

**BEFORE THE FORUM**  
**FOR REDRESSAL OF CONSUMER GRIEVANCES**  
**IN SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF A.P LIMITED TIRUPATI**

**On this the 31<sup>st</sup> day of August 2020**

**C.G. No: 158/2019-20/Anantapur Circle**

**Present**

**Sri. Dr. A. Jagadeesh Chandra Rao**  
**Sri. A. Sreenivasulu Reddy**  
**Sri. V. Venkateswarlu**  
**Sri. Dr. R. Surendra Kumar**

**Chairperson**  
**Member (Finance)**  
**Member (Technical)**  
**Independent Member**

***Between***

A.Ramanatha Reddy,  
Area Manager,  
Jio Infocomm Ltd.  
Tower Mall, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
Anantapur.

Complainant

***AND***

1. Assistant Accounts Officer/Tadipatri CCO  
2. Assistant Executive Engineer/O/Putlur  
3. Deputy Executive Engineer/O/Tadipatri CCO  
4. Executive Engineer/O/Gooty

Respondents

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**ORDER**

1. This complaint is filed by one A. Ramanath Reddy of Anantapur on behalf of M/s. Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd. stating that they are having service No.7241239001047 – JIO ID : 1-AP-PUTL-ENB-9004 for their Reliance JIO tower at Ellutla (V) Putlur (M), Anantapur Dt. The said service received first bill in the month of January'19. After repeated persuasions they observed that they received huge electricity bill with huge KWH readings discrepancy in the months of February'19 and March'19 and the same was identified and escalated to the officers. Then the meter was replaced in May'19 with new one and old one was sent for testing. After testing it was found that meter is working normal and the memory of the meter is found with 13505 KWH, but the bills were received with the readings like 71490/90792 KWH which is not suitable to the meter reading so that as a proactive measure they have calculated the actual site load and given below for ready reference.

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**DESPATCHED**

**DATE** 01/09

I-AP-PUTL-ENB-9004	
Current	7.9 Amps
Voltage	230V
Power	1798.83
KW	1.79883
Per Day Units	43.17192
Per Month Units	1295.158
Taking per unit charge	9.8
Per Month Bill	12692.54

Average units consumption: 1300 units per month

Number of months from 10.04.2017 to 31.07.2019 i.e. 27 months

Total amount  $27 \times 12692.54 = 342698.58$ .

The subject site was powered on 10.04.2017 and they received first electricity bill on 10.10.2018. Since then abnormal bill with high energy was issued and asked them to pay the issued amount around Rs.10,00,000/-. But as per site load calculations it may not charge more than 3.5 lakh and out of this they have already paid Rs.1,73,758/-. Hence look into the issue and resolve the grievance to enable them to pay the balance amount.

2. Respondent. No 1 filed written submission stating that meter was installed to the service on 11.07.2017. Due to non-updation of turnkey payments in CSC portal the service could not be released in the same month, after pursuance of payment from Corporate Office and IT wing the said service was released on 03.08.2018. The meter readings were not recorded properly from the date of supply to 01/2019 and the accumulated actual reading was billed in 02/2019. Due to this, huge demand has been issued CC charges bill for Rs.6,45,641/- and for Rs.2,04,688/- in 03/2019. Due to nonpayment of CC charges the

service was disconnected and the service was billed in UDC in 04/2019. Complainant registered a complaint for meter challenging test then the meter was replaced with IRDA port meter in 05/2019. As per the request of the complainant the meter is tested on 23.03.2019 in MRT test bench and certified that the meter is 'OK'. As complainant aggrieved with the testing the meter was again sent to MRT test bench on 27.07.2019 for testing as per the test record the meter is 'OK' with meter readings shown KWH '13504.9' and KVAH '17189.5'. After recording one (1) lakh units the meter dial will change automatically and reading starts from '1' and shown reading in testing on 27.07.2019 as KWH 13504.9 and KVAH 17189.5. Due to lack of technical knowledge on meters complainant suspected that how meter readings are less in 07/2019 when compared to 03/2019 and presented a complaint to this forum. Due to dial change of difference of units is to be billed and demand to be raised as follows:

	KWH	KVAH
Already billed	90792	93811
To be billed as per dial change	13504.9	17189.5

