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**LICENCE CONDITION G : CODE OF PRACTICE FOR CUSTOMERS**

As you know all water and sewerage companies must, in accordance with Condition G of their Appointment, prepare and submit to me for my approval a Code of Practice for Customers. It may help you in the preparation of your Code if I set out briefly my initial views on the matter.

When considering each of the Codes submitted to me I shall be guided by what I consider to be the fundamental purposes of the Condition. These are :-

- (a) The need for companies to produce a clear statement of the services they provide, the way those services are provided, the charges and other terms and conditions, and the way they will deal with their customers.
- (b) The need to inform customers about matters they should be aware of and how they can obtain such information.

The model Code which was prepared by the former Water Authorities Association and the Water Companies Association, in collaboration with the Department of the Environment, provides a useful checklist of the matters that should be included in the Codes. What I will require is :-

- (a) A comprehensive statement covering all matters referred to in the model Code; and
- (b) details of how each company proposes to inform its customers of the existence of the Code.

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The comprehensive statement should comprise a single document; a copy of which must be available on request to customers. By its very nature this comprehensive statement will be a somewhat substantial document and one which is likely, therefore, to be used mainly by your own staff, and organisations and agencies concerned with advising customers. Inevitably it will cover some matters which may be of little interest to many of your customers. You may feel, therefore, that, in addition, there is a place for a simple leaflet (or leaflets) covering the parts of the Code which are of concern to all or most customers and which refers customers to the Code for detailed information on matters of more limited interest.

I should be informed about the details of how each company proposes to inform its customers of the existence of the Code. Obviously a leaflet such as that described above would be one way of meeting the requirement of Condition G.

Provided each Code complies with the Condition G the language, style and structure is a matter for each company. While I consider the model Code is a useful checklist of matters to be covered, I am not wedded to its language or to its structure; and companies should not feel constrained to follow the model Code closely. I would hope that companies will see the advantage of documents written in plain and simple english.

Finally, as you know, the Code must be submitted to me by 31 October 1989. For my part I will endeavour to inform Companies as soon as possible of the need, if any, for revisions with the aim of securing an approved Code of Practice for Customers by the end of the year.

Yours sincerely

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