



Review of functioning of CGRF & Ombudsman

Final Report

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
AERC	Assam Electricity Regulatory Commission
APERC	Andhra Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission
APSERC	Arunachal Pradesh State Electricity Regulatory Commission
ARR	Aggregate Revenue Requirement
BERC	Bihar Electricity Regulatory Commission
CSERC	Chattisgarh State Electricity Regulatory Commission
CGRF	Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum
CGRO	Central Grievance Redressal Officer
DERC	Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission
FOR	Forum of Regulators
GERC	Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission
GRO	Grievance Redressal Officer
HERC	Haryana Electricity Regulatory Commission
HPERC	Himachal Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission
J&KSERC	Jammu & Kashmir State Electricity Regulatory Commission
KERC	Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission
KSERC	Kerala State Electricity Regulatory Commission
MERC	Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission
MP	Madhya Pradesh
MPERC	Madhya Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission
MSERC	Meghalaya State Electricity Regulatory Commission
NEP	National Electricity Policy
NERC	Nagaland State Electricity Regulatory Commission
OERC	Orissa Electricity Regulatory Commission
PSERC	Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers Pvt. Ltd
RERC	Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission
SERC	State Electricity Regulatory Commission
SOP	Standard Of Performance
TNERC	Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission
TERC	Tripura Electricity Regulatory Commission
UERC	Uttarakhand Electricity Regulatory Commission
UPERC	Uttar Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission
WBERC	West Bengal Electricity Regulatory Commission

Executive Summary

The Electricity Act, 2003 makes elaborate provisions which seek to protect the interests of consumers. The National Electricity Policy and the Tariff Policy framed under the Act further reinforce its provisions. They stipulate a road map and action plan for various stakeholders in ensuring protection of consumers' interests. In line with these provisions, many State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) have notified regulations for redressal of consumer grievances. The States have institutionalized the mechanisms of grievance redressal, such as the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) and the Ombudsman. Performance standards have also been specified delineating, inter alia, the requirements on quality of supply and service. A consumer advocacy system has been institutionalized in some states to educate consumers about their rights and obligations.

FOR has been taking steps towards ensuring that the provisions in the Electricity Act, Policies and Rules, i.e., the National Electricity Policy (NEP) and Electricity Rules 2005 are implemented effectively. Among such steps, FOR initiates' research and conceptualization studies to further the process of reforms in the electricity sector in India. Since consumer services and effective redressal of consumer grievances is critical to the performance of public and private utilities in this sector, FOR has sought to setup a model framework for the concerned bodies to align with, and thereby improve services as per industry and global benchmarks.

FOR decided that a study shall be carried out to review the steps taken in various states in operationalizing the CGRF and Ombudsman. PricewaterhouseCoopers Pvt. Ltd. (PwC) was appointed by FOR to assist in carrying out the tasks required for the study. The objective of the study is to undertake review of functioning of CGRF's & Ombudsman in States.

Initiatives taken by various States regarding establishment of CGRF & Ombudsman

Pursuant to power conferred by Electricity Act, 2003 to various the Commissions, various SERC's have notified CGRF and Ombudsman regulations to improve service delivery and enhance consumer satisfaction. Some states like Himachal Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh came up with first notification of CGRF and Ombudsman Regulations in 2003, soon after the Electricity Act 2003 while few states came up with the CGRF and Ombudsman Regulations as late as 2011 (Arunachal Pradesh).

These regulations broadly cover the following aspects:

- *Composition and Operationalization*
- *Reporting requirements*
- *Process to be followed by consumer for submission of grievance*
- *Details about the grievance handling process*

All the states except Jammu and Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland have established at least one CGRF in their states. In Arunachal Pradesh, the utilities are working towards establishment of CGRF while in Nagaland, the NERC has notified the utilities to establish the CGRF but till date it is not operational¹. Similarly CGRF in J&K is yet to be formed by the distribution licensee. In Telangana, although the draft regulations for establishment of CGRF and Ombudsman have been recently formed after the formation of new SERC, CGRF and Ombudsman do exist as per regulations of erstwhile SERC of Andhra Pradesh (APEREC).

Similarly, at least one Ombudsman is operational in all states except the state of Nagaland, Jammu and Kashmir where the respective state Commissions have issued notification for the formation of an Ombudsman office but the Ombudsman office is still not functional

¹ As per CEA: Status of implementation of progress of reforms under Electricity Act 2003 (information received up to 31st Mar 2015)

As mandated by EA Act 2003, the states in India have developed a four tier mechanism for redressal of consumer grievances consisting of the following:

- Internal Grievance Redressal Forum
- Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum
- Ombudsman Services
- Court of Law (High Court)

Review of CGRF and Ombudsman regulations across states

A review of the regulations across various states in India has revealed some variations in the guidelines of CGRF and Ombudsman. Some states have established the basic institutional structure as outlined in the Electricity Act 2003, while other states have gone a step further and established a robust mechanism for consumer grievance redressal. For example, states like Karnataka and Kerala have established a CGRF for every licensee in each revenue district so as to increase the geographic reach of CGRF. Madhya Pradesh has tried to address the issue of limited geographic reach by holding sittings of CGRF in various locations on predefined dates. Delhi has taken significant steps to increase awareness of consumers regarding CGRF and Ombudsman. In Delhi, the electricity bill contains the details of CGRF on the reverse so that consumers have quick access to the information regarding CGRF and Ombudsman. Some other unique features of the state of art regarding CGRF in various states are highlighted below

- CGRF in Mizoram and Manipur along with Tripura have a three tier structure and the consumer can register its complaints at tier 1 / tier 2 in their areas and subsequently move to the third tier within CGRF if he is not satisfied with the decisions at tier 1 and tier 2. If the consumer is still dissatisfied, he may approach Ombudsman.
- Rajasthan has a unique system of grievance redressal for electricity consumers, wherein several parallel avenues have been established in the last two decades to address and solve disputes. Before the enactment of EA 2003, it had 'settlement committees' at each level for resolution of disputes in the erstwhile Electricity Board. Even after enactment of the Act, CGRFs were not established since the grievances were being addressed by the settlement committees. As a result, there was no corresponding regulation from the RERC to establish CGRF or make any change in the settlement committees till year 2008. The Commission came up with (Guidelines for Redressal of Grievances) Regulations, 2008, after which the required framework of CGRFs and Ombudsman was established. A redressal platform, name Sugam Portal, was also established in 2012 to enable consumers to file all complaints related to Departments, Boards, Organizations, Power Companies & Local bodies which would be forwarded to the concerned authorities for needful action. In addition, the Government of Rajasthan also launched two acts: The Rajasthan Guaranteed Delivery of Public Services Guarantee Act, 2011, providing for penalties which may be imposed on concerned public authorities for failing or delaying provision of a service, as well as The Rajasthan Right to Hearing Act, 2012, to provide citizens with the right to voice their grievances before a Public Hearing Officer (PHO), first appellate authority, second appellate authority and revision authority within a stipulated timeframe, in the event of grievances not being heard and addressed by the concerned officials.

Similarly, Ombudsman regulations across various states have also shown some variations:

- Most states have established only one Ombudsman in the entire state but state like Maharashtra has established two Ombudsmen (Mumbai and Nagpur). Both Ombudsmen in Maharashtra hold sittings at various locations in order to address the consumer complaints.
- Similarly in Orissa, OERC has established Ombudsman for each of the four discoms (viz. CESU, NESCO, SOUTHCO, WESCO)

Selection of ten states for study

The following parameters were identified and framed to perform the detailed analysis on the operationalization and functioning of the consumer grievance redressal mechanism in the subsequent phase of this study:

- Representation from all the four regions viz. North, South, East and West
- Availability of secondary and primary data
- Any unique feature in the regulation
- Number of CGRF Offices
- Year of notification of regulation

Using the given framework, ten states from the five regions were shortlisted for the detailed analysis:

Table 1: Selected states for study

North	Central	South	East	West
Uttarakhand	Chhattisgarh	Andhra Pradesh	West Bengal	Gujarat
Punjab	Madhya Pradesh	Karnataka		
Haryana	Delhi			

A review of the CGRF and Ombudsman regulations across various states in India reveals variation in the regulations with respect to certain basic parameters such as the composition, manner of appointment of members, etc. In order to have a clear understanding of variation in regulations across states, a review of the CGRF and Ombudsman regulation across the select ten states has been made. The review of these states gives key insights on the framework for consumer grievance redressal mechanism in the electricity sector across the country.

CGRF Regulations

Although, the regulations issued by various SERC's regarding CGRF have shown similarity with respect to the various aspects covered, they have also revealed slight variation regarding the mechanism in which the forum operates. The difference in the regulations can be found in the following areas:

Structure: The structure of CGRF is same across all the reviewed state except West Bengal. CGRF in West Bengal has a unique structure where it consists of Grievance Redressal Officers (GRO's). The number of GRO in a forum is as per the requirement decided on the basis of geographical area, number of districts being covered, number of consumers etc.

Composition: The regulations of various states have subtle differences in the manner in which the forum is appointed and composed. A typical CGRF in a state consists of 3 members including the Chairperson. The three members have expertise in either or more of the areas seen as: legal, finance, technical and consumer issues. Some of the key variations observed in various regulations have been highlighted below:

- All the ten states except West Bengal should have at least one technical member in the forum
- All states except West Bengal should have at least one member who is an expert in consumer affairs
- It is mandatory only in Delhi and Haryana to have a legal expert as a member of CGRF

Appointment of Members: As per the CGRF regulations, the members of the CGRF are either appointed by the licensee or the Commission or both. The key variations observed in the different state regulations have been highlighted below:

- The regulations in Delhi have ensured that all the three members are independent of distribution licensee (all three appointed by the Commission)

- Regulations in Haryana do not mandate that the CGRF should have independent members (members appointed or nominated by the Commission)

Tenure of Members: The normal tenure of member of CGRFs ranges from two years to five years according to the respective state guidelines. Some of the key variations observed in the various regulations have been highlighted below:

- Normal tenure of service of members is either 2 years or 3 years
- Few states like Gujarat and Uttarakhand have provisions for extension of term of members by 2 years if needed

Cost and expense of the forum: The CGRF regulations in all the states have mentioned that cost and expenses of the forum are to be determined by the distribution licensee. The snapshot for the 10 states is given below:

Table 2: Cost and expense of the forum

Cost and Expenses	States
Borne by the distribution licensee	Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab
Only determined by the distribution licensee	Karnataka, AP, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh

CGRF Regulations in Karnataka have only mentioned that the cost and expenses of the forum are to be decided by the distribution licensee but does not specify whether it has to be borne by distribution licensee itself or not.

Ombudsman Regulations

Similarly, a review of the Ombudsman regulations across various states in India reveals variation in the regulations with respect to certain parameters. The differences in regulations of various states have been highlighted below under four heads viz. number of Ombudsman, appointment of Ombudsman, independence, cost and expense etc.

- Number of Ombudsman:** The Ombudsman regulations in states such as Delhi, Gujarat, Punjab and Uttarakhand have clearly highlighted appointment of more than one Ombudsman in the state if needed. The Ombudsman regulation of West Bengal is silent regarding the number of Ombudsman that a Commission may appoint. The Ombudsman regulation of Haryana and Karnataka allow for appointment of only one Ombudsman for the entire state.
- Appointment of Ombudsman:** The regulations in the state of Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, and Punjab have mentioned that Ombudsman shall be appointed by the respective state Commissions. However, it does not contain any clarity on the manner in which the Ombudsman will be appointed. The Ombudsman regulations of states such as Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh have elaborated the manner in which these appointments have to be done. For instance, Gujarat CGRF regulations outline the formation of a selection committee by the Commission consisting of the Chairperson and members for selecting the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is to be selected by a simple majority and the chairperson of the committee (who is Chairperson of the Commission) shall have a casting vote.
- Independence of Ombudsman:** The regulations in various states have made attempts to ensure that Ombudsman is independent of the distribution licensee. Some states have clearly outlined the eligibility criteria of the Ombudsman such that the applicant shall not have worked with a distribution licensee since last few years. Out of the ten states, only Delhi, Gujarat, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh have tried to ensure independence of Ombudsman from distribution licensee by making eligibility criteria which disallow the appointment of the existing employees or recently retired employees of the distribution licensee as Electricity Ombudsman. However, the remaining states have still not ensured the same which may act as a bottleneck towards impartial redressal of consumer grievance.

iv. **Cost and Expenses:** The cost and expense of the Ombudsman and the secretariat are borne out of the following three mechanisms in the states:

- Borne by Commission
- Out of funds created under section 103 of EA Act 2003
- Borne by distribution licensees

The cost and expenses of the Ombudsman and its offices in Delhi, Punjab and Uttarakhand are to be determined by the Commission but borne by the distribution licensees in proportion of power drawl during the previous years. The cost and expense of Ombudsman offices have to be borne by the Commission in Gujarat, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh while in Karnataka it shall be as per funds created under section 103 of EA Act 2003.

Analysis of functioning of CGRF and Ombudsman Regulations across select ten states

To analyse the efficiency and impact of grievance resolution processes adopted by the various states selected for this study, the templates for the collection of the requisite data had been designed and circulated with the concerned SERCs. The template consisted of the following areas for data collection:

- Number of CGRF offices
- Number of sittings in a quarter
- Number of grievances pending at the beginning of the quarter
- Number of grievances received and disposed of during the quarter
- Number of decisions in favour/ against the consumer
- Number of grievances resolved within or beyond the stipulated time as per the regulations

Both the quarterly and annual data were analysed to understand the performance of CGRFs and Ombudsman in the selected states. A few states were unable to provide complete information as per the templates due to unavailability of information or inadequacy in data recording. However, the information provided by the SERCs coupled with the secondary research has been used to give a comprehensive overview of the current state of grievance redressal in selected states.

The given data was analysed under the following parameters:

- Efficiency of grievance resolution (being able to resolve incoming grievances on an ongoing basis)
- Drivers of resolution efficiency (which have improved swiftness of decision making)
- Impact of Decisions (result of decisions and consequent escalations)

The following framework was thus adopted to analyse the functioning of CGRF and Ombudsman of selected states.

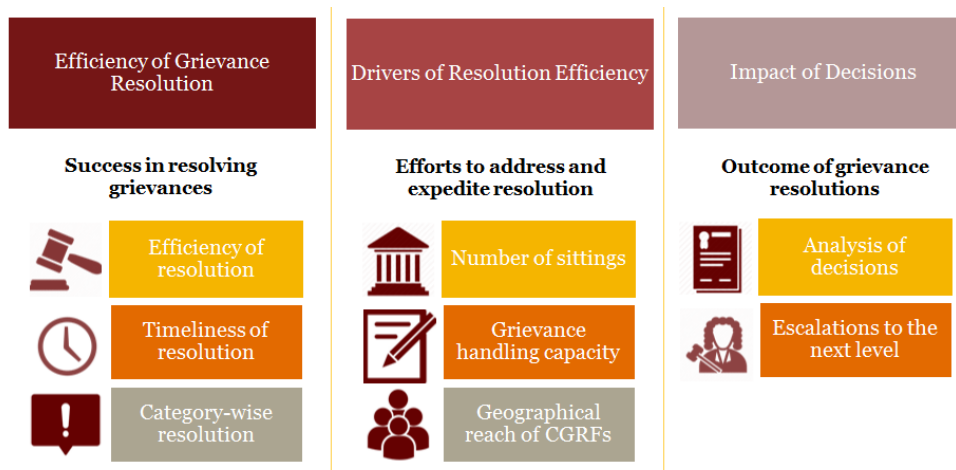


Figure 1: Framework for performance analysis of CGRF and Ombudsman

The key findings that emerged out of the analysis for the selected ten states are as follows:

Table 3: Key observations regarding functioning of CGRFs and Ombudsman

Observations
Efficiency in grievance resolution - CGRFs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CGRFs in Madhya Pradesh and CGROs in West Bengal have been most efficient in resolving grievances in an efficient and timely manner (doing so for more than 90% of the grievances handled), followed by CGRFs in Haryana, Gujarat & Chhattisgarh CGRFs in Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab & Uttarakhand have strived for resolution of grievances within the stipulated time period (doing so for less than 60% of grievances handled), while Karnataka has struggled to manage a relatively smaller base of complaints
Efficiency in grievance resolution - Ombudsman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ombudsman in Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Delhi and Karnataka have been most efficient in grievance resolution, followed by Ombudsman in Punjab, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal Ombudsman in Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana have been most successful in resolving grievances in a timely manner, while Ombudsman in Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttarakhand have not been able to deliver decisions consistently within the stipulated period of resolution (highlighted in the regulations)
Category-wise resolution of grievances by CGRFs and Ombudsman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect billing and meter-related issues have been the most frequently handled grievance (CGRFs of 8 out of 10 states receive more than 40% of grievances related to billing), owing in most part to technical malfunctioning of meters, tampering of meters and thefts, and unwillingness of certain consumers to pay bills within the stipulated billing cycle. With ever-increasing load growth in states such as Gujarat and Delhi, the requests for new connections have also been on a rise, and hence may require a more prioritized mechanism for resolution
Effect of CGRF and Ombudsman sittings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in number of sittings held by CGRFs positively influence swiftness in resolution, and seems necessary in states like Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat with a large base of complaints. Since all CGRF members are required to be present, it may be required in the future to allow fewer members to decide on non-grievous issues so that the increasing number of grievances registered can be handled in an efficient manner on a consistent basis West Bengal has the highest number of grievances resolved per sitting, which can be primarily attributed to the presence of a grievance redressal officer in every district, who is empowered to resolve standard grievances
Grievance handling capacity of CGRFs and Ombudsman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most CGRFs have been able to steadily handle the grievances load over the years. In states where awareness and enterprising levels of consumers are higher, CGRFs may struggle to resolve complaints in an expedited manner in the foreseeable future (such as in Delhi and Madhya Pradesh)
Types of grievances escalated to Ombudsman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of grievances escalated to Ombudsman across states has been relatively low, indicating either the lack of awareness of consumers regarding the escalation structure or successful grievance resolution by the CGRF's Mostly, only grievances such as disconnection of supply have been escalated in more numbers by consumers to Ombudsman because it has a huge impact on them. Punjab, Karnataka, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh have faced several escalations of grievances regarding disconnections of supply. West Bengal has addressed all disconnection grievances within the stipulated period Similarly, cases which had huge monetary impact on consumer had also been escalated to Ombudsman by the consumers

Findings of the consumer survey

In order to understand the efficacy of grievance redressal mechanism, a short consumer survey consisting of twenty one questions was hosted on the website of Forum of Regulators. The survey had questions covering the following aspects of consumer grievance redressal procedure:

- Background and major concerns being faced by consumers regarding grievance redressal
- Awareness of consumers regarding the structure of grievance redressal
- Past experience of consumers with CGRF and/or Ombudsman
- Any other feedback for improvement of the current mechanism of grievance redressal in the electricity sector

The survey was live on the website for a period of forty five days and consumer responses had been recorded. The following were the key highlights of the consumer responses:

- Despite most respondents being from metropolitan cities, around 40 % of the consumers surveyed were unaware of CGRF and/or Ombudsman. The consumers who were aware of CGRF and Ombudsman mainly received information regarding the existence of such institutions either through information printed on bills or State Electricity Commission's websites.
- Majority of consumers surveyed had billing or meter related issues.
- More than 40% of the respondents feel that legal assistance is required for filing complaint and thus acts as a big deterrent in registering complaints.

Grievance Redressal Mechanism in electricity sector of other countries

In order to benchmark against global standards and prevailing practices, a study of grievance redressal mechanism followed by utilities in United Kingdom and Philippines was conducted. The mechanism of grievance redressal in both these countries is quite unique and different from Indian context and thus these two countries were selected for study.

United Kingdom

Ofgem, the government regulator for gas and electricity markets in Great Britain, was setup to promoting security of supply and sustainability, for consumers and other domestic and industrial users. It also looks at the supervision and development of markets and competition regulation and the delivery of government schemes. OFGEM acts as a resource for government policy as well as market and economic information.

The grievance escalation structure in United Kingdom is as follows:

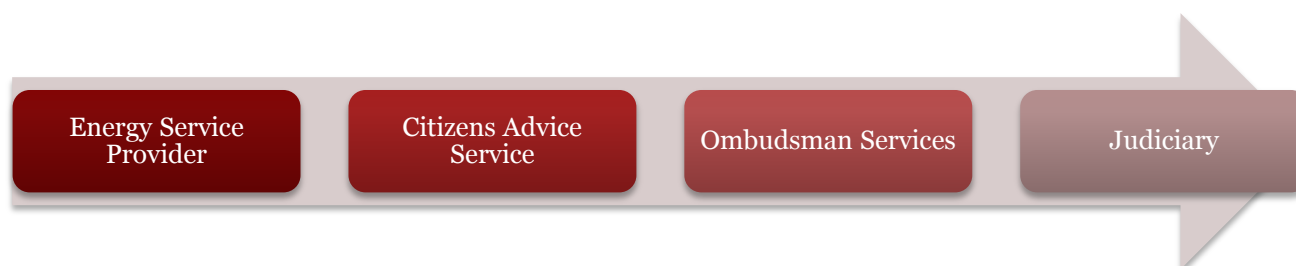


Figure 2: Grievance Escalation Structure in UK

Various performance parameters have been highlighted for utilities in terms of consumer service. Thus the performances on matters related to grievance redressal of various utilities are benchmarked against each other. The various performance parameters considered for benchmarking are as follows:



Figure 3: Redressal Performance Parameters in UK

Key takeaways from United Kingdom

The key takeaways from United Kingdom with respect to efficient grievance resolution are as follows:

- **Empowerment of first point of contact:** It is most important to empower the first consumer touch points within the utility for resolution of complaints
- **Performance incentives:** More efficiency and assurance metrics linked to supplier's performance and incentives
- **More consumer touch points:** Consumers can use app based service for registering a complaint. A personal timeline to track usage, view billing related information and provide feedback is made available to the consumers.

Philippines

Philippines has a very strong history of successful independent power producers' implementations. The country started seeing private sector participation in power since the early 90s, which led to continued capacity addition, improved Grid connectivity and strengthening, and restructuring reforms towards implementation of retail competition and open access.

Philippines follows two different methodologies of resolution of grievances for issues related to billing/settlement and other issues like quality of supply. The various stakeholders of grievance redressal mechanism in Philippines are:

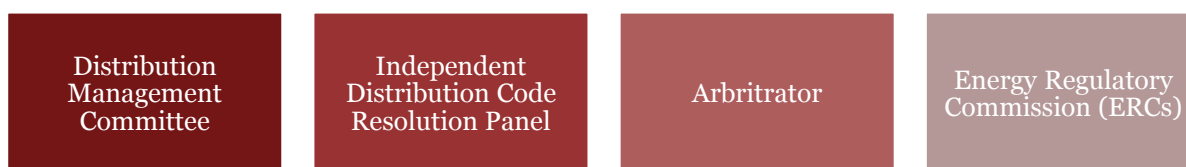


Figure 4: Grievance Redressal Stakeholders - Philippines

Key takeaways from Philippines

The key takeaways from Philippines with respect to efficient grievance resolution are as follows:

- **Improving procedural efficiency:** Procedural efficiency can be improved by assigning priority to complaints for fast-track resolution on the basis of certain parameters. Therefore, billing related issues can be resolved in a fast track manner while other issues can be resolved as per normal time allowed for grievance resolution.
- **Improving transparency:** Improving the look of the bills so that they are simpler and easier to understand. This also includes consumer being informed of its complaints at each stage of resolution.
- **Enhancing communication:** The Customer should be assisted after understanding the problem & informing them of the next step. The consumers shall be assisted in finding the appropriate person to escalate its complaints to the next level. The consumers shall also be made aware of the final verdict in a simplified manner and shall be provided a proof of the closure of disputes.

Grievance Redressal Mechanism in other sectors in India: Banking and Telecommunications

A study of best practices in grievance redressal was conducted for the sectors of banking and telecommunication in India. These two sectors were selected because of the volume of the complaints being received by them and the manner in which they are able to tackle such a large number of complaints.

Key takeaways from grievance redressal framework of banking and telecommunication sectors:

- The banking sector divides the consumer complaints into three main categories viz. attitudinal/behavioural, operational aspects and technology related. The manner of treatment of grievance is different for each of such cases
- The interface between the consumer and the service provider has many touch points. Thus customers can register complaints in various ways: Telephonic, call centre, complaints in person, nodal customer care centres and complaints through email
- The internal grievance redressal mechanism of the banking system has various levels of escalations thereby reducing the load on banking Ombudsman. Before representation to banking Ombudsman, the complaint goes through escalations before reaching the head of customer service and nodal officers
- In the telecom sector, the service provider has to establish an Advisory Committee in each of the service areas to render advice on the appeals filed before the Appellate Authority. The Advisory Committee helps consumers at the most important stage of registration of complaints before the Appellate Authority

Recommendations for improving existing structure

On the basis of the analysis of data regarding CGRF and Ombudsman of the ten states along with literature review of grievance redressal mechanism in other sectors, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. ***Prioritizing grievances:*** ‘Critical’ status can be assigned to certain complaints where exceptional urgency or imminent loss is involved and such cases shall be resolved on a fast track basis.
2. ***Penalty for non-compliance with regulations:*** The discoms shall be penalized in case any deviation is observed from the regulations regarding establishment, constitution, composition etc. Thus a stricter compliance monitoring needs to be conducted by respective SERC’s.
3. ***Assigning accountability to forum members:*** Defining responsibilities of each of the members can be prescribed with respect to attendance, hearing the cases, decision-making, judgment writing, etc., allowing for better management and effective decision-making
4. ***Decentralization of duties:*** Constitution of a committee within CGRF, the members of which can meet regularly and resolve non-critical issues while final approval of critical issues may rest with the chairperson.
5. ***Establishing Consumer Advocacy Committee:*** Consumer Advocacy Committee should provide expertise to consumers on the prevalent escalation structures and on representation of grievances to the relevant body.
6. ***Active survey and admittance of grievances:*** This can be achieved by organizing regular tours of forums to the various cities of the state. This will enable to admit complaints from far flung areas of the state. Some states like Madhya Pradesh have been doing it in the past and such practice may be adopted by CGRF of other states.
7. ***Improving the first contact point for admission of grievance at discom level:*** An independent active helpline shall be established by all the discoms of the states. The helpline executives shall be trained to explain to consumers how their bills have been calculated, or changes in billing procedures and tariff rates

8. **Improving Communication:** An open mechanism to enable consumers to locate and understand grievance resolution process easily and conveniently. Thus the following initiatives can be taken:
 - Improving the look and layout of bills to simplify billing information.
 - Providing the escalation structure clearly on electricity bills.
 - Providing a standardized layout for bills, websites and mobile applications in the long run.
9. **Facilitating mediation before approaching CGRFs:** To ease the burden of resolution on CGRFs, grievances can also be resolved through a process of mediation between consumers and licensees, which can be overseen by CGRFs or SERC to help the concerned consumer and licensee arrive at an agreeable solution.

Key learnings derived from the study

On the basis of the analysis of data regarding CGRF and Ombudsman of the ten states along with literature review of grievance redressal mechanism in other sectors, the following key learnings have been re-emphasised:

1. *Improving reach of CGRFs will be necessary for all states in the foreseeable future. Achieving this objective may require:*
 - a. Increasing number of CGRFs in states to improve capacity of grievance handling
 - b. Ensuring that forums are accessible for all consumers
 - c. Setting appropriate timelines for institution of new CGRFs
 - d. Conducting forum tours to designated areas for faster admittance and resolution of grievances.
 - e. Ensuring requisite composition of the forums
2. *Involving and educating consumers through new initiatives will be essential in improving services in the long run. Achieving this objective may require:*
 - a. Empowering first-contact customer care handlers to resolve simple grievances
 - b. Earmarking funds for greater publicity of the grievance resolution process
 - c. Enabling online submission and tracking of grievances for consumers
 - d. Mandating all CGRFs to periodically disclose all grievance-related information
3. *Ensuring independence of working of CGRFs from distribution licensees*
 - a. Ensuring independent composition and membership of CGRFs through regulations
 - b. Periodic review of adherence with regulations regarding independence
 - c. Separation of CGRFs office space with that of licensees to the extent possible
 - d. Ensuring financial independence of CGRFs through regulations

Thus, all the initiatives to improve the operationalization of existing structure of grievance redressal mechanism in electricity shall focus on the above three pillars.

1. Overview

1.1. Background of the study

The Electricity Act, 2003 makes elaborate provisions which seek to protect the interests of consumers. The National Electricity Policy and the Tariff Policy framed under the Act further reinforce its provisions. They stipulate a road map and action plan for various stakeholders in ensuring protection of consumers' interests. In line with these provisions, many State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) have notified regulations for redressal of consumer grievances. The States have institutionalized the mechanisms of grievance redressal, such as the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) and the Ombudsman. Performance standards have also been specified delineating, inter alia, the requirements on quality of supply and service. A consumer advocacy system has been institutionalized in some States to educate consumers about their rights and obligations.

The Forum of Regulators (FOR) has been constituted by the Government of India in terms of Section 166 (2) of the Electricity Act, 2003, and is responsible for harmonization, coordination and ensuring uniformity of approach amongst the Electricity Regulatory Commissions across the country, in order to achieve greater regulatory certainty in the electricity sector.

FOR consists of the Chairperson of the Central Commission and the Chairpersons of the State Commissions. The Chairperson of the Central Commission is the Chairperson of the FOR and secretarial assistance to the FOR is provided by the Central Commission.

1.2. Objective of the study

FOR has been taking steps towards ensuring that the provisions in the Electricity Act, Policies and Rules, i.e., the National Electricity Policy (NEP) and Electricity Rules 2005 are implemented effectively. Among such steps, FOR initiates research and conceptualization studies to further the process of reforms in the electricity sector in India. Since consumer services and effective redressal of consumer grievances is critical to the performance of public and private utilities in this sector, FOR has sought to setup a model framework for the concerned bodies to align against and improve services as per industry and global benchmarks.

FOR decided that a study shall be carried out to review the steps taken in various states in operationalizing the CGRF and Ombudsman. PricewaterhouseCoopers Pvt. Ltd. (PwC) was appointed by FOR to assist in carrying out the tasks required for the study.

The objective of the study is to undertake review of functioning of CGRF's & Ombudsman in States.

1.3. Structure of the report

The report is structured in the following manner:

- Review of legislative and regulatory provisions on consumer protection
- Review of existing grievance redressal frameworks in India
- Analysis of functioning of CGRFs and Ombudsman for selected ten states
- Analysis of responses of consumer survey regarding current grievance redressal framework in the electricity sector
- Review of Grievance Redressal Mechanism in electricity sector of other countries (United Kingdom and Philippines)
- Review of Grievance Redressal Mechanism in other sectors in India (Banking and Telecommunications)

- Proposed recommendations and key learning from the study

1.4. Scope of work

As per the Terms of Reference, PwC is required to carry out review of the functioning of CGRF and Ombudsman in various states, which would include the following:

- Tabulating status of establishment and composition of CGRF and Ombudsman in all States
- Analysis of functioning of CGRF & Ombudsman in 10 States
- Tabulating the number & nature of consumer complaints handled by the CGRF and the Ombudsman; time taken for disposal of cases; pendency of cases; number of decisions in favor of and against consumers, etc.
- Analyzing the above information and based on the analysis, identifying the gaps, if any in the functioning of CGRF and Ombudsman vis a vis their role envisaged under the Act and the Rules & Regulations
- Suggesting measures for strengthening the institution of the CGRF & Ombudsman
- Such other related analysis

1.5. Phase wise approach for completion of the assignment

In order to meet requirements of the Scope of Work, PwC, in consultation with the Forum of Regulators has followed, a phase wise approach for completion of the assignment as provided below:

Table 4: Phase-wise approach for the assignment

Phase	Topics covered
Phase 1- Inception Report	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review of legal and regulatory framework with respect to CGRF and Ombudsman Review of related provisions in Electricity Act, National Electricity Policy and National Tariff Policy Tabulating status of establishment of CGRF and Ombudsman in all States Selection of 10 states for in-depth study Comparison of SERC Regulations regarding CGRF and Ombudsman in select 10 states

Phase	Topics covered
Phase 2- Review of experience of Indian States	<p>1. Tabulation of data functioning of CGRF and Ombudsman for the select 10 states</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of data from select 10 states by sending templates to respective SERC's • Representing the data collected in tabular form for comparison on parameters such as number of cases disposed, types of complaints, time of resolution etc. • Analysis of the data <p>The above exercise was done for the 10 states.</p> <p>2. Conducting a survey to gain an understanding of major concerns faced by the consumers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulating a questionnaire and hosting the same on website of FOR • Capturing survey responses • Analysis and impact of consumer concerns regarding the existing framework of grievance redressal in the electricity sector <p>3. Literature Review of consumer grievance redressal mechanism in other sectors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banking/Telecommunications Sector • Telecom Sector
Phase 3- International Review	<p>Review of consumer grievance redressal mechanism in other countries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippines • United Kingdom <p>Based on the review, derive key learnings from each country.</p>
Phase 4- Recommendations	<p>Identification of issues and Way forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of issues and scope for improvement in the current structure as identified in Phase 2 • Recommendations and Way forward on the basis of review of the current structure and best practices in other sectors • Benchmarking against best practices in consumer grievance redressal mechanism prevalent internationally.
Phase 5- Draft report	Draft consolidated report and presentation to FOR
Phase 6- Final report	Final consolidated report after incorporating comments from FOR

2. Legislative & regulatory provisions

One of the salient objectives of the electricity reforms beginning with the Electricity Act, 2003 (EA) was increased focus on the protection of consumer's interests. The EA (2003), the National Electricity Policy (2005) and the Tariff Policy (2005) specify the framework for protection of consumer interests in India.

This section studies the regulatory framework on consumer protection. Relevant provisions of EA, various policies and regulations have been analyzed.

2.1. The Electricity Act, 2003

EA was enacted in 2003 to consolidate laws relating to generation, transmission, distribution, trading and the use of electricity. It sought to create an environment that was conducive to the development of the power sector by taking measures to promote competition, protect the interests of consumers, supply electricity to all areas, rationalize electricity tariff and implement policies that are transparent on subsidies.

The Electricity Act, 2003 provides a comprehensive framework for the protection of consumer interests. Section 42 of the Act provides for the establishment of a forum for redressal of consumer grievances by the distribution licensee. It empowers State Commissions to frame guidelines for grievance redressal mechanism in their respective states. This section also provides for the consumer to make representation of his grievance to Ombudsman in case he is aggrieved by non-redressal of his grievance by the forum

Section 42 of EA prescribes the following in regard to consumer protection:

“(5) Every distribution licensee shall, within six months from the appointed date or date of grant of license, whichever is earlier, establish a forum for redressal of grievances of the consumers in accordance with the guidelines as may be specified by the State Commission.

(6) Any consumer, who is aggrieved by non-redressal of his grievances under sub-section (5), may make a representation for the redressal of his grievance to an authority to be known as Ombudsman to be appointed or designated by the State Commission.

(7) The Ombudsman shall settle the grievance of the consumer within such time and in such manner as may be specified by the State Commission.

(8) The provisions of sub-sections (5), (6) and (7) shall be without prejudice to right which the consumer may have apart from the rights conferred upon him by those sub-sections.”

The Electricity Act, 2003 envisaged that a two-tier mechanism for consumer grievance redressal must be established under the aegis of the respective State Electricity Regulatory Commission within 6 months from the appointed date or date of grant of license, whichever is earlier

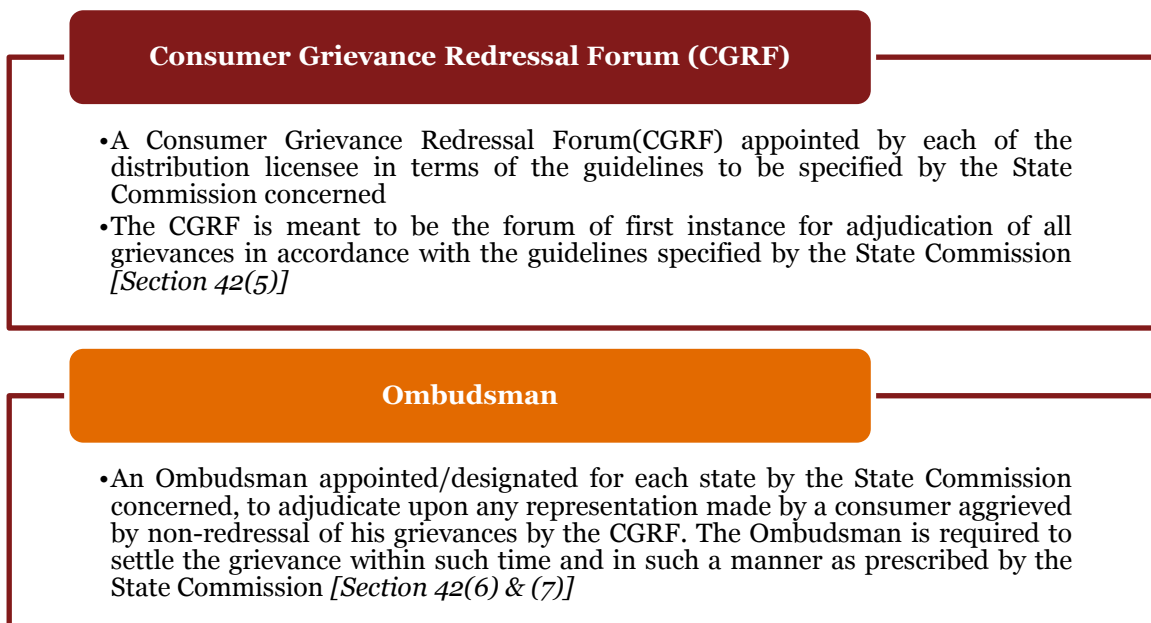


Figure 5: CGRF and Ombudsman Description

2.2. National Electricity Policy

Section 3 of the Electricity Act 2003 gives power to the Central Government, from time to time, for preparing the National Electricity Policy and National Tariff Policy. These policies were notified by the Central Government in 2005 and 2006 respectively. These policies also lay emphasis on protecting the interests of the consumers.

Section 5.13 of the National Electricity Policy, 2005 lays emphasis on safeguarding the interest of the consumers and promoting the quality standards of supply of power. It reiterates the role of SERCs in setting up the mechanisms of CGRF and the Ombudsman

“5.13.3 It is advised that all State Commissions should formulate the guidelines regarding setting up of grievance redressal forum by the licensees as also the regulations regarding the ombudsman and also appoint/designate the ombudsman within six months.”

“5.13.4 The Central Government, the State Governments and Electricity Regulatory Commissions should facilitate capacity building of consumer groups and their effective representation before the Regulatory Commissions. This will enhance the efficacy of regulatory process.”

2.3. National Tariff Policy

Section 8.0 of the Tariff policy emphasizes on the supply of reliable and quality power of specified standards. The policy also emphasizes on the imposition of penalty on the licensees in case of failure to meet the standards. Following is the extract of the section 8.0 of the Tariff Policy:

“Supply of reliable and quality power of specified standards in an efficient manner and at reasonable rates is one of the main objectives of the National Electricity Policy. The State Commission should determine and notify the standards of performance of licensees with respect to quality, continuity and reliability of service for all consumers. It is desirable that the Forum of Regulators determines the basic framework on service standards. A suitable transition framework could be provided for the licensees to reach the desired levels of service as quickly as possible. Penalties may be imposed on licensees in accordance with section 57 of the Act for failure to meet the standards.”

2.4. Electricity Rules, 2005

In exercise of powers conferred by section 176 of the Electricity Act, 2003, the Central Government came up with Electricity Rules 2005 which further had detailed provisions regarding CGRF and Ombudsman. The rules specify the guiding principles regarding the composition of CGRF but empower the SERC to specify the process of appointing members along with the process of redressal of grievance by the CGRF.

The Electricity Rules also describe the appointment of Ombudsman by the State Commission, reporting requirements of Ombudsman with respect to grievance redressal and compliance of SOP as specified by the Commission along with procedure for grievance redressal.

Rule 7 of Electricity Rules, 2005 prescribes the following in regard to consumer protection:

“(1) The distribution licensee shall establish a forum for redressal of grievances of consumers under sub-section (5) of section 42 which shall consist of officers of the licensee.

(2) The Ombudsman to be appointed or designated by the State Commission under sub-section (6) of section 42 of the Act shall be such person as the State Commission may decide from time to time.

(3) The Ombudsman shall consider the representations of the consumers consistent with the provisions of the Act, the Rules and Regulations made hereunder or general orders or directions given by the Appropriate Government or the Appropriate Commission in this regard before settling their grievances.

