

**CONSUMER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL FORUM,
AMRAVATI ZONE, AKOLA.**

*“ Vidyut Bhavan ”
Ratanlal Plots,
Akola : 444001
Tel No.2434476*

Dt.20/03/2014

Complaint NO. 54/2014

In the matter of grievance about the incorrect bills.

Quorum :

Shri T.M.Mantri, Chairman
Shri P.B.Pawar, Secretary
Shri A.S.Gade, Member

Shri Debashish A. Dutt , Amravati.

..... **Complainant**

...vrs....

The Executive Engineer (R) Akola

..... **Respondent**

Appearances :

Complainant Representative : Self

Respondent Representative : Shri S.K.Wankhede, Dy. E.E.

1. The complainant has approached this Forum in respect of grievance about issuing of incorrect bills of 200 units since last 11 months as against the average of 100 units. It is alleged that the bills are wrongly issued on higher side, though the flat is never closed, incorrect endorsements have been made. In spite lodging the complaint 3 months back, nothing has been done, except enquiry by some Official with a promise to rectify, but nothing has been done. In spite of shifting of meter on the ground floor but the bill is received as Door Locked, hence this complaint. Alongwith the complaint copies of documents came to be filed.

2. As per the Regulation, notice was sent to the N.A. for submitting reply to the complaint. However, no reply was filed , the matter was proceeded and posted for argument. After receipt of notice of this forum of hearing, the representative of N.A. attended and filed reply stating therein that the bills to the complainant have been issued from February 2013 to December 2013 on average basis with endorsement “locked” but in January 2014, as per the Spot Inspection, the meter reading is 8706. The bill has been issued and further stated that after considering the payments of the bills made by the Complainant, there is a credit balance of Rs.7978=58 by the end of February 2014. Alongwith the reply copy of spot inspection report dated 13.3.2014 and copy of CPL from Jan.2013 till Feb.2014 has been filed on record.
3. Herd Shri S.K.Wankhade, Dy.Engineer, Learned Representative of N.A.. The Complainant has chosen to remain absent. The Learned Representative of N.A. has submitted that the copy of the reply with documents have also been sent to the complainant and his grievance has been settled. The Learned Representative of N.A. has submitted the Spot Inspection report bears the signature of representative of the complainant and from the CPL as well reply he has submitted that by the end of February 2014, there is credit balance of Rs.7978=58. According to him, it is after considering the payment made by the Complainant from time to time till December 2013 and as per the current reading taken on the meter, correction has been made, resulting in showing of excess payment made by the Complainant as credit. It has been informed that the complainant has telephonically informed that he is not attending the Forum and matter be decided, appropriately.

4. On going through the record, it is clear that since Feb.2013, bills have been issued on average of 200 units per month with endorsement “locked”. It is further clear that in Jan.2014, the correct reading is shown as 8706 and previous reading as 8147. The CPL clearly shows this reading of 8147 has been shown as correct reading in January 2013 and for all the months till December 2013, the said reading been shown as current as well as previous reading with endorsement “locked”. When query was made with the Learned representative of N.A. he has submitted that there is no problem in the meter and it was recording reading correctly. However, while feeding to IT Department, it was not accepted, resulting in issuing of incorrect bills on average basis. According to him the mistake was corrected in the bill of January 2014. Here it is pertinent to note that the complainant prior to approaching this Forum has made grievance and acknowledgement of the Complaint of 2nd Sept.2013 is filed with the complaint, so also some of the bills of 200 units with “locked” endorsement. After filing the complaint in this Forum, notice was sent in January 2014 itself, to the N.A. for filing reply on 24.1.2014. It seems that after receipt of notice of this Forum, the office of the N.A. has started taking steps but no cognizance was taken of the complaint made by the complainant orally as well as in writing on dt.2nd Sept.2013.

5. Here, it is pertinent to note that the N.A. has failed to file reply as per the notice of Forum and even to attend the proceeding, the matter was proceeded further and in view of absence of the N.A. again notice was sent for hearing. Thereafter, some steps have been taken including that of spot inspection on 13.3.14 and reply dated 14.3.2014 is said to have been sent to Forum by post but it, was not received till the date of hearing. When query was made as to why such a long time has been required for correcting

mistake, when there was no fault in meter, there was no satisfactory reply from the side of the N.A. and except the submissions that now the bill is corrected and credit of Rs.7978=58 is shown to the credit of the complainant till February 2014. It is, thus, clear that for the about period of 12 months, the incorrect endorsements have been recorded in CPL, and bills even as per defense and submissions of the N.A. Had prompt steps would have been taken by the concerned person/staff, the mistake could not have been repeated, that too, for the period of about 12 months. Only after the approach made by the Complainant to this Forum, and after receipt of notice of this Forum, steps have been taken from the side of the N.A. During all this period about 12 months the, Complainant has been required to pay on the basis of incorrect bills on average basis. Excess payment has been recovered from him. When he was making complaint, no cognizance has been taken. Now, mere showing credit balance of Rs.7978=58, the N.A. cannot absolve from its liability of failure to meet standards of performance prescribed under the Regulations. Apparently, there is lethargy / negligence on the part of concerned person/staff of the N.A. Office, whereby incorrect and higher bills have been issued to the Complainant for long time.

6. When query was made, whether the N.A. will pay interest to the Complainant, in such excess amount recovered from him, the Lerner Representative has submitted that there is no such provision but he has to admit if the consumer fails to pay the bills, in time fixed interest, is being levied and the same is included in the next bill, so also the delay payment charges. Consequently, in view of recovery of excess amount from the complainant, the N.A. is liable to pay token amount of Rs.200/- which amount is to be recovered from the erring person/staff of the office of the N.A. This Forum is also of the considered view that the Licensee to take

appropriate action against erring person/staff of the N.A. Office, for allowing the mistake to be continued for such a long period of about one year, resulting in issuing of excess bills, thereby harassment to the complainant. With such observations, the Forum proceeds to pass following unanimous order:

ORDER

1. The complaint is disposed of in view of showing credit balance of Rs.7978=58 by the N.A. in the account of the Complainant, with the observations that the N.A. Licensee to take appropriate steps / action against the erring person/officer/ staff of the concerned Office of the N.A. for the latches /negligence on their part, raising incorrect higher bills to the Complainant for months together. Including recovery of R,200/- payable to the complainant.
2. The N.A. to issue the correct bills as per the actual consumption of energy to the Complainant, henceforth.
3. In the circumstances no order as to costs.
4. That the Compliance report to be submitted within the period of one Month from this order.

Sd/-
(A.S.Gade)

Sd/-
(P.B.Pawar)

Sd/-
(T.M.Mantri)