Demand to be raised for 22712.9 KWH units. The bills issued are correct

3. Complainant filed an application for reconnection of the service connection and not to disconnect the same till the disposal of the complaint before this forum. Accordingly an order was passed for reconnection of the service No. 7241239001047 in I.A. No. 10/2019-20 with a condition to deposit 14<sup>th</sup> of the disputed amount i.e. Rs. 2,19,100/- and on such payment the service shall be restored and not to disconnect till the disposal of the case before this forum and with a further direction he is liable to pay current CC bills.
4. Personal hearing was conducted on 15.06.2020 through video conferencing. Heard both parties. Both parties reiterated their versions mentioned in the pleadings.
5. Respondent No.4 filed written submission separately after personal hearing on similar lines and further stated that complainant is requesting to average the bill from 07/2017 to 03/2019 based on October'19 consumption.

6. The point for determination is whether the bill served by the respondents is erroneous and liable to be revised?

The contents of written statement of the respondent No.4 shows that the service was actually released on 11.07.2017. Due to software issues in billing it was incorporated in the records as if it was released on 03.08.2018. As per the written statement there was an accumulated consumption from the date of release i.e. 11.07.2017 to 31.01.2019. The para 3 of written statement further shows that the bill was given for Rs.6,46,641/- for consumption of 62988 units and the final reading was 71490 and bill was also issued for arrears of Rs.1,02,858/- totaling the arrears to an amount of Rs.7,49,499/-. The next month bill i.e. in March' 19 a bill was issued for Rs.2,04,688/- for a consumption of 19302 units with final reading of 90792. The bill for the month of April'19 was issued for Rs. 12,067/- under UDC i.e. '03' status.

According to the respondents after completion of one dial over i.e. Completion of 1 lakh units the meter will automatically start with reading of '00001' and at the time of testing the meter on 27.07.2019 the final reading is 13504.9 and a bill has to be raised against the consumer for 22,712 units-

On the other hand according to the complainant the service was actually released on 10.04.2017 and first bill was issued on 10.10.2018. So there is a discrepancy in respect of actual date of releasing of service and raising of the bill between the parties. But the facts of the case clearly shows that there is an abnormal delay of 13 /16 months in including the service number in the consumer master and raising bill on the side of administration.

As per the record the meter was first tested on 23.03.2019 and as complainant not satisfied with the findings of first test report, again it was tested on 27.07.2019. The meter change slip for this service connection shows that the old meter was removed on 22.03.2019 with final reading of 90792. The old meter was replaced with a new meter with No. 3406236 with initial meter reading of KVAH/KWH zero. The account statement shows that the consumption of units is shown as zero in the month of April' 19 with final reading 90792. It is apparent on the face of the record that the service is

disconnected and it is in UDC in the month of April'19. The account statement further shows that initial reading was taken as '01' and final reading as reading as 767 in the month of 05/2019 with a consumption of 766 units.

The first meter test report shows that final reading of the meter was not mentioned. It is mentioned that complainant was present but the name of the representative of the complainant who was present is not mentioned in it and so also the signature of the representative of the consumer was not taken in it.

The second meter test report was conducted on 27.07.2019. The final reading is mentioned as 13504.9 A. Ramanath Reddy i.e. the person who filed this complaint was said to be present and signed in the test report. Respondents are claiming that this final reading of 13504.9 is to be taken into consideration and the bill has to be raised for the difference between the initial meter reading taken at the time of removal of first meter i.e. 90792 and the balance of 13504.9 which includes dial over of 'one lakh' reading and the final reading in the new meter of 767 units.

Respondents did not give any explanation as to why difference of recording in units in final reading had taken place in this case. There is no explanation as to why the final reading has taken as 90792 at the time of removal of the meter and the final reading of 13504.9 on 27.07.2019 at the time of testing the meter on second occasion. So also there is no explanation why final reading was not mentioned in first meter test report and why the name of the representative who was present at the time of testing the meter on first occasion on 23.03.2019 was not mentioned and why his signature was not obtained.

On the other hand complainant suspected the readings and raising of bill and filed the present complaint. Merely because representative of the complainant signed in the second test report is itself not sufficient to come to conclusion that he accepted the final reading taken on 27.07.2019 and respondents are entitled to raise bill basing on that reading.