(4) (a) The Ombudsman shall prepare a report on a six monthly basis giving details of the nature of the grievances of the consumer dealt by the ombudsman, the response of the Licensees in the redressal of the grievances and the opinion of the ombudsman on the Licensee’s compliance of the standards of performance as specified by the Commission under section 57 of the Act during the preceding six months.

(b) The report under sub-clause (a) above shall be forwarded to the State Commission and the State Government within 45 days after the end of the relevant period of six months”

3. Review of existing scenario in India

3.1. Initiatives taken by various states regarding establishment of CGRF & Ombudsman

Pursuant to power conferred by Electricity Act, 2003 to various the Commissions, various SERC's have notified CGRF and Ombudsman regulations to improve service delivery and enhance consumer satisfaction. The following table shows the status of notification of CGRF and Ombudsman regulations in the various states:

Table 5: Initiatives by states in establishing CGRF and Ombudsman

S. No.	SERC	State	Year of notification of first CGRF & Ombudsman Regulations	Is CGRF established ?	Is Ombudsman established?
1	APSERC	Arunachal Pradesh	2011	x	√
2	APERC	Andhra Pradesh	2004	√	√
3	AERC	Assam	2003	√	√
4	BERC	Bihar	2006	√	√
5	CSERC	Chhattisgarh	2007	√	√
6	DERC	Delhi	2003	√	√
7	GERC	Gujarat	2004	√	√
8	HERC	Haryana	2004	√	√
9	HPERC	Himachal Pradesh	2003 ²	√	√
10	JSERC	Jharkhand	2005	√	√
11	J&KSERC	Jammu & Kashmir	2012	x	x
12	KERC	Karnataka	2004	√	√
13	KSERC	Kerala	2005	√	√
14	MERC	Maharashtra	2006	√	√
15	MPERC	Madhya Pradesh	2004	√	√
16	MSERC	Meghalaya	2007	√	√
17	NERC	Nagaland	2012	x	x
18	OERC	Orissa	2004	√	√
19	PSERC	Punjab	2005	√	√
20	RERC	Rajasthan	2003/08 ³	√	√
21	TSERC	Telangana	2015 ⁴	√	√
22	TNERC	Tamil Nadu	2004	√	√
23	TERC	Tripura	2005	√	√
24	UERC	Uttarakhand	2004	√	√
25	UPERC	Uttar Pradesh	2003	√	√
26	WBERC	West Bengal	2003	√	√
27	JERC (Goa &UT)	Goa and UT	2009	√	√
28	JERC (Manipur and Mizoram)	Manipur and Mizoram	2010	√	√

² HPERC came up with Electricity Ombudsman Regulations in 2004.

³ Rajasthan came up with Ombudsman Regulations in 2003 and CGRF regulations in 2008

⁴ Draft Regulations

Source: SERC Website and CEA Report on status of implementation of progress of reforms under Electricity Act 2003 (Till 31st March 2015)

All the states have come up with regulations regarding mechanism for grievance redressal by establishing CGRF and Ombudsman. These regulations broadly cover the following aspects in the regulations:

- **Composition and Operationalization of CGRF and Ombudsman**
- **Reporting requirements of CGRF and Ombudsman**
- **Process to be followed by consumer for submission of grievance**
- **Details about the grievance handling process (Investigation process, issue of order)**

Since various states had come up with these regulations at various points in time after Electricity Act 2003, significant variations have been observed in these regulations. In order to bring clarity and uniformity in the method of grievance redressal being followed in various states, FOR had come up with model regulations for the constitution and operationalization of CGRF and Ombudsman in February 2011⁵ called as “*Model Regulations for Protection of Consumer Interest*”

The objective of model regulations was to bring about uniformity in approach towards the issues of consumer protection across states and reduce discrimination between consumers of different states. However, a lot still needs to be done in order to bring uniformity and efficacy in the grievance redressal mechanism.

All the states except Jammu and Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland have at least one CGRF established in their states. In Arunachal Pradesh, the utilities are working towards establishment of CGRF while in Nagaland, the NERC has notified the utilities to establish the CGRF but till date it is not operational⁶. Similarly CGRF in J&K is yet to be formed by the distribution licensee. In Telangana, although the draft regulations for establishment of CGRF and Ombudsman have been recently formed after the formation of new SERC but CGRF and Ombudsman do exist as per regulations of erstwhile SERC of Andhra Pradesh (APERC).

Similarly, at least one Ombudsman is operational in all states except the state of Nagaland, Jammu and Kashmir where the respective State Commissions have issued notification for the formation of an Ombudsman office but the Ombudsman office is still not functional

All the states in India have developed a four tier mechanism for redressal of consumer grievances:

- **Tier 1:** Consumer to contact the internal grievance redressal cell/call centre of the discom
- **Tier 2:** If the consumer is dissatisfied or complaint is not resolved within a stipulated timeframe, it can go to CGRF
- **Tier 3:** If the consumer is not satisfied with the outcome at the CGRF level, he/she may appeal the CGRF’s decision to the Ombudsman
- **Tier 4:** If still dissatisfied, the consumer has the right to approach the High Court

The typical four tier grievance redressal system prevalent in various states can be depicted as below:

⁵ Source: FOR Website

⁶ As per CEA: Status of implementation of progress of reforms under Electricity Act 2003 (information received up to 31st Mar 2015)

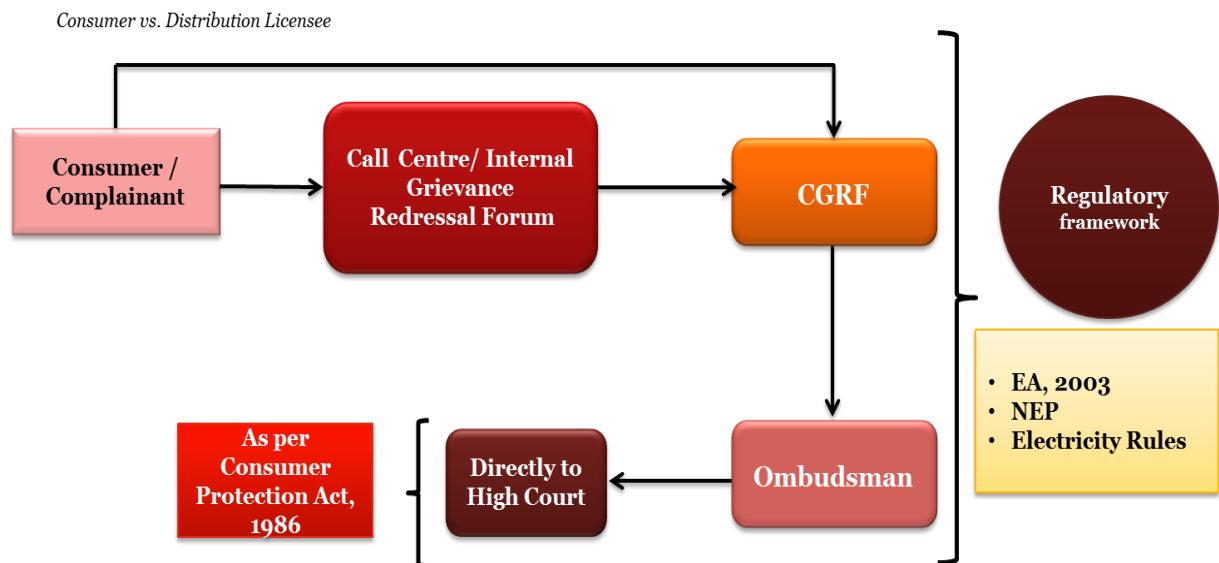


Figure 6: Prevalent Grievance Redressal System in various states

3.2. Selection of states for study

A review of the regulations across various states in India has revealed some variations in the guidelines of CGRF and Ombudsman. Some states have established the basic institutional structure as outlined in the Electricity Act 2003, while other states have gone a step further and established a robust mechanism for consumer grievance redressal. For example, states like Karnataka and Kerala have established a CGRF for every licensee in each revenue district so as to increase the geographic reach of CGRF. Madhya Pradesh has tried to address the issue of limited geographic reach by holding sittings of CGRF in various locations at predefined dates. Delhi has taken significant steps to increase awareness of consumers regarding CGRF and Ombudsman. In Delhi, the electricity bill contains the details of CGRF on the reverse side so that consumers have quick access to the information regarding CGRF and Ombudsman. Some other unique features of the state of art regarding CGRF in various states are highlighted below

- CGRF in Mizoram and Manipur along with Tripura have a three tier structure and the consumer can register its complaints at tier 1 / tier 2 in their areas and subsequently move to the third tier within CGRF if he is not satisfied with the decisions at tier1 and tier 2. If the consumer is still dissatisfied, he may approach Ombudsman.
- Rajasthan has a unique system of grievance redressal for electricity consumers. Before the enactment of EA 2003, it had 'settlement committees' at each level for resolution of disputes in the erstwhile Electricity Board. Even after enactment of the Act, CGRFs were not established since the grievances were being addressed by the settlement committees. As a result, there was no corresponding regulation from the RERC to establish CGRF or make any change in the settlement committees till year 2008. The Commission came up with (Guidelines for Redressal of Grievances) Regulations, 2008. It has a provision for grievance cum resettlement forum resulting in ambiguity in the regulations

Similarly, Ombudsman regulations across various states have also shown some variations:

- Most states have established only one Ombudsman in the entire state but state like Maharashtra has established two Ombudsmen (Mumbai and Nagpur). Both Ombudsmen in Maharashtra hold sittings at various locations in order to address the consumer complaints.
- Similarly in Orissa, OERC has established Ombudsman for each of the four discoms (viz. CESU, NESCO, SOUTHCO, WESCO)

The following parameters were identified and framed to perform the detailed analysis on the operationalization and functioning of the consumer grievance redressal mechanism in the subsequent phase of this study:

Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States/ UT's have been chosen from each of the 4 regions i.e. north, south, east and west so as to represent a wide demographic in our study
Data Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States which have published the data regarding CGRF and Ombudsman in their annual report or on SERC website have been given preference
Unique Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation from states with observed difference in composition and autonomy of CGRF and Ombudsman
Number of CGRF Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation from states with better geographic reach
Number of Ombudsman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation from states with more than one Ombudsman
Year of Notification of Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation from both category of states viz. states which had proactively notified regulations regarding CGRF and Ombudsman soon after enactment of EA Act 2003 and states which have issued first regulations regarding CGRF and Ombudsman recently

Figure 7: Parameters for analysis of functioning of CGRF and Ombudsman

Using the given framework, we had initially identified and performed a study on 10 states. A tabular comparison of various states on the six parameters listed above has been done in the table given in the next page:

Table 6: Comparison of states (selected initially) on functional parameters

Proposed states for study	Region	Data Availability	Year of Notification	No of CGRF Offices	More than one Ombudsman
Delhi	North	✓	2003	4	x
Rajasthan	North	✓	2008	3	x
Punjab	North	✓	2005	NA*	x
Haryana	North	✓	2004	2	x
Maharashtra	West	✓	2006	14	✓
Gujarat	West	✓	2004	8	x
Madhya Pradesh	West	✓	2004	3	x
West Bengal	East	✓	2003	NA*	x
Manipur and Mizoram	East	✓	2010	2	x
Karnataka	South	x	2004	Each district	x

Source: CGRF and Ombudsman regulations and other details available on respective websites of SERCs

*Data on exact number of CGRF's is not available

** Other factors like consumer mix, unique structure of grievance redressal have also been considered for selection of states.

Since the relevant data for the states of Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Manipur & Mizoram was not readily available, the states of Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh were incorporated into the study in consultation with FOR Secretariat, to represent the Northern, Southern and Eastern Regions respectively:

Table 7: Comparison of states (selected finally) on functional parameters

Finalized states for study	Region	Data Availability	Year of Notification	No of CGRF Offices	More than one Ombudsman
Delhi	North	√	2003	4	x
Uttarakhand	North	√	2007	2	x
Punjab	North	√	2005	NA*	x
Haryana	North	√	2004	2	x
Gujarat	West	√	2004	8	x
Madhya Pradesh	West	√	2004	3	x
West Bengal	East	√	2003	NA*	x
Chhattisgarh	East	√	2011	3	x
Andhra Pradesh	South	√	2004	4	x
Karnataka	South	x	2004	Each district	x

Source: CGRF and Ombudsman regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

A total of ten states were finalized to complete the study from different regions, as provided below:

Table 8: Selected states for study

Northern Region	Central Region	Eastern Region	Western Region	Southern Regions
DERC-Delhi	MPERC-Madhya Pradesh	WBERC-West Bengal	GERC-Gujarat	APERC-Andhra Pradesh
UERC-Uttarakhand	CSERC-Chhattisgarh			KERC-Karnataka
PSERC-Punjab				
HERC-Haryana				

3.3. Review of CGRF regulations across select ten states

A review of the CGRF regulations across various states in India reveals variation in the regulations with respect to certain parameters. The variations have been found mostly in parameters such as the composition, manner of appointment of members, etc. In order to have a clear understanding of variation in regulations across states, the CGRF regulation across the select 10 states as identified in the previous section was reviewed. The tabular comparison of regulations issued by states of **Delhi, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh** are presented in Table 9. The review of these states gives key insights on the framework for consumer grievance redressal mechanism in the electricity sector across the country. Although, the regulations issued by various SERC's regarding CGRF have shown similarity with respect to the various aspects covered, they have also revealed slight variation regarding the mechanism in which the forum operates. The difference in the regulations can be found in the following areas:

Structure: The structure of CGRF is same across all the reviewed states except West Bengal. CGRF in West Bengal has a unique structure where it consists of Grievance Redressal Officers (GRO's). The number of GRO in a forum is as per the requirement decided on the basis of geographical area, number of districts being covered, number of consumers etc. It is mandated by regulations to have at least one GRO at the sub district/district/zone level of the licensee (as required). It is also mandatory to have at least one Central Grievance Redressal Officer at the corporate level of each distribution licensee.

Composition: The regulations of various states have subtle differences in the manner in which the forum is appointed and composed. A typical CGRF in a state consists of 3 members including the chairperson. The three members have expertise in either or more of the following areas: Legal, Finance, technical and consumer issues. The typical composition of the CGRFs operating in the eleven states can be seen from the table below:

Table 9: Composition of CGRFs

State	Legal Expert	Finance Expert	Technical Expert	Expert in Consumer related matters
Delhi	✓	x	✓	✓
Gujarat	✓ (either of two)		✓	✓
Haryana	✓	x	✓	✓
Karnataka	x	x	✓ (two)	✓
Andhra Pradesh	✓	✓	✓	✓ (co-opted member)
Madhya Pradesh	x	✓ (or Commercial)	✓	✓
Punjab	x	✓	✓	✓
Uttarakhand	✓	x	✓	✓
West Bengal	Not defined	Not defined	Not defined	Not defined
Chhattisgarh	✓ (either of two)		✓	✓

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

As per the regulations of respective SERCs':

- All the ten states except West Bengal should have at least one technical member in the forum
- All states except West Bengal should have at least one member who is an expert in consumer affairs

- It is mandatory only in Delhi and Haryana to have a legal expert as a member of CGRF
- It is mandated in only two states viz. Madhya Pradesh and Punjab to have at least an expert in field of finance

Appointment of Members: As per the CGRF regulations, the members of the CGRF are either appointed by the licensee or the Commission or both. The variation across the ten states in terms of appointment of the members can be seen below:

Table 10: Appointment of CGRF members

State	No. of Members appointed by Licensee	No. of Members appointed by the Commission	Independent Members ⁷
Delhi	0	3	3 independent member
Gujarat	2	1	1 independent member
Haryana	3	0	No independent member
Karnataka	3	0	1 independent member
Andhra Pradesh	3	0	1 independent member
Madhya Pradesh	3	0	1 independent member
Punjab	3	0	1 independent member
Uttarakhand	3	0	1 independent member
West Bengal	NA	NA	NA
Chhattisgarh	3	0	1 independent member

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

- The regulations in Delhi have ensured that all the three members are independent of distribution licensee (all three appointed by the Commission)
- Regulations in Haryana do not mandate that the CGRF should have independent members (members appointed or nominated by the Commission)
- Most other states have ensured at least one independent member in the forum which is nominated by the Commission even though it may or may not be appointed by the licensee

Tenure of Members: The normal tenure of member of CGRF's ranges from two years to five years according to the respective state guidelines. The following table gives a brief snapshot of the service terms of the members as per the regulations:

Table 11: Tenure of CGRF members

State	Normal term of service	Extended term
Delhi	3 years	No extension
Gujarat	3 years	Extendible by 2 years
Haryana	3 years	No extension
Karnataka	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

⁷ Independent member means a member of the forum appointed or nominated by the Commission

State	Normal term of service	Extended term
Andhra Pradesh	3 years	Extendible by 2 years
Madhya Pradesh	2 years	Extendible by 1 year
Punjab	2 years	No extension
Uttarakhand	3 years	Extendible by 2 years
West Bengal	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Chhattisgarh	2 years	Extendible by 2 years

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

- Normal tenure of service of members is either 2 years or 3 years
- Few states like Gujarat and Uttarakhand have provisions for extension of term of members by 2 years if needed
- Provisions in States like MP allow for extension of term of members by 1 year
- The maximum tenure that can be served by a member in any state is 5 years subject to compliance with the age limit of the respective states (such as Gujarat)

Maximum age for holding office: The states of Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Punjab have set maximum age limit of 65 years for members holding offices of CGRF.

Cost and expense of the forum: The CGRF regulations in all the states have mentioned that cost and expenses of the forum are to be determined by the distribution licensee. The snapshot for the 10 states is given below:

Table 12: Cost and expenses of CGRFs

Cost and Expenses	States
Borne by the distribution licensee	Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab
Only determined by the distribution licensee	Karnataka, AP, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

CGRF Regulations in Karnataka have only mentioned that the cost and expenses of the forum are to be decided by the distribution licensee but does not specify whether it has to be borne by distribution licensee itself or not.

Maximum time period for grievance handling: The time limit given for redressal of grievance by CGRF varies from state to state regulations. It ranges from a period of 30 days to 60 days in some cases. The snapshot for the 10 states is given below:

Table 13: Maximum time period for grievance handling

Maximum time period of resolution	States
Within 45 days	Gujarat, AP, Chhattisgarh
Within 60 days	Delhi, Karnataka, Punjab, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, MP

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

The CGRF regulations of Haryana have not mentioned any specific time period of resolution. CGRF regulations in Madhya Pradesh have guided the CGRF to settle the grievances of the consumers *within a period of 6 weeks normally and not exceeding 8 weeks in any case*.

Appeal against the order of CGRF: The regulations of all states allow the consumer to make a representation to Ombudsman if they are not satisfied by the decision of CGRF or the CGRF fails to communicate the decision within the time period specified in the regulations as discussed above. The distribution licensee however is not allowed to appeal against the order passed by CGRF. Although, all states give consumers the right to appeal against the order of CGRF, the allowed timeframe within which the consumer needs to file the complaint with Ombudsman varies from state to state. The snapshot regarding maximum time period allowed to appeal against the order for the 10 states is given below:

Table 14: Appeal against the order of CGRF

Appeal against the order	States*
Within 30 days	Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Punjab, AP, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh
Within 60 days	Madhya Pradesh

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

*West Bengal allows only a maximum time period of 20 days from the date of order from GRO/CGRO before which the aggrieved consumer has to appeal to Ombudsman

The detailed comparative review of CGRF regulations for the ten states has been shown in the next page.

3.4. Comparison of CGRF Regulations in select ten states

The following table presents the analysis of the regulations of Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal:

Table 15: Comparison of CGRF regulations in select ten states

State (SERC)	Composition	Appointment	Term of service of members	Age limit	Cost & Expenses	Maximum time period for resolution	Appeal against the order
Delhi (DERC)	3 members (one legal, one technical, & one consumer expert)	Commission appoints all the members All members are independent of the discom. To be eligible one must have left the utility at least two years prior to joining CGRF.	Normal term: 3 years No extension	Max: 65 years at the time of holding office	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee	Within 60 days of receipt of complaint	Within 30 days from CGRF order
Gujarat (GERC)	3 members (Legal/Finance, technical, & one consumer expert)	Appointed by licensee: Legal and technical member Nominated by Commission: Consumer expert	Normal term: 3 years Extendible by: 2 years	Max: 65 years at the time of holding office	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee	Within 45 days of receipt of complaint	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order
Haryana (HERC)	3 members (one legal, one technical, & one consumer expert)	All three members appointed by the licensee (Both the technical members are employee of the discom)	Normal term: 3 years No extension	Max: 65 years at the time of holding office	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee. Expenses allowed to pass through in ARR	Not mentioned	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order
Karnataka (KERC)	3 members (two technical, & one consumer expert)	Two members including the chairperson are the employees of the licensee (technical) Nominated by Commission: Consumer expert	No mention	For employee of licensees: As per prevalent practice in distribution licensee	Cost and expenses to be determined by the licensee	Within 60 days of receipt of complaint	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order

State (SERC)	Composition	Appointment	Term of service of members	Age limit	Cost & Expenses	Maximum time period for resolution	Appeal against the order
				For nominated by Commission: 65 years			
Andhra Pradesh (APERC)	The 'Forum' is consisting of four members including the Chairperson (Technical), Member (Finance) and Member (Legal), and one co-opted Member, who is familiar with Consumer affairs	Appointed by Licensee, Co-opted member appointed by Commission	Normal term: 3 years Extendible: another 2 years	Max: 62 years	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee	Not mentioned	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order
Madhya Pradesh (MPERC)	3 members (one consumer, one technical, one commercial expert)	Nominated by Commission: Consumer expert Appointed by licensee: Technical and Commercial members The technical member is a representative of the licensee, who is a current employee of discom	Normal term: 2 years Extendible: Till 3 years	Max: 65 years	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee Expenses allowed to be pass through in ARR	Within 6 weeks in normal cases Within 8 weeks in any circumstances	Within 60 days after issue of CGRF order
Punjab (PSERC)	3 members(1 Finance, 1 technical/commercial, 1 consumer expert)	Two members including the chairperson are employees of the licensee Nominated by Commission: Consumer expert	Normal term: 2 years	For employee of licensees: As per prevalent practice in distribution licensee For nominated by Commission: 65 years	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee	Normally within 60 days of receipt of complaint In case of grievances related to non-supply, connection or disconnection of supply: within 30 days	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order

State (SERC)	Composition	Appointment	Term of service of members	Age limit	Cost & Expenses	Maximum time period for resolution	Appeal against the order
Uttarakhand (UERC)	3 members (Judicial, Technical, & one consumer expert)	Appointed by licensee: Legal and technical member Nominated by Commission: Consumer expert	Normal term: 3 years Extendible: another 2 years	Not mentioned	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee	Within 60 days of receipt of complaint	Within 30 days from CGRF order
West Bengal (WBERC)	Forum shall consist of as many GRO as required. At least one GRO at each sub district/district /zone levels. At least one Central Grievance Redressal Officer (CGRO) at the corporate level of the licensee.	GRO at the sub district/district/zonal levels appointed from employees of licensees One or more CGRO at the corporate level appointed from employees of CGRO	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Within 60 days from date of sending acknowledgment to petitioner	20 working Days from the date of an order from GRO/CGRO
Chhattisgarh (CSERC)	3 members (one finance/accounts/legal matters/engineering, one technical – electrical engineering, & one consumer expert)	Two members appointed by Licensee and 1 nominated by the Commission (consumer expert)	Normal term: 2 years, Extendible for 2 years	Max age at 63 at the time of joining, and can work up to the age of 65 years	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee.	Within 45 days of registration of the grievance	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

3.5. Review of Ombudsman regulations across states

In order to have a clear understanding of different regulations across states, the Ombudsman regulations issued by various SERCs have been reviewed. The tabular comparison of regulations issued by states of **Delhi, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh** is presented. The review of these states gives us a good understanding of the grievance redressal mechanism in the Indian electricity sector. The regulations on Ombudsman across the states discussed broadly about the following:

- Manner of appointment of Ombudsman
- Eligibility for appointment
- Age limit for Ombudsman
- Tenure
- Expenses and Cost
- Procedure of grievance redressal
- Time period for issuance of order

Although, the regulations of all the states contain information on the above lines, however the guidelines for the respective regulations are different in the manner in which the various parameters have been treated. The key points of differentiation in the regulations can be highlighted in the following areas:

Number of Ombudsman: The Ombudsman regulations in states such as Delhi, Gujarat, Punjab and Uttarakhand have clearly highlighted appointment of more than one Ombudsman in the state if needed. The Ombudsman regulation of West Bengal is silent regarding the number of Ombudsman that a Commission may appoint. The Ombudsman regulation of Haryana and Karnataka allow for appointment of only one Ombudsman for the entire state.

Appointment of Ombudsman: The regulations in the state of Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, and Punjab have mentioned that Ombudsman shall be appointed by the respective State Commissions. However, it does not contain any clarity on the manner in which the Ombudsman will be appointed. The Ombudsman regulations of states such as Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh have elaborated the manner in which these appointments have to be done. For instance, Gujarat CGRF regulations outline the formation of a selection committee by the Commission consisting of the Chairperson and members for selecting the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is to be selected by a simple majority and the chairperson of the committee (who is Chairperson of the Commission) shall have a casting vote.

Independence of Ombudsman: The regulations in various states have made attempts to ensure that Ombudsman is independent of the distribution licensee. Some states have clearly outlined the eligibility criteria of the Ombudsman such that the applicant shall not have worked with a distribution licensee since last few years. The following table gives snapshot of the Ombudsman regulations regarding independence from distribution licensee:

Table 16: Independence of Ombudsman

State	Independence	Mechanism to ensure independence
Delhi	✓	Ombudsman shall not have worked with a distribution licensee since last two years
Gujarat	✓	Only retired CE cadre and above of utilities are allowed to apply
Haryana	x	No particular clause to ensure the independence
Karnataka	x	No particular clause to ensure the independence
Andhra Pradesh	x	No particular clause to ensure the independence
Madhya Pradesh	✓	Applicants for post of Ombudsman shall not have worked with a distribution licensee since last 1 year
Punjab	x	Commission may designate a staff from the licensee as the Ombudsman
Uttarakhand	✓	Applicants not eligible within 2 years of retirement from the services of an electricity utility.
West Bengal	Not mentioned	NA
Chhattisgarh	x	No particular clause to ensure the independence

Source: Ombudsman regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

Out of the ten states only Delhi, Gujarat, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh have tried to ensure independence of Ombudsman from distribution licensee by making eligibility criteria which disallow the appointment of the existing employees or recently retired employees of the distribution licensee as Electricity Ombudsman. However, the remaining states have still not ensured the same which may act as a bottleneck towards impartial redressal of consumer grievance.

Tenure of Appointment: The tenure of the appointment of Ombudsman varies from two years to five years as per the various regulations. The following is a brief snapshot of the service terms of the Ombudsman as per the SERC regulations

Table 17: Tenure of Ombudsman

State	Normal term of service	Extended term
Delhi	3 years	No extension
Gujarat	3 years	Extendible by 2 years
Haryana	3 years	Extendible by 1 year
Karnataka	3 years	Not mentioned
Andhra Pradesh	3 years	Extendible by 2 years
Madhya Pradesh	2 years	Extendible by 2 years
Punjab	3 years	No extension
Uttarakhand	3 years	Extendible by 1 year

State	Normal term of service	Extended term
West Bengal	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Chhattisgarh	2 years	Extendible by 2 years

Source: Ombudsman regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

The following observations can be derived from the above table:

- The normal tenure of appointment of Ombudsman ranges from 2 to 3 years
- Most of the state regulations allow for extension of term of Ombudsman

Cost and Expenses: The cost and expense of the Ombudsman and the secretariat are borne out of the following three mechanisms in the states:

- Borne by Commission
- Out of funds created under section 103 of EA Act 2003
- Borne by distribution licensees

The table given below gives the snapshot of how the expenses and costs of Ombudsman office are being borne for various states:

Table 18: Cost and Expenses of Ombudsman

State	Borne by Commission	Out of funds created under section 103 of EA Act 2003	Borne by the Distribution licensee
Delhi	x	x	√
Gujarat	√	x	x
Haryana	√	x	x
Karnataka	x	√	x
Andhra Pradesh	√	x	x
Madhya Pradesh	√	x	x
Punjab	x	x	√
Uttarakhand	x	x	√
West Bengal	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Chhattisgarh	√	x	x

Source: Ombudsman regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

- The cost and expenses of the Ombudsman and its offices in Delhi and Punjab are to be determined by the Commission but borne by the distribution licensees in proportion of power drawl during the previous years

- West Bengal does not have any clause regarding the composition, cost and expense in their guidelines on CGRF and Ombudsman 2013

Time period for issuance of Order: The stipulated time period within which the order has to be issued by the Ombudsman varies from state to state. It ranges from 60 days up to 90 days in some cases. The stipulated time period of the issuance of orders can be summarized below:

Table 19: Time period for issuance of Order

Time period of resolution	States
Within 2 months	Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh
Within 3 months	Delhi, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh

Source: Ombudsman regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

- Regulations in West Bengal have not clearly specified the timeline within which the Ombudsman needs to resolve the case. However, it highlights a very unique feature that if the Ombudsman has been referred cases from Commission then consumer can appeal in the Commission for resolution before going to Judiciary

The detailed comparison of Ombudsman regulations for the ten states highlighting the points of parity and difference can be found in the next page.

3.6. Comparison of Ombudsman Regulations in selected ten states

The following table presents the analysis of the regulations of Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh.

Table 20: Comparison of Ombudsman Regulations

State (SERC)	Composition & Appointment	Degree of Independence	Term of service	Age limit	Cost & Expenses	Resolution and Repeal
Delhi (DERC)	Commission to appoint one or more Ombudsman as required Commission will also provide an advisor (engineering), advisor (Law) along with Secretary to the Ombudsman	Ombudsman shall not have worked with a distribution licensee since last two years	Normal: 3 years	Max: 65 years	All expenses of the Ombudsman's office shall be decided by the Commission but shared by the distribution licensees in the proportion of power drawl during the previous year	Within 3 months from the date of the receipt of the complaint
Gujarat (GERC)	Commission to appoint one or more Ombudsman as required. The Commission forms a selection committee consisting of the Chairperson and members of the Commission for selecting the Ombudsman. The Chairperson of the Commission is the chairperson of the selection committee. The Ombudsman is selected by a simple majority and the Chairperson has a casting vote.	Retired Chief Engineer of a utility is also eligible for Ombudsman	Normal: 3 years Extendible up to 2 more years	Max: 65 years	Borne by the Commission	Within 60 days or two months from the date of the receipt of the complaint
Haryana (HERC)	Commission to appoint an Ombudsman. Commission will also be provided a	Not ensured because a serving employee of the licensee may apply	Normal: 3 years Extendible up to 1 more	Min: 50 years Max: 65 years at the time of holding the office	Determined and borne by the Commission	Within 3 months from the date of the receipt of the complaint.

State (SERC)	Composition & Appointment	Degree of Independence	Term of service	Age limit	Cost & Expenses	Resolution and Repeal
	secretariat	for the post	years			A unique feature in the regulation is that a complainant may appeal to Commission if he is still aggrieved
Karnataka (KERC)	One Ombudsman for entire state appointed by Commission Ombudsman to be provided with secretariat	No specific criteria to ensure independence from distribution licensee	Normal: 3 years Extendible up to 2 more years	Max:65 years at the time of holding the office	All expenses of the Ombudsman's office including that of the secretariat are paid out of the funds constituted under section 103 of the Electricity Act, 2003.	Within 2 months from the date of the receipt of the complaint
Andhra Pradesh (APERC)	Commission to appoint one or more Ombudsman as required	Not clarified	Normal: 3 years Extendible up to 2 more years	Not mentioned	Determined and borne by the Commission	Where the representation is not settled by agreement within a period of 30 days from the date of receipt of complaint or such extended period the Vidyut Ombudsman may deem fit duly considering the overall time limit specified
Madhya Pradesh	Search Committee to select two candidates. ERC to select one. Search committee to consist of one	Ombudsman shall not have worked with a distribution	Normal: 2 years Extendible up	Max: 65 years	All expenses of the Ombudsman's office shall be borne by the Commission	Within 3 months from the date of the receipt of the

State (SERC)	Composition & Appointment	Degree of Independence	Term of service	Age limit	Cost & Expenses	Resolution and Repeal
(MPERC)	SAC member, one CMD and one person of eminence.	licensee since last 1 year	to 2 more years			complaint
Punjab (PSERC)	More than one Ombudsman if required	Commission may designate a staff from the licensee as the Ombudsman	Normal: 3 years	As per prevalent practice of distribution licensee	To be borne by the distribution licensee but determined by the Commission	Within 3 months from the date of the receipt of the complaint
Uttarakhand (UERC)	Commission to appoint One or more Ombudsman as required	Not eligible within 2 years of retirement from the services of an electricity utility.	Normal: 3 years Extendible: by another 2 years	Not mentioned	To be borne by the distribution licensee but determined by the Commission	Within 3 months from the date of the receipt of the complaint
West Bengal (WBERC)	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned If the Ombudsman has been referred cases from Commission then consumer can appeal in the Commission before going to Judiciary
Chhattisgarh (CSERC)	Commission to appoint One or more Ombudsman as required	Not clarified	Normal: 2 years Extendible: by another 2 years	Max age at 63 at the time of joining, and can work up to the age of 65 years	Determined and borne by the Commission	Within 3 months from the date of the receipt of the complaint

Source: Ombudsman regulations and other details available on respective SERC websites

4. Review of functioning of CGRFs and Ombudsman

4.1. Approach and Methodology

To analyse the efficiency and impact of grievance resolution processes adopted by the various states selected for this study, templates for data collection were designed and circulated (in association with FOR) with the concerned SERCs. The templates consisted of the following data requirements.

Table 21: Data requirements for analysis

S.No.	Data Requirements
1.	Number of CGRF offices
2.	Number of sittings in a quarter
3.	Number of grievances pending at the beginning of the quarter
4.	Number of grievances received and disposed of during the quarter
5.	Number of decisions in favour/ against the consumer
6.	Number of grievances resolved within or beyond the stipulated time as per state regulations

The templates for the collection of the requisite data have been provided in Appendix 11.1.

Both quarterly and annual data were analysed to understand the performance of CGRFs and Ombudsman in the selected states. A few states were unable to provide the required information as per the templates due to unavailability of information or inadequacy in data recording. However, the information provided by the SERCs coupled with secondary research has been used to give a comprehensive overview of the current state of grievance redressal in selected states.

The given data was analysed under three major parameters:

- Efficiency of grievance resolution (being able to resolve grievances on an ongoing basis)
- Drivers of resolution efficiency (which have improved swiftness in decision making)
- Impact of Decisions (results of decisions and consequent escalations)

The following framework was thus adopted to analyse the functioning of CGRF and Ombudsman of selected states. This framework has been used to provide a state-wise as well as comparative examination of the performance of CGRFs and Ombudsman in the subsequent sections.

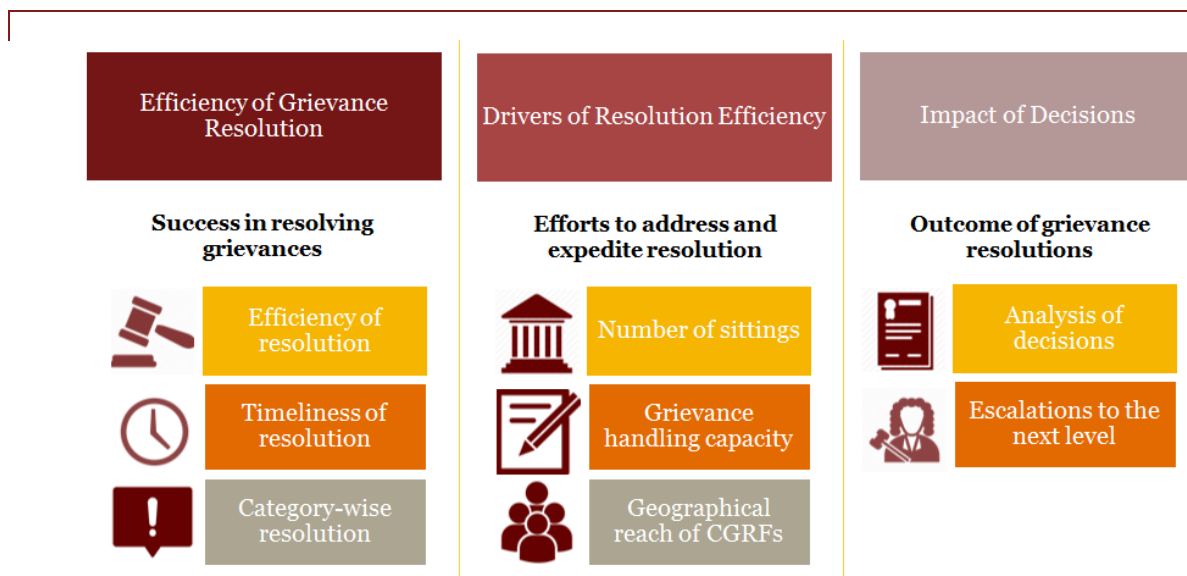


Figure 8: Framework for performance analysis of CGRF and Ombudsman

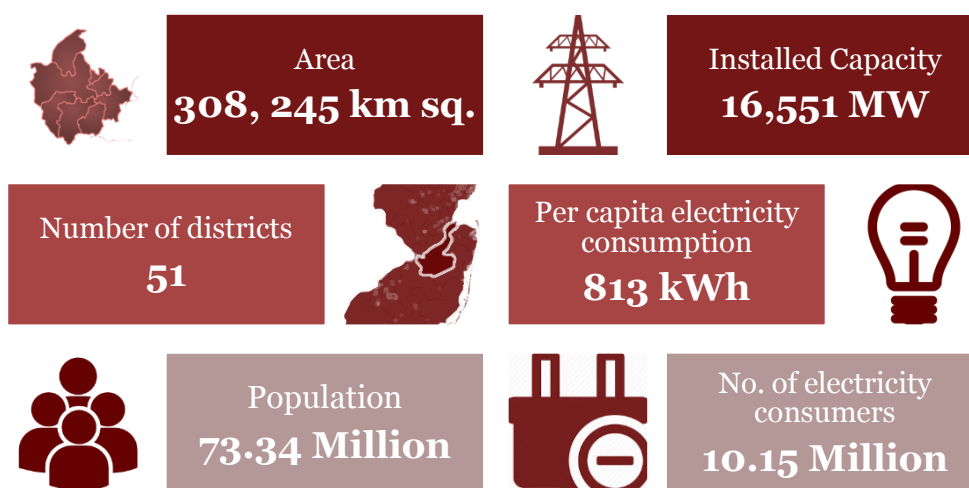
4.2. Review of states

It has been observed that each state under study is at a different stage of evolution in the adoption and successful implementation of CGRF and Ombudsman regulations as notified by the relevant SERC. Hence, a state-wise study of the regulatory framework and performance of CGRF and Ombudsman for given parameters has been outlined to better understand the influence of different functional models on the success of grievance resolution, as shown in the following sections.

4.2.1. Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh is the second largest state in India in terms of area. There are three discoms currently in the state: M.P. Poorv Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Co (East), M.P. Paschim Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Co (West) and M.P. Madhya Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Co (Central). The consumer mix of the state predominantly consists of agricultural and domestic consumers for all the three discoms.

Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot



Source: Electricity Sector in India, States of India by Installed Power Capacity (Wikipedia), MPERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Figure 9: Madhya Pradesh - Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot

CGRF Regulations

Although Madhya Pradesh has only three CGRFs (one for each discom) operating in the entire state, they hold sittings frequently at various locations in order to gain more geographical reach. This is particularly important in a state like Madhya Pradesh which has a substantial geographical area and a significant number of rural consumers.

Table 22: Madhya Pradesh - CGRF Regulations Snapshot

Regulations	Description
Structure and Functioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of CGRFs: 3 Location of offices: Bhopal (Central Discom), Indore (West Discom) & Jabalpur (East Discom) Forums conduct sittings at other places also besides their Head Offices The Commission may direct the Licensee to establish additional Forum(s), if considered necessary
Composition	3 members (1 independent member who has never been in the service of the licensee; the technical member is a representative of the licensee, who is a current employee of discom): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman (Expert in consumer related affairs) Member (Engineer/Technical) Member (Revenue & Accounts)
Appointment of Members	All 3 members are appointed by licensee in consultation with the Commission, and the consumer expert is nominated by the Commission
Tenure of Members	2 years, extendible by 3 years
Time Limit for Grievance Handling	Within 6 weeks in normal cases, and within 8 weeks in any circumstances
Appeal against CGRF order	A maximum time period of 60 days from the date of order from CGRF before which the aggrieved consumer has to appeal to Ombudsman

Regulations	Description
Cost and Expense of the Forum	Borne by the distribution licensee

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on MPERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Note:

In all three CGRFs, it is the consumer affairs expert that has been chosen as the Chairman of the CGRF, with Finance and Technical experts as the other members.

