

For immediate release, September 2006

Contact Bill Bullen, 0845 450 4117 or via press@utilita.co.uk

Press Statement

Ofgem misses chance with metering trial

Ofgem, regulator of Britain's gas and electricity industries, has missed an opportunity to re-ignite competition in the energy supply market.

The regulator has awarded virtually all of the funds it has allocated for smart meter trials to the existing big operators. Only one out of eight projects will be undertaken by an organisation outside of the Big 6 suppliers* and one of those will also carry out two projects.

Bill Bullen, Utilita Commercial Director said,

"This money won't make any difference to the Big 6 suppliers, all of whom should be spending far in excess of this amount on smart metering anyway. These organisations will also struggle to meet the project timelines. This money would have made a massive difference to new entrants who can design a whole business to deliver innovative utility products. Had it chosen to award some of the funds to this type of operator Ofgem could have achieved two objectives; firstly to stimulate competition and secondly to deliver the smart meter trial in the time they want it. "

EDITORS NOTES

[1] * The Big 6 are: British Gas, npower, PowerGen, EDF, Scottish & Southern and Scottish Power. Between them these organisations supply over 99.9% of the UK residential energy market.

[2] Customers can see all Utilita tariffs at <www.utilita.com.uk> or may contact Jim Garrett, on 0845 450 4117 <jimgarrett@utilita.co.uk>