So all the above facts clearly shows that there was abnormal delay in entering the service number in consumer master in records and meter readings were not taken properly from the beginning till removal of the meter and later came with a plea that even

the recording of final reading of meter at the time of removal on 22.03.2019 is not correct and the actual consumption recorded in the meter is 13504.9 as on 27.07.2019. The second meter test was recorded after 4 months and 3 days after first meter test. Apparently the first meter after removal is in the store for about 4 months and 3 days before recording final consumption of units by the respondents. There is an abnormal discrepancy in recording of final reading in the first meter between the date of removal of it and second test report. Respondents did not place any other material to show which one among these two is correct and to be taken into consideration for revision of bill.

Complainant is presently requesting to issue bill basing on the consumption in the month of October'19. Complainant did not place any authority that the previous bill can be issued basing on the consumption recorded after 18 or 19 months after release of service and raising of bills as the case may be.

It is relevant to refer Clause No. 7.5.1.4.1 and 7.5.1.4.2 of GTCS which is reproduced here under:

**7.5.1.4.1** *“The number of units to be billed during the period in which the meter ceased to function or became defective, shall be determined by taking the average of the electricity supplied during the preceding three billing cycles to the billing cycle in which the said meter ceased to function or became defective provided that the condition with regard to use of electricity during the said three billing cycles were not different from those which prevailed during the period in which the Meter ceased to function or became defective.*

**7.5.1.4.2** *If the conditions with regard to use of electricity during the periods as mentioned above were different, assessment shall be made on the basis of any 3 (three) consecutive billing cycles during the preceding 12 Months when the conditions of working were not different”*

Complainant is requesting contra to the above clauses of GTCS.

The above clauses will be applicable only when the meter was become defective or seized to function. In this case, on the suspicion of complainant in recording of the

consumption of units in the first meter, it was removed and tested in the laboratory and found the condition of the meter is satisfactory.

Complainant is also aware that he is utilizing the power and consuming energy from April'17 and bills were not correctly issued to it till Feb'19. Complainant did not brought this fact to higher authorities. A duty is also cast on the complainant when he is not receiving bills for such an abnormal period to bring this fact in writing to higher authorities. Had the complainant brought this fact to higher authorities, the mistake would have been rectified and he would have received bills regularly, so that he can pay bills every month basing on monthly consumption. It will also may be difficult for the complainant /consumer to pay a consolidated bill for 19 months at a time. Complainant appears to have under impression that meter was erroneous and his consumption was less when he received a consolidated bill for 19 months at a time. There is no defect in the recording of consumption of units in the meters of the complainant, but issuing a consolidated bill will certainly affect the quantum of amount payable by him on a consolidated bill.

The facts of this case clearly shows that field officers are not diligent in recording the correct date of releasing of service in consumer master and also in recording the consumption of units recorded in the meter every month correctly. They are also negligent in recording final reading at the time of removal of first meter and coming with a plea that final reading recorded at the time of removal of first meter is not correct. They have also not correctly recorded the final reading of the removed meter in meter change slip. In this connection it is relevant to refer Clause. No. 04 of Reg. 05/2004 as amended upto 01.11.2015 which is issued by Hon'ble APERC for issuing of electricity bills. It is as follows:

#### 4. *Electricity Bills*

##### *"4.1 Intervals of Electricity Bills*

*4.1.1 Bills shall be issued at a periodicity of not more than 2 months in respect of domestic, commercial agricultural services (metered cases) and general purpose consumers. Flat rate agricultural consumer shall be provided with pass books and electricity charges*

*shall be collected monthly on pro rata basis in respect of annual flat rate tariff fixed for this category. In respect of all other categories of consumers, the bills shall be issued monthly.*

- 4.1.2 The consumer shall be informed in advance of the periodicity of billing for his service (monthly or bimonthly), date in the calendar month when his meter will be read, bill date in the calendar month and due date for payment in the calendar month. It shall be obligatory on the part of Licensee to read meter of a service on prescribed date. But in unforeseen circumstances, the licensee may record the meter reading two days before or after the prescribed date.*

*The bill date shall be the date of meter reading for spot billing system and in other cases it shall be within one week from the date of the meter reading. The bill shall be served to a consumer immediately after the meter reading in case of spot billing system and in other cases within a period of one week from the bill date.*

*The licensee shall obtain the acknowledgement of the consumer or some other inmate of the premises after issue of the bill and the authorized meter reader shall also enter the meter reading and the date of reading in the passbook/ or meter card provided to the consumer.*