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on MPERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - CGRFs

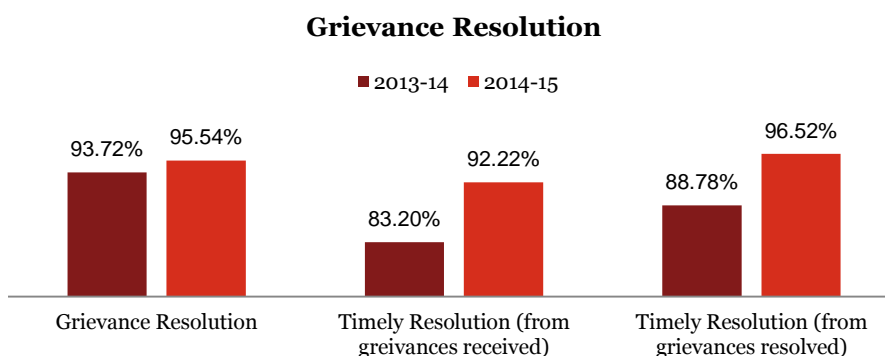
Table 23: Madhya Pradesh - Grievance Resolution Results (Quarterly), CGRFs (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	77	77	86	95	34	46	46	64	91	72
Received during the quarter/year	655	179	181	134	161	2333	476	1480	155	222
Disposed of during the quarter/year	686	170	172	195	149	2273	458	1452	174	189
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	362	100	95	101	66	1883	363	1192	157	171
In the favour of licensees	283	53	61	90	79	304	78	196	14	16
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	609	137	147	182	143	2194	436	1442	151	165
Beyond stipulated time	77	33	25	13	6	79	22	10	23	24
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	250	64	55	72	59	239	58	78	48	55

Source: As per data provided by MPERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

While a significant percentage of grievances were resolved (93.72% in 2013-14 and 95.54% in 2014-15), the number of pending grievances residing with the CGRF from one quarter to another did not decrease substantially (a quarterly average of 76.15% grievances resolved out of the total grievances with the CGRF at any point over the period of 2013-14 to 2014-15).



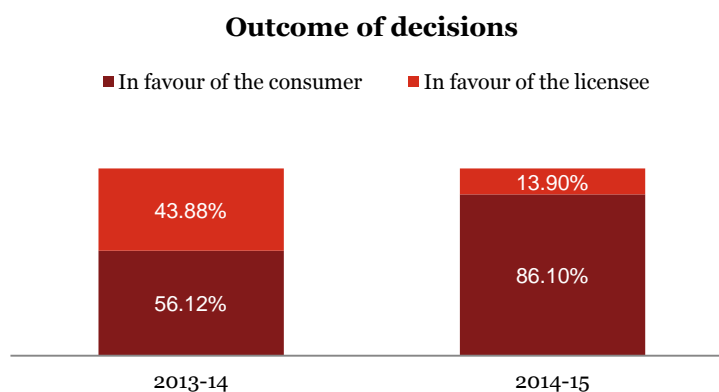
Source: As per data provided by MPERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 10: Madhya Pradesh - Grievance Resolution, CGRFs

There is notable improvement in terms of timely resolution of grievances from 2013-14 to 2014-15 (83.2 % to 92.22% of all resolved grievances, respectively). It may be attributed to the increasing expertise and efficiency of the forum that was developed over the period of the preceding two years.

Note: There was an exceptional increase in billing and meter related issues faced by CGRF, Jabalpur in the first two quarters of 2014-15, which is reflected in the given snapshot and was reasonably dealt with in a timely and efficient manner by the CGRF.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by MPERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 11: Madhya Pradesh - Outcome of decisions, CGRFs

The outcome of decisions in 2013-14 seems to be balanced in favour of both consumers and licensees, while it leans heavily in favour of consumers in 2014-15 which may be attributed to the exceptional rise of billing and meter related issues in the service area of Jabalpur arising in 2014-15.

Number of sittings

CGRF sittings have been conducted at a steady level, with an average of approximately 61 sittings per quarter. A higher number of sittings certainly seem to improve the timeliness and efficiency of resolution, with approximately 8 grievances resolved in a timely manner per sitting in 2014-15, as compared to an average of approximately 2.4 grievances being resolved per sitting in 2013-14.

An average number of approximately 34 lakh consumers are being served by each of the 3 CGRFs in Madhya Pradesh, with each CGRF handling approximately 79 grievances per quarter. With the rise in consumer awareness regarding the grievance escalation procedure, the number of forums may need to be increased by each distribution utility in the coming years.

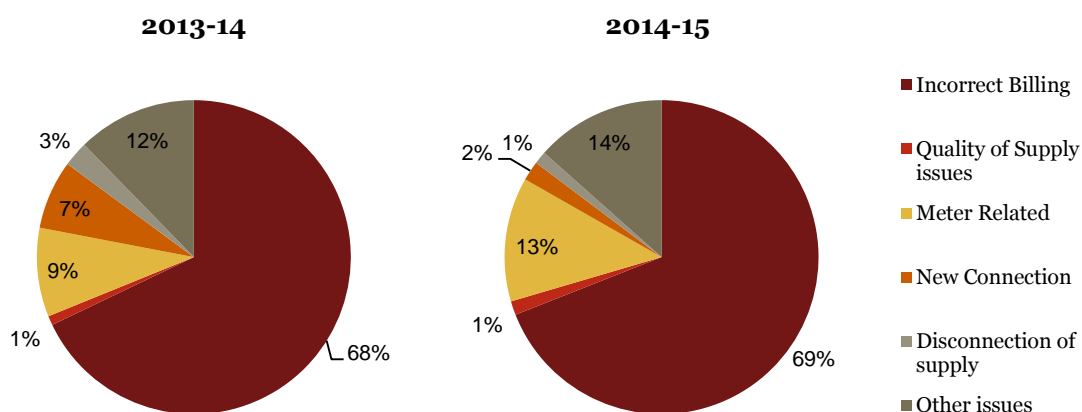
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 24: Madhya Pradesh - Category-wise resolution results (annual), CGRFs (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	61	0	5	1	4	6
Grievances received during the year	436	7	62	51	15	84
Total grievances handled in the year	497	7	67	52	19	90
Timeliness of resolution						

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Resolved in stipulated time	434	7	66	49	19	86
Resolved beyond stipulated time	25	0	0	0	0	0
Total grievances resolved	459	7	66	49	19	86
Balance grievances to be redressed	38	0	1	3	0	4
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	38	0	1	3	0	4
Grievances received during the year	1606	34	304	45	31	316
Total grievances handled in the year	1644	34	305	48	31	320
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	1506	33	287	44	28	316
Resolved beyond stipulated time	50	0	1	1	1	3
Total grievances resolved	1556	33	288	45	29	319
Balance grievances to be redressed	89	1	10	2	2	1

Source: As per data provided by MPERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by MPERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 12: Madhya Pradesh - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, CGRFs

Since billing and meter-related issues are the most frequently handled grievances for the CGRFs, delays in the redressal of such grievances may hamper the ability of the CGRFs to address other types of grievances in a timely manner.

Ombudsman Regulations

Table 25: Madhya Pradesh - Ombudsman Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Ombudsman: 1 Location of the Ombudsman office: Bhopal The Ombudsman holds sittings at such other places within the area of jurisdiction as may be considered necessary and appropriate More than one Ombudsmen may be appointed by the Commission
Composition/Qualifications	Ombudsmen are selected from among those who have experience in a specific field like Legal Affairs, Engineering, Industry, Finance, Administration, Management, Defence Services or Consumer Affairs.
Independence of	The Ombudsman cannot not be associated with the activities of any of the

Regulations	Description
Ombudsman	Licensees for a period of preceding one year.
Appointment of Ombudsman	Appointed by the Commission
Tenure of Ombudsman	2 years, extendible by 2 years
Time Period for Issuance of Order	Within three months from the date of the receipt of the representation of the Complainant
Cost and Expense	All expenses of the Ombudsman's office shall be borne by the Commission

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on MPERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - Ombudsman

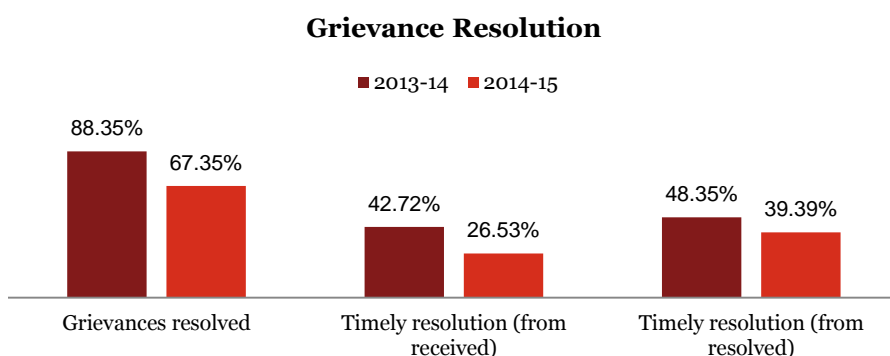
Table 26: Madhya Pradesh - Grievance Resolution Results (Annual), Ombudsman (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	2014-15
Number of grievances		
At the beginning of the quarter/FY	77	46
Received during this quarter/FY	655	2333
Disposed of during this quarter/FY	686	2273
Number of decisions		
In the favour of consumer	362	1883
In the favour of licensees	283	304
Number of complaints addressed		
Within stipulated time	609	2194
Beyond stipulated time	77	79
Number of sittings		
Number of sittings in the quarter/FY	250	239

Source: As per data provided by MPERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

While the efficiency of resolution for Ombudsman was fairly high (88.35% in 2013-14 and 67.35% in 2014-15), the timeliness of resolution was relatively low (42.72% in 2013-14 and 26.53% in 2014-15), as can be seen in the following figure.

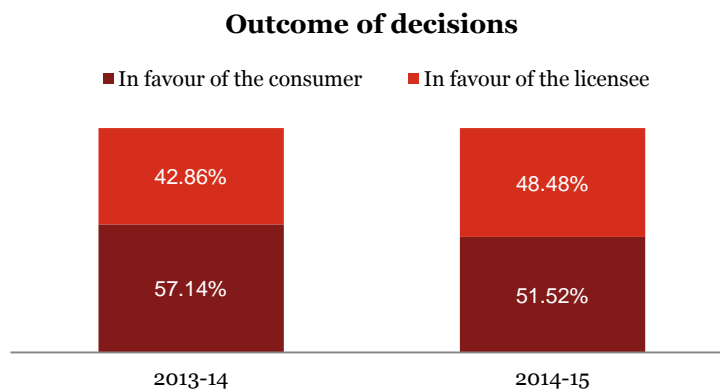


Source: As per data provided by MPERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 13: Madhya Pradesh - Grievance Resolution, Ombudsman

Outcome of decisions

The outcome of decisions seems to be balanced in favour of both consumers and licensees for 2013-14 and 2014-15.



Source: As per data provided by MPERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 14: Madhya Pradesh - Outcome of decisions, Ombudsman

Escalations to Ombudsman

A fairly small percentage of cases have been escalated to the Ombudsman in Madhya Pradesh across the two years (the Ombudsman received approximately 1 grievance for every 20 grievances received by the CGRFs in 2013-14, and much less in 2014-15.) This may have arisen due to the following reasons:

- The difficulty in accessibility of the Ombudsman office by consumers residing in the farther regions of the state.
- The lack of awareness regarding the escalation structure.

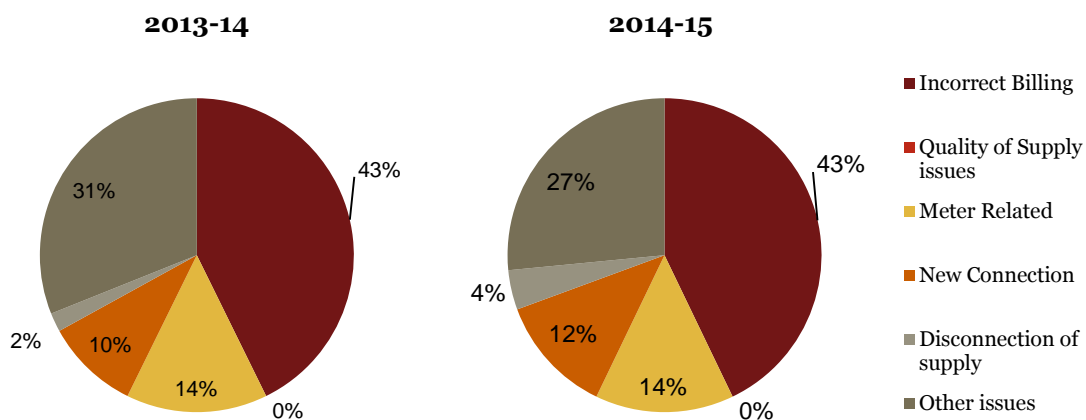
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 27: Madhya Pradesh - Category-wise resolution results (annual), Ombudsman (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnect ion of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	29	0	4	10	2	23
Grievances received during the year	15	0	11	0	0	9
Total grievances handled in the year	44	0	15	10	2	32
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	18	0	8	6	2	10
Resolved beyond stipulated time	21	0	4	4	0	18
Total grievances resolved	39	0	12	10	2	28
Balance grievances to be redressed	5	0	3	0	0	4
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	5	0	3	0	0	4
Grievances received during the year	16	0	4	6	2	9
Total grievances handled in the year	21	0	7	6	2	13
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	4	0	2	2	1	4
Resolved beyond stipulated time	10	0	0	4	0	6

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Total grievances resolved	14	0	2	6	1	10
Balance grievances to be redressed	7	0	5	0	1	3

Source: As per data provided by MPERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by MPERC in the templates circulated by FOR

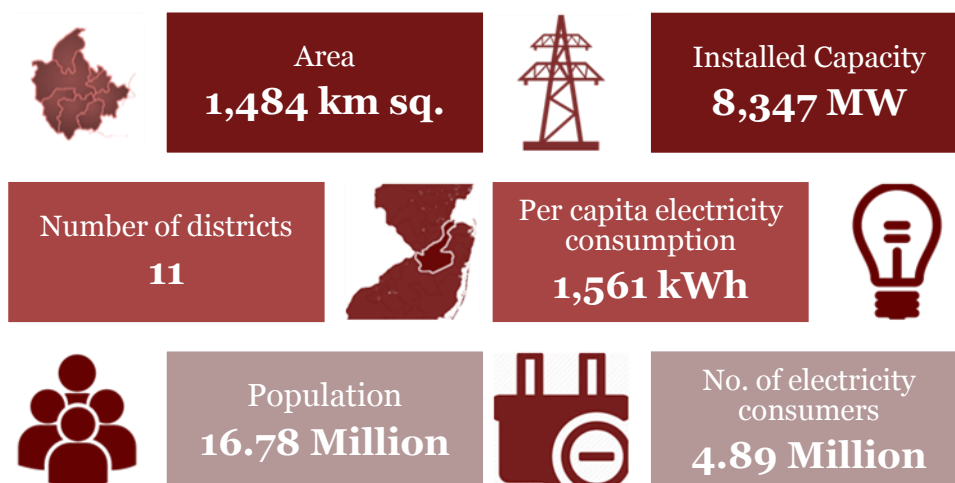
Figure 15: Madhya Pradesh - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, Ombudsman

Grievances regarding billing, meter related issues, and new connections have constituted the major proportion of grievances escalated to the Ombudsman across 2013-14 and 2014-15.

4.2.2. Delhi

Delhi has four distribution companies, namely BSES-Rajdhani Power Ltd (BRPL), BSES-Yamuna Power Ltd (BYPL), Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd. and New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC). The consumer mix of Delhi is slightly different from other states, with domestic and commercial categories accounting for a majority of electricity consumption. Moreover, Delhi has a different load curve than other states, and registers a significant difference between the peak load and base load in both summer and winter season.

Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot



Source: Electricity Sector in India, States of India by Installed Power Capacity (Wikipedia), DERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Figure 16: Delhi - Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot

CGRF regulations

CGRF regulations in Delhi are different from other states with respect to the composition of CGRFs. The regulations in Delhi have ensured independence of CGRF from licensees by mandating the appointment of the CGRF members by the Commission. Consumers in Delhi have greater awareness regarding CGRF and Ombudsman than most of the other states which is evident from high number of cases registered with various CGRF's.

Table 28: Delhi - CGRF Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of CGRFs: 4 Location of Offices: Pushp Vihar, Delhi (CGRF-BRPL), Shahdara, Delhi (CGRF-BYPL), Model Town, Delhi (CGRF-TPDDL), Gole Market, Delhi (CGRF-NDMC) The Forum holds sittings at the headquarters or at any other place in the licensee's area as decided by the Chairperson The Commission may direct the Licensee to establish additional Forum(s) if considered necessary
Composition	3 members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman (Electrical engineering, having served not below the rank of Superintending Engineer and having experience in the area of electricity distribution) Member (Legal, to serve as chair in absence of chairperson) Member (Consumer Representative - NGO, Cons. Organization) A secretary to aid the functioning of the CGRF

Regulations	Description
Appointment of Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission appoints all the members No person shall be eligible to be appointed to the Forum within two years of his retirement if, immediately before such retirement, he has been in the service of a licensee.
Tenure of Members	3 years, with no extension
Time Limit for Grievance Handling	Within 60 days of receipt of complaint
Appeal against CGRF order	A maximum time period of 30 days from the date of order from CGRF before which the aggrieved consumer has to appeal to the Ombudsman
Cost and Expense of the Forum	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on DERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Note:

- The Chairman and Members appointed have been mandated to devote their whole time to the affairs of the Forum, and not to undertake any other part-time or honorary work.
- All members are independent of the discom. To be eligible for becoming a member of CGRF, one must have left the utility at least two years prior to joining CGRF.

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on DERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

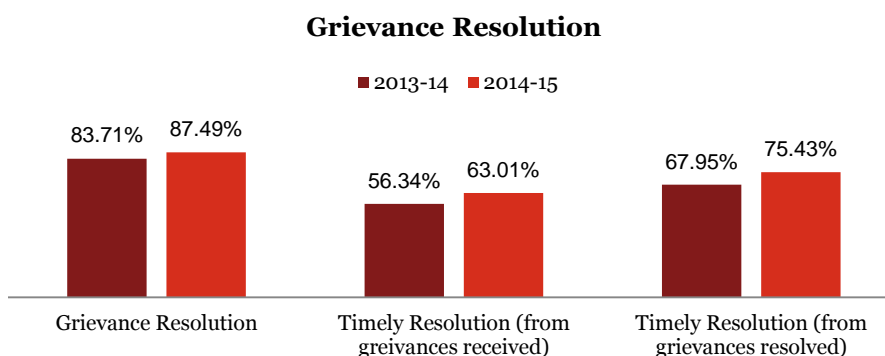
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot: CGRFs

Table 29: Delhi - Grievance Resolution Results (Quarterly), CGRFs (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	794	794	661	612	397	428	428	522	566	474
Received during the quarter/year	1833	622	544	279	388	1594	426	586	310	272
Disposed of during the quarter/year	2199	738	610	494	357	1769	412	542	402	413
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	1875	618	520	430	307	1295	252	406	320	317
In the favour of licensees	334	120	90	64	60	394	80	136	82	96
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	1480	388	437	395	260	1274	278	372	305	319
Beyond stipulated time	698	350	152	99	97	415	54	170	97	94
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	421	106	114	97	104	379	83	108	89	99

Source: As per data provided by DERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution



Source: As per data provided by DERC in the templates circulated by FOR

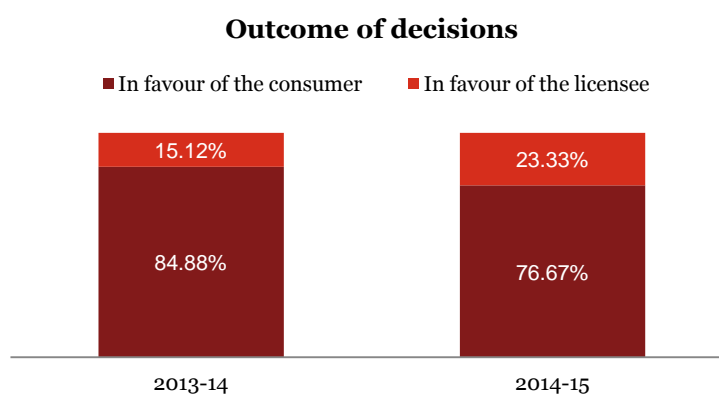
Figure 17: Delhi - Grievance Resolution, CGRFs

In Delhi, the CGRFs handle a relatively larger base of complaints due to a higher level of consumer awareness, as well as easier accessibility and smaller geography of the state. With one CGRF currently operating for each distribution utility, the efficiency of resolution has improved marginally from 83.71% in 2013-14 to 87.49% in 2014-15.

Only about 6 out of 10 complaints handled are being resolved within the stipulated time period of 60 days. This may adversely affect the resolution timeliness of forthcoming grievances and increase the load of redressal on the CGRFs over time.

Improving the efficiency of forum resolution processes in the near future, and increasing the number of forums in the longer run, are key operative measures that need to be considered for improving the effectiveness of the existing grievance redressal framework in Delhi.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by DERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 18: Delhi - Outcome of decisions, CGRFs

Delhi has been consistent in awarding more decisions in favour of consumers rather than licensees. The high percentage of decisions going in favour of the consumers may be attributed to the

independence of CFGRs from the licensees. Such a structure also gives confidence to the consumers in registering their grievances in CGRFs.

Number of sittings

Delhi has conducted the highest number of CGRF sittings for the given states under study, with an average of about 105 sittings per quarter in 2013-14, and nearly 95 sittings per quarter in 2014-15.

Other key statistics:

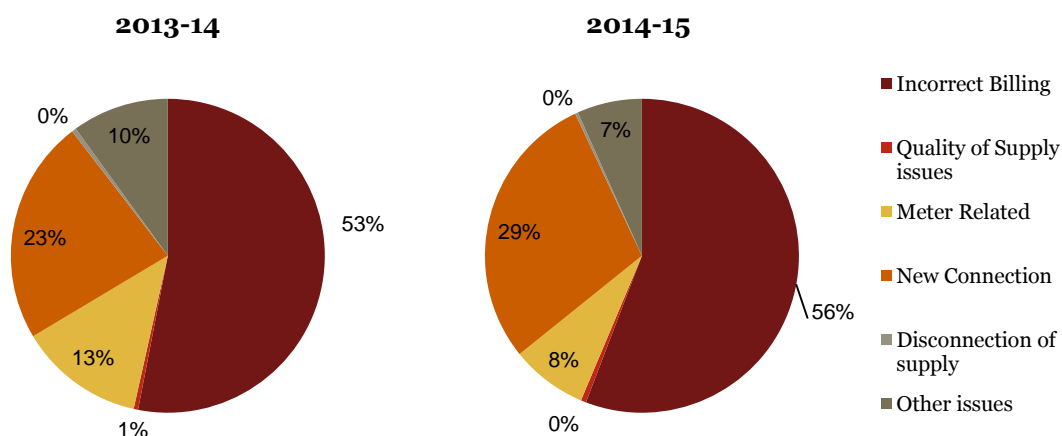
- An average of approximately 12 lakh consumers is being served by each of the 4 CGRFs in Delhi, with each CGRF handling approximately 287 grievances per quarter
- 1 in about 1053 electricity consumers escalated a grievance to one of the CGRFs in the course of the two years in Delhi; indicating a fairly high level of consumer awareness regarding the escalation structure

Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 30: Delhi - Category-wise resolution results (annual), CGRFs (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnect ion of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	441	0	151	103	4	41
Grievances received during the year	946	12	187	502	8	220
Total grievances handled in the year	1387	12	338	605	12	261
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	677	8	187	455	6	157
Resolved beyond stipulated time	446	1	127	77	4	54
Total grievances resolved	1123	9	314	532	10	209
Balance grievances to be redressed	252	4	41	88	2	51
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	252	4	41	88	2	51
Grievances received during the year	882	7	119	497	4	85
Total grievances handled in the year	1134	11	160	585	6	136
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	676	6	78	428	4	82
Resolved beyond stipulated time	241	1	73	73	2	25
Total grievances resolved	917	7	151	501	6	107
Balance grievances to be redressed	217	4	9	84	0	29

Source: As per data provided by DERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by DERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 19: Delhi - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, CGRFs

A large number of grievances related to new connections were being escalated to CGRFs in the serving regions of BYPL and TPDDL in Delhi, whereas a high number of billing issues were being addressed by the CGRF in the operative region of BRPL on a frequent basis.

Ombudsman Regulations

Table 31: Delhi - Ombudsman Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Ombudsman: 1 Office of the Ombudsman: Vasant Vihar, Delhi Two advisors to the Ombudsman (Legal and Engineer), and a secretary to aid the functioning of the CGRF The Ombudsman holds sittings at such other places within his area of jurisdiction as he considers necessary The Commission may appoint more than one Ombudsman if deemed necessary
Composition/Qualifications	Needs experience from the following areas: law, management, engineering, finance, commerce, public administration or in a NGO
Independence of Ombudsman	Ombudsman should not have worked with a distribution licensee in the preceding two years
Appointment of Ombudsman	Appointed by the Commission
Tenure of Ombudsman	3 years
Time Period for Issuance of Order	Within three months from the date of the receipt of the representation of the Complainant
Cost and Expense	Borne by the distribution licensees in the proportion of power drawl during the previous year and as per the budget approved by the Commission

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on DERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

To be noted

The Ombudsman can be a person who has served at the level of the Secretary to the Govt. of NCT of Delhi or equivalent ; person having served in any public or private sector undertaking or an NGO, or having experience comparable to the aforesaid

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on DERC

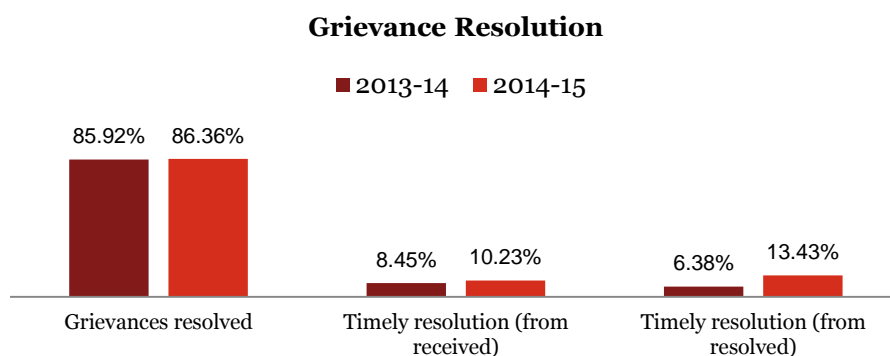
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - Ombudsman

Table 32: Delhi - Grievance Resolution Results (Annual), Ombudsman (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	21	21	13	12	9	10	10	15	31	16
Received during the quarter/year	50	15	9	8	18	78	21	32	11	14
Disposed of during the quarter/year	61	23	10	11	17	76	16	16	26	18
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	20	8	6	3	3	23	4	5	6	8
In the favour of licensees	55	22	9	9	15	67	12	15	24	16
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	6	1	1	2	2	9	4	1	2	2
Beyond stipulated time	88	34	14	19	21	58	19	12	18	9
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	9	1	2	0	6	16	2	4	9	1

Source: As per data provided by DERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

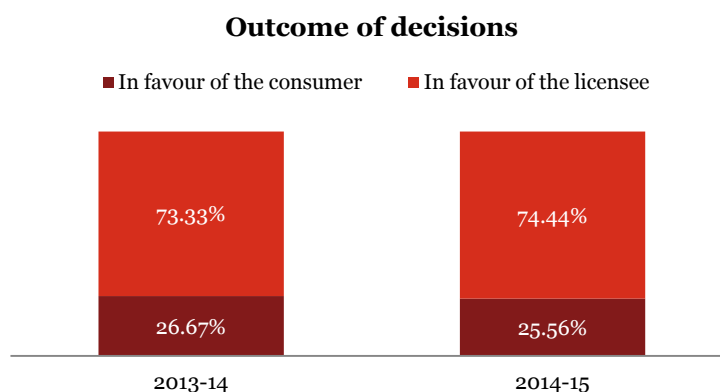


Source: As per data provided by DERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 20: Delhi - Grievance Resolution, Ombudsman

While the resolution efficiency of Ombudsman remained steady from 2013-14 to 2014-15, the timeliness of resolution was registered to be particularly low (8.45% in 2013-14 and 10.23% in 2014-15). Keeping in mind the frequent issues escalated to the Ombudsman, and the most common delays in grievance redressal (such as time taken to file responses and setting a suitable data for hearing), the efficiency of resolution procedures adopted by the Ombudsman may be considered for further improvement.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by DERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 21: Delhi - Outcome of decisions, Ombudsman

A significant percentage of decisions have been awarded by the Ombudsman in Delhi in favour of the licensee.

Escalations to Ombudsman

It has been observed that a fairly small percentage of complaints have been escalated to the Ombudsman in Delhi. The reason for the same may be attributed to the following reasons:

- Unwillingness of the consumer to pursue a more favourable decision.
- Lack of awareness of the availability of Ombudsman services and lack of guidance to the consumers.

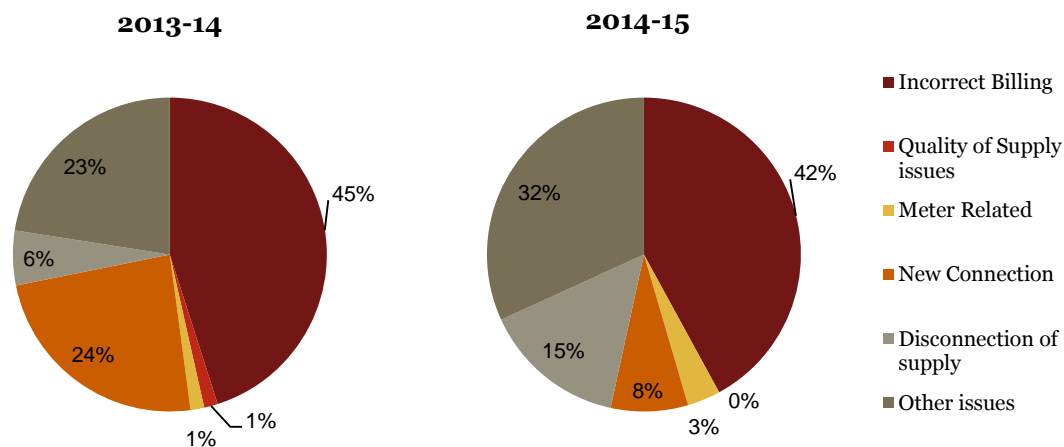
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 33: Delhi - Category-wise resolution results, Ombudsman (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnect ion of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	10	0	0	4	0	7
Grievances received during the year	22	1	1	13	4	9
Total grievances handled in the year	32	1	1	17	4	16
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	22	1	1	12	4	15
Resolved beyond stipulated time	2	0	0	4	0	0
Total grievances resolved	24	1	1	16	4	15
Balance grievances to be redressed	8	0	0	1	0	1
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	8	0	0	1	0	1
Grievances received during the year	29	0	3	6	13	27
Total grievances handled in the year	37	0	3	7	13	28

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	28	0	3	4	10	24
Resolved beyond stipulated time	3	0	0	0	1	9
Total grievances resolved	31	0	3	4	11	27
Balance grievances to be redressed	6	0	0	3	2	1

Source: As per data provided by DERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by DERC in the templates circulated by FOR

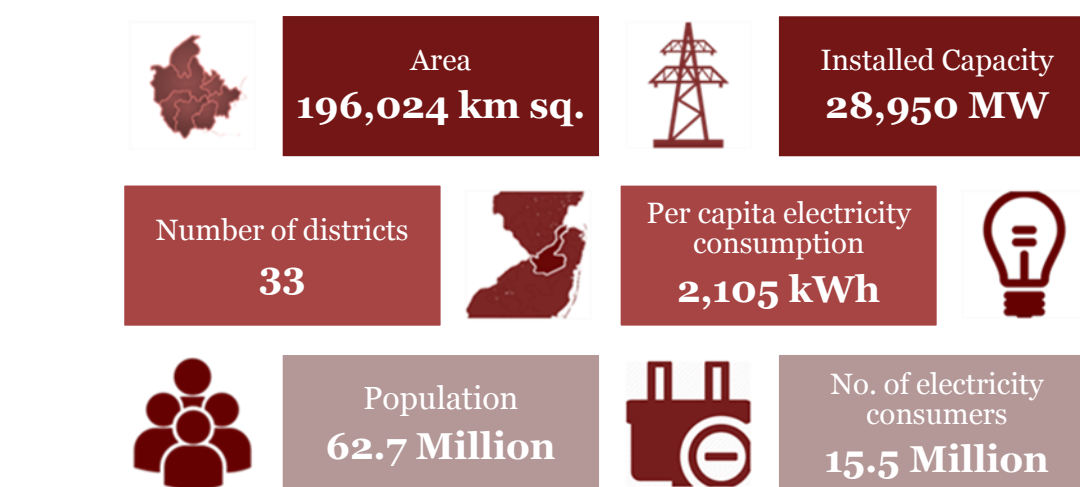
Figure 22: Delhi - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, Ombudsman

Grievances regarding billing and meter-related issues were the major types of grievances escalated to the Ombudsman in Delhi.

4.2.2.1. Gujarat

The power distribution companies in Gujarat consist of the state-owned utilities Dakshin Gujarat Vij Co.Ltd (DGVCL), Madhya Gujarat Vij Co.Ltd (MGVCL), Purva Gujarat Vij Co.Ltd (PGVCL), Uttar Gujarat Vij Co.Ltd (UGVCL), and the privately owned Torrent Power Limited. DGVCL distributes electricity to 7 districts of South Gujarat covering about 24.53 Lacs consumers. MGVCL distributes electricity to 7 districts of Central Gujarat covering about 27.68 Lacs consumers. UGVCL distributes electricity partly to 10 districts of Northern Gujarat covering about 31.23 Lacs consumers. Torrent Power Limited distributes power to 20.4 lakh customers annually in Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar and Surat. PGVCL serves 12 districts in the areas of Saurashtra and Kachh, distributing power to over 51.33 lakh consumers.

Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot



Source: Electricity Sector in India, States of India by Installed Power Capacity (Wikipedia), GERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Figure 23: Gujarat - Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot

CGRF regulations

Table 34: Gujarat - CGRF Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of CGRFs: 8 Location of offices: PGVCL: Rajkot, Bhuj, Bhavnagar, MGVCL: Vadodara, UGVCL: Ahmedabad, DGVCL: Surat, TPL: Ahmedabad, Surat
Composition	3 members (Legal/Finance, technical, & one consumer expert)
Appointment of Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed by licensee: Legal and technical member Nominated by Commission: Consumer expert
Tenure of Members	Normal term: 3 years, Extendible by: 2 years
Time Limit for Grievance Handling	Within 45 days of receipt of complaint
Appeal against CGRF order	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order
Cost and Expense of the Forum	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on GERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Note

CGRFs of MGVCL, UGVCL and DGVCL consist of two technical experts and a legal expert, but no member exclusively appointed as an expert on consumer affairs (as mandated in the regulations)

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on GERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

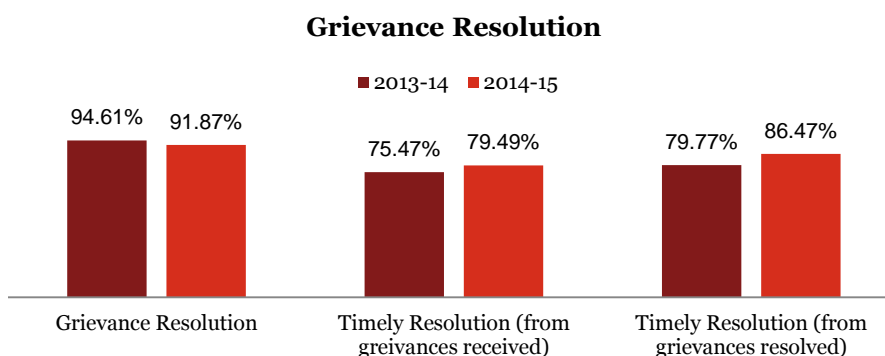
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - CGRFs

Table 35: Gujarat - Grievance Resolution Results (Quarterly), CGRFs (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	131	131	126	131	127	98	98	101	96	146
Received during the quarter/year	1687	436	414	408	429	1599	374	419	407	399
Disposed of during the quarter/year	1720	441	409	412	458	1559	371	424	357	407
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	841	185	210	207	239	720	177	196	165	182
In the favour of licensees	703	201	165	166	171	643	158	173	153	159
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	1372	345	315	311	401	1349	327	358	303	361
Beyond stipulated time	348	96	94	101	57	211	45	66	54	46
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	339	85	79	86	89	365	90	101	89	85

Source: As per data provided by GERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

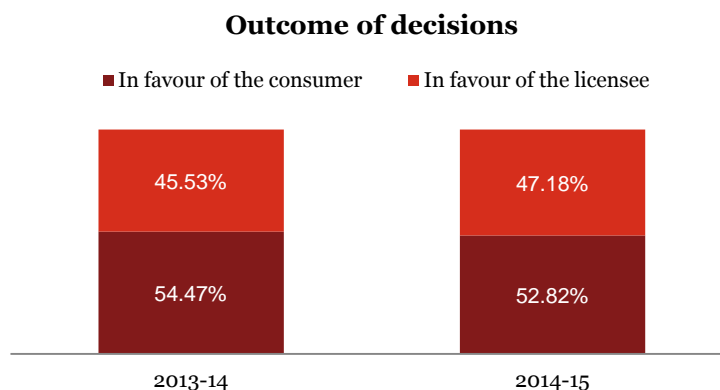


Source: As per data provided by GERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 24: Gujarat - Grievance Resolution, CGRFs

CGRFs in Gujarat handle a large base of complaints, but have managed to resolve complaints in a fairly efficient manner. With eight CGRFs currently operating, the efficiency of resolution for CGRFs in Gujarat has remained at over 90% in 2013-14 and 2014-15. Around 80% of the complaints handled by CGRF are being resolved in the stipulated time period of 45 days, which is expected to improve in the coming years.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by GERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 25: Gujarat - Outcome of decisions, CGRFs

Gujarat has awarded more decisions in favour of consumers rather than licensees, although by a small margin.

Number of sittings

Gujarat has conducted one of the highest numbers of CGRF sittings in any quarter for the given states under study, with an average of about 88 sittings per quarter over the two years. Each CGRF in Gujarat is handling approximately 66 grievances per quarter.

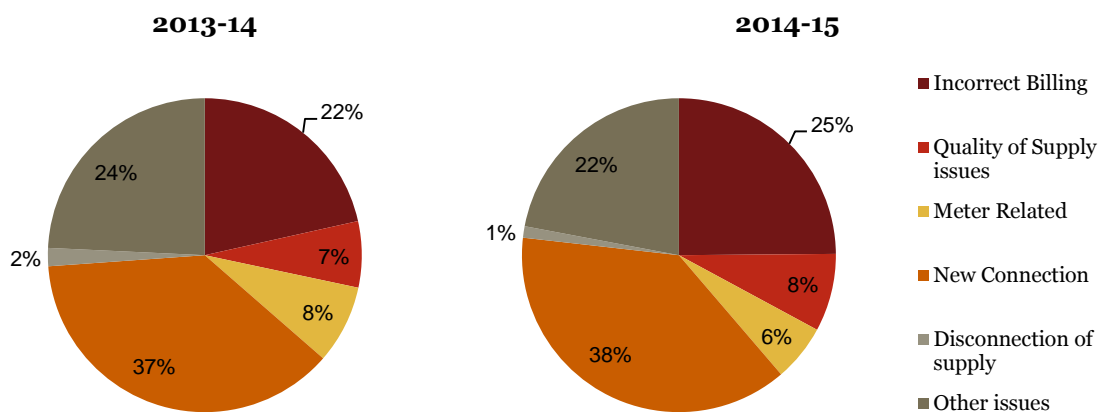
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 36: Gujarat - Category-wise resolution results (annual), CGRFs (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnect ion of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	29	4	16	52	1	29
Grievances received during the year	362	120	131	629	33	412
Total grievances handled in the year	391	124	147	681	34	441
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	260	92	120	498	29	378
Resolved beyond stipulated time	103	28	27	133	4	48
Total grievances resolved	363	120	147	631	32	426
Balance grievances to be redressed	29	5	0	49	1	14
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	29	5	0	49	1	14
Grievances received during the year	393	131	99	597	19	360
Total grievances handled in the year	422	136	99	646	20	374
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	297	104	86	506	13	342
Resolved beyond stipulated time	71	19	9	92	2	18

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnect ion of supply	Other issues
Total grievances resolved	368	123	95	598	15	360
Balance grievances to be redressed	54	13	4	48	5	14

Source: As per data provided by GERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by GERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 26: Gujarat - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, Gujarat CGRFs

A large number of grievance related to new connections have been escalated to CGRFs, along with billing and meter related issues.

