

Ref. No PR-3/ General/ No 19345

Date: 18 JUN 2010

**COMMERCIAL CIRCULAR NO. 118**

**Sub:** Checking of Zero, faulty & average billed consumers.

**Background:**

The correct / actual meter reading is the most crucial activity for MSEDCL since this decides the energy that is consumed by the consumer thereby deciding the legitimate revenue associated with it and also the losses in system. Thus, the correct / actual meter reading, correct billing and revenue realization thereof is absolutely necessary.

To counter loss of revenue due to billing system, Photo meter reading was introduced after issuing Commercial Circular No. 56 dtd. 21.06.2007 to ensure that the meter reader would actually visit the spot, take the photo which will be facsimily transferred on the bill. This methodology addressed many issues including the consumer's grievances about wrong meter reading and also ensured that every consumer was visited to obtain the photo meter reading.

As of now the work of Photometer reading is totally outsourced to agencies. It is also observed that at times in an isolated cases these outsourced agencies err deliberately or otherwise in.

- 1) Not taking photo of the meter and showing LOCK/RNA status.
- 2) Repeating the same facsimile, photo on other consumer's bills.
- 3) Taking photo in such a way that the reading is not clear.
- 4) Keeping previous and current reading same to show normal billing.

Though all above actions deserve strict action on the agency there are hardly any instances where this has happened.

As such the main purpose of photo meter reading is likely to get defeated to some extent due to the heavy dependence on outsourced photo metering agency. This is very serious issue from the point of view of credibility of MSEDCL for no fault of MSEDCL and also from the point of view of adverse financial implications due to wrong billing. All these cases need to be detected & rectified during the validation process by MSEDCL officers and billing staff.

After introduction of photo meter reading, the percentage of "Actual Reading" has not improved as expected. There are still large numbers of zero, faulty, average reading bill being issued to consumers. Hence it was absolutely necessary to have a quality counter check on meter reading agencies so as to minimize this menace. Needless to say zero, average and faulty reading questions the credibility of MSEDCL, which is governed by regulation in this behalf and also adversely affects the revenue and derails the energy accounting mechanism. Thus the zero, faulty and average meter reading has to greatly reduce to acceptable limit.