- 4.1.3 Bills shall be sent to the consumers, other than HT category, either by post or by hand delivery and in case of HT consumers, either by certificate of posting or by hand delivery. The fact of dispatch of bills to the consumers of a particular area will be displayed by appropriate notice on the notice board of the Licensee's Revenue office of the area concerned. Loss in transit of the bill if sent by post shall not be the responsibility of the licensee. However in case of hand delivery proof of service of the bill shall be maintained at the concerned Revenue Office of the Licensee. It shall be the responsibility of the Licensee to ensure prompt delivery of bills to the consumer. However, if the consumer does not receive the bill within 14 days from the date of meter reading, he should approach the Revenue Office concerned to obtain a duplicate copy of the bill.*



*4.1.4 The Licensee shall issue the first bill for all services energized during a billing cycle, before end of next billing cycle. In case, the consumer does not receive the first bill before end of next billing cycle from date of energizing the connection, he may report to the designated Officer of the Licensee who shall arrange for issue of the bill within next 14 days.*

Respondents have not brought any authority before this forum when they themselves had given two different final readings of the removed meter, they are entitled to raise bill basing on the final reading which was taken after a lapse of 4 months that too during the course of the second meter test while not mentioning the final reading in the first test report which has taken place on the next date of removal of the meter. Since proper readings were not properly taken, every month and non recording of correct final reading at the time of removal of meter and non mentioning of final reading in the first test report and mentioning final reading which was said to have taken on 22.03.2019 in meter change slip caused a huge financial loss to the licensee. When there is discrepancy in meter reading and when Respondents failed to place any additional material to show which meter reading among the two readings given by them is correct, consumer is entitled for benefit and he can be permitted to pay bill basing on the meter reading which is advantages and beneficial to him.

Hence we are of the opinion that consumer is liable to pay bill from the actual date of release of service connection i.e. 10.04.2017 to till the meter was replaced on 22.03.2019 with a final reading of 90792 only . The point is answered accordingly.

7. Licensee is requested to issue suitable instructions to the field officers immediately to release the service connection number and enter it in all the relevant records for assigning the bill so that the consumers will receive first bill immediately as per the provisions contained in Clause No. 04 of Reg. No. 05/2004 as amended in Reg.07/2013 on the next month of releasing of service connection. Otherwise it may cause financial loss to the Licensee, if any consumer fails to pay the electricity bills for a long period and also may become difficult in releasing the arrears. Apart from it, it may cause heavy burden on the consumer to pay the entire amount in lumpsum when he is having right to pay monthly bills basing on his monthly consumption.

DESPATCHED  
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The licensee is also requested to initiate disciplinary action against the erring officers as per the procedure so that this type of lapses will not recur in future.

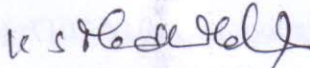
8. In the result respondents are directed to revise the bill and issue bill from the actual date of releasing of service connection as per the version of the complainant i.e. 10.04.2017 to till the meter was replaced on 22.03.2019 with a final reading of '90792' and second bill from the date of change of meter i.e. 22.03.2019 with initial reading of '0' and issue revised bill within 15 days from the date of receipt of this order and submit compliance report within 15 days thereon. The amount paid by the complainant as per orders in I.A. No. 10/2019-20 shall be adjusted in the revised bill.

If aggrieved by this order, the Complainant may represent to the Vidyut Ombudsman, Andhra Pradesh, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Sri Manjunatha Technical Services, Plot No:38, Adjacent to Kesineni Admin Office, Sri Ramachandra Nagar, Mahanadu Road, Vijayawada-520008, within 30 days from the date of receipt of this order.

This order is passed on this, the day of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020.

Sd/- Sd/- Sd/- Sd/-  
Member (Finance) Member (Technical) Independent Member Chairperson

**Forwarded By Order**

  
**Secretary to the Forum**

To

The Complainant

The Respondents

Copy to the General Manager/CSC/Corporate Office/ Tirupati for pursuance in this matter.

Copy to the Nodal Officer (Executive Director/Operation)/CGRF/APSPDCL/TPT.

Copy Submitted to the Vidyut Ombudsman, Andhra Pradesh, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Sri Manjunatha Technical Services, Plot No:38, Adjacent to Kesineni Admin Office, Sri Ramachandra Nagar, Mahanadu Road, Vijayawada-520008.

Copy Submitted to the Secretary, APERC, 11-4-660, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Singareni Bhavan, Red Hills, Lakdikapool, Hyderabad- 500 004.