Ombudsman Regulations

Table 37: Gujarat - Ombudsman Regulations Snapshot

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Ombudsman: 1 Office of the Ombudsman: Ahmedabad Commission to appoint one or more Ombudsman as required
Composition/Qualifications	Not clarified
Independence of Ombudsman	Retired Chief Engineer of a utility is also eligible for Ombudsman
Appointment of Ombudsman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed by the Commission The Commission forms a selection committee consisting of the Chairperson and members of the Commission for selecting the Ombudsman. The Chairperson of the Commission is the chairperson of the selection committee. The Ombudsman is selected by a simple majority and the Chairperson has a casting vote
Tenure of Ombudsman	3 years, extendible by 2 years
Time Period for Issuance of Order	Within 60 days or two months from the date of the receipt of the complaint
Cost and Expense	Borne by the Commission

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on GERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

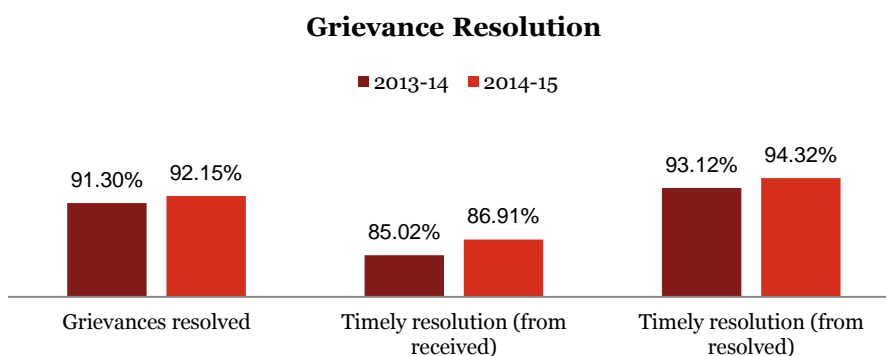
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - Ombudsman

Table 38: Gujarat - Grievance Resolution Results (Annual), Ombudsman (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	12	12	31	19	14	18	18	21	10	13
Received during the quarter/year	195	56	55	37	47	173	52	40	43	38
Disposed of during the quarter/year	189	37	67	42	43	176	49	51	40	36
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	70	12	27	18	13	60	16	22	12	10
In the favour of licensees	102	20	33	23	26	92	25	20	25	22
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	176	35	60	41	40	166	45	50	39	32
Beyond stipulated time	13	2	7	1	3	10	4	1	1	4
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	224	42	83	51	48	216	56	60	56	44

Source: As per data provided by GERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

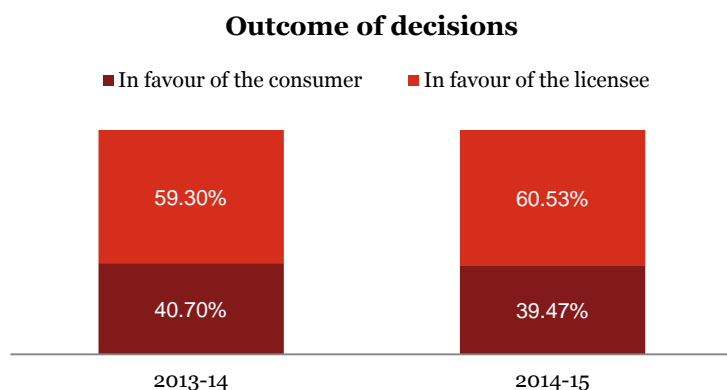


Source: As per data provided by GERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 27: Gujarat - Grievance Resolution, Ombudsman

The efficiency and timeliness of grievance resolution for Ombudsman has remained steady from 2013-14 to 2014-15. Keeping in mind the frequent issues escalated to the Ombudsman, and the most common delays in grievance redressal (such as time taken to file responses and setting a suitable data for hearing), the efficiency of resolution procedures adopted by the Ombudsman can be considered for further improvement.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by GERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 28: Gujarat - Outcome of decisions, Ombudsman

A significant percentage of decisions have been awarded by the Ombudsman in Gujarat in favour of the licensee.

Escalations to Ombudsman

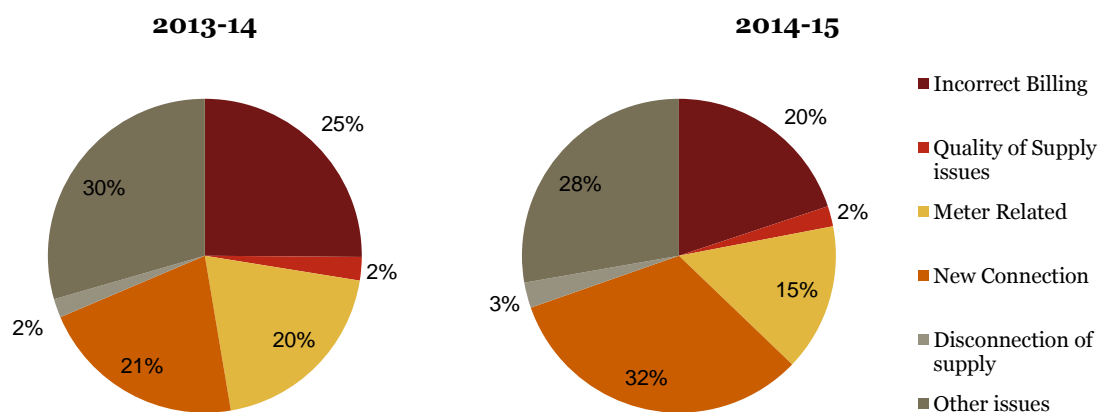
A fairly small percentage of complaints have been escalated to Ombudsman. For every 10 grievances escalated to the CGRFs, only one grievance on an average has been escalated to the Ombudsman.

Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 39: Gujarat - Category-wise resolution results, Ombudsman (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	3	0	2	4	0	3
Grievances received during the year	49	5	39	40	4	58
Total grievances handled in the year	52	5	41	44	4	61
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	48	5	39	37	4	43
Resolved beyond stipulated time	1	0	0	4	0	8
Total grievances resolved	49	5	39	41	4	51
Balance grievances to be redressed	3	0	2	3	0	10
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	3	0	2	3	0	10
Grievances received during the year	35	4	27	59	5	43
Total grievances handled in the year	38	4	29	62	5	53
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	32	4	27	56	5	42
Resolved beyond stipulated time	3	0	0	2	0	5
Total grievances resolved	35	4	27	58	5	47
Balance grievances to be redressed	3	0	2	4	0	6

Source: As per data provided by GERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by GERC in the templates circulated by FOR

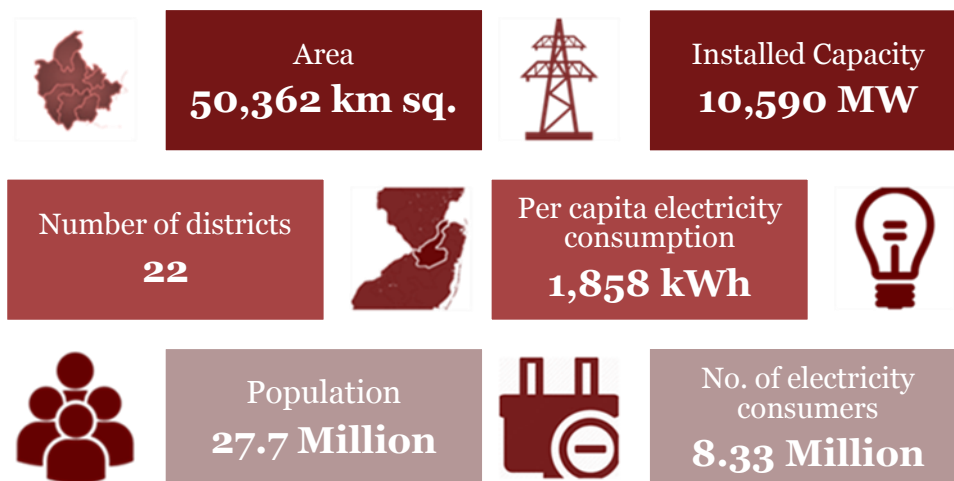
Figure 29: Gujarat - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, Ombudsman

Grievances regarding billing, meter-related issues and new connections constitute the major proportion of grievances encountered by the Ombudsman.

4.2.3. Punjab

Punjab has a unique consumer mix which is dominated by agricultural consumers, and thus the study of grievance redressal mechanism in Punjab will give us insights on the level of representation of consumer complaints from rural and agricultural consumers.

Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot



Source: Electricity Sector in India, States of India by Installed Power Capacity (Wikipedia), PSERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Figure 30: Punjab - Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot

CGRF regulations

Table 40: Punjab - CGRF Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	Number of CGRFs: 1 Location of the office: Patiala
Composition	3 members(1 Finance, 1 technical/commercial, 1 consumer expert)
Appointment of Members	Two members including the chairperson are employees of the licensee Nominated by Commission: Consumer expert
Tenure of Members	Normal term: 2 years
Time Limit for Grievance Handling	Normally within 60 days of receipt of complaint In case of grievances related to non-supply, connection or disconnection of supply: Within 30 days
Appeal against CGRF order	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order
Cost and Expense of the Forum	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on PSERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

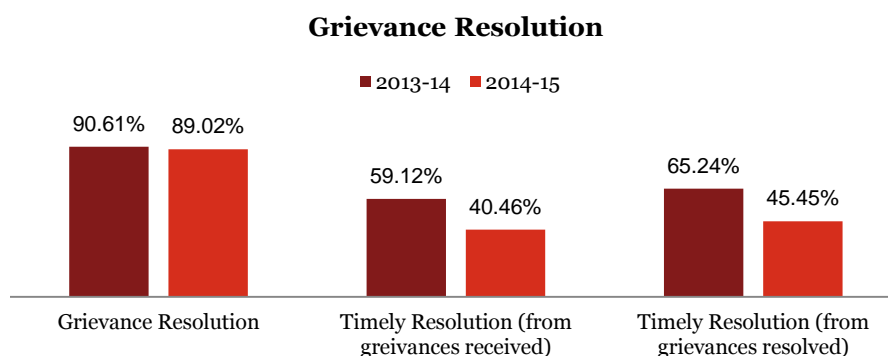
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - CGRFs

Table 41: Punjab - Grievance Resolution Results (Quarterly), CGRFs (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	28	28	27	25	18	17	17	21	21	30
Received during the quarter/year	153	41	43	34	35	156	42	40	37	37
Disposed of during the quarter/year	164	42	45	41	36	154	38	40	28	48
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	105	29	32	22	22	85	18	22	17	28
In the favour of licensees	59	13	13	19	14	69	20	18	11	20
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	107	29	28	31	19	70	23	18	9	20
Beyond stipulated time	57	13	17	10	17	84	15	22	19	28
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	115	30	33	28	24	107	25	28	28	26

Source: As per data provided by PSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution



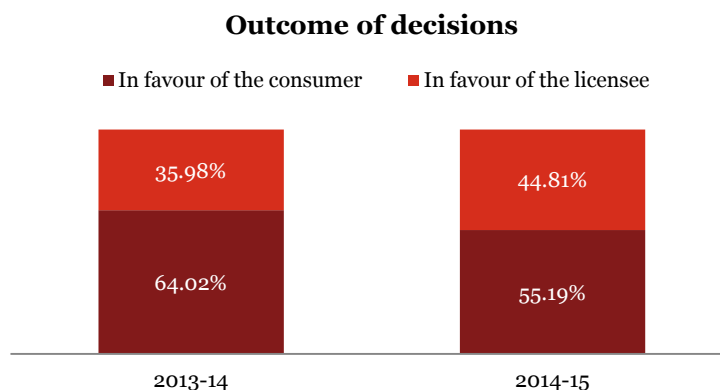
Source: As per data provided by PSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 31: Punjab - Grievance Resolution, CGRFs

CGRFs in Punjab handle a relatively smaller base of complaints, but even with one CGRF currently operating for the state, the efficiency of resolution has remained steady from 90.61% in 2013-14 to 89.02% to 2014-15.

Only about 40% of the grievances handled were being resolved in the stipulated time period in 2014-15. This may adversely affect the resolution timeliness of imminent grievances and increases the load of redressal on the CGRFs over time.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by PSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 32: Punjab - Outcome of decisions, CGRFs

Punjab has awarded marginally more decisions in favour of consumers rather than licensees.

Number of sittings

Punjab has conducted an average of 27 sittings per quarter. With a relatively modest number of sittings, the timely resolution of grievances remains a concern, and therefore the process efficiency for resolution of grievances in Punjab may need to be re-evaluated.

Other key statistics:

- Approximately 83.29 lakh consumers are being served by the only CGRF in Punjab, handling approximately 62 grievances per quarter.
- 1 in about 33,593 electricity consumers escalated a grievance to one of the CGRFs in the course of the two years in Punjab; indicating a fairly low level of consumer awareness regarding the escalation structure.

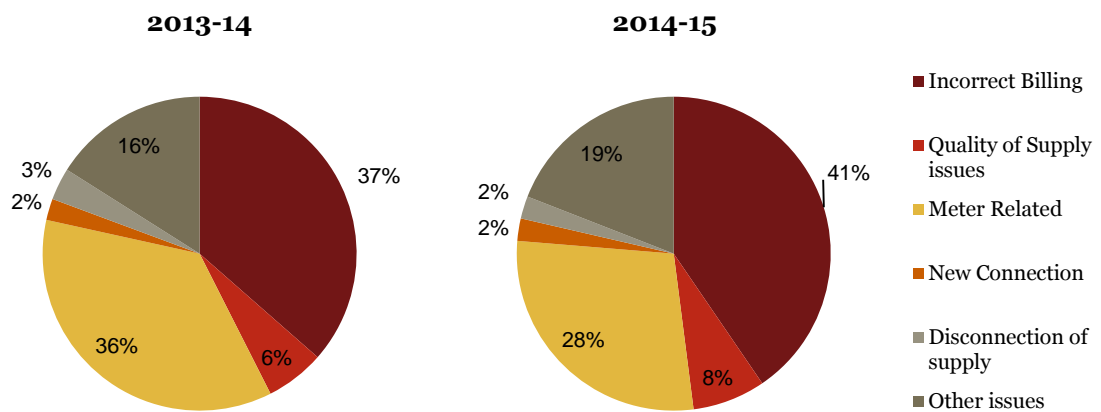
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 42: Punjab - Category-wise resolution results (annual), CGRFs (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	8	4	11	1	0	4
Grievances received during the year	58	7	54	3	6	25
Total grievances handled in the year	66	11	65	4	6	29
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	37	6	43	3	2	16
Resolved beyond stipulated time	20	3	21	1	3	9
Total grievances resolved	57	9	64	4	5	25
Balance grievances to be redressed	9	2	1	0	1	4
2014-15						
Grievances handled						

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Pending grievances of previous year	9	2	1	0	1	4
Grievances received during the year	61	11	48	4	3	29
Total grievances handled in the year	70	13	49	4	4	33
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	31	5	19	4	3	8
Resolved beyond stipulated time	36	6	26	0	0	16
Total grievances resolved	67	11	45	4	3	24
Balance grievances to be redressed	3	2	4	0	1	9

Source: As per data provided by PSERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by PSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 33: Punjab - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, CGRFs

A large number of billing and meter related grievances were being escalated to CGRFs in 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Ombudsman Regulations

Table 43: Punjab - Ombudsman Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Ombudsman: 1 Location of the Ombudsman office: Chandigarh More than one Ombudsman can be appointed if required. Also assigned with a tech advisor and secretary
Composition/Qualifications	Not mentioned
Independence of Ombudsman	Commission may designate a staff from the licensee as the Ombudsman
Appointment of Ombudsman	Appointed by the Commission
Tenure of Ombudsman	3 years
Time Period for Issuance of Order	Within 3 months from the date of the receipt of the complaint
Cost and Expense	To be borne by the distribution licensee but determined by the Commission

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on PSERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

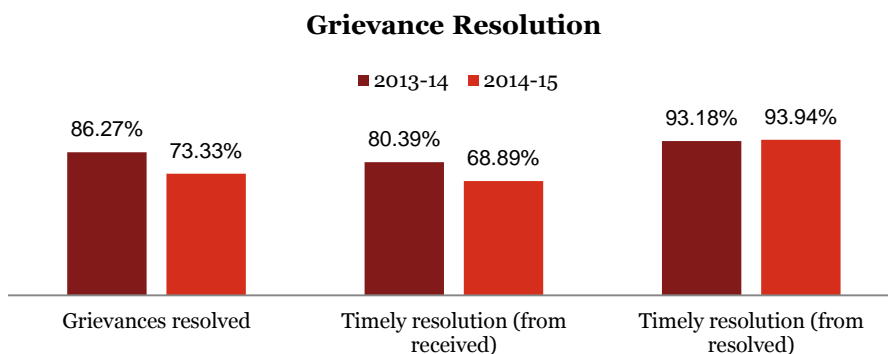
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - Ombudsman

Table 44: Punjab - Grievance Resolution Results (Annual), Ombudsman (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	9	9	10	9	7	7	7	11	6	4
Received during the quarter/year	42	12	8	10	12	38	9	9	6	14
Disposed of during the quarter/year	44	11	9	12	12	33	5	14	8	6
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	12	5	4	2	1	6	2	2	1	1
In the favour of licensees	7	1	1	3	2	9	1	4	3	1
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	41	11	6	12	12	31	4	14	8	5
Beyond stipulated time	3	0	3	0	0	2	1	0	0	1
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	54	13	12	15	14	44	8	12	10	14

Source: As per data provided by PSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

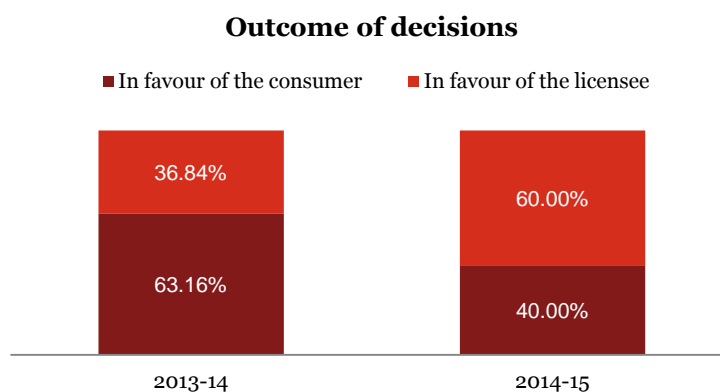


Source: As per data provided by PSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 34: Punjab - Grievance Resolution, Ombudsman

While the efficiency of grievance redressal by Ombudsman has declined from 86.72% 2013-14 to 73.33% in 2014-15, the timeliness of resolution is at 80.39% in 2013-14 and 68.89% in 2014-15. Since several types of grievances are not being resolved within the stipulated period of time, the efficiency of resolution procedures adopted by the Ombudsman can be considered for further improvement.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by PSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 35: Punjab - Outcome of decisions, Ombudsman

More decisions have been awarded by the Ombudsman in Punjab in favour of the consumer in 2013-14, but the trend had reversed in 2014-15.

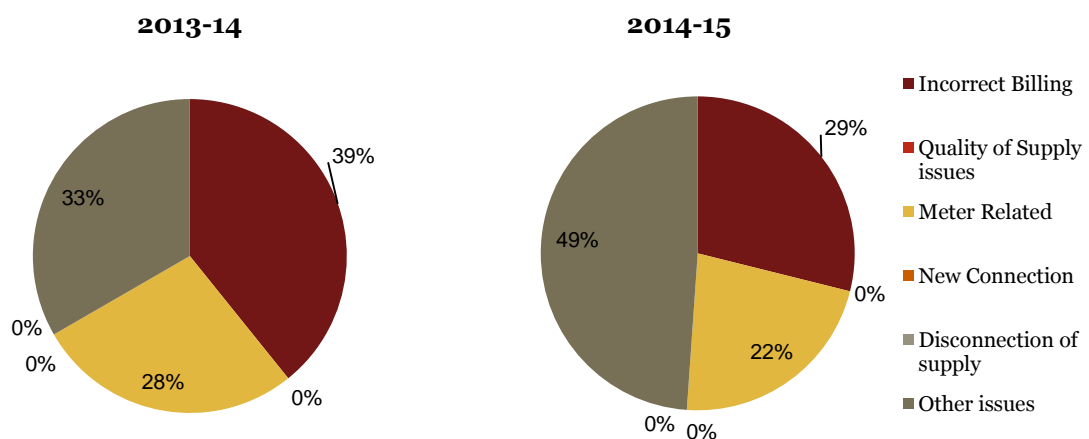
Relative to other states, a notable percentage of complaints have been escalated to the Ombudsman in Punjab. For every 4 complaints received by the CGRF, one complaint was escalated to the Ombudsman on an average over the period of two years.

Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 45: Punjab - Category-wise resolution results, Ombudsman (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	3	0	2	0	0	4
Grievances received during the year	17	0	12	0	0	13
Total grievances handled in the year	20	0	14	0	0	17
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	15	0	12	0	0	14
Resolved beyond stipulated time	2	0	1	0	0	0
Total grievances resolved	17	0	13	0	0	14
Balance grievances to be redressed	3	0	1	0	0	3
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	3	0	1	0	0	3
Grievances received during the year	10	0	9	0	0	19
Total grievances handled in the year	13	0	10	0	0	22
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	6	0	10	0	0	15
Resolved beyond stipulated time	2	0	0	0	0	0
Total grievances resolved	8	0	10	0	0	15
Balance grievances to be redressed	5	0	0	0	0	7

Source: As per data provided by PSERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by PSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

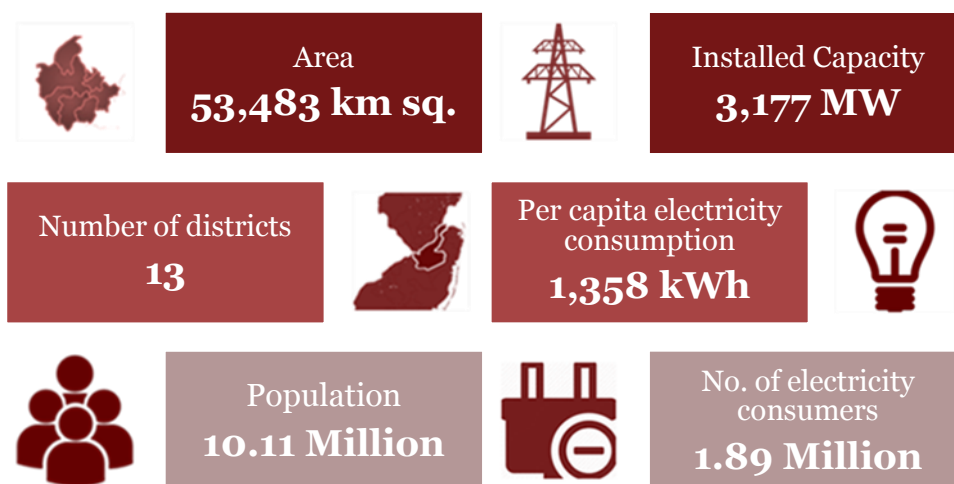
Figure 36: Punjab - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, Ombudsman

Grievances regarding billing and meter related issues constitute the major proportion of grievances encountered by the Ombudsman.

4.2.4. Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand is composed of varying topographies, which necessitates unique infrastructure requirements and logistical setups to serve the settlements located across the state. It therefore poses a challenge to public and private utilities in providing adequate reach and quality of services to the required population.

Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot



Source: Electricity Sector in India, States of India by Installed Power Capacity (Wikipedia), UERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Figure 37: Uttarakhand - Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot

CGRF regulations

The grievance redressal framework in Uttarakhand provides for 2 CGRFs serving Kumaon & Udham Singh Nagar, and Garhwal & Haridwar regions respectively, along with the presence of one Ombudsman.

Table 46: Uttarakhand - CGRF Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of CGRFs: 2 Location of the offices: Haldwani for Kumaon Zone, Dehradun for CGRF Garhwal Zone One or more Forum as may be prescribed by the Commission for each utility The Forum has sittings at the principal office and also at any other place in each district in the area of supply of the Distribution Licensee as may be decided by the Forum from time to time or as directed by the Commission
Composition	3 members (Judicial, Technical, & one consumer expert) 2 members appointed by Licensee, 1 independent member
Appointment of Members	Appointed by licensee: Legal and technical member Nominated by Commission: Consumer expert
Tenure of Members	Normal term: 3 years Extendible by: 2 years
Time Limit for Grievance Handling	Within 60 days of receipt of complaint
Appeal against CGRF order	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order
Cost and Expense of the Forum	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on UERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Note

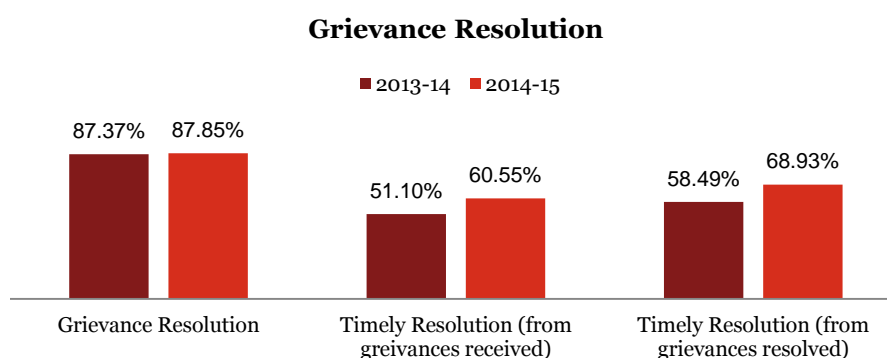
- It has been mandated by regulations that no post can be left vacant for more than 30 days in CGRFs in Uttarakhand.
- The Commission may direct the forums to hold sittings in areas where more number of grievances have been registered.

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on UERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - CGRFs**Table 47: Uttarakhand - Grievance Resolution Results (Quarterly), CGRFs (Nos.)**

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	104	104	100	53	40	63	63	41	86	57
Received during the quarter/year	395	126	84	83	102	406	58	143	100	105
Disposed of during the quarter/year	436	130	131	96	79	412	80	98	129	105
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	340	104	95	75	66	321	59	77	104	81
In the favour of licensees	96	26	36	21	13	91	21	21	25	24
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	255	71	59	62	63	284	46	73	93	72
Beyond stipulated time	181	59	72	34	16	128	34	25	36	33
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	272	68	68	68	68	272	68	68	68	68

Source: As per data provided by UERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

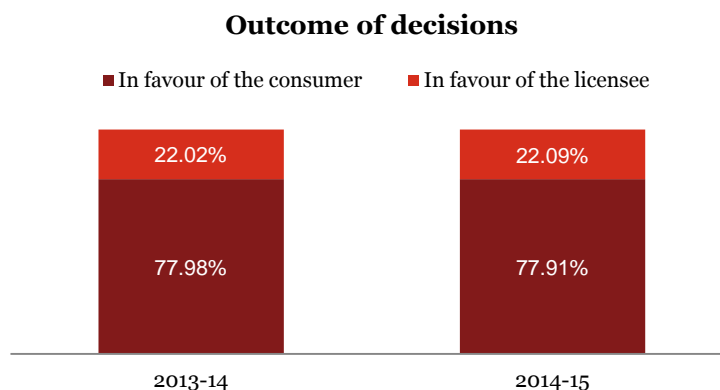
Source: As per data provided by UERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 38: Uttarakhand - Grievance Resolution, CGRFs

The efficiency of resolution has remained steady between 87-88% from 2013-14 to 2014-15 for the CGRFs in Uttarakhand. However, only about 6 out of 10 complaints handled were being resolved in the stipulated time period in 2014-15. This may adversely affect the resolution timeliness of forthcoming grievances and increases the load of redressal on the CGRFs over time.

It has thus become crucial for CGRFs to improve the efficiency of forum resolution procedures in Uttarakhand in the near future since the number of pending resolution over each quarter is rising.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by UERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 39: Uttarakhand - Outcome of decisions, CGRFs

Uttarakhand has been consistent in awarding more decisions in favour of consumers rather than distribution licensees.

Number of sittings

Uttarakhand has conducted the CGRF sittings on a regular basis over each quarter of the two years under consideration (2013-14 and 2014-15).

Other key statistics:

- An average of approximately 9.45 lakh consumers is being served by each of the CGRFs in Uttarakhand, with each CGRF handling approximately 84 grievances per quarter.
- 1 in about 2812 electricity consumers on an average escalated a grievance to one of the CGRFs in the course of the two years in Uttarakhand; indicating a fairly high level of consumer awareness regarding the escalation structure.

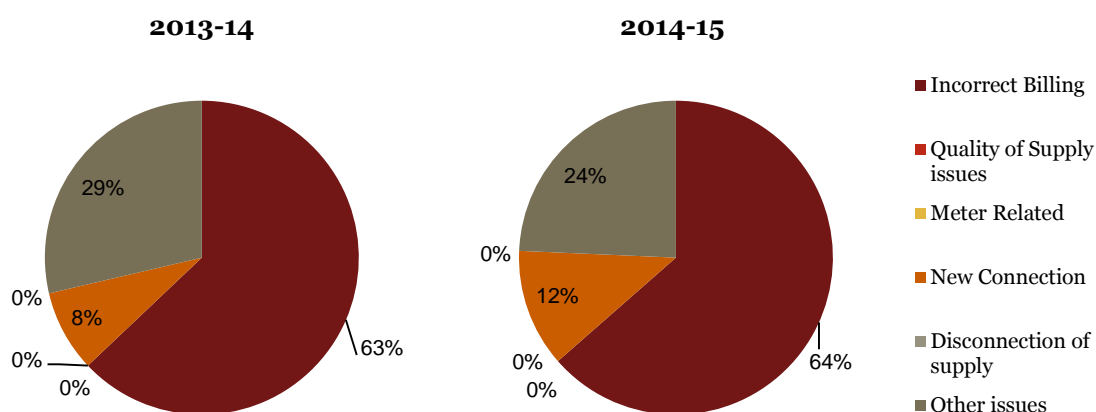
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 48: Uttarakhand - Category-wise resolution results (annual), CGRFs (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	58	0	0	10	0	36
Grievances received during the year	256	0	0	32	0	107
Total grievances handled in the year	314	0	0	42	0	143
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	161	0	0	23	0	71
Resolved beyond stipulated time	120	0	0	14	0	47
Total grievances resolved	281	0	0	37	0	118
Balance grievances to be redressed	33	0	0	5	0	25
2014-15						
Grievances handled						

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Pending grievances of previous year	33	0	0	5	0	25
Grievances received during the year	265	0	0	52	0	89
Total grievances handled in the year	298	0	0	57	0	114
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	165	0	0	40	0	79
Resolved beyond stipulated time	88	0	0	13	0	27
Total grievances resolved	253	0	0	53	0	106
Balance grievances to be redressed	45	0	0	4	0	8

Source: As per data provided by UERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by UERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 40: Uttarakhand - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, CGRFs

A large number of grievances related to billing and new connections have been escalated to CGRFs in Uttarakhand in 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Ombudsman Regulations

Table 49: Uttarakhand - Ombudsman Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Ombudsman: 1 Location of the Ombudsman office: Dehradun More than one Ombudsman may be appointed if required Ombudsman holds sittings at such places within his area of jurisdiction as may be considered necessary and proper by him
Composition/Qualifications	Experience in engineering, finance, commerce, economics, law, consumer affairs or management and has held strategic positions in the said fields at the level not below that of the functional Director of any electricity utility or a retired civil servant not below the rank of Secretary to the State Government
Independence of Ombudsman	Not eligible within 2 years of retirement from the services of an electricity utility
Appointment of Ombudsman	Appointed by the Commission
Tenure of Ombudsman	3 years, extendible by two years
Time Period for Issuance of Order	Within 3 months from the date of the receipt of the complaint
Cost and Expense	To be borne by the distribution licensee but determined by the Commission

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on UERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

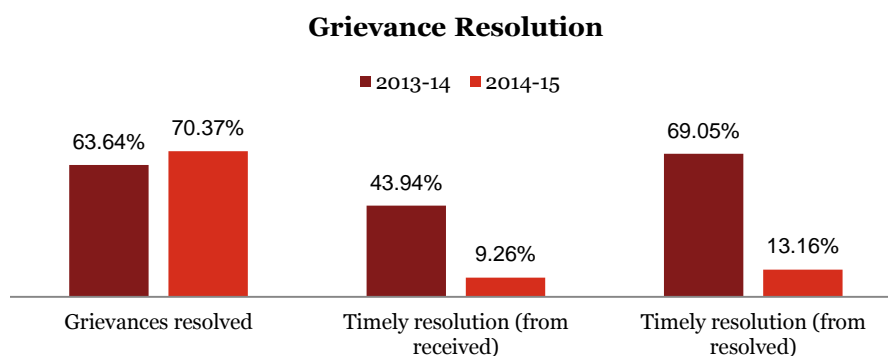
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - Ombudsman

Table 50: Uttarakhand - Grievance Resolution Results (Annual), Ombudsman (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	22	22	22	17	26	24	24	10	7	12
Received during the quarter/year	44	4	16	20	4	30	10	3	10	7
Disposed of during the quarter/year	42	4	21	11	6	38	24	6	5	3
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	9	2	2	4	1	6	4	2	0	0
In the favour of licensees	33	2	19	7	5	32	20	4	5	3
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	29	4	13	7	5	5	3	1	0	1
Beyond stipulated time	13	0	8	4	1	33	21	5	5	2
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	272	68	68	68	68	272	68	68	68	68

Source: As per data provided by UERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

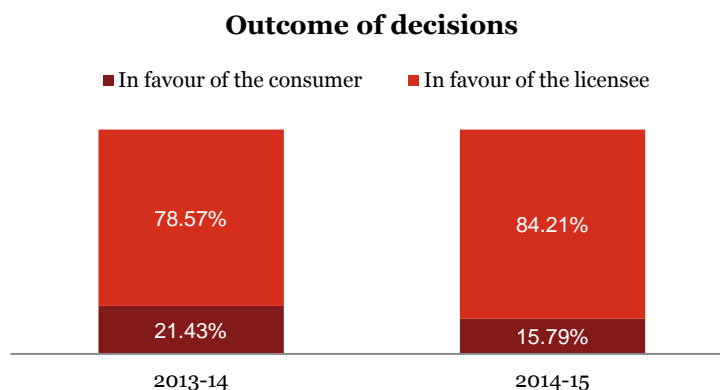


Source: As per data provided by UERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 41: Uttarakhand - Grievance Resolution, Ombudsman

While the resolution efficiency of Ombudsman has improved marginally from 63.64% 2013-14 to 70.37% 2014-15, the timeliness of resolution has declined significantly (43.94% in 2013-14 and 9.36% in 2014-15). Keeping in mind the frequent issues escalated to the Ombudsman, and the most common delays in grievance redressal, the efficiency of resolution procedures adopted by the Ombudsman can be considered for further improvement.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by UERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 42: Uttarakhand - Outcome of decisions, Ombudsman

A significant percentage (around 80%) of decisions has been awarded by the Ombudsman in Uttarakhand in favour of the licensee. A fairly small percentage of complaints have been escalated to Ombudsman. This can be attributed to a variety of reasons:

- Consumers are in general satisfied with the decisions of the respective CGRFs
- Lack of awareness about Ombudsman
- Lack of guidance to the consumers regarding the procedure to be followed for registering a complaint to Ombudsman

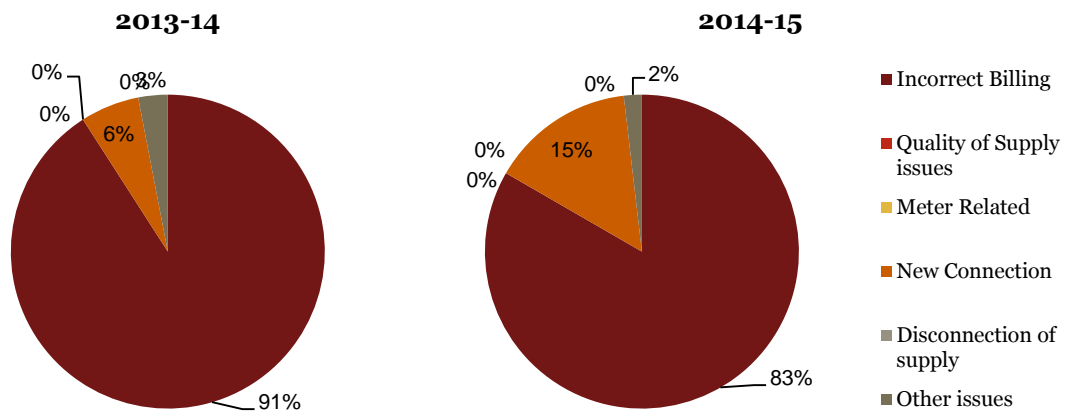
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 51: Uttarakhand - Category-wise resolution results, Ombudsman (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	21	0	0	1	0	0
Grievances received during the year	39	0	0	3	0	2
Total grievances handled in the year	60	0	0	4	0	2
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	13	0	0	0	0	0
Resolved beyond stipulated time	26	0	0	2	0	1
Total grievances resolved	39	0	0	2	0	1
Balance grievances to be redressed	21	0	0	2	0	1
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	21	0	0	2	0	1
Grievances received during the year	24	0	0	6	0	0
Total grievances handled in the year	45	0	0	8	0	1
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	3	0	0	1	0	1

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Resolved beyond stipulated time	27	0	0	6	0	0
Total grievances resolved	30	0	0	7	0	1
Balance grievances to be redressed	15	0	0	1	0	0

Source: As per data provided by UERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by UERC in the templates circulated by FOR

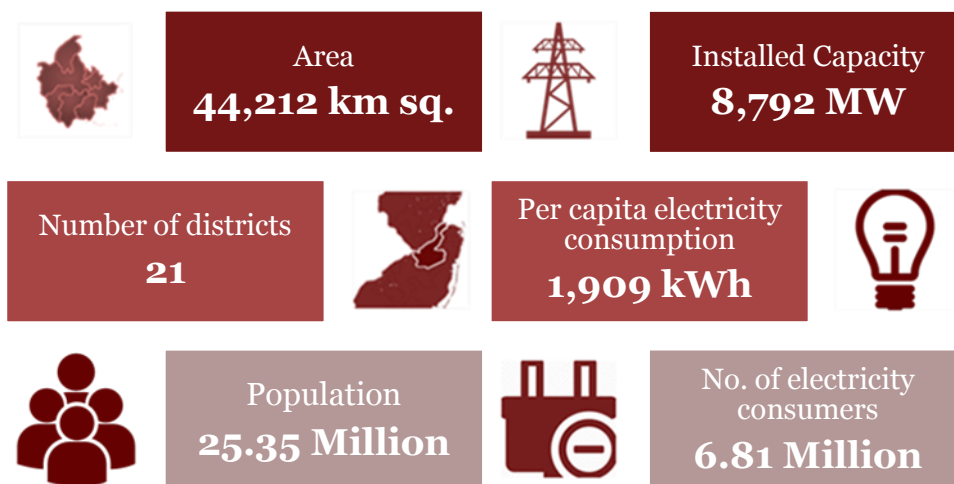
Figure 43: Uttarakhand - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, Ombudsman

Grievances regarding billing and meter related issues constitute the major proportion of grievances encountered by the Ombudsman.

4.2.5. Haryana

Haryana is served by two power distribution companies: Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam Limited (UHBVNL) which serves power to approximately 27 lakh consumers in North circles, and Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam Limited (DHBVNL) which serves power to approximately 41 lakh consumers in South circles of Haryana. Domestic and agriculture categories make up for the bulk of power consumers in Haryana.

Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot



Source: Electricity Sector in India, States of India by Installed Power Capacity (Wikipedia), HERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Figure 44: Haryana - Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot

CGRF regulations

Haryana is amongst the few states with very low number (two) of CGRF offices. Hence it has been selected to further study the effectiveness of grievance redressal mechanism being handled by just two CGRF's for around 68 lac connections.

