-term planned activities At least 22 business days advance notification	Cyclical flushing of the distribution network
		Exchange of bulk meters on a Wholesaler's network
		Leak repairs (e.g. non urgent leaks that do not require immediate action)
		Step test (Wholesaler distribution network testing)
		Asset Maintenance/Repairs (e.g. Hydrant or valve repair/replacement)
		Sewer collapse (Minor works required)
D3	Reactive activities At least 48 hours advance notification	Flushing due to a discolouration incident, low pressure, meter blockage
		Leak repairs
		Step test (Wholesaler distribution network testing)
		Asset Maintenance/Repairs requiring urgent action
		Sewer collapse

2.0 Impacts and Level of Interaction Between Parties

One or more impacts can be associated with any planned activity carried out on the network, and these impacts will determine the scope of interaction between Wholesaler, Retailer and NHH customers. The table below sets out the impacts against the interactions that should occur.

Potential Impacts of Planned Work	Wholesaler to NHH customer interaction	Wholesaler to retailer interaction	Retailer to NHH customer interaction
Interruption to supply	In every circumstance	In every circumstance	If requested by the Wholesaler or deemed appropriate by the Retailer
Significant pressure change and particularly to below minimum standard	Including but not limited to customers with SSAs	Including but not limited to customers with SSAs	If requested by the Wholesaler or deemed appropriate by the Retailer
Significant change to supply (e.g. water composition)	Including but not limited to customers with SSAs	Including but not limited to customers with SSAs	If requested by the Wholesaler or deemed appropriate by the Retailer
No effect on water services but the potential for indirect business impact (e.g. road closure, blocked access).	Where appropriate	Where appropriate	If requested by the Wholesaler or deemed appropriate by the Retailer

3.0 General Communication

Wholesalers are required to broadcast information and this includes the use of general communication channels. This is detailed in the adjacent tables.

In addition, specific information to individual Retailers is required and this is covered in Section 4.

Table 3.1 - Wholesaler to NHH Customers

Media	D1	D2	D3
Web and social media	Yes	Yes	Yes
Portal push notifications	Yes	Yes	Yes
Alerts (push)	No	No	Yes
Wholesaler Customer maildrop (letter/card)	Potentially	Potentially	Yes
Wholesaler Pop-up campaigns	Yes	No	No
Wholesaler Public consultations	Yes	No	No
Customer consultation	Potentially	No (unless requested by Retailer). Potentially for Sensitive Customers.	Potentially for Sensitive Customers

Table 3.2 - Wholesaler to Retailers

Media	D1	D2	D3
Alerts (push)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Web and social media	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wholesaler Public consultations	Yes	No	No

4.0 Specific Information

This section outlines the structure of information that should be sent from, or made available by, Wholesalers to Retailers to make them aware of planned activities that specifically relate to their licensed premises. This should include:

- Details of the planned activity
- Details of the properties potentially affected

Best practice in information transmission and processing should be adopted by the market and its participants. At the time of writing, this may be limited to email with CSV attachments that can be easily filtered, sorted and uploaded. The requirement is that the information can be packaged, distributed, processed and acted upon with the least amount of disruption, delay or loss of integrity.

Details of the planned activity

Data in a structured format should detail the planned activity. Multiple messages may be sent with the same planned activity ID in the case of updates to the activity over time.

A suggested template is provided setting out the information to be provided using standardised headings.

Table 4.1 - Information template

Data	Notes / examples
Subject	Planned activity notification
Wholesaler name	
Status	Initial Notification / Update / Complete
Timeframe	E.g. D2
Nature of work	E.g. Cyclical flushing of the distribution network
Impact(s)	E.g. Potential for interruption to supply and pressure fluctuations
Count of SPIDs affected	For that particular Retailer
Planned Event I.D.	This should be incident specific and where possible include Wholesaler Org ID, geographical location and a date.
Date and start time	
Expected duration of the works	
Action Planned	
Customer message	Summary of customer message at this stage
Action to be taken by Retailer	Any specific action to be taken by Retailer related to support level, including any script where onward communication is required.

Details of the properties potentially affected

Data in a structured format should detail the SPIDs affected (where these are known). Information provided should, in preference, not include SPIDs licensed to another Retailer. In addition, customer names are excluded to ensure data protection. Multiple messages may be sent with the same Planned activity ID in the case of updates to any of the data.

Table 4.2

The following headings should be used each time and provided in the same order.

Data	Notes / examples
Planned activity ID	ID given by Wholesaler
Retailer	Particularly useful if the file is not specific to that Retailer
SPID	The individual water or waste SPIDs affected
Postcode	Postcode of SPID to unit level
Sensitive customers	Whether this site is occupied by a sensitive customer
Site-specific arrangements	Whether this site has an associated site-specific arrangement

5.0 Summary

In order for effective communication and coordination of planned events a degree of standardisation of terminology and methods of communication is required.

This document has proposed a consistent approach to events and has assigned roles and responsibilities for each trading party. It has provided guidance on methods of communication, the content of messages and their formats.

It is proposed that this document forms a good practice guide for Wholesalers and Retailers for this area of the market.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Planned Activities – Process Summary

This Process Summary should be read in conjunction with the full process scope contained in the Wholesale Contract Schedule 1, Part 3: Operational Terms - Part D: Planned activities and affected services.

Purpose and scope of Processes D1, D2 and D3

The Wholesaler must undertake long-term planning, short-term planning and reactive activities. Processes D1, D2 and D3 set out how the Retailer and Wholesaler shall interact in relation to such activities.

D1: Notification of capital works having an effect on NHH Customers – long-term planning.

D2: Short-term planned activities.

D3: Reactive Activities

Process D1 - Notification of capital works having an effect on NHH Customers – long-term planning

At least once 3 months, but sooner if known, the Wholesaler shall notify the Retailer of all work that it intends to conduct on its Network and which may interrupt the water services and/or sewerage services which it provides.

Process D2 – Short-term planned activities

At least 22 Business Days in advance of carrying out any planned work which it expects or reasonably should expect to have an effect on its water and/or sewerage services provided to NHH customers, the Wholesaler shall notify and update the Retailer of those activities and shall provide updates if information previously provided changes or further information becomes available.

Process D3 – Reactive activities

Reactive activities are those activities that do not form part of a programme of work but which need to be carried out and which are not covered under the long or short-term planning Process D1 or D2 and are not in the nature of unplanned events or incidents covered in Part E.

The Wholesaler shall notify and update the Retailer of specific activities 48 hours in advance of the time chosen to commence such activities where they are reasonably likely to affect water and/or sewerage services provided to NHH customers.