Table 52: Haryana - CGRF Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of CGRFs: 2 Location of the offices: Panchkula, for CGRF Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam Limited (UHBVNL), Hisar for CGRF Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam Limited
Composition	3 members (one legal, one technical, & one consumer expert)
Appointment of Members	All three members appointed by the licensee (Both the technical members are employee of the discom)
Tenure of Members	Normal term: 3 years, No extension
Time Limit for Grievance Handling	Not mentioned
Appeal against CGRF order	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order
Cost and Expense of the Forum	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee, and expenses allowed to pass through in ARR

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on HERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

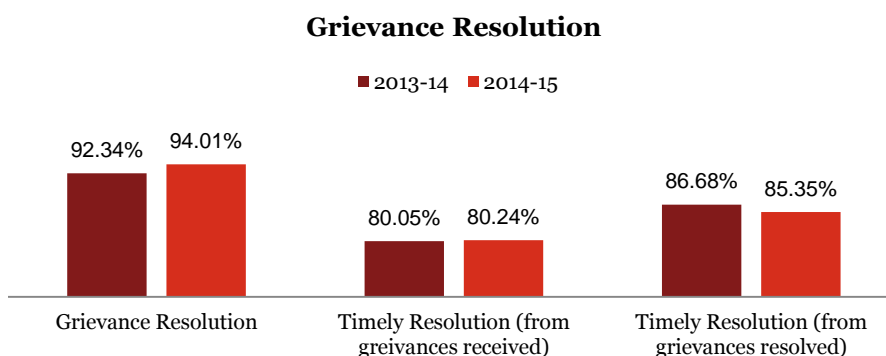
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - CGRFs

Table 53: Haryana - Grievance Resolution Results (Quarterly) (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	51	51	32	49	60	33	33	38	26	21
Received during the quarter/year	380	97	90	110	83	301	71	61	40	129
Disposed of during the quarter/year	398	116	73	99	110	314	66	73	45	130
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	267	64	47	77	79	218	40	50	30	98
In the favour of licensees	131	52	26	22	31	96	26	23	15	32
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	345	92	65	84	104	268	55	61	36	116
Beyond stipulated time	53	24	8	15	6	46	11	12	9	14
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	109	21	28	30	30	134	27	38	34	35

Source: As per data provided by HERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

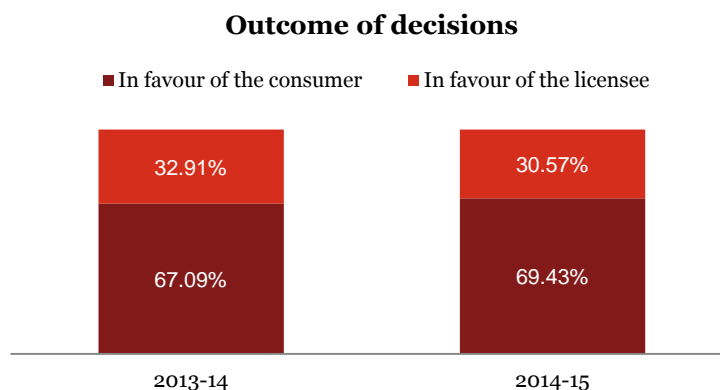


Source: As per data provided by HERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 45: Haryana - Grievance Resolution, Haryana CGRFs

The efficiency of resolution for CGRFs in Haryana has improved marginally from 92.34% in 2013-14 to 94.01%. About 8 out of 10 complaints handled are being resolved in the stipulated time period.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by HERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 46: Haryana - Outcome of decisions, CGRFs

Haryana has been consistent in awarding more decisions in favour of consumers rather than licensees.

Number of sittings

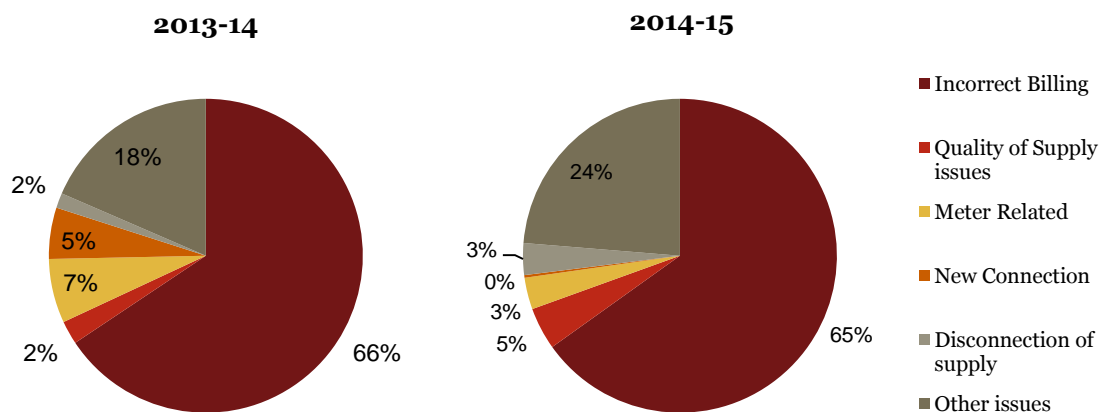
CGRFs in Haryana have conducted a relatively low average of 30 sittings in each quarter of 2013-14 and 2014-15 to handle approximately 62 grievances per quarter. An increase in the number of sittings may thus help improve the timeliness of resolution of grievances over time.

Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 54: Haryana - Category-wise resolution results (annual), CGRFs (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnect ion of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	46	0	2	7	1	23
Grievances received during the year	252	11	28	17	6	61
Total grievances handled in the year	298	11	30	24	7	84
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	232	7	22	16	4	57
Resolved beyond stipulated time	30	2	4	7	0	17
Total grievances resolved	262	9	26	23	4	74
Balance grievances to be redressed	36	2	4	1	3	10
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	36	2	4	1	3	10
Grievances received during the year	203	14	8	0	9	77
Total grievances handled in the year	239	16	12	1	12	87
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	173	8	7	0	9	61
Resolved beyond stipulated time	34	2	4	1	3	12
Total grievances resolved	207	10	11	1	12	73
Balance grievances to be redressed	32	6	1	0	0	14

Source: As per data provided by HERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by HERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 47: Haryana - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, CGRFs

A large number of billing related issues were being escalated to CGRF in Haryana during 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Ombudsman Regulations

Table 55: Haryana - Ombudsman Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	Number of Ombudsman: 1 Location of the Ombudsman office: Panchkula
Composition/Qualifications	Not mentioned
Independence of Ombudsman	Not ensured because a serving employee of the licensee may apply for the post
Appointment of Ombudsman	Commission to appoint an Ombudsman. Commission will also be provided a secretariat.
Tenure of Ombudsman	3 years, extendible by 1 year
Time Period for Issuance of Order	Within 3 months from the date of the receipt of the complaint. Interested the complainant may appeal to Commission if he is still aggrieved
Cost and Expense	Determined and borne by the Commission

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on HERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

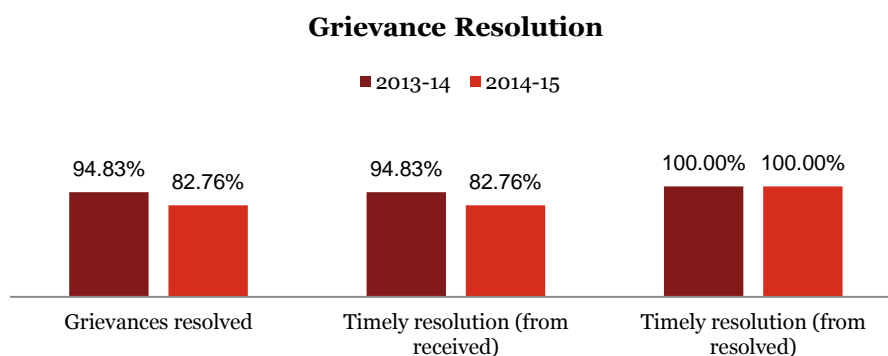
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - Ombudsman

Table 56: Haryana - Grievance Resolution Results (Annual), Ombudsman (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	6	6	13	13	5	3	3	8	10	5
Received during the quarter/year	52	16	14	14	8	55	12	14	15	14
Disposed of during the quarter/year	55	9	14	22	10	48	7	12	20	9
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	33	8	10	8	7	31	6	8	11	6
In the favour of licensees	22	1	4	14	3	17	1	4	9	3
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	55	9	14	22	10	48	7	12	20	9
Beyond stipulated time	0					0				
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	125	26	55	31	13	81	12	22	28	19

Source: As per data provided by HERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

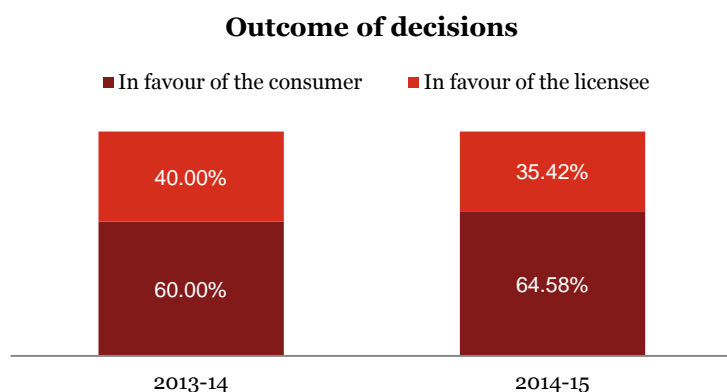


Source: As per data provided by HERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 48: Haryana - Grievance Resolution, Ombudsman

While the resolution efficiency of Ombudsman has declined marginally from 94.83% in 2013-14 to 82.76% in 2014-15, all the resolved complaints have been stated to be resolved within the stipulated time period.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by HERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 49: Haryana - Outcome of decisions, Ombudsman

A higher percentage of decisions have been awarded by the Ombudsman in Haryana in favour of the consumers.

Escalations to Ombudsman

A fairly small percentage of complaints have been escalated to Ombudsman (about 1-2 complaints escalated to Ombudsman for 10 grievances escalated to CGRFs). This may be attributed to the lack of awareness of the consumers regarding the availability of Ombudsman services.

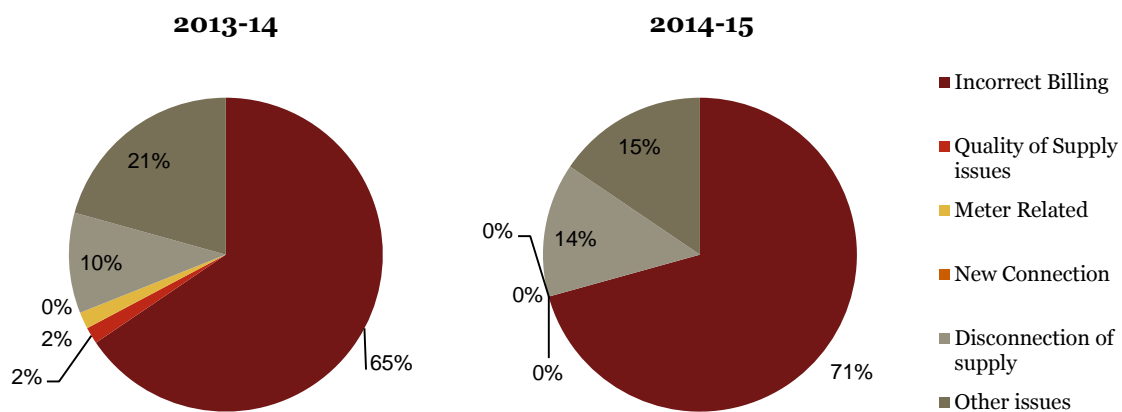
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 57: Haryana - Category-wise resolution results, Ombudsman (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	46	0	2	7	1	23
Grievances received during the year	252	11	28	17	6	61
Total grievances handled in the year	298	11	30	24	7	84
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	232	7	22	16	4	57
Resolved beyond stipulated time	30	2	4	7	0	17
Total grievances resolved	262	9	26	23	4	74
Balance grievances to be redressed	36	2	4	1	3	10
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	36	2	4	1	3	10
Grievances received during the year	203	14	8	0	9	77
Total grievances handled in the year	239	16	12	1	12	87
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	173	8	7	0	9	61
Resolved beyond stipulated time	34	2	4	1	3	12

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnect ion of supply	Other issues
Total grievances resolved	207	10	11	1	12	73
Balance grievances to be redressed	32	6	1	0	0	14

Source: As per data provided by HERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by HERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 50: Haryana - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, Ombudsman

Billing related issues are the major type of grievances encountered by the Ombudsman.

4.2.6. Andhra Pradesh

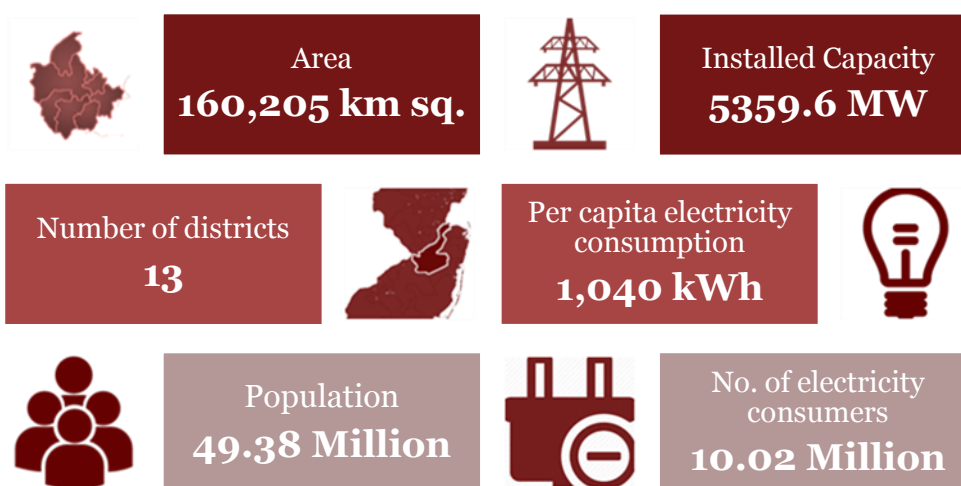
With the division of the erstwhile state of Andhra Pradesh and the formation of a separate state of Telangana in 2014, TSERC (Telangana State Electricity Regulatory Commission) was formed to cater to the new region, while APERC continued to oversee regulatory functions for the state of present-day Andhra Pradesh.

The two major power distribution companies in Andhra Pradesh are The Southern Power Distribution Company of Andhra Pradesh Limited (APSPDCL), and The Eastern Power Distribution Company of Andhra Pradesh Limited (APEPDCL).

APSPDCL has its Head Quarters at Tirupati, and comprises of eight districts; namely Krishna, Guntur, Ongole, Nellore, Chittoor, Kadapa, Kurnool and Ananthapur. APSPDCL supplies power to over one crore consumers belonging to different categories.

The Eastern Power Distribution Company of Andhra Pradesh Limited (APEPDCL), with its Head Quarters at Visakhapatnam, comprises five districts namely Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari and West Godavari. APEPDCL supplies power to over 52.76 lakh consumers belonging to different categories.

Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot



Source: Electricity Sector in India, States of India by Installed Power Capacity (Wikipedia), APERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Figure 51: Andhra Pradesh - Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot

CGRF regulations

The CGRF regulations in Andhra Pradesh ask CGRFs to be constituted with representations from Technical, Legal, Finance as well as Consumer Affairs for a fair assessment and redressal of registered grievances.

Table 58: Andhra Pradesh - CGRF Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of CGRFs: 2 Location of the offices: APEPDCL-Vizag, APSPDCL-Tirupati Every Licensee has established one Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum having jurisdiction over its area of supply The Forum has sittings at the Head Quarters and /or at any other place in

Regulations	Description
	the Licensee area as may be decided by the Forum depending upon the number of grievances and area of operation
Composition	The forum consists of four members, including the Chairperson (Technical), Member (Finance) and Member (Legal), and one co-opted Member, who is familiar with Consumer affairs
Appointment of Members	Appointed by Licensee, Co-opted member appointed by Commission
Tenure of Members	Normal term: 3 years, Extendible by: 2 years
Time Limit for Grievance Handling	Within 45 days of receipt of complaint
Appeal against CGRF order	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order
Cost and Expense of the Forum	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on APERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Note:

1. The position of the Member from a finance background may be vacant in CGRF-APEPDCL, as the person who in the said position is not mentioned on the APEPDCL website.
2. The position of the Member from a Consumer Affairs background may be vacant in CGRF-APSPDCL, as the person who in the said position is not mentioned in CGRF orders.

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on APERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

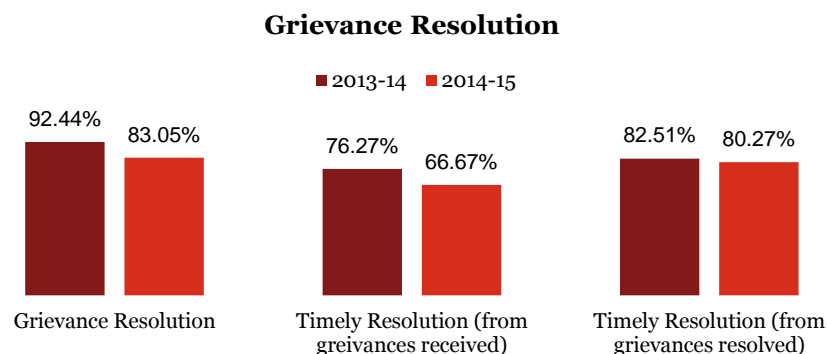
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot – CGRFs

Table 59: Andhra Pradesh - Grievance Resolution Results (Quarterly), CGRFs (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	16	16	69	24	38	58	58	35	73	95
Received during the quarter/year	751	219	141	184	207	650	141	257	90	162
Disposed of during the quarter/year	709	166	186	170	187	588	164	219	68	137
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer										
In the favour of licensees										
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	585	132	140	151	162	472	120	186	68	98
Beyond stipulated time	124	34	46	19	25	116	44	33	0	39
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year										

Source: As per data provided by APERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution



Source: As per data provided by APERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 52: Andhra Pradesh - Grievance Resolution, CGRFs

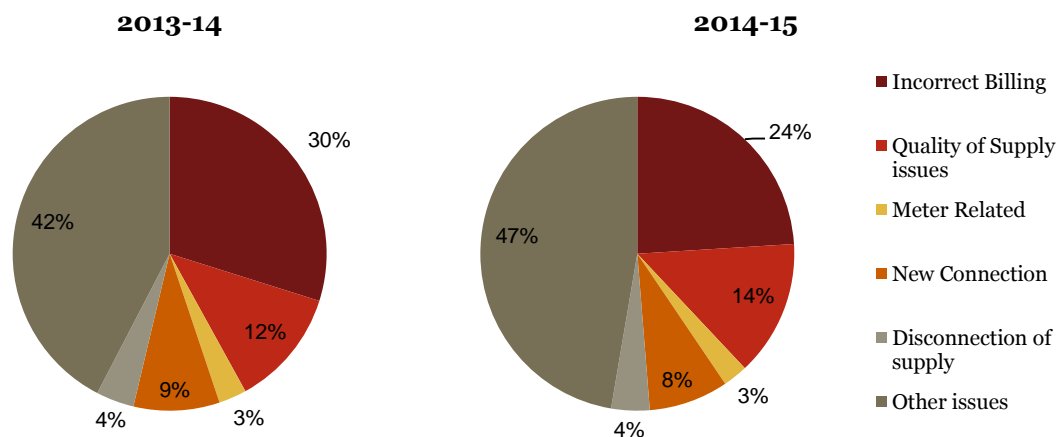
With 4 CGRFs still operating in erstwhile Andhra Pradesh office locations, the success rate of resolution has declined marginally from 92.44% in 2013-14 to 83.05%. About 7 out of 10 complaints on an average are being resolved in the stipulated time period of 45 days. Each CGRF has been handling approximately 112 grievances per quarter.

Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 60: Andhra Pradesh - Category-wise resolution results (annual), CGRFs (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnect ion of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	1	6	0	1	0	8
Grievances received during the year	228	87	22	67	30	317
Total grievances handled in the year	229	93	22	68	30	325
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	189	53	17	55	30	241
Resolved beyond stipulated time	23	33	5	9	0	54
Total grievances resolved	212	86	22	64	30	295
Balance grievances to be redressed	17	7	0	4	0	30
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	17	7	0	4	0	30
Grievances received during the year	153	92	18	54	28	305
Total grievances handled in the year	170	99	18	58	28	335
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	132	48	12	45	28	207
Resolved beyond stipulated time	13	27	4	9	0	63
Total grievances resolved	145	75	16	54	28	270
Balance grievances to be redressed	25	24	2	4	0	65

Source: As per data provided by APERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by APERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 53: Andhra Pradesh - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, CGRFs

A large number of grievances related to billing and quality of supply issues have been escalated to CGRFs in the state.

Ombudsman Regulations

Table 61: Andhra Pradesh - Ombudsman Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	Number of Ombudsman: 1 Location of the Ombudsman Office: Hyderabad The Commission may appoint or designate more than one Ombudsmen for a licensee or a common Vidyut Ombudsman, or Ombudsmen for two or more Distribution Licensees
Composition/Qualifications	Should have experience and exposure in legal affairs, engineering, education, industry, civil service, administrative service, or consumer affairs
Independence of Ombudsman	Not clarified
Appointment of Ombudsman	Appointed by the Commission
Tenure of Ombudsman	3 years, extendible by 2 years
Time Period for Issuance of Order	Where the representation is not settled by agreement within a period of 30 days from the date of receipt of complaint or such extended period the Vidyut Ombudsman may deem fit duly considering the overall time limit specified
Cost and Expense	Borne by the Commission

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on APERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Table 62: Andhra Pradesh - Grievance Resolution Results, Ombudsman (Nos.)

Particulars	2014-15		2015-16
	H1	H2	H1
Grievances handled			
At the beginning of the half-year	59	48	30
Received during the half-year	26	18	19
Disposed of during the half-year	37	36	23
Timeliness of resolution			
Appeals pending at the end of this period	48	30	26
Appeals pending for more than 2 months	25	25	23
Number of hearings			

Particulars	2014-15		2015-16
	H1	H2	H1
Number of hearings	71	71	23
Number of appeals heard	274	274	69

Source: Vidyut Ombudsman Website for Andhra Pradesh

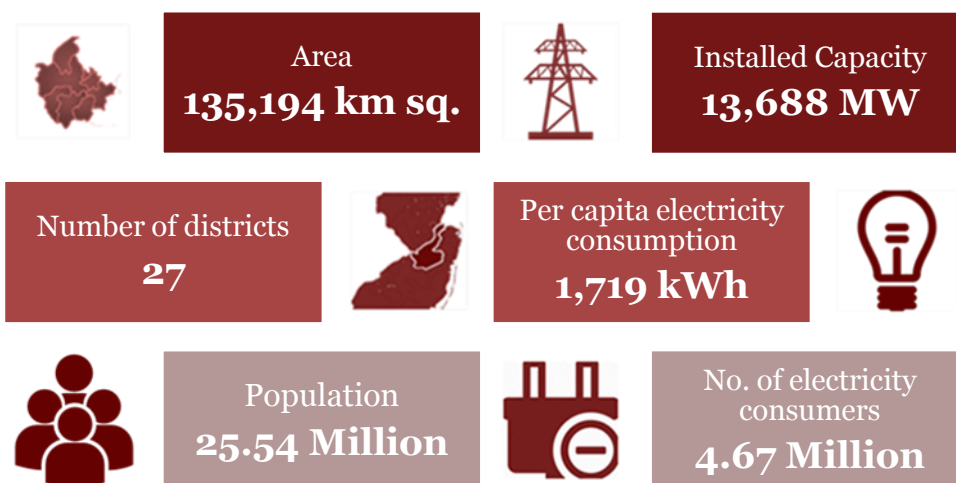
Prior to 2015-16, Andhra Pradesh had a Vidyut Ombudsman catering to the entire state of Andhra Pradesh (including the newly formed state of Telangana). After formation of a separate Telangana state, TSERC (Telangana State Electricity Regulatory Commission) was formed which notified the establishment of a separate Vidyut Ombudsman for the state of Telangana.

Vidyut Ombudsman in Andhra Pradesh has published both quarterly as well as half-yearly data for a financial year which has been compiled and shown in the above table. It has been observed that the number of hearings in each half of the year 2014-15 has been 71 and the focus of Ombudsman has been to resolve cases in an expedited manner. However, the number of appeals pending for more than 2 months has remained the same for both the half-years, indicating that such cases remained pending for resolution. This may be attributed to the fact that either the complainant has not been able to make proper representation before the Ombudsman or such cases require more number of hearings for efficient resolution.

4.2.7. Chhattisgarh

The major power entities in Chhattisgarh include CSPDCL (Chhattisgarh State Power Distribution Company Limited), which provides electricity to approximately 4.67 million consumers across the state of Chhattisgarh, Jindal Power Limited's (JPL), one of the largest private power producer in Chhattisgarh with an installed capacity of 3400 MW, and Bhilai Captive Power Plant, which supplies power to Bhilai Steel Plant of Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) from its coal based captive power plant at Bhilai.

Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot



Source: Electricity Sector in India, States of India by Installed Power Capacity (Wikipedia), CSERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Figure 54: Chhattisgarh - Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot

CGRF regulations

Table 63: Chhattisgarh - CGRF Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of CGRFs: 4 Location of the offices: Raipur and Bilaspur (CGRF Chhattisgarh State Power Distribution Co. Ltd.), Raigarh (Jindal Steel and Power Ltd.), Bhilai (Bhilai Steel Plant)
Composition	3 members (one finance/accounts/legal matters/engineering, one technical – electrical engineering, & one consumer expert)
Appointment of Members	Two members appointed by Licensee and 1 nominated by the Commission (consumer expert)
Tenure of Members	Normal term: 2 years, Extendible for 2 years
Time Limit for Grievance Handling	Within 45 days of registration of the grievance
Appeal against CGRF order	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order
Cost and Expense of the Forum	Cost and expenses to be borne by Licensee.

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on CSERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

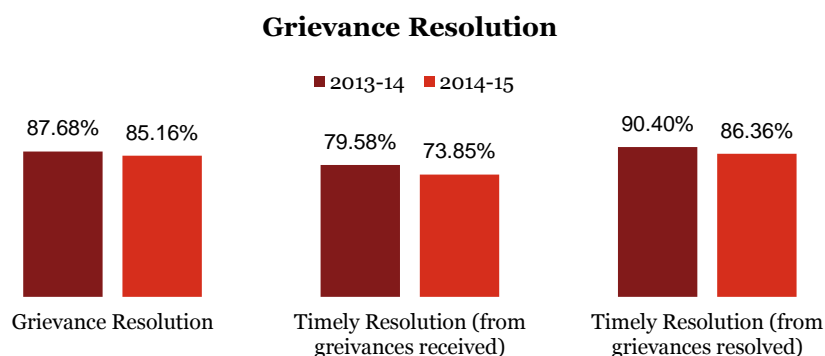
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - CGRFs

Table 64: Chhattisgarh - Grievance Resolution Results (Quarterly), CGRFs (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	51	51	26	29	34	35	35	29	36	34
Received during the quarter/year	233	40	44	74	75	248	42	56	62	88
Disposed of during the quarter/year	249	65	41	69	74	241	48	49	64	80
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	175	48	31	56	40	176	29	42	49	56
In the favour of licensees	74	17	10	13	34	65	19	7	15	24
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	226	59	36	64	67	209	41	38	57	73
Beyond stipulated time	24	6	5	6	7	33	7	11	7	8
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	266	78	53	74	61	271	47	57	75	92

Source: As per data provided by CSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

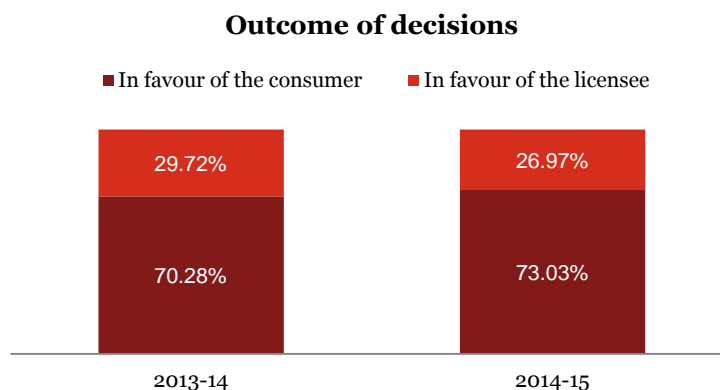


Source: As per data provided by CSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 55: Chhattisgarh - Grievance Resolution, CGRFs

With 4 functioning CGRFs, the efficiency in resolution has decreased only marginally from 87.68% in 2013-14 to 85.16% in 2014-15. About 7-8 out of 10 complaints handled on an average are being resolved within the stipulated time period of 45 days as outlined in the state regulations.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by CSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 56: Chhattisgarh - Outcome of decisions, CGRFs

CGRFs in Chhattisgarh have been consistent in awarding more decisions in favour of consumers rather than licensees.

Number of sittings

CGRFs in Chhattisgarh have conducted an average number of 67 sittings each quarter for the period of two years. Even with a relatively higher number of sittings, the timeliness of resolution of grievances has declined marginally.

Other key statistics:

- An average number of approximately 15.6 lakh consumers are being served by each of the 4 CGRFs in Chhattisgarh, with each CGRF handling approximately 31 grievances per quarter.
- 1 in about 12,399 electricity consumers escalated a grievance to one of the CGRFs in the course of the two years in Chhattisgarh.

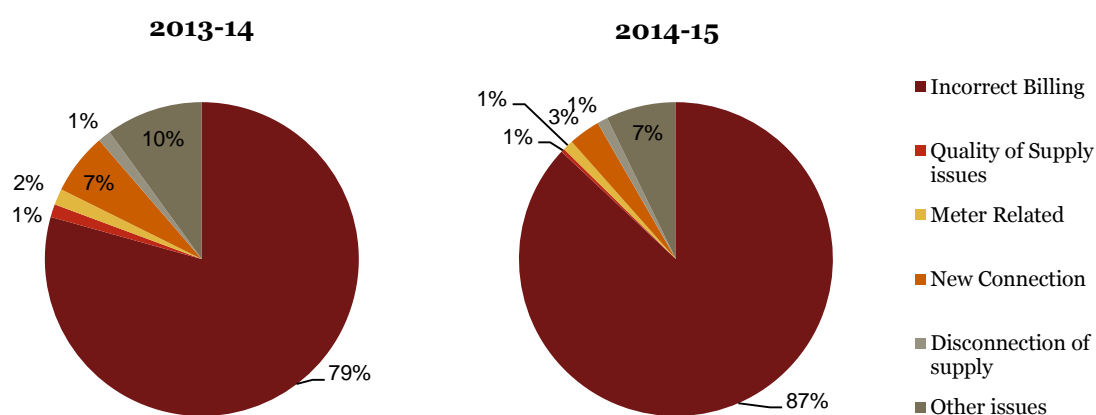
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 65: Chhattisgarh - Category-wise resolution results (annual), CGRFs (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnect ion of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	18	1	0	1	3	8
Grievances received during the year	220	3	5	18	1	22
Total grievances handled in the year	238	4	5	19	4	30
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	186	3	4	13	3	20
Resolved beyond stipulated time	11	1	1	2	1	7
Total grievances resolved	196	4	5	15	4	24
Balance grievances to be redressed	27	0	0	5	0	6
2014-15						
Grievances handled						

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Pending grievances of previous year	25	0	0	5	0	4
Grievances received during the year	216	1	3	4	3	16
Total grievances handled in the year	241	1	3	9	3	20
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	185	1	2	7	2	13
Resolved beyond stipulated time	23	0	1	2	1	4
Total grievances resolved	208	1	3	9	3	17
Balance grievances to be redressed	33	0	0	0	0	3

Source: As per data provided by CSERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by CSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 57: Chhattisgarh - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, CGRFs

A substantial number of billing related grievances were escalated to CGRFs in both 2013-14 and 2014-15. A more streamlined procedure for resolving billing issues may thus help improve the overall resolution speed of the CGRFs in Chhattisgarh in the future.

Ombudsman Regulations

Table 66: Chhattisgarh - Ombudsman Regulations Snapshot

Regulations	Description
Structure	Number of Ombudsman: 1 Location of the Ombudsman office: Raipur
Composition/Qualifications	Should have experience and exposure in any of the fields of legal affairs, engineering, industry, administration, management, defence services and consumer affairs, of not less than 20 years
Independence of Ombudsman	Not clarified
Appointment of Ombudsman	Commission to appoint an Ombudsman.
Tenure of Ombudsman	2 years, extendible by 2 years
Time Period for Issuance of Order	Within 3 months from the date of the receipt of the complaint.
Cost and Expense	Determined and borne by the Commission

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on CSERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

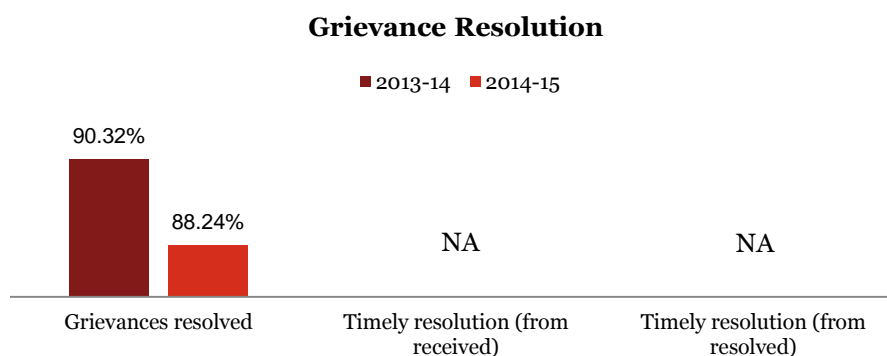
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - Ombudsman

Table 67: Chhattisgarh - Grievance Resolution Results (Annual), Ombudsman (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	1	1	0	0	3	3	3	1	3	2
Received during the quarter/year	30	7	9	4	10	14	8	3	1	2
Disposed of during the quarter/year	28	8	9	1	10	15	10	1	2	2
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	2	0	1	0	1	1	1			
In the favour of licensees	26	8	8	1	9	14	9	1	2	2
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	0					0				
Beyond stipulated time	0					0				
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	231	55	62	57	57	231	43	64	59	65

Source: As per data provided by CSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

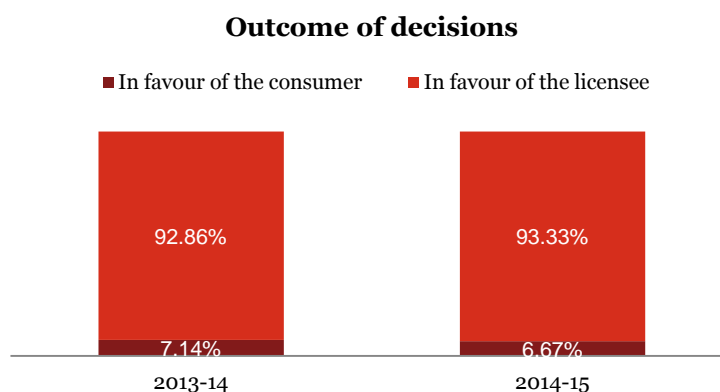


Source: As per data provided by CSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 58: Chhattisgarh - Grievance Resolution, Ombudsman

The resolution efficiency of Ombudsman has remained steady from 2013-14 (90.32%) to 2014-15 (88.24%).

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by CSERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 59: Chhattisgarh - Outcome of decisions, Ombudsman

A significant percentage of decisions (92.86% in 2013-14 and 93.33% in 2014-15) have been awarded by the Ombudsman in Chhattisgarh in favour of the licensees.

Escalations to Ombudsman

A fairly small percentage of complaints have been escalated to Ombudsman (about 1 grievance for 20 grievances received by CGRF in 2014-15 was received by the Ombudsman). This may have arisen due to the unwillingness of the consumer to pursue a more favourable decision, along with lower awareness of the availability of Ombudsman services.

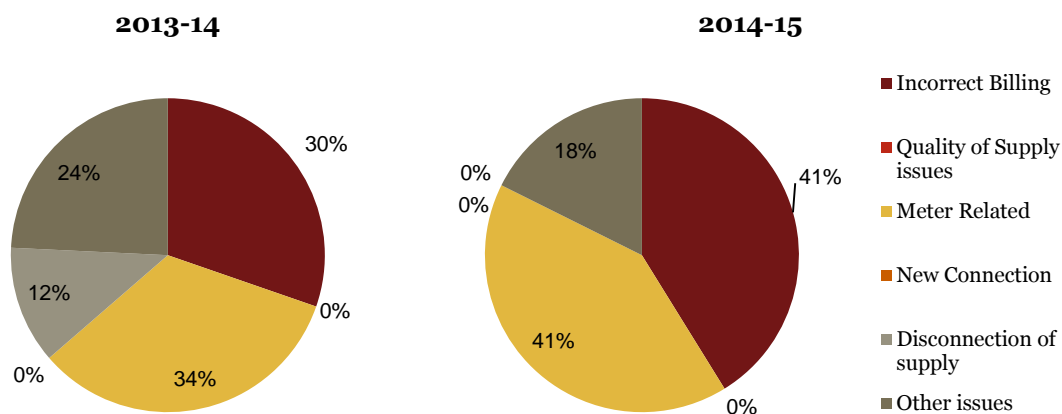
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 68: Chhattisgarh - Category-wise resolution results, Ombudsman (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	1	0	2	0	0	0
Grievances received during the year	9	0	9	0	4	8
Total grievances handled in the year	10	0	11	0	4	8
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Resolved beyond stipulated time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total grievances resolved	10	0	11	0	4	8
Balance grievances to be redressed	3	0	0	0	0	0
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	3	0	0	0	0	0
Grievances received during the year	4	0	7	0	0	3
Total grievances handled in the year	7	0	7	0	0	3
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Resolved beyond stipulated time	0	0	0	0	0	0

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Total grievances resolved	7	0	7	0	0	4
Balance grievances to be redressed	1	0	0	0	0	1

Source: As per data provided by CSEER in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by CSEER in the templates circulated by FOR

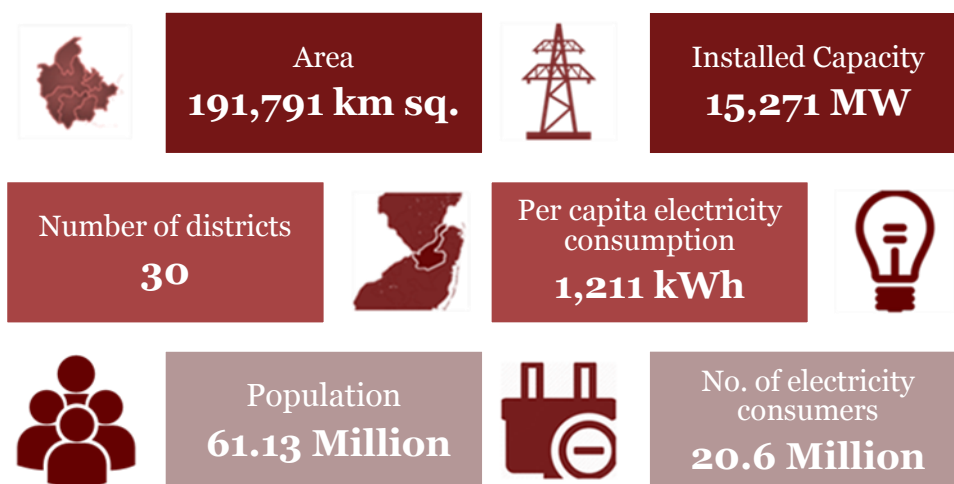
Figure 60: Chhattisgarh - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, Ombudsman

Billing and meter related issues are the major types of grievances received by the Ombudsman in both 2013-14 and 2014-15.

4.2.8. Karnataka

In Karnataka, the major distribution utilities are Bangalore Electricity Supply Company, Mangalore Electricity Supply Company, Hubli Electricity Supply Company, Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company and Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Ltd., which supply electricity to over 20.6 million consumers in Karnataka.

Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot



Source: Electricity Sector in India, States of India by Installed Power Capacity (Wikipedia), KERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Figure 61: Karnataka - Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot

CGRF regulations

Karnataka has been taking steps to increase the geographic reach of CGRFs. In an amendment to CGRF regulations in 2013, KERC directed the distribution companies to establish a CGRF in each of the revenue districts. Thus, it is one of the states with the highest number of CGRF offices (30).

Table 69: Karnataka - CGRF Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	Number of CGRFs: 30 Location of the offices: Karnataka distribution utilities have established CGRFs in each of the revenue districts
Composition	3 members (2 technical - Chief Engineer, Superintendent Engineer/General Manager. Controller of Audit, and 1 consumer expert)
Appointment of Members	Two members including the chairperson are the employees of the licensee (technical), Nominated by Commission: Consumer expert
Tenure of Members	No mention
Time Limit for Grievance Handling	Within 60 days of receipt of complaint
Appeal against CGRF order	Within 30 days after issue of CGRF order
Cost and Expense of the Forum	Not mentioned

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on KERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

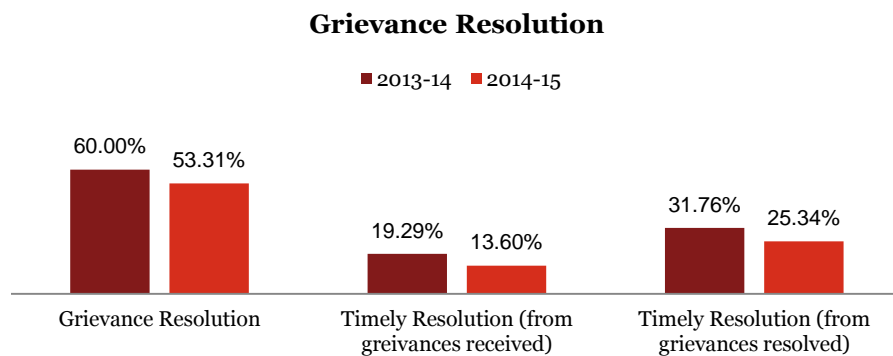
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - CGRFs

Table 70: Karnataka - Grievance Resolution Results (Quarterly), CGRFs (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	22	22	12	54	109	107	107	95	109	101
Received during the quarter/year	118	16	25	29	48	165	40	48	35	42
Disposed of during the quarter/year	84	26	2	13	43	145	41	23	45	36
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	0					0				
In the favour of licensees	0					0				
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	27	4	2	10	11	37	6	8	13	10
Beyond stipulated time	58	22	0	4	32	109	35	16	33	25
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	121	18	16	34	53	225	43	49	59	74

Source: As per data provided by KERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution



Source: As per data provided by KERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 62: Karnataka - Grievance Resolution, CGRFs

With a much smaller base of registered grievances in 2013-14 and 2014-15 in comparison to other states of comparable geographical dimensions, the resolution efficiency and timeliness of CGRFs in Karnataka has been lower than expected. With the recent institution of CGRFs in every revenue district from the third quarter of 2013-14, the performance is expected to improve in the foreseeable future.

Number of sittings

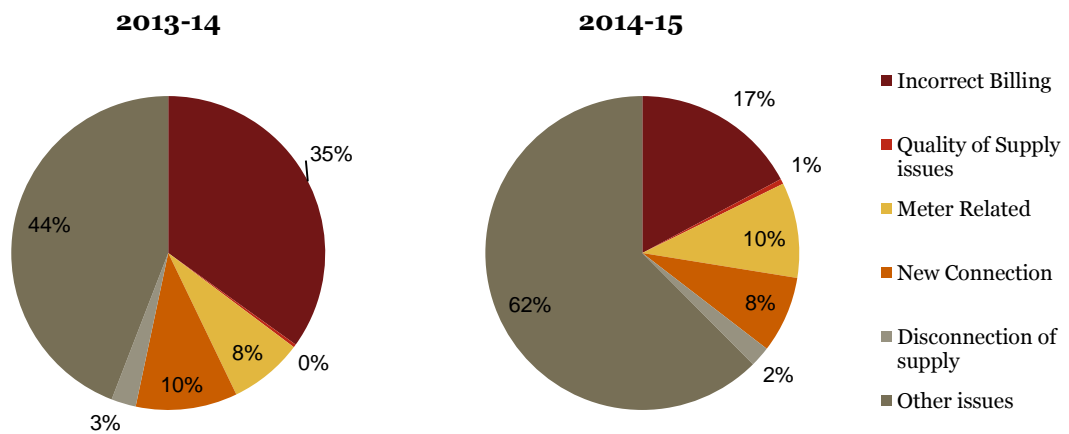
CGRFs in Karnataka have conducted an average number of approximately 43 sittings per quarter over 2013-14 and 2014-15. An average number of approximately 7 lakh consumers are being served by each of the 30 CGRFs in Karnataka, with each CGRF handling only 2-3 grievances per quarter.

Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 71: Karnataka - Category-wise resolution results (annual), CGRFs (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnect ion of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	73	1	15	19	8	81
Grievances received during the year	37	0	9	14	0	58
Total grievances handled in the year	110	1	24	33	8	139
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	17	0	2	2	1	5
Resolved beyond stipulated time	22	0	8	2	0	26
Total grievances resolved	37	0	10	4	1	32
Balance grievances to be redressed	71	0	14	29	7	82
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	74	2	40	41	9	246
Grievances received during the year	26	1	11	4	3	120
Total grievances handled in the year	98	3	56	45	12	356
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	14	1	3	4	0	15
Resolved beyond stipulated time	7	0	5	6	0	91
Total grievances resolved	20	1	8	9	0	107
Balance grievances to be redressed	74	2	34	35	11	247

Source: As per data provided by KERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by KERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 63: Karnataka - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, CGRFs

The major types of grievances escalated to CGRFs in 2013-14 and 2014-15 have been regarding incorrect billing, meter-related issues and new connections.

Ombudsman Regulations

Table 72: Karnataka - Ombudsman Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	Number of Ombudsman: 1 The Ombudsman regulations of Karnataka allow appointment of only one Ombudsman for the entire state
Composition/Qualifications	Not mentioned
Independence of Ombudsman	No specific criteria to ensure independence from distribution licensee
Appointment of Ombudsman	Appointed by the Commission
Tenure of Ombudsman	3 years, Extendible up to 2 more years
Time Period for Issuance of Order	Within 60 days or two months from the date of the receipt of the complaint
Cost and Expense	All expenses of the Ombudsman's office including that of the secretariat are paid out of the funds constituted under section 103 of the Electricity Act, 2003

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on KERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

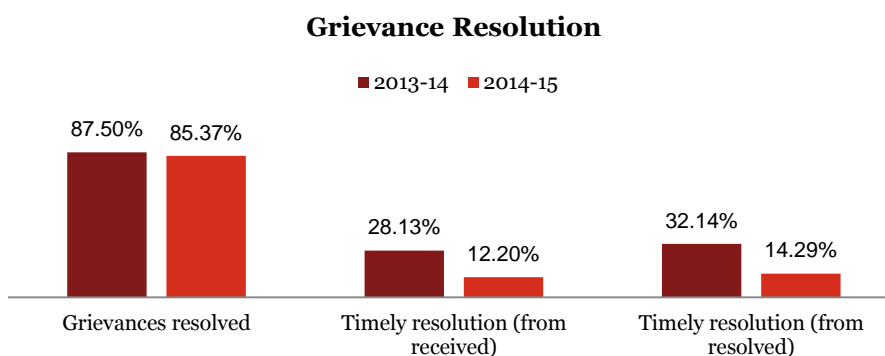
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - Ombudsman

Table 73: Karnataka - Grievance Resolution Results (Annual), Ombudsman (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	8	8	15	11	6	4	4	16	12	8
Received during the quarter/year	24	14	8	0	2	37	18	8	7	4
Disposed of during the quarter/year	28	7	12	5	4	35	6	12	11	6
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	20	3	11	4	2	18	1	5	8	4
In the favour of licensees	8	4	1	1	2	17	5	7	3	2
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	9	2	6	0	1	5	3	1	0	1
Beyond stipulated time	19	5	6	5	3	30	3	11	11	5
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	40	10	12	7	11	58	11	16	17	14

Source: As per data provided by KERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

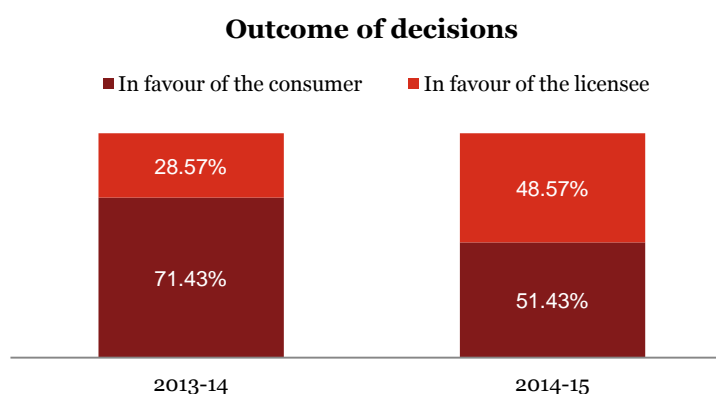


Source: As per data provided by KERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 64: Karnataka - Grievance Resolution, Ombudsman

While the resolution efficiency of Ombudsman has remained steady from 2013-14 to 2014-15, the timeliness of resolution was lower than expected (28.13% in 2013-14 and 12.20% in 2014-15). Keeping in mind the types of issues frequently escalated to the Ombudsman, and the most common delays encountered in grievance redressal (such as time taken to file responses and setting a suitable data for hearing), the efficiency of resolution procedures adopted by the Ombudsman can be considered for further improvement.

Outcome of decisions:



Source: As per data provided by KERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 65: Karnataka - Outcome of decisions, Ombudsman

A significant percentage of decisions were awarded by the Ombudsman in Karnataka in favour of the consumers (71.43%) in 2013-14.

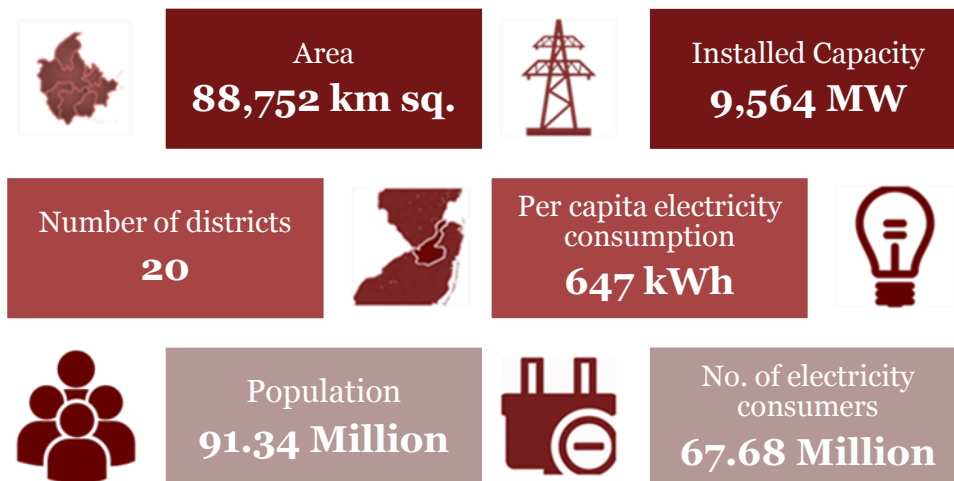
Escalations to Ombudsman

An average number of about 2 grievances were escalated to the Ombudsman for every 10 grievances received by the CGRF.

4.2.9. West Bengal

The primary distribution utility in West Bengal is the West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (WBSEDCL), which serves a customer base of more than 67.68 million consumers across West Bengal, spanning over 5 Zones and 20 districts. The Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation (CESC) serves approximately 3 million consumers in Kolkata and parts of northern and southern districts of West Bengal.

Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot



Source: Electricity Sector in India, States of India by Installed Power Capacity (Wikipedia), WBERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Figure 66: West Bengal - Demographic and Power Consumption Snapshot

CGRF regulations

West Bengal had formed the regulations immediately after enactment of Electricity Act and it has a unique structure of grievance redressal mechanism comprising of GRO's at the sub district/district/zonal levels and CGRO's at the corporate level.

Table 74: West Bengal - CGRF Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of CGROs: 40 Location of the offices: GROs at the sub district/district/zonal levels and CGRO's at the corporate level. Forum shall consist of as many GRO as required. At least one GRO at each sub district/district /zone levels. At least one Central Grievance Redressal Officer (CGRO) is at the corporate level of the licensee.
Composition	Regional GROs at the designation of Superintendent Engineer, Divisional Engineer. Principal GRO at the designation of Chief Engineer.
Appointment of Members	GRO at the sub district/district/zonal levels appointed from employees of licensees
Tenure of Members	Not Mentioned
Time Limit for Grievance Handling	Within 60 days from date of sending acknowledgment to petitioner
Appeal against CGRF order	20 working days from the date of an order from GRO/CGRO
Cost and Expense of the Forum	Not mentioned

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on WBERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Deviations from regulations

Post of Consumer Affairs representative in GESCOM CGRF may be vacant.

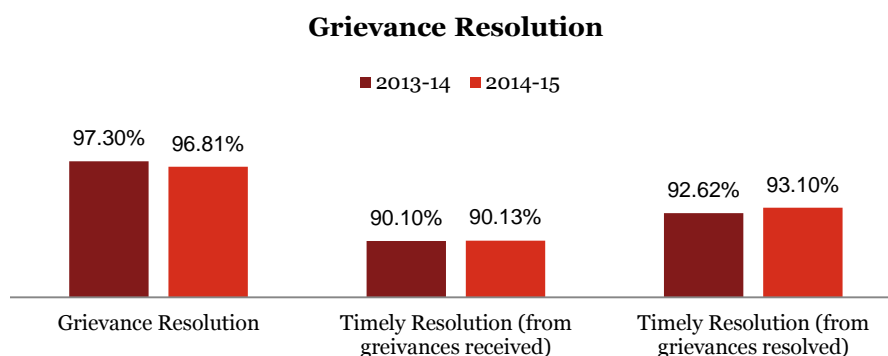
Controller of Audit is in place of Technical representative in GESCOM and HESCOM.

Source: CGRF regulations and other details available on WBERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - CGROs**Table 75: West Bengal - Grievance Resolution Results (Quarterly), CGROs (Nos.)**

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	312	312	309	246	354	170	170	95	109	105
Received during the quarter/year	5761	1467	1653	1571	1070	4096	1169	1413	820	694
Disposed of during the quarter/year	5909	1470	1724	1458	1257	4130	1241	1401	823	665
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	1826	469	554	399	404	1251	417	412	231	191
In the favour of licensees	4083	1001	1170	1059	853	2881	826	989	592	474
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	5472	1397	1572	1315	1188	3845	1177	1267	794	607
Beyond stipulated time	436	73	152	142	69	285	64	134	29	58
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	286	72	88	64	62	225	62	55	51	57

Source: As per data provided by WBERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

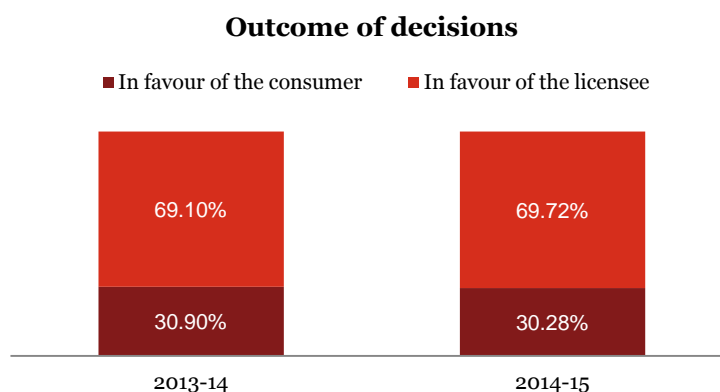
Source: As per data provided by WBERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 67: West Bengal - Grievance Resolution, CGROs

With the presence of forty GRO officers across the state, West Bengal registered the largest number of grievances in the period of 2013-14 to 2014-15 among the ten states under study. Even with such a large base of grievances, West Bengal has been most successful in resolving grievances in an efficient and expedited manner, resolving approximately 9 out of 10 grievances received in the stipulated time of 60 days.

With a grievance redressal structure that has been responsive and accessible, the number of pending grievances residing with the grievance redressal officers was also seen to decline gradually by nearly 50% between 2013-14 to 2014-15.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by WBERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 68: West Bengal - Outcome of decisions, CGROs

In a contrast to the trend observed in other states, CGROs in West Bengal have rewarded more grievances in favour of the licensee than in the favour of the consumers.

Number of sittings

West Bengal CGROs have conducted approximately 71 sittings per quarter in 2013-14 and 56 sittings in 2014-15, but have registered the highest number of resolutions per sittings (nearly 20 grievances per sitting).

Other key statistics:

- An average number of approximately 16.92 lakh consumers is being served by each of the 40 CGROs in West Bengal, with each grievance redressal officer handling approximately 36 grievances on an average per quarter
- 1 in about 12,243 electricity consumers escalated a grievance to one of the CGROs in the course of the two years in West Bengal

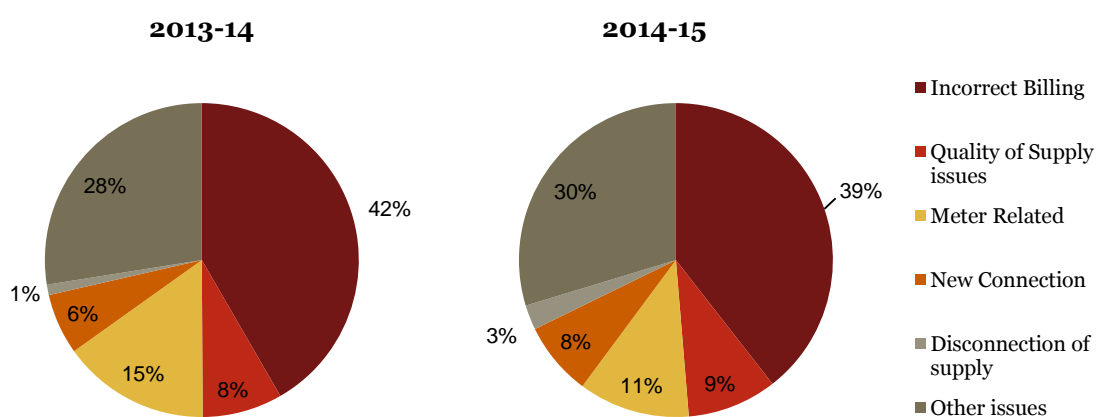
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 76: West Bengal - Category-wise resolution results (annual), CGROs (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	2	2	1	1	0	0
Grievances received during the year	1279	252	467	192	33	846
Total grievances handled in the year	1281	254	468	193	33	846
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	1131	252	467	193	33	845
Resolved beyond stipulated time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total grievances resolved	1280	254	467	192	33	845
Balance grievances to be redressed	2	0	1	0	0	1
2014-15						

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	2	0	1	0	0	1
Grievances received during the year	1109	260	322	214	72	835
Total grievances handled in the year	1111	260	323	214	72	836
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	1110	260	323	213	74	834
Resolved beyond stipulated time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total grievances resolved	1105	260	323	213	74	834
Balance grievances to be redressed	1	0	0	0	0	2

Source: As per data provided by WBERC in the templates circulated by FOR



Source: As per data provided by WBERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 69: West Bengal - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, CGROs

A significant percentage of billing and meter-related grievances were escalated to CGROs in both 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Ombudsman Regulations

Table 77: West Bengal - Ombudsman Regulations

Regulations	Description
Structure	Number of Ombudsman: 3 Location of Ombudsman Office: Kolkata The Ombudsman regulation of West Bengal is silent regarding the number of Ombudsman that a Commission may appoint.
Composition/Qualifications	Not mentioned
Independence of Ombudsman	Not mentioned
Appointment of Ombudsman	Not mentioned
Tenure of Ombudsman	Not mentioned
Time Period for Issuance of Order	Regulations in West Bengal have not clearly specified the timeline within which the Ombudsman needs to resolve the case. However, it highlights a very unique feature that if the Ombudsman has been referred cases from Commission then consumer can appeal in the Commission for resolution before going to Judiciary
Cost and Expense	Not mentioned

Source: Ombudsman regulations and details available on WBERC and respective distribution utilities' websites

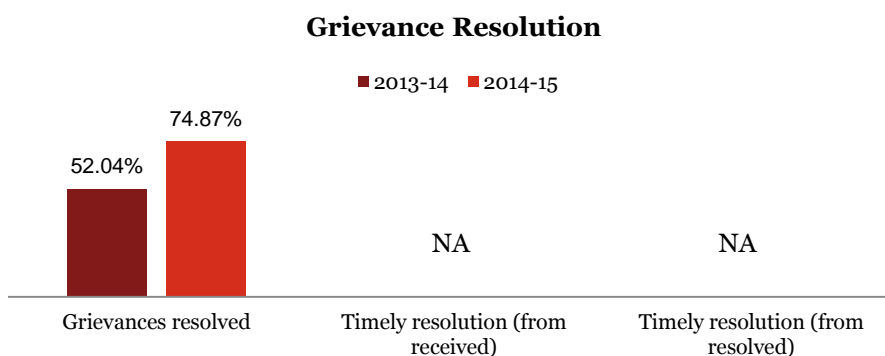
Grievance Redressal Performance Snapshot - Ombudsman

Table 78: West Bengal - Grievance Resolution Results (Annual), Ombudsman (Nos.)

Particulars	2013-14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014-15	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Grievances handled										
At the beginning of the quarter/year	1095	1095	1366	1530	1774	1608	1608	1391	1178	900
Received during the quarter/year	2258	699	636	622	301	744	245	256	143	100
Disposed of during the quarter/year	1745	428	472	378	467	1761	462	469	421	409
Outcome of decisions										
In the favour of consumer	1370	328	357	304	381	1361	341	360	334	326
In the favour of licensees	375	100	115	74	86	400	121	109	87	83
Timeliness of resolution										
Within stipulated time	0					0				
Beyond stipulated time	0					0				
Number of sittings										
Number of sittings in the quarter/year	289	77	75	63	74	291	78	79	64	70

Source: As per data provided by WBERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Efficiency and timeliness of resolution

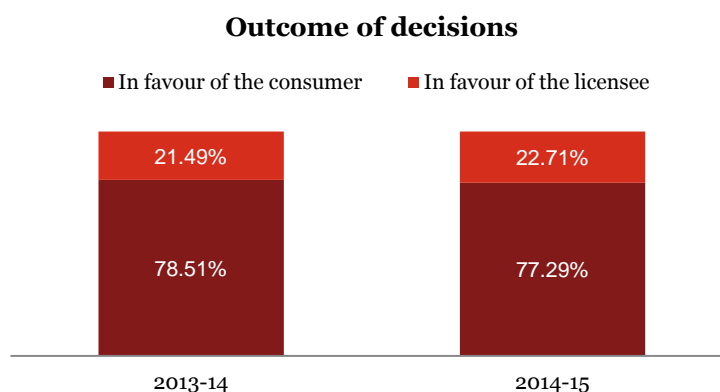


Source: As per data provided by WBERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 70: West Bengal - Grievance Resolution, Ombudsman

The resolution efficiency of the Ombudsman improved notably from 52.04% in 2013-14 to 74.87% in 2014.15.

Outcome of decisions



Source: As per data provided by WBERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 71: West Bengal - Outcome of decisions, Ombudsman

A significant percentage of decisions have been awarded by the Ombudsman in favour of the consumers (78.51% in 2013-14 and 77.29% in 2014-15).

Escalations to Ombudsman

Relative to other states, a significant number of complaints were escalated to Ombudsman in 2013-14, with 4 grievances received by the Ombudsman for every 10 grievances received by the CGROs. In 2014-15, 2 grievances were received by the Ombudsman for every 10 grievances received by the CGROs.

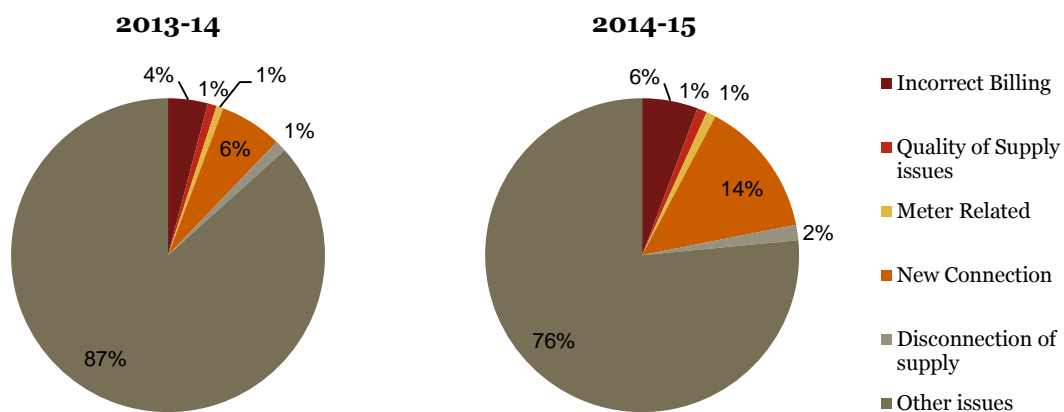
Category-wise resolution of grievances

Table 79: West Bengal - Category-wise resolution results, Ombudsman (Nos.)

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
2013-14						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	36	11	20	23	22	983
Grievances received during the year	101	20	4	193	17	1923
Total grievances handled in the year	137	31	24	216	39	2906
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Resolved beyond stipulated time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total grievances resolved	30	8	6	26	6	1172
Balance grievances to be redressed	85	13	17	170	27	1296
2014-15						
Grievances handled						
Pending grievances of previous year	85	13	17	170	27	1296
Grievances received during the year	50	11	6	163	10	504
Total grievances handled in the year	135	24	23	333	37	1800
Timeliness of resolution						
Resolved in stipulated time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Resolved beyond stipulated time	0	0	0	0	0	0

Types of complaints	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Total grievances resolved	73	4	6	85	9	1584
Balance grievances to be redressed	62	20	17	248	28	216

Source: As per data provided by WBERC in the templates circulated by FOR



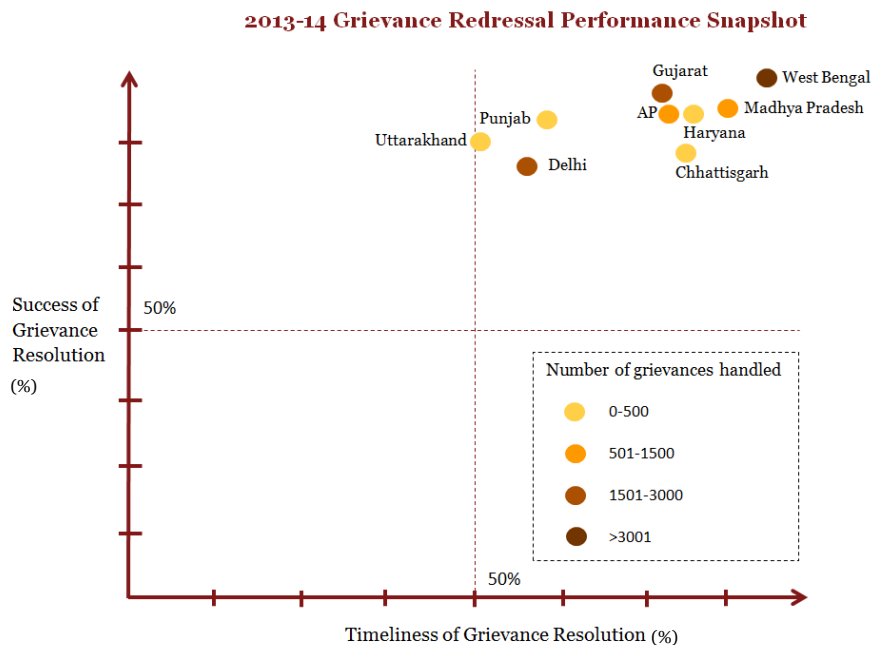
Source: As per data provided by WBERC in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 72: West Bengal - Category-Wise Share of Grievances, Ombudsman

The most frequent grievances escalated to the Ombudsman were regarding incorrect billing and new connections.

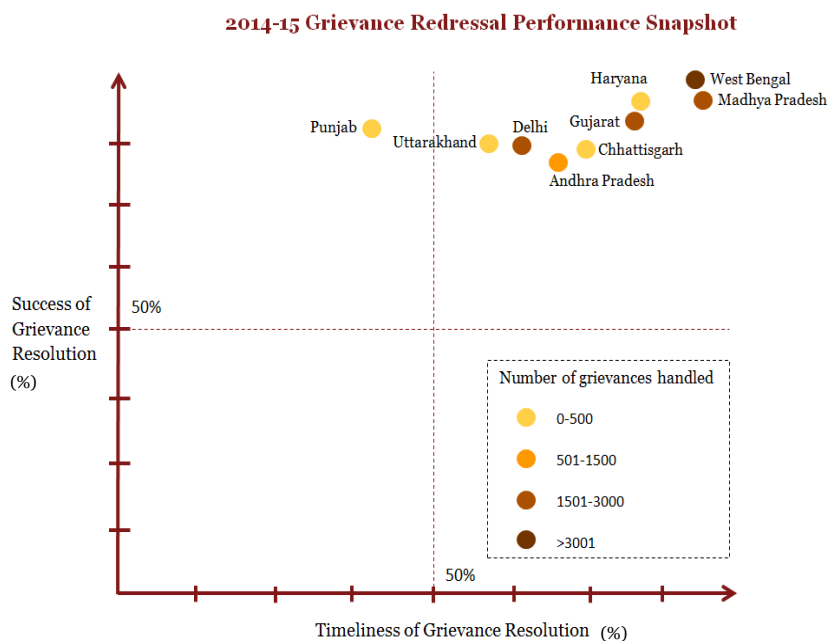
4.3. Comparative Analysis of States

The following graph provides an indicative snapshot of the comparative performance of CGRFs of the selected states based on two parameters: Success of grievance resolution and Timeliness of grievance resolution.



Source: As per data regarding provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 73: Grievance Redressal Comparative Performance, 2013-14



Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 74: Grievance Redressal Comparative Performance, 2014-15

As can be observed, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana are the leading performers on the parameters of both success and timeliness of resolution across the years 2013-14 and 2014-15, followed by Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Uttarakhand and Punjab.

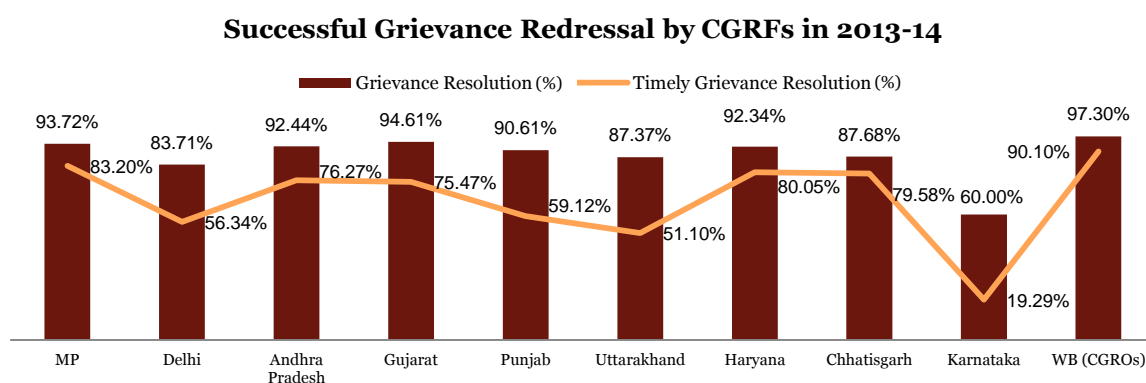
Note: Karnataka has not been included in the comparative performance of states presented above since the impact of newly structured CGRFs in each revenue district of Karnataka in 2013-14 is likely to show a different scenario from the current state.

A detailed comparative analysis based on each parameter is elaborated in the following sections.

4.3.1. Efficiency of Grievance Resolution

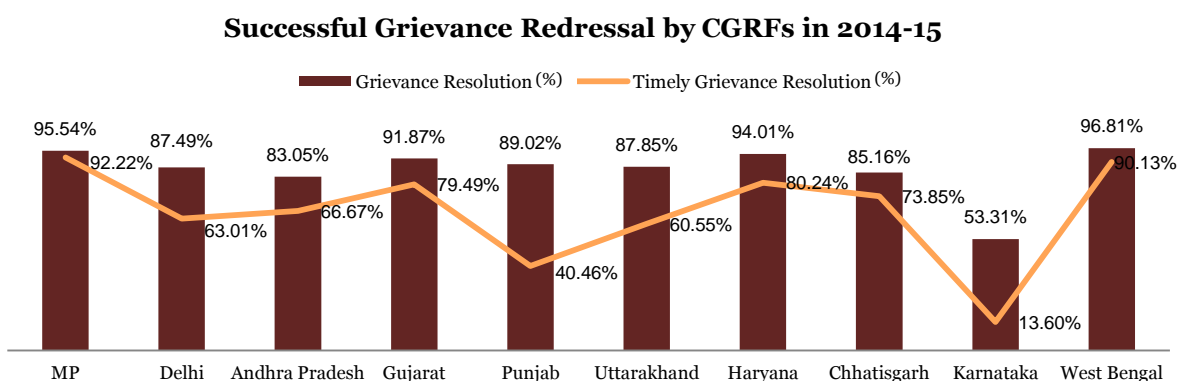
4.3.1.1. Grievance Resolution Performance Snapshot

CGRFs



Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 75: Successful Grievance Redressal by CGRFs in 2013-14



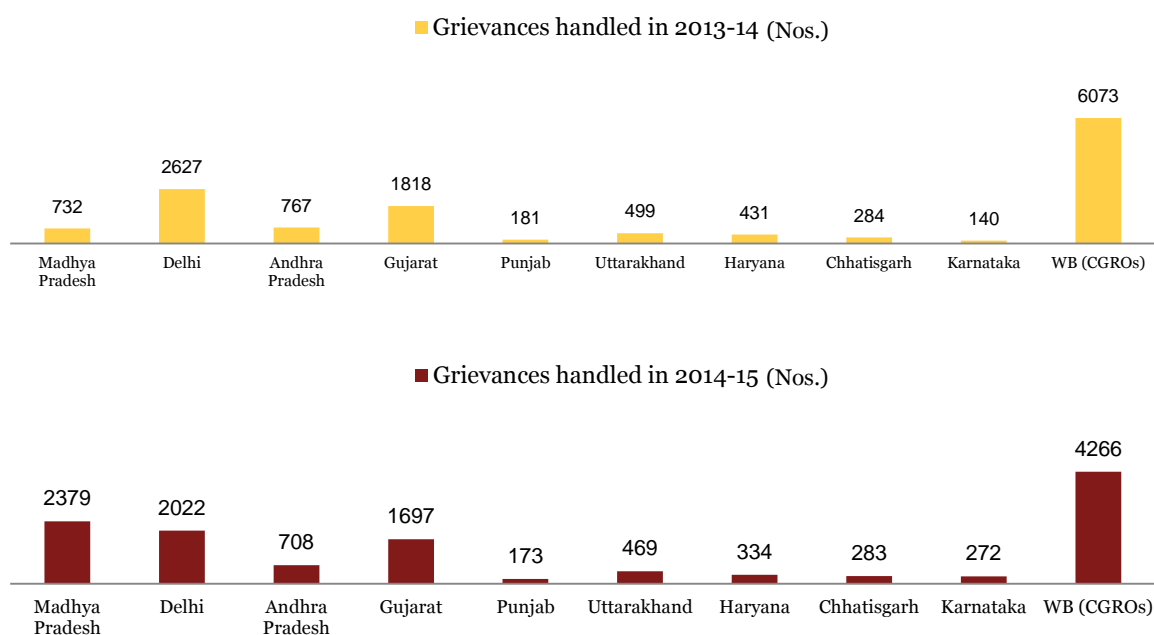
Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 76: Successful Grievance Redressal by CGRFs in 2014-15

Key Observations:

1. CGRFs in Madhya Pradesh and Haryana, and CGROs in West Bengal, have been the top performers for 2014-15 in resolving grievances in both an efficient and timely manner, followed by CGRFs in Gujarat & Chhattisgarh.
2. CGRFs in Uttarakhand and Punjab have a high percentage of efficiency for resolving grievances, but have lagged behind in timeliness of resolution.

3. West Bengal follows a different model of employing a larger number Grievance Redressal Officers in all districts, which has proved to be a fairly responsive model of resolution. Such a model provides more accessibility to consumers of all regions, and enables fast-track resolution of those complaints which have clear precedents.
4. Madhya Pradesh consists of 3 CGRFs, who have been able to handle a large base of grievances in a steadfast manner. Madhya Pradesh faced an exceptional billing issue in 2014-15, and hence shows a large number of grievances for that year.
5. CGRFs in Delhi and Andhra Pradesh have been striving for timely resolution of grievances, while CGRFs in Karnataka have struggled to manage a relatively smaller base of complaints. With CGRFs established in all the 30 revenue districts of Karnataka, the resolution efficiency is expected to improve in the coming months.

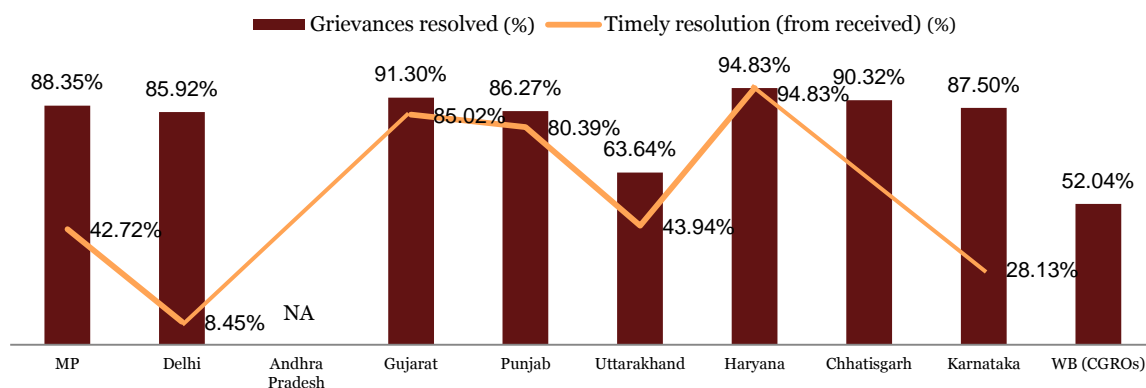


Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 77: Number of grievances handled by CGRFs in each state

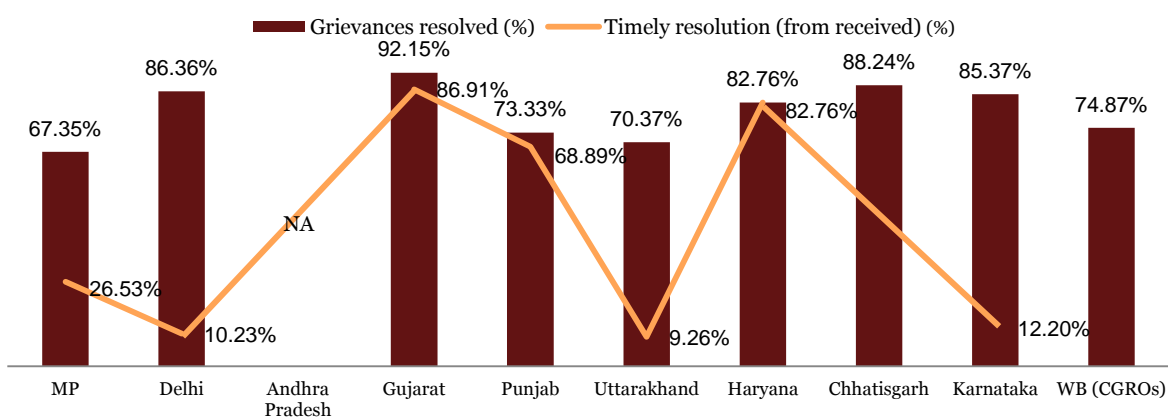
Given in the above figure is the base of grievances handled by CGRFs in each state in 2013-14 and 2014-15. CGRFs in Gujarat have been able to handle a large base of complaints in both years with success, but CGRFs in Delhi have lagged behind in timeliness of resolution.

West Bengal has registered the highest number of grievances and been able to resolve complaints in a fairly expedited manner. As observed earlier, it can be attributed to the empowerment of district and sub-district level officers to resolve grievances with defined limits of reward or penalty. This also enables higher level officers to focus solely on critical grievances and address them efficiently.

Ombudsman**Successful Grievance Redressal by Ombudsmans in 2013-14**

Source: As per data regarding functioning of Ombudsman provided by respective SERCs

Figure 78: Successful Grievance Redressal by Ombudsman in 2013-14

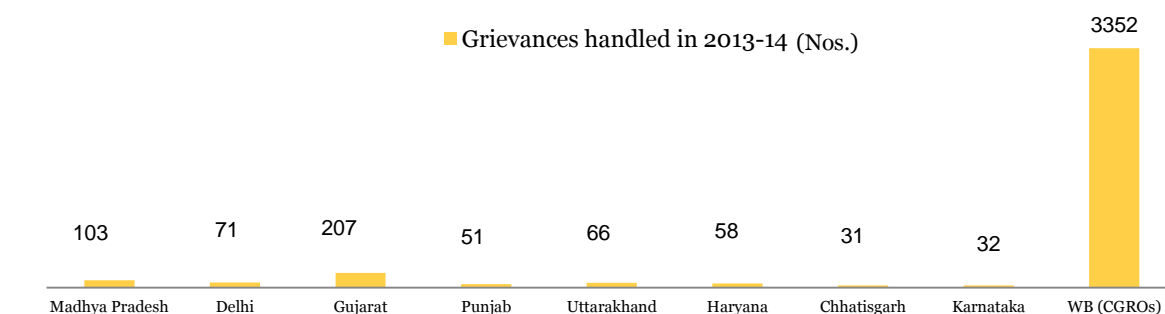
Successful Grievance Redressal by Ombudsmans in 2014-15

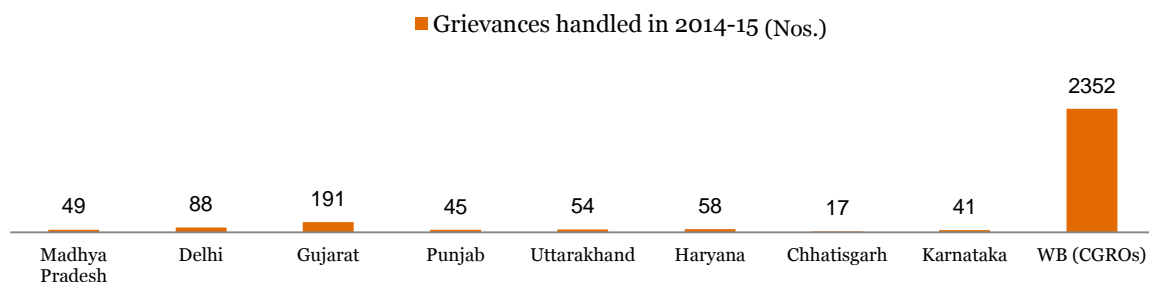
Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 79: Successful Grievance Redressal by Ombudsman in 2014-15

Key Observations:

1. Ombudsman in Gujarat, Chhatisgarh, Haryana, Delhi and Karnataka have been most successful in grievance resolution, while Ombudsman in Punjab, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal have achieved moderate success for the same.
2. Ombudsman in Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana have been most successful in resolving grievances in a timely manner, while Ombudsman in Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttarakhand have not been able to deliver decisions consistently within the stipulated period.





Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 80: Number of grievances handled by Ombudsman in each state

Ombudsman in Gujarat has handled a larger base of complaints than most of the other states and still been able to resolve grievances in a timely and efficient manner. Ombudsman in West Bengal has also handled a substantial number of grievances, though the number decreased significantly from 2013-14 to 2014-15.

4.3.1.2. Types of grievances

The following tables show the share of various types of grievances registered in CGRFs in 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Table 80: Category-wise share of grievances, CGRFs - 2013-14 (%)

2013-14	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Madhya Pradesh	68%	1%	9%	7%	3%	12%
Delhi	53%	0%	13%	23%	0%	10%
Andhra Pradesh	30%	12%	3%	9%	4%	42%
Gujarat	22%	7%	8%	37%	2%	24%
Punjab	36%	6%	36%	2%	3%	16%
Uttarakhand	63%	0%	0%	8%	0%	29%
Haryana	66%	2%	7%	5%	2%	19%
Chhattisgarh	79%	1%	2%	6%	1%	10%
Karnataka	35%	0%	8%	10%	3%	44%
WB (CGROs)	42%	8%	15%	6%	1%	28%

Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Table 81: Category-wise share of grievances, CGRFs - 2014-15 (%)

2014-15	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Madhya Pradesh	69%	1%	13%	2%	1%	13%
Delhi	56%	1%	8%	29%	0%	7%
Andhra Pradesh	24%	14%	3%	8%	4%	47%
Gujarat	25%	8%	6%	38%	1%	22%
Punjab	40%	8%	28%	2%	2%	19%
Uttarakhand	64%	0%	0%	12%	0%	24%
Haryana	65%	4%	3%	0%	3%	24%

2014-15	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Chhattisgarh	87%	0%	1%	3%	1%	7%
Karnataka	17%	1%	10%	8%	2%	62%
WB (CGROs)	39%	9%	11%	8%	3%	30%

Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Key Observations

1. Grievance regarding incorrect billing and meter-related issues are the most frequently handled grievances and have affected the overall efficiency of resolution for all states. 8 out of 10 states received more than 40% of grievances related to billing.

This can be primarily attributed to the following reasons:

- a. Technical malfunctioning of meters and display of incorrect usage.
 - b. Tampering of meters and thefts.
 - c. Unwillingness of certain consumers to pay bills within the stipulated billing cycle.
 - d. Lack of communication between utilities and consumers in any changes made in billing procedures.
 - e. Lack of awareness of consumers of the right escalation structure for reporting suspected issues with metering.
2. CGRFs in Madhya Pradesh & CGROs in West Bengal were able to resolve more than 90% grievances related to billing and meter-related issues in a timely manner.
 3. CGRFs in Punjab resolved about 44.3% of billing related grievances on time, which has affected the overall efficiency of resolution for the state.
 4. Issues regarding new connections were registered as a major share of grievances in Delhi and Gujarat. This can be attributed to the following reasons:
 - a. Delays caused due time taken in understanding requirements for providing a new connection.
 - b. Delays caused in understanding the needs of the consumer.
 - c. Delays caused in procurement and installation of requisite equipment.

Electricity Act, 2003 mandates utilities to provide supply of electricity within one month after receipt of the application, unless it entails setup of new local or regional infrastructure. Hence, it can be said that delays in setting up new connections are against the spirit of the Electricity Act.

5. CGRFs in both Delhi and Gujarat have been able to resolve less than 80% of new connection grievances within the stipulated time, which has affected their efficiency and speed of resolution.
6. Issues regarding disconnection of supply were also a notable type of grievance registered by consumers. The reasons for this grievance can be attributed to the following:
 - a. Suspected theft of electricity causes the utility to isolate the concerned consumers and disconnect their supply with immediate effect.
 - b. Lack of understanding of consumers (particularly agricultural and commercial users) in knowing the limitations in usage of electricity and attempts to divert electricity to other uses other than the ones designated during grant of connection.

CGRFs in Punjab, Karnataka, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh have faced several escalations of grievances regarding disconnections of supply. West Bengal has addressed all disconnection grievances within the stipulated period.

7. As is the case in CGRFs, grievances regarding incorrect billing and meter-related issues are the most frequently handled grievances for Ombudsman.
8. Grievances regarding disconnection of supply is one of the more significant issues handled by the Ombudsman, and more matters of this type are being escalated to the Ombudsman.

Ombudsman

The following tables show the share of various types of grievances registered to the Ombudsman in 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Table 82: Category-wise share of grievances, Ombudsman - 2013-14 (%)

2013-14	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Madhya Pradesh	43%	0%	15%	10%	2%	31%
Delhi	45%	1%	1%	24%	6%	23%
Andhra Pradesh	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gujarat	25%	2%	20%	21%	2%	29%
Punjab	39%	0%	27%	0%	0%	33%
Uttarakhand	91%	0%	0%	6%	0%	3%
Haryana	66%	2%	2%	0%	10%	21%
Chhattisgarh	30%	0%	33%	0%	12%	24%
Karnataka	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
West Bengal	4%	1%	1%	6%	1%	87%

Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Table 83: Category-wise share of grievances, Ombudsman - 2014-15 (%)

2014-15	Incorrect Billing	Quality of Supply issues	Meter Related	New Connection	Disconnection of supply	Other issues
Madhya Pradesh	43%	0%	14%	12%	4%	27%
Delhi	42%	0%	3%	8%	15%	32%
Andhra Pradesh	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Gujarat	20%	2%	15%	32%	3%	28%
Punjab	29%	0%	22%	0%	0%	49%
Uttarakhand	83%	0%	0%	15%	0%	2%
Jharkhand	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Haryana	71%	0%	0%	0%	14%	16%
Chhattisgarh	41%	0%	41%	0%	0%	18%
Karnataka	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
West Bengal	6%	1%	1%	14%	2%	77%

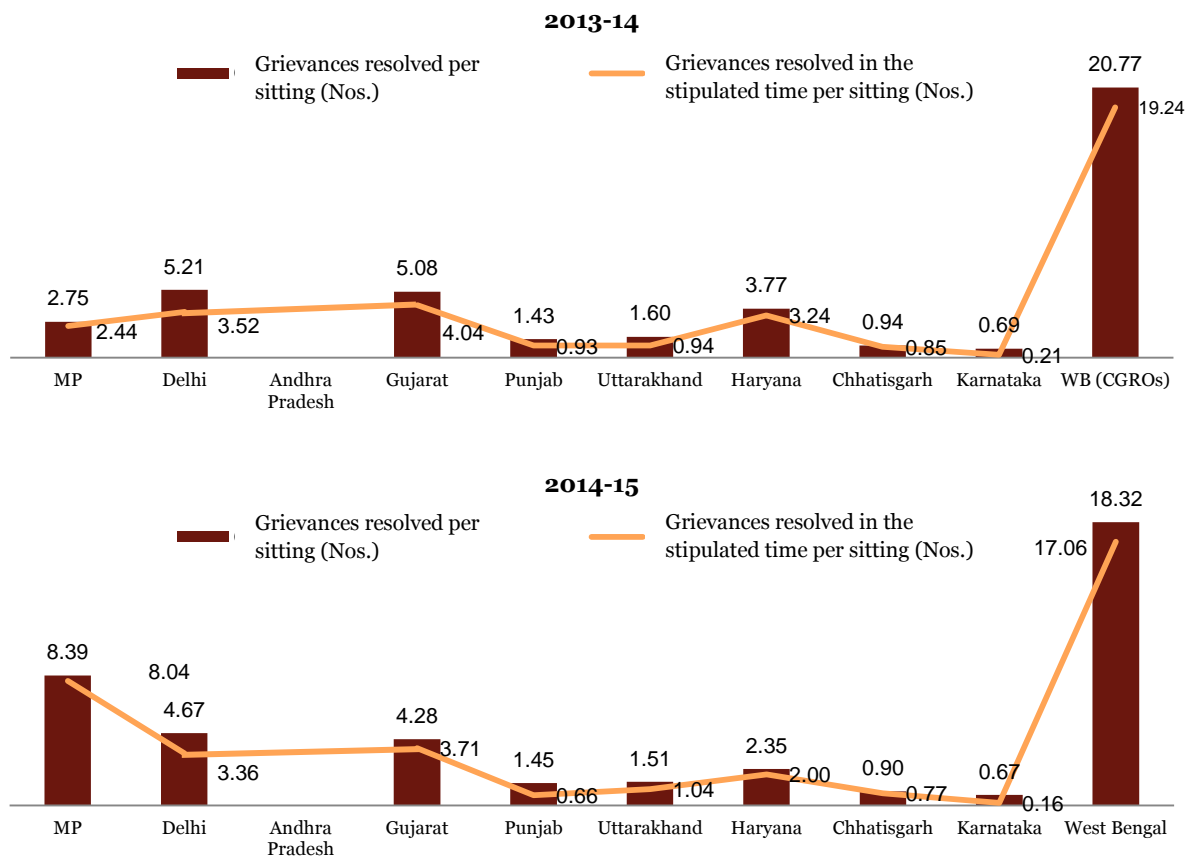
Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

9. Grievances regarding new connections have been registered as a major share of grievances to the Ombudsman in Delhi and Gujarat.

4.3.2. Drivers of Resolution Efficiency

4.3.2.1. Efforts to address and expedite resolution

CGRFs



Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 81: Grievance redressal efficiency of CGRFs for all states (Quarterly average)

Key Takeaways

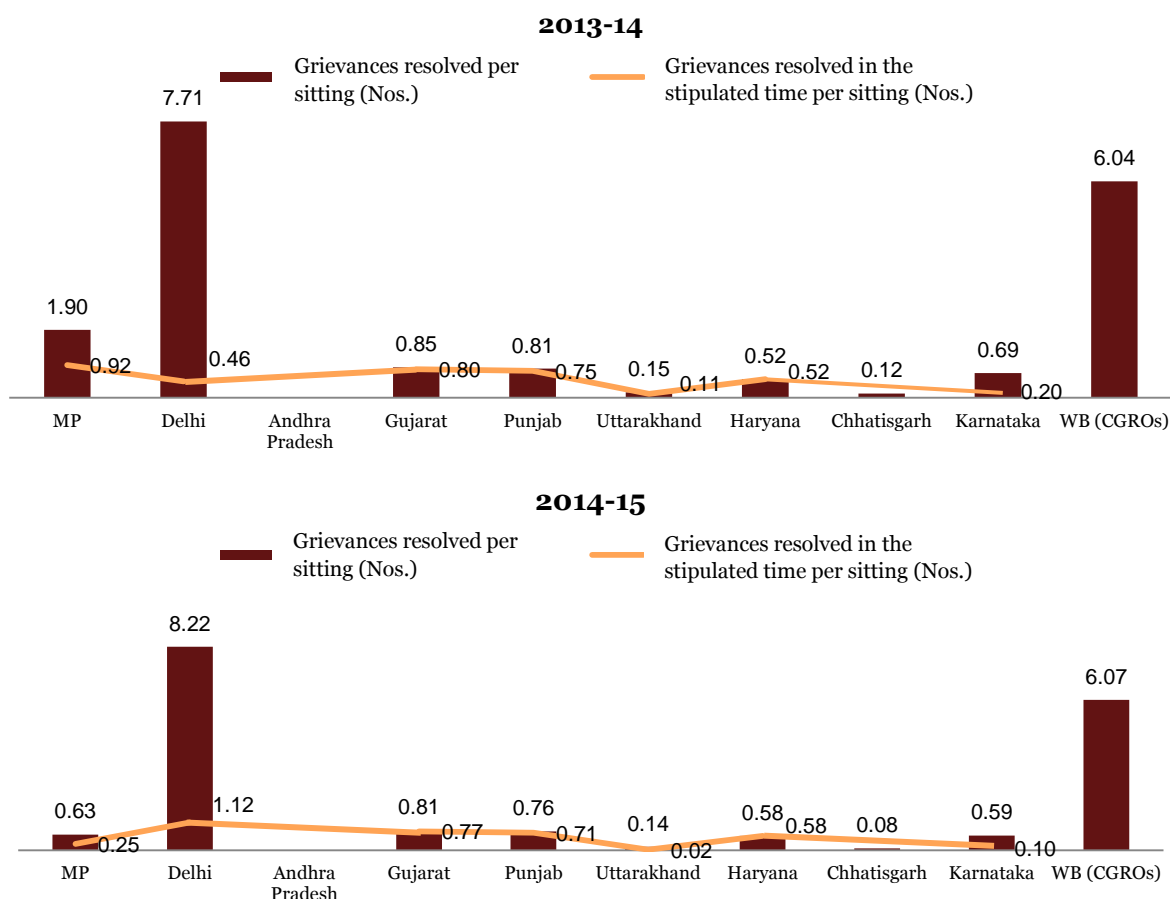
1. Number of sittings seems to positively influence timely redressal of grievances, and appears to be necessary in states such as Delhi and Madhya Pradesh, which have a large base of complaints.

Constitution of CGRFs may be revised to ensure regular meetings amongst members who are not critically involved in other operations, and the final approval of critical issues may rest with the chairman of CGRF.

2. West Bengal registered the highest number of grievances resolved per sitting, which may be attributed to the following reasons:
 1. Sub-district and district level grievance redressal officers are empowered to resolve grievances with defined limits of reward and penalty. Thus, the grievances are resolved in an expeditious manner without the need for further escalations or approvals.

2. With a grievance redressal officer accessible for consumers in each region, the conduct of hearings with consumers becomes more efficient, relevant and productive. The travelling time for concerned parties is saved, and the required documents and evidence can be kept handy and accessible.
3. CGRFs in Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat and Haryana have a higher efficiency of resolution per sitting than other states, followed by CGRFs in Punjab, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and Karnataka.

Ombudsman



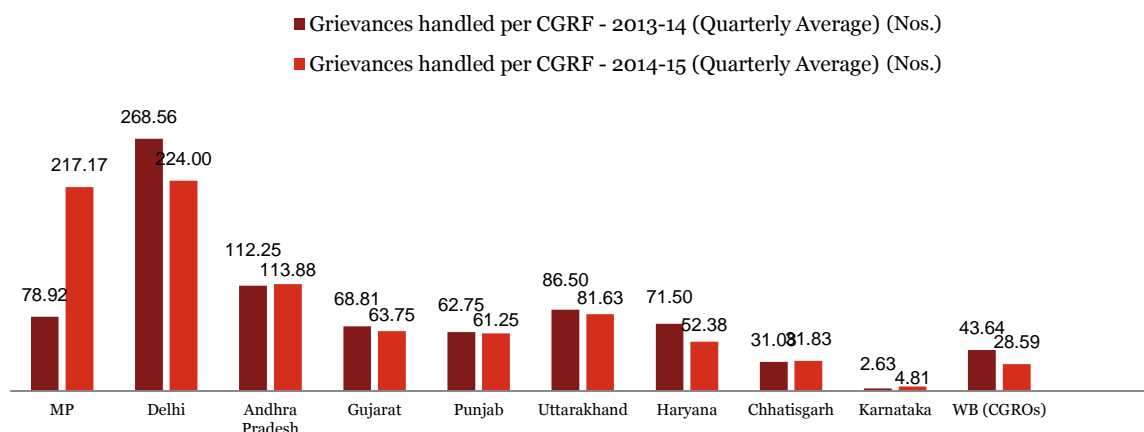
Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 82: Grievance redressal efficiency of Ombudsman for all states (Quarterly average)

Key Takeaways

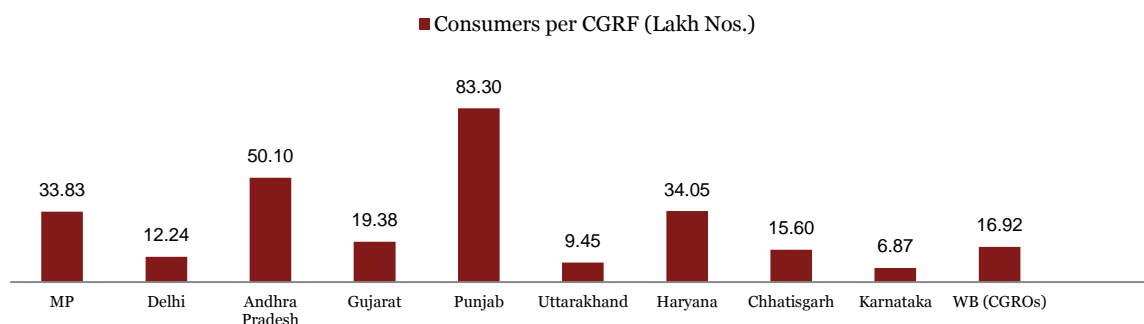
1. As with CGRFs, number of sittings seems to positively influence timely redressal of grievances for the Ombudsman, and appears to be necessary in states such as Delhi which have a large base of complaints.
2. Ombudsman in Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana have been able to influence the swiftness of resolution with the number of sittings held. However, Ombudsman in Delhi, Karnataka, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh have been unable to expedite the timeliness of resolutions with the conducted number of sittings.

4.3.2.2. Grievance Handling Capacity of CGRFs



Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 83: Grievance Handling Capability of CGRFs



Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 84: Electricity consumers served per CGRF

Key Takeaways

1. Burden of high number of cases

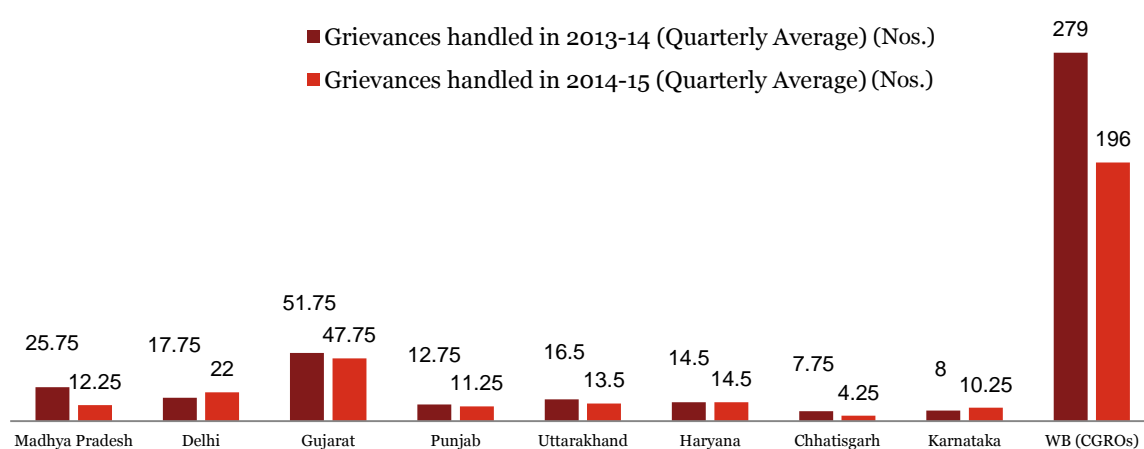
- While most CGRFs have been able to consistently handle the load of registered grievances over the two years, states where awareness and enterprising levels of consumers are high may struggle to resolve complaints in an expeditious manner (such as Delhi) and may require the creation of more forums in the coming years.
- To improve the timeliness of resolution, states like Delhi and Punjab may need to increase the number of forum members by 2, to ensure that more number of sittings can be conducted with the required quorum, and increase frequency of state tours to resolve grievances.

2. Geographical Reach

- In states such as Madhya Pradesh and Delhi, one CGRF has been setup for each of the distribution utilities to serve the electricity consumers of those utilities, while in Haryana and Uttarakhand, the CGRFs have been established for each major region, keeping in mind regional and logistical considerations.

- Karnataka has adopted an approach of establishing a CGRF in each of the revenue districts of the state to provide more accessibility to the consumers, while West Bengal has adopted a different approach of posting a grievance redressal officer in every district and sub-district to ensure continual resolution of incoming grievances by the empowered officers.
- While most states under study appear to be handling an optimal number of electricity consumers, many states will need to institute more CGRFs in the coming years to counter increasing number of grievances from more diverse geographies. States like Punjab and Madhya Pradesh are already serving a large number of electricity consumers per CGRF instituted, and should consider establishing more forums to ease the burden on the current forums. This will also ensure that more territories can be toured by the forums and more consumers can be involved in redressal and awareness programs.

Ombudsman



Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Figure 85: Grievance Handling Load of Ombudsman

Key Observations

1. Burden of grievance Resolution

- Since grievances escalated to the Ombudsman may be of a more critical nature, and may result in a significant monetary drawback for the consumer or licensee, such issues may require more deliberation, hearings and hence take more time to resolve. The timeliness of resolution is lower than expected for Ombudsman in most states under study. Therefore, each of the states under study should consider instituting more Ombudsman in the state to allow each of the functional Ombudsman to focus on timely resolution of critical grievances.
- Since a large number of grievances are being escalated to Ombudsman in West Bengal, the state may consider the appointment of more Ombudsman in the foreseeable future.

4.3.3. Impact of decisions

The outcome of decisions made by CGRFs and Ombudsman have been analysed on the basis of the following two parameters:

1. Decision Trends – Whether the decisions of grievance resolutions are in favour of the consumers or the licensees.
2. Escalations to Ombudsman – The number of grievances of different types being referred to the Ombudsman as compared to the number of grievances of corresponding types being referred to the relevant CGRF in the same time period.

Decision Trends

Table 84: Decision Trends for CGRFs – 2013-14 (%)

2013-14	In favour of the consumer	In favour of the licensee
Madhya Pradesh	56.12%	43.88%
Delhi	84.88%	15.12%
Andhra Pradesh	NA	NA
Gujarat	54.47%	45.53%
Punjab	64.02%	35.98%
Uttarakhand	77.98%	22.02%
Haryana	67.09%	32.91%
Chhattisgarh	70.28%	29.72%
Karnataka	NA	NA
West Bengal	30.90%	69.10%

Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Table 85: Decision Trends for CGRFs - 2014-15 (%)

2014-15	In favour of the consumer	In favour of the licensee
Madhya Pradesh	86.10%	13.90%
Delhi	76.67%	23.33%
Andhra Pradesh	NA	NA
Gujarat	52.82%	47.18%
Punjab	55.19%	44.81%
Uttarakhand	77.91%	22.09%
Haryana	69.43%	30.57%
Chhattisgarh	73.03%	26.97%
Karnataka	NA	NA
West Bengal	30.28%	69.72%

Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Key Observations

1. Most state CGRFs have been consistent in giving more decisions in favour of consumers than the licensees.

2. Delhi & Uttarakhand have given a significant proportion of decisions in favour of consumers, followed by Chhattisgarh and Haryana.
3. CGRF's in Gujarat & Punjab have given marginally more decisions in favour of the consumers.
4. West Bengal is the only state where decisions have been more in favour of licensee than consumer.

Table 86: Decision Trends for Ombudsman- 2013-14 (%)

States	In favour of the consumer	In favour of the licensee
Madhya Pradesh	57.14%	42.86%
Delhi	26.67%	73.33%
Andhra Pradesh	NA	NA
Gujarat	40.70%	59.30%
Punjab	63.16%	36.84%
Uttarakhand	21.43%	78.57%
Haryana	60.00%	40.00%
Chhattisgarh	7.14%	92.86%
Karnataka	71.43%	28.57%
West Bengal	78.51%	21.49%

Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Table 87: Decision Trends for Ombudsman - 2014-15 (%)

States	In favour of the consumer	In favour of the licensee
Madhya Pradesh	51.52%	48.48%
Delhi	25.56%	74.44%
Andhra Pradesh	NA	NA
Gujarat	39.47%	60.53%
Punjab	40.00%	60.00%
Uttarakhand	15.79%	84.21%
Haryana	64.58%	35.42%
Chhattisgarh	6.67%	93.33%
Karnataka	51.43%	48.57%
West Bengal	77.29%	22.71%

Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Key Observations

1. Ombudsman in Delhi, Gujarat, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh have given a significant proportion of decisions in favour of Licensees, while Ombudsman in Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka and West Bengal have given more decisions in favour of Consumers.
2. The Ombudsman in Punjab gave more decisions in favour of consumers in 2013-14, but more in favour of licensees in 2014-15.

Escalations to Ombudsman

Aggrieved consumers can approach the Ombudsman to appeal against a decision that has been awarded in favour of the distribution licensee by the relevant CGRF. However, due to lack of

awareness of the given escalation structure, unwillingness of consumers to pursue an extended course, or relative inaccessibility of the Ombudsman office, a lesser number grievances have been escalated to the Ombudsman in most states under study.

The number of grievances being referred to the Ombudsman as compared to the number of grievances of corresponding types being referred to the relevant CGRF in the same time period has been given below.

Table 88: Types of grievances escalated to CGRF and Ombudsman - 2013-14 (Nos.)

Type of grievance	Incorrect Billing		Quality of Supply		Meter Related		New Connection		Disconnection of supply	
State	CGRF	Ombuds man	CGRF	Ombuds man	CGRF	Ombuds man	CGRF	Ombuds man	CGRF	Ombuds man
Madhya Pradesh	436	15	7	0	62	11	51	0	15	0
Delhi	946	22	12	1	187	1	502	13	8	4
Gujarat	362	49	120	5	131	39	629	40	33	4
Punjab	58	17	7	0	54	12	3	0	6	0
Uttarakhand	256	39	0	0	0	0	32	3	0	0
Haryana	252	38	11	1	28	1	17	0	6	4
Chhattisgarh	220	9	3	0	5	9	18	0	1	4
West Bengal	1279	101	252	20	467	4	192	193	33	17

Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Table 89: Types of grievances escalated to CGRF and Ombudsman - 2014-15 (Nos.)

Type of grievance	Incorrect Billing		Quality of Supply		Meter Related		New Connection		Disconnection of supply	
State	CGRF	Ombuds man	CGRF	Ombuds man	CGRF	Ombuds man	CGRF	Ombuds man	CGRF	Ombuds man
Madhya Pradesh	1606	16	34	0	304	4	45	6	31	2
Delhi	882	29	7	0	119	3	497	6	4	13
Gujarat	393	35	131	4	99	27	597	59	19	5
Punjab	61	10	11	0	48	9	4	0	3	0
Uttarakhand	265	24	0	0	0	0	52	6	0	0
Haryana	203	39	14	0	8	0	0	0	9	7
Chhattisgarh	216	4	1	0	3	7	4	0	3	0
West Bengal	1109	50	260	11	322	6	214	163	72	10

Source: As per data provided by respective SERCs in the templates circulated by FOR

Key Observation

Issues regarding disconnection of supply are the majority of grievances escalated in more numbers by consumers to Ombudsman for most states under study. A significant number of grievances regarding disconnection of supply in Delhi, Haryana and West Bengal have been escalated to Ombudsman for resolution.

The Ombudsman in Gujarat, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Haryana and West Bengal has also received several escalations of issues related to incorrect billing.

These observations may be attributed to the following reasons:

1. Many consumers believe that high billing charges and usage occurs on the account of theft or meter-tampering and therefore they pursue the matter for resolution.
2. In grievances where the consumers consider billing amounts to be inordinate or unfair, they feel compelled to further escalate the matter to Ombudsman. These cases account for significant monetary loss to consumers and hence the consumers seek immediate relief.

5. Consumer Survey Responses

In order to understand the efficacy of grievance redressal mechanism, a short consumer survey consisting of twenty one questions was floated on the website of Forum of Regulators. The survey had questions covering the following aspects:

- Background and major concerns being faced by consumers regarding grievance redressal
- Awareness of consumers regarding the structure of grievance redressal
- Past experience of consumers with CGRF and/or Ombudsman
- Any other feedback for improvement of the current mechanism of grievance redressal

The following table shows the list of questions which were the part of questionnaire floated on the website of FOR.

Table 90: Questionnaire for consumer survey

Background and major concerns faced	
1. Which state do you belong to?	4. Have you ever filed a complaint to the distribution company?
2. Which category of consumers do you belong to?	5. What was the time taken by the distribution company to resolve the issue?
3. What is the most common problem that you face in electricity supply?	6. Why have you never filed a complaint you're your distribution company?
Awareness of grievance escalation structure	
7. Are you aware of CGRF?	10. Why have you never appealed to CGRF? (If answer to Q9 was no)
8. Where did you get the information on CGRF and Ombudsman?	
9. Have you ever appealed to CGRF?	
Past escalations to CGRF or Ombudsman	
11. Why did you apply to CGRF?	14. Were you satisfied with the decision of CGRF?
12. For which issue did you appeal to CGRF?	15. Did you appeal to Ombudsman? (If answer to Q14 was no)
13. What was the time taken by CGRF to arrive at the decision?	16. What was the time taken by Ombudsman for the decision?
Feedback	
17. Would you appeal to CGRF/Ombudsman again if you face any problem with electricity supply?	20. Do you feel that legal assistance is required in filing an appeal to CGRF/Ombudsman?
18. What could be the possible reason for you to not appeal to CGRF and Ombudsman again?	21. According to you, which industry has the best customer grievance redressal mechanism?
19. According to you, how can functioning of CGRF/Ombudsman be improved?	

The survey was live on FoR website for a period of 45 days and the consumer responses had been collected and analysed. The key findings of the consumer survey have been highlighted below:



Despite most respondents hailing from metropolitan cities, around 40 % of the consumer surveyed was unaware of CGRF and/or Ombudsman. The consumers who were aware of CGRF and Ombudsman mainly received information regarding the existence of such institutions either through information printed on bills or State Electricity Commission's websites.



Majority of consumers surveyed had billing or meter related issues.



Awareness level of consumers regarding internal Grievance Redressal Procedure followed by discoms was relatively high. It can mainly be attributed to the fact that the consumers who responded were mostly from metropolitan cities.



More than 40% of the respondents feel that legal assistance is required for filing complaints and this acts as a big deterrent for registering complaints.



Around 25 % of respondents cited that they would not like to register complaints with CGRF or Ombudsman as it is a time consuming exercise and entails considerable travel for hearing purposes. The consumers suggested that the maximum time period for grievance redressal for critical issues should be reduced.

6. Other consumer service initiatives

The electricity supply code of each state mandates distribution licensees to adhere to prescribed standards of consumer services regarding quality of supply, metering, billing, grievance redressal and other related services. To adhere to such standards, and to adequately serve the growing base of electricity consumers, leading distribution licensees in India have also endeavored to undertake several initiatives to improve the level of consumer services in the last five years. A few such initiatives have been outlined below:

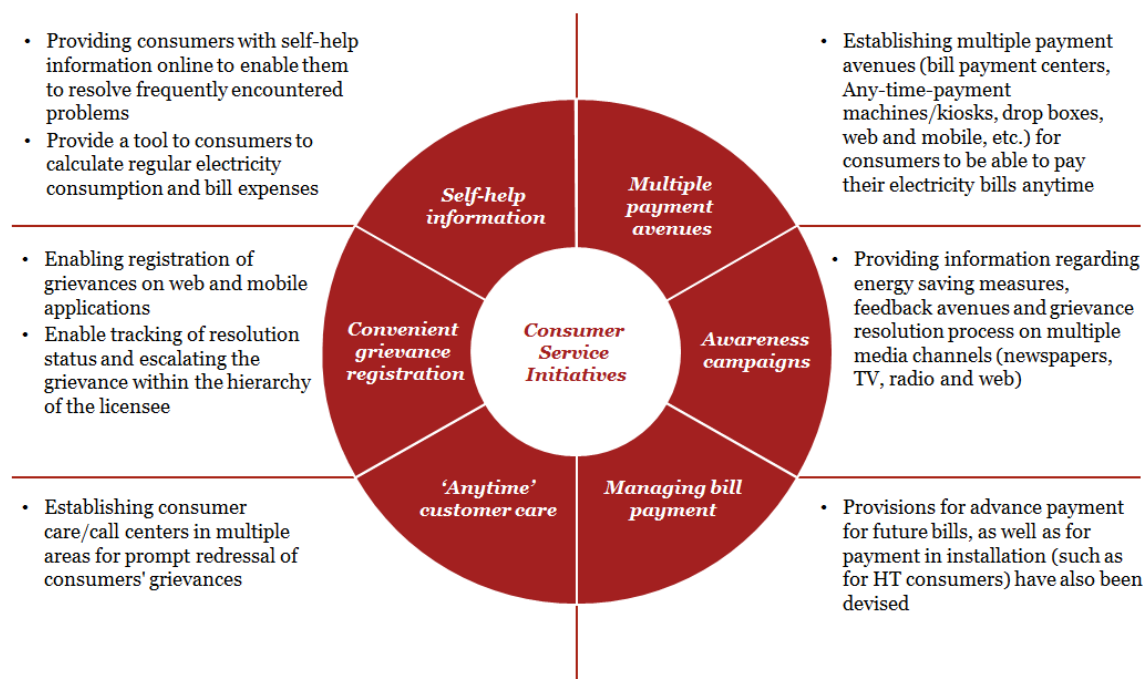


Figure 86: Consumer Service Initiatives

With such initiatives, the number of grievances being registered in CGRFs may be prevented from escalating quickly over time.

Case Study: Keeping in touch with consumers

BESCOM (Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company Limited) holds a customer interaction meeting every month in all sub-divisions, wherein consumers are invited to voice their concerns and feedback. Meeting venue, date and time is published in advance by the sub-divisional office through local newspapers, handbills, notice board and electronic media. This process has come to be accepted as a fairly impartial process by consumers since concerns are voiced and discussed in the public domain.

Source: www.bescom.org

Case Study: Decentralizing consumer services

A "MeeSeva" program initiated by the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh in conjunction with state utilities, allows self-employed youth to run decentralized service points in remote regions of the state, wherein they provide a range of government services to local communities. Such services include applying for identity documents, availing government schemes, and registering grievances for any public service. Local functionaries are empowered to approve requests instantaneously with digital signatures. This program has thus enabled consumers in remote regions to address their requests regarding electricity connections in a swift and effective manner.

Source: www.meeseva.gov.in

7. Review of Grievance Redressal Mechanism in other countries

To better understand the evolving models of grievance redressal being employed by other countries in the domain of energy services, an international review of the same has also been carried out in this study. We hereby present key findings from the study done for United Kingdom and Philippines.

From the consumers' point of view, we have evaluated the prevalent escalation structures through which the consumer seeks to address his grievances, and from a regulator's point of view, we have examined the key performance parameters that will help improve services on a continual basis.

7.1. United Kingdom

7.1.1. Background

From an international perspective, UK has one of the most open and dynamic energy markets in the world. In recent years, electricity prices have been broadly in line with prices in Europe and, in the case of gas, below most. The doubling in the amount of electricity generated from renewable sources since 2009 has lowered carbon emissions and reduced the UK's dependence on imported fossil fuels.

On the domestic front, the entry of new suppliers has markedly improved services and reductions in bills. Over 10 million UK households have seen substantial reductions in energy consumption as a result of various measures facilitated by their energy supplier.

However, the energy sector in UK is still attempting to solve the long-term issues of mandated decarbonization targets and subsequently uncertainty in pricing mechanisms. Need for stable supply, upgradation of metering infrastructure and collection efficiency are continual problems faced by suppliers.

7.1.2. Governing Bodies:

Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM)

The government regulator for gas and electricity markets in Great Britain was setup to promoting security of supply and sustainability, for consumers, and other domestic and industrial users. It also looks at the supervision and development of markets and competition regulation and the delivery of government schemes. OFGEM also acts as a resource for government policy as well as market and economic information.

Gas and Electricity Markets Authority (GEMA)

The role of the GEMA is to oversee OFGEM's work and provide strategic direction. It comprises non-executive and executive members and a non-executive chair.

Citizens Advice consumer service

It is a government funded service offering advice and information by telephone and online on a range of consumer issues, including gas and electricity. As well as being able to offer practical, impartial advice, it can refer consumers to bodies that are better able to assist.

Ombudsman Services:

It is the free and independent redress scheme set up to investigate complaints from domestic and micro business consumers that the energy company cannot resolve (after eight weeks or deadlock). It can require the company to correct the problem, apologize, explain what happened, and make a financial award. Its decisions are binding on the energy company but not the consumer.

7.1.3. Grievance Escalation Structure

The following escalation structure has been set up in United Kingdom:

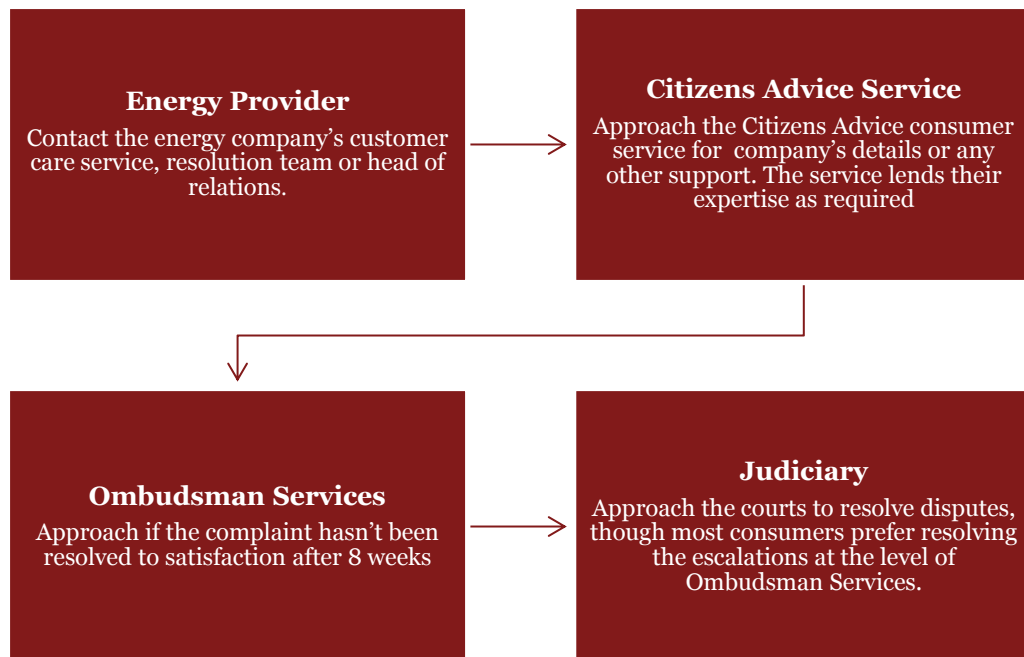


Figure 87: Grievance Escalation Structure in UK electricity sector

7.1.4. Performance Parameters

Key parameters used to measure grievance redressal performance of energy companies in the United Kingdom are:

1. **Communication with the consumer:** The consumer should not have any difficulty in obtaining supplier's contact details and should not have to repeatedly contact the supplier to register a complaint. Also there should be a clear agreement on objective of complaint between the consumer and the utility.
2. **Response time:** The consumer should be given a timetable for resolution process, and should be updated on a periodic basis.
3. **Clearance Level:** The consumer should be able to solve issues at the first point of contact itself, i.e. at the customer care specialist level, to the extent possible.
4. **Escalation of grievances:** The consumer should not have to escalate the grievance to Ombudsman on failure or delay by energy supplier
5. **Consumer Retention:** The consumer should not have to switch to other energy suppliers

7.2. Philippines

7.2.1. Background

Philippines has a robust history of successful independent power producers implementations. The country started seeing private sector participation in power since the early 90s, which led to continued capacity addition, improved grid connectivity and strengthening, and restructuring reforms towards implementation of retail competition and open access.

Retail competition and Open access are being pushed for nationwide execution in order to make the unregulated components of electricity tariffs more transparent and reflective of market forces.

7.2.2. Governing Bodies

Energy Regulatory Commission: ERC is an independent regulatory body performing the combined quasi-judicial, quasi-legislative and administrative functions in the electric industry in Philippines. The primary functions of ERC include rate and service regulation functions, ensuring consumer education and protection, and promoting competitive operations in the electricity market.

ERC has issued a Magna Carta for consumers outlining their rights as electricity consumers, which is framed within the context of individual consumer complaints and grievances.

Consumers Affairs Service: CAS is responsible for handling consumer complaints and ensuring the adequate promotion of consumer interests. This responsibility includes the following functions:

3. Provide the consumers with timely, relevant and complete information on electricity matters that affect their interest.
4. Encourage electricity consumers to air their complaints and grievances against any participant in the electricity industry, or even the ERC or any of its operating units or personnel, who may be perceived or actually known as working against the interest of the consumer.
5. Acts on grievances by referring it to the office unit concerned for immediate action.
6. Sets up mechanisms for responsive, fair and acceptable actions on complaints.
7. Recommends sanctions against any participants/players/ERC personnel who have been proven as working against the interest of consumer/end-users, and/or rewards/incentives for participants/players with no records of complaints from consumers/end-users.

Electricity Consumer Groups: Groups representing different civil categories provide interventions in the regulatory process concerned largely with rate setting and major consumer grievances.

7.2.3. Grievance Escalation Structure

The following escalation structure has been set up in Philippines:

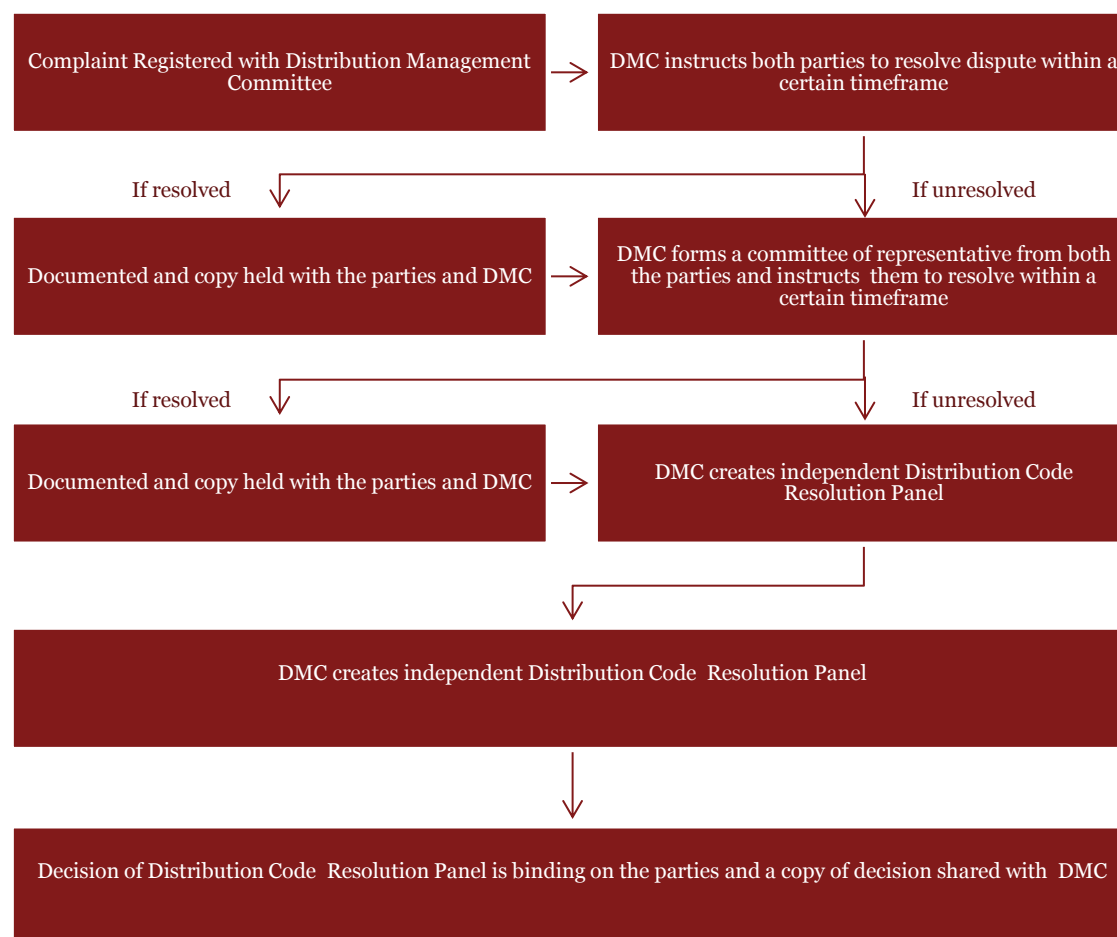


Figure 88: Grievance Escalation Structure in Philippines

For metering and billing settlement related issues, the following is the process for the dispute resolution:

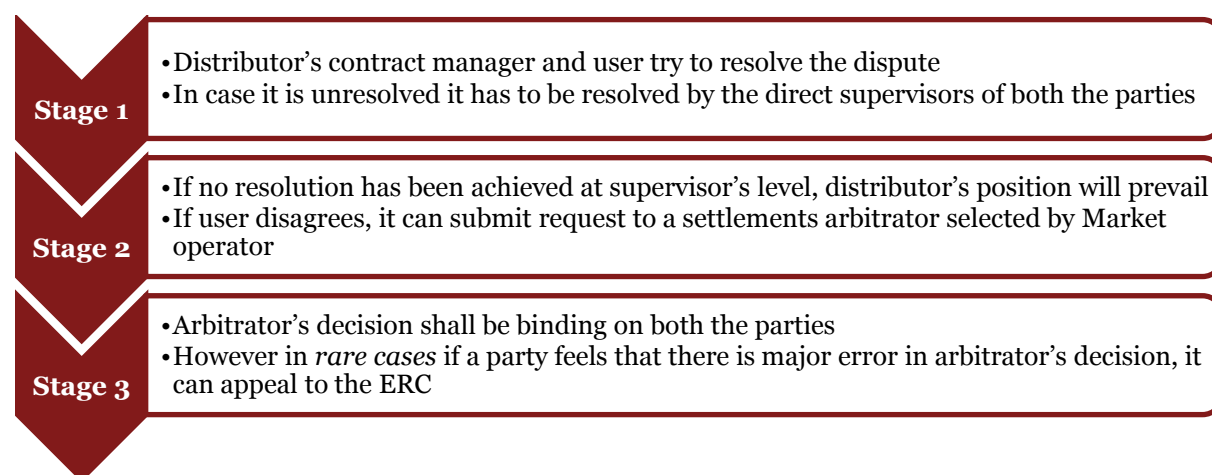


Figure 89: Dispute Resolution process in Philippines

7.3. Key Takeaways from International Review

In order to ramp up scale of operations without compromising on the quality of services provided, some of the innovative measures introduced by leading firms in the global framework are:

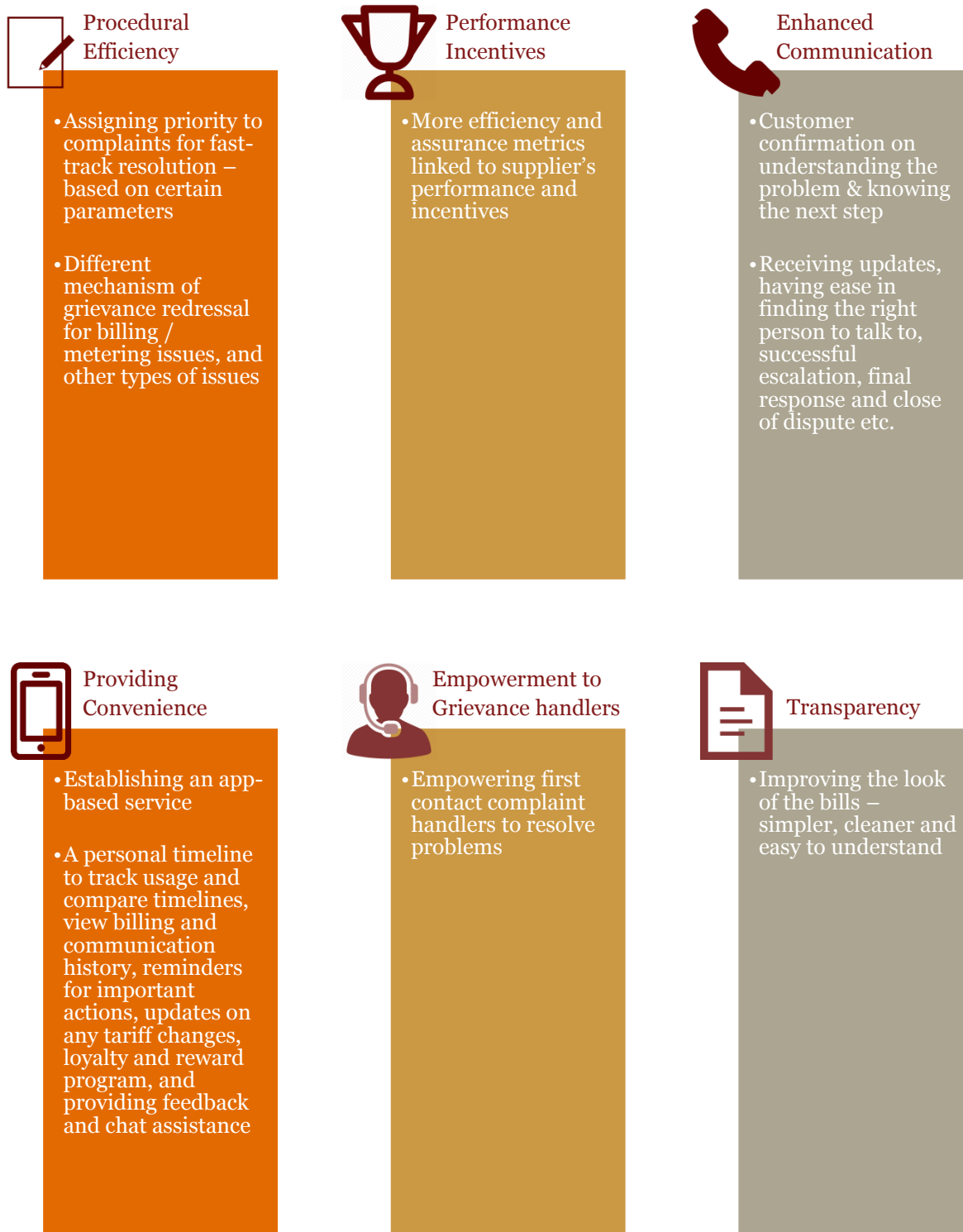


Figure 90: Key takeaways from other international review

8. Review of Grievance Redressal Mechanism in other sectors in India

8.1. Banking Sector

8.1.1. Regulatory Framework

8.1.1.1. Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006

Introduction

Under the Banking Ombudsman Scheme of 2006, The Reserve Bank appoints one or more of his officers as the Banking Ombudsman to redress customer complaints against certain deficiency in banking services. A complainant can file a complaint before the banking ombudsman only if he has attempted to find a satisfactory solution directly with his bank by making a written representation. If the bank rejects the complaint, or the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution or if the reply has not been received from the bank within a period of one month after bank has received his representation, the complainant can file a complaint in the Ombudsman.

The Banking Ombudsman endeavors to settle the complaint through mediation but in case an agreement between the complainant and the bank is not reached within 1 month, then the banking ombudsman passes the award after giving both the parties a reasonable opportunity to present their case. In case the award is acceptable to both the complainant and the bank, the complainant is required to send a letter of acceptance of the award to the bank within a period of 30 days from the date of receipt of the copy of the award by him and the bank has to comply and intimate compliance to the Ombudsman within a period of 30 days from the date of receipt by it of the acceptance from complainant.

The scheme also provides an option to appeal against the decision of the Ombudsman to both the parties. The aggrieved party can file an appeal before the Appellate Authority who is the Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India.

Obligations of banks under the scheme

The banks covered under this scheme have to ensure that:

- The purpose of the scheme and the contact details banking ombudsman are displayed prominently in branches and offices;
- The copy of the scheme is available with the designated officer of the bank for perusal in office premises and also uploaded on the websites;
- A Nodal Officer is appointed at regional/zonal offices who will be responsible for representing the bank and furnishing information to the Ombudsman about the complaints filed against the bank.

Further, RBI in its circular dated DBOD. No. Leg BC.81/09.07.005/2007-08 dated May 2, 2008 has also advised all scheduled commercial banks to ensure that a suitable mechanism exists for receiving and addressing complaints from its customers / constituents with specific emphasis on resolving such complaints fairly and expeditiously regardless of the source of the complaints.

8.1.1.2. Code of Bank's Commitment to Customers

Introduction

Code of Bank's Commitment to Customers was set up by the Banking Codes and Standard Board of India (BCSBI) in association with the Indian Bank's Association. BCSBI is an independent and autonomous body that was set up by Governor of Reserve Bank of India in his Monetary Policy Statement of 2005 to ensure that a comprehensive code of conduct for fair treatment of customers was evolved and adhered to. Membership of BCSBI is open to scheduled commercial banks, regional rural banks and select urban cooperative banks.

Objectives

Code of Bank's Commitment to Customers was set up to ensure minimum standards of banking practices for member banks to follow when they are dealing with individual customers. The central objective of this code is to promote good banking practices, set minimum standards, increase transparency, achieve higher operating standards and promote a cordial banker-customer relationship which would foster confidence of the common man in the banking system. As per the code, the member banks should:

1. Guide the customer in filing a complaint by explaining the procedure of complaint handling by the bank and prominently displaying the name of the official whom the customer may approach in case of any grievance.
2. Acknowledge the complaint within one week after its receipt in writing and keep the customer informed about the progress of the complaint.
3. Address the complaint within a period of 30 days of receipt of complaint or explain the reasons for requiring more time.
4. Guide the customer on how to take his complaint further if he is not satisfied and also that he may pursue other avenues like Banking Ombudsman for redressal of his grievances.
5. Display contact details of Banking Ombudsman in branches and the scheme on website.
6. Organize meetings of customers at periodic intervals to facilitate exchange of ideas.
7. Display the dates of branch level customer service committee meeting in branches and the banking ombudsman scheme on the website.

8.1.2. State Bank of India

The grievance redressal mechanism of State Bank of India is illustrated in the flow chart below:

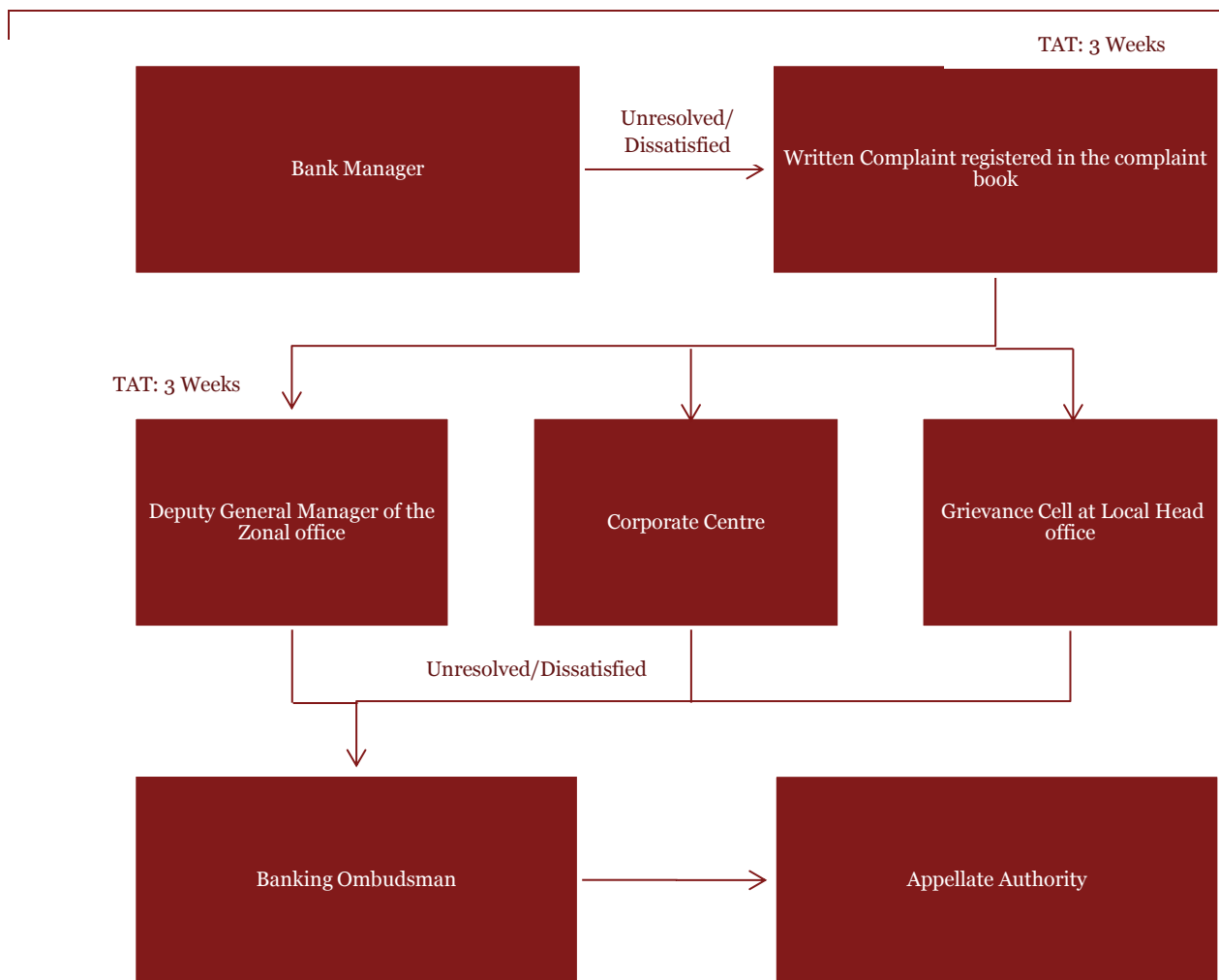


Figure 91: Grievance redressal mechanism of State Bank of India

1. In case of any transaction related grievance, the customer can approach the Bank Manager, who tries to ensure fair and expeditious handling of customer grievances.
2. However, if the bank manager is not able to attend to customer needs, the customer may register a written complaint in the complaint book available in all branches. A copy of the complaint with an acknowledgment is issued to the customer. The bank attempts to redress the complaint within a maximum period of three weeks and if for any reason the bank is unable to redress the grievance, the customer is informed about the reasons and the actions taken for early redressal.
3. In case of any difficulty with the branch or an unsatisfactory reply in respect of the complaint lodged with the branch, the customer has an option to approach:
 - a. Deputy General Manager/Assistant General Manager of the Zonal Office under whose administrative control the Branch functions;
 - b. Grievance cell at the local head office under whose jurisdiction the branch functions;
 - c. General Manager at the Corporate center;
4. The Zonal Office, Local Head Office or the Corporate Centre as the case may be, are required to acknowledge the grievance within five days of receipt and initiate action to have the grievance resolved within a maximum period of three weeks. The customer will also be kept

informed of the action taken, the reasons for delay if any, in redressal and the progress in redressal of grievance.

5. In case the customer is still unhappy with the service or redressal provided by the bank, he can also approach the Banking Ombudsman located in State Capitals for redressal.

8.1.3. ICICI Bank

8.1.3.1. Grievance Redressal Process

The grievance redressal mechanism at ICICI bank is as depicted below:

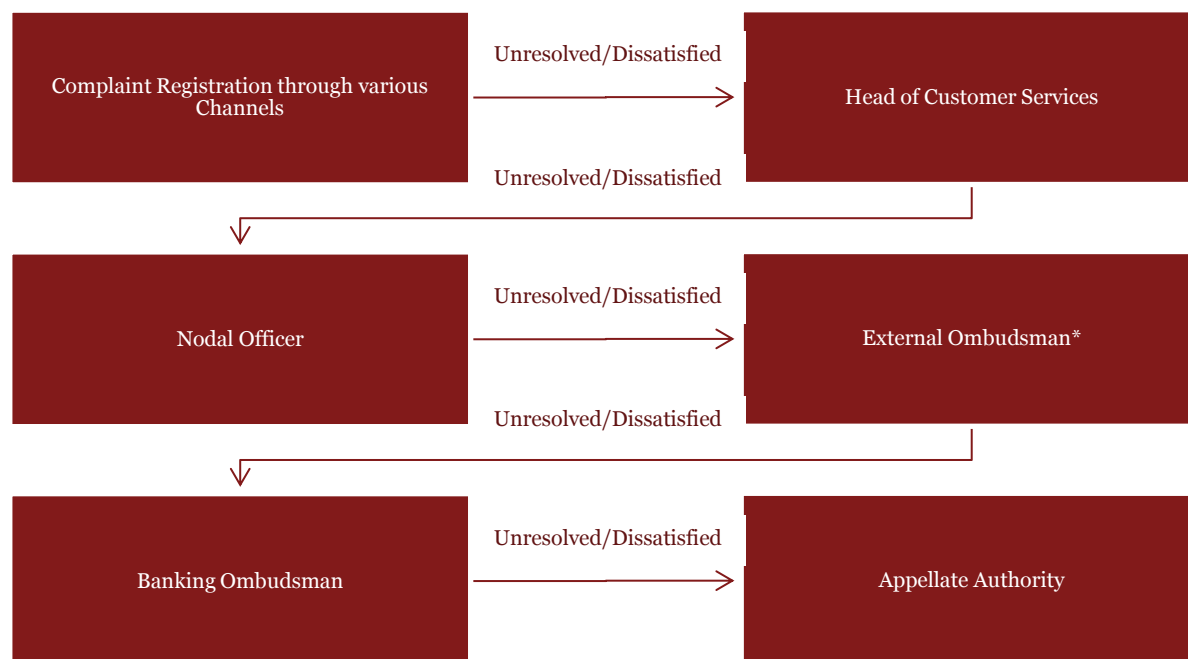


Figure 92: Grievance redressal mechanism at ICICI bank

1. In case of any grievance, the customer can lodge his complaint through various channels which are:
 - a) Customer Care: The customer can contact the Customer Care officers over the phone or send an e-mail/letter to the mail ids/addresses of the branch.
 - b) Branch: The customer can speak to the branch officials for resolution of their issues or register their grievances through the complaint book available in the branches. Alternatively, customers can drop their complaint/feedback in the boxes made available at the branch.
 - c) Bank's Website: Customers can log in a complaint on the Bank's website.
2. The turnaround time for responding to a registered complaint in ICICI bank is:
 - a) Normal cases (other than the ones mentioned below): 7 working days
 - b) Fraud cases, Legal cases and cases which need retrieval of documents and exceptionally old records: 15 working days
 - c) Cases involving 3rd party (other Banks): 30 working days

- d) Chargeback related cases: 45 to 90 working days or as per VISA/Master Card guidelines

If any case needs additional time, the bank informs the customer/regulator the reasons of delay in resolution and provides expected time lines for resolution of the issue. The overseas branches will follow the timelines as mandated by respective local regulator.

3. If a customer is not satisfied with the resolution provided through various channels, the customer can escalate the issue to the Head of Customer Services.
4. If the resolution by Head of Customer Services does not meet the expectations of the customer, the customer can contact the Nodal Officer.
5. If the customer is still not satisfied with the resolution provided by the Nodal Officer, the customer has an option of approaching the external ombudsman of the bank. The External Ombudsman is a third party who is usually a retired senior banker, of the rank of an Executive Director, or higher. The decision of the External Ombudsman of the Bank will be binding on the Business unit who will follow the directives within the pre-determined timeframe.
6. If still dissatisfied with the response from the Bank, customers are provided with an option of approaching the Banking Ombudsman.

8.1.3.2. Forums to Review Customer Grievances: ICICI Initiative

ICICI bank has constituted various forums to review handling of customer grievances and enhance the quality of customer services. These forums are a major initiative from the bank to strengthen the bank's orientation towards customer and bridge the gap between the customer and the senior management. Through these forums, the bank ensures that there is a continuous improvement in bank's service levels through continuous customer feedback. The various forums established by the bank are:

1. **Branch level customer service committee (MILAP):** MILAP acts as forum to enable customers meet and interact with the senior managers of the Bank with the following objectives:
 - a) Collect customer feedback on services provided by the Bank
 - b) Enable senior managers get first hand feel of requirements/demands
 - c) Reduce information gap between customers and Bank
 - d) Build trust amongst customers
2. **Standing committee on customer service:** The Customer Service Council (CSC) of the Bank functions as the Standing Committee on Customer Services which is chaired by a Working Director. Business Heads and the Heads of related departments are members of the Council. The Council focuses on building and strengthening customer service orientation in the Bank through initiating various measures including simplifying processes for improvement in customer service levels. The Council holds monthly review meetings to discuss service updates, ongoing projects specifically targeted towards improvement of customer service and appropriate actions arising from discussions. The Customer Service Council carries out the following specific functions:
 - a) Evaluate feedback on quality of customer service received from various quarters.
 - b) Review comments/feed-back on customer service and implementation of Bank's Code of Commitments to Customers formulated by Banking Codes and Standards Board of India (BCSBI).
 - c) Review complaints related to non-compliance of Code of Commitment.

- d) Ensure that the Bank follows all regulatory instructions regarding customer service and actionable pointed out by Committee on Procedures and Performance Audit on Public Services.
 - e) Submit report on its performance to the Customer Service Committee of the board at quarterly intervals.
3. **Customer service committee of the Board:** The Customer Service Committee of the Board overlooks the implementation of various customer service guidelines as mandated by Reserve Bank of India and Banking Codes and Standards Board of India. The Committee reviews customer service initiatives and deliberates innovative measures for enhancing the quality of customer service and improving overall service levels. The Committee also reviews the functioning of the Standing Committee on Customer Service (Customer Service Council of the Bank).

8.1.4. Snapshot of Performance

Disposal of Complaints

There are 15 Banking Ombudsman covering 29 states and 7 Union Territories to handle the complaints received from bank customers regarding the deficiency in banking services. The no of complaints received and disposed in FY 2011-12, FY 2012-13 and FY 2013-14 are highlighted in the table below:

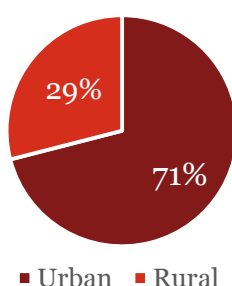
Table 91: Status of Performance of Banking Ombudsman

Number Of Complaints	FY 2011-12	FY 2012-13	FY 2013-14
Received during the year	72889	70541	76573
Brought forward from previous year	4618	4642	5479
Handled during the year	77507	75183	82052
Disposed of during the year	72865	69704	78745
Rate of disposal	94%	93%	96%
Carried forward to the next year	4642	5479	3307

Source: RBI Annual Reports on Banking Ombudsman Scheme

As inferred from the table, the Banking Ombudsman disposes the cases expeditiously and resolves more than 90% of the cases received by them in the same year itself.

Population group wise Classification of Complaints

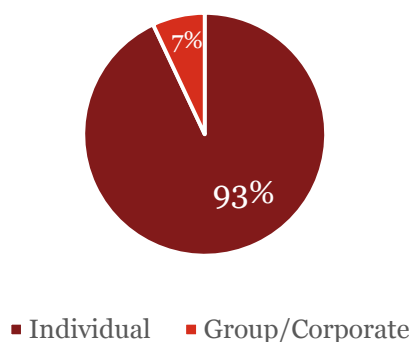


Source: RBI Annual Reports on Banking Ombudsman Scheme

Figure 93: Source of complaints received by Banking Ombudsman

The source of complaints received by Banking Ombudsman remains heavily skewed towards customers from metro/urban areas which accounts for approximately 71% of the complaints received in FY 2013-14. This shows that the spread is still confined to urban and metro areas and a continued thrust on consumer awareness is required in improving the position in the future.

Complainant wise Classification of Complaints

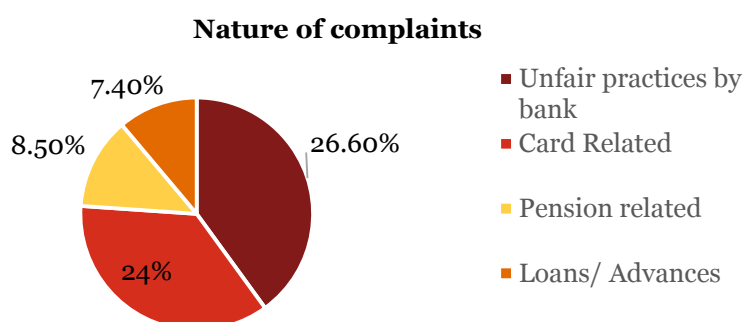


Source: RBI Annual Reports on Banking Ombudsman Scheme

Figure 94: Complainant-wise classification of complaints

Approximately 93% of the complaints received in FY 2013-14 were from the individual bank customers which are the target segment of the scheme.

Category wise Distribution of Complaints



Source: RBI Annual Reports on Banking Ombudsman Scheme

Figure 95: Category wise Distribution of Complaints

Complaints pertaining to failure to meet commitments, non-observance of fair practices code, BCSBI Codes taken together constituted largest category of complaints with 26.6% of the complaints received in FY 2013-14. A large number of complaints in this category indicates the lack of awareness about these codes amongst bank staff as well as the customers. Card related complaints comprised 24.1% of the total complaints and formed the second largest category of complaints followed by pension related complaints (8.5%), loans and advances (7.4%) and others.

8.1.5. Best Practices and takeaways

Independence of Resolution Body

1. The Banking Ombudsman is appointed by the Reserve Bank of India from one of its officials in the rank of Chief General Manager or a General Manager ensuring its independence which is in contrast to the Power Sector wherein many states like Haryana, Karnataka, Punjab, Rajasthan have not included any clause in their regulations to ensure independence of Ombudsman from the distribution licensee.

2. ICICI bank has gone a step further to ensure independence by appointing an External Ombudsman who is not the bank's employee but a retired senior banker and whose decision will be binding on all the business units.

Communication with customers

1. ICICI has also established various forums to continuously enhance the quality of grievance handling mechanism by the bank. These forums have been constituted to strengthen customer orientation of bank by continuous incorporation of customer feedback and compliance to regulatory instructions.
2. Through this initiative, the board of the bank is apprised about the quality of services provided by the bank to its customers

8.2. Telecommunications Sector

The following sections will illustrate the grievance handling mechanism in the telecommunications sector along with performance of Vodafone grievance redressal mechanism in detail:

8.2.1. Regulatory Framework

The grievance redressal mechanism in the telecommunications sector is regulated by the Telecom Consumers Complaint Redressal Regulations, 2012 and as amended thereof issued by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) for speedy, effective and inexpensive redressal of consumer grievances. The regulations apply to all service providers in the country providing basic telephone services, unified access services, cellular mobile telephone services and internet services except the internet service providers having revenue less than Rs. 5 Cr or having total number of subscribers less than ten thousand in the preceding financial year. The mechanism established under this regulation is as depicted below:

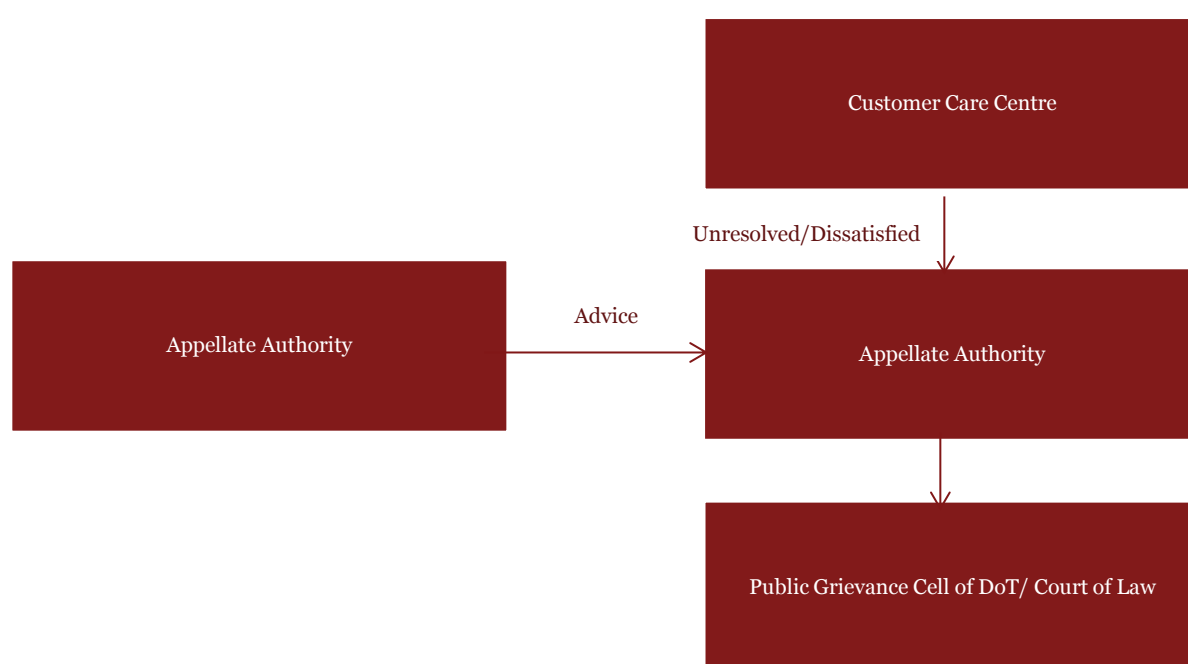


Figure 96: Grievance Redressal Mechanism in Telecommunications Sector

As per the Telecom Consumers Complaint Redressal Regulations of 2012, the service provider has to establish a Two Tier Institutionalized Grievances Redressal Mechanism for redressal of customer grievances. The mechanism is as explained as under:

1. **Complaint Centre:** All the service providers have to establish a Complaint Centre with a toll free customer care number which will be responsible to address all the complaints received by them. The service providers should also ensure that the Complaint Centre is accessible through the network of other service providers by earmarking a specific number. Every complaint at the Complaint Center shall be registered by giving a unique docket number, which will remain in the system for at least three months. The docket number along with date and time of registration and the time limit for resolution of the complaint should be communicated to the consumer through SMS. The customer shall also be informed of the action taken through SMS/email/post. The service providers also have to establish a Web Based Complaint Monitoring System to enable the consumers to monitor their complaints.
2. **Appellate Authority:** If a consumer is not satisfied with the redressal of his complaint, or his complaint remains unaddressed or no intimation of redressal of the complaint is received

within the specified period, he can approach the next tier i.e. the Appellate Authority for redressal of his complaints. The Appellate Authority is established by the service provider in each of the service areas which consists of one or more people as decided by the service provider.

3. **Advisory Committee:** The service provider also has to establish an advisory committee in each of the service areas to render advice on the appeals filed before the Appellate Authority. The advisory committee consists of two people of which one member should be from the consumer organizations registered with TRAI and the other member should be a representative of the service provider. On receipt on an appeal, the secretariat of the appellate authority has to:
 - a. Register the appeal by assigning a unique number and acknowledge it within three days by sending the unique number through SMS or email to the consumer
 - b. Forward the appeal to the concerned service provider within three days for filing a reply within seven days along with requisite documents
 - c. Place the appeal in front of the advisory committee within two days of receipt of reply from the service provider
 - d. The advisory committee should render its advice on each appeal placed before it within 15 days and within 2 days of receipt of advice from the committee; the appeal should be placed before the Appellate Authority for its consideration.
 - e. The Appellate Authority after conducting the necessary inquiry should arrive at decision within 10 days of the appeal placed before it. The Appellate Authority can decide the appeal in accordance with the advice of the advisory committee or otherwise.

However, in case the grievance is not redressed after exhausting this procedure, an individual complainant may approach an appropriate Court of Law or Public Grievance Cell of Department of Telecommunications (DoT). The public grievance cell of DoT acts only as a facilitator to the redressal process and is not vested with any power to penalize the service provider for not redressing the grievance to the satisfaction of the complainant or for delay in redressing the grievance. The complaint received by DoT is forwarded to the concerned service provider and the concerned unit in DoT with an advice to take appropriate action in the matter and to inform the complainant regarding the action towards the redressal of the grievance.

The regulations also require the service provider to set up a telecom consumer's charter which will contain various time frames specified by the Authority for redressal of various types of complaints under Quality of Service regulations, complaint redressal mechanism, various procedures related to services like mobile number portability, amount to be deducted as administrative expenses or otherwise, right of the consumers etc.

8.2.2. Best Practices and takeaways

1. The Regulatory Framework of grievance redressal mechanism in telecommunications sector lack independence since both the customer care centers and Appellate Authority are appointed by the service providers itself.
2. The advisory committee consists of two members amongst which one member is appointed from the consumer organization appointed by the Authority. However, the Appellate Authority can take the decision for the case in accordance with or against the advice of the Advisory Committee.

3. The member appointed from the consumer organization has tenure of 1 year extendible by a maximum period of 1 year which in some capacity ensures that the independence of independent members is not compromised whereas in the power sector, the tenure of members of CGRF and Ombudsman is even extendible to a period of 5 years in some states.

9. Key Takeaways from other sectors

9.1. Grievance Redressal Mechanism of Banking and Telecommunication Sectors

The literature review of the grievance redressal mechanism in banking and telecommunication sector has been done in the previous section. Although, the nature of services of these two sectors are different from the electricity sector but these two sectors have been selected because of the large volume of the grievances received from the consumers. The mechanism and the regulatory framework for grievance redressal is quite different for the two sectors yet the key learnings being derived from them can be implemented in the electricity sector to further improve the existing grievance resolution procedure. The key takeaways from the grievance redressal mechanism for banking and telecommunication sectors have been highlighted below:



The banking sector divides the consumer complaints in to three main categories viz. attitudinal/behavioural, operational aspects, technology related and has different manner of treatment for each of such cases.



The interface between the consumer and the service provider has many touch points. Thus customers can register complaints in various ways, such as through telephonic, call centre, complaints in person, nodal customer care centres and complaints through email.



The internal grievance redressal mechanism of the banking system has various levels of escalations thereby reducing the load on banking Ombudsman. Before representation to banking Ombudsman, the complaint goes through escalations before reaching to head of customer service and nodal officers.



In the telecom sector, the service provider has to establish an Advisory Committee in each of the service areas to render advice on the appeals filed before the Appellate Authority. The Advisory Committee helps consumers at the most important stage of registration of complaints before the Appellate Authority.



Insurance industry has recently started automation of complaint handling process. The automation is being done using BPM (Business Process Management) based platform. An efficient BPM engine enables organizations to automate their business processes within the time frame of readymade tools and with the flexibility of custom built systems.

10. Recommendations

10.1. Key learning from the study

The study on current state of grievance redressal frameworks in India has presented us with key insights on prevailing concerns and how further progress can be made to improve consumer services in the coming years. In view of the current scenario observed in India, we can summarize our key learning in the form of three focus areas as given below:

- I. Improving reach of CGRFs
- II. Increasing consumer education and involvement
- III. Ensuring independence of CGRFs



Figure 97: Summary of Key Learning

I. Improving reach of CGRFs will be necessary for all states in the foreseeable future

- a. It may be necessary to increase the number of CGRFs in states which have a larger geographical areas and a growing base of consumers. Parameters such as area per CGRF and consumers per CGRF may be benchmarked against other states to decide on the creation of formation of additional forums.
- b. New forums may be set up keeping in mind the average distance that consumers need to travel in order to register a grievance, and the possibility of conducting forum tours in surrounding regions to have a periodic exchange with different settlements.
- c. Appropriate timelines for institution of new CGRFs shall be set by the respective State Regulatory Commissions such that an optimal number of grievances and consumers can be served in the near future.

- d. Forum members can conduct more tours to ensure complete coverage of designated regions over a period of one year, and thus enable greater admittance and resolution of grievances. Such tours may also act as tools of awareness and education, wherein the forum may address aggrieved users in how to handle a particular concern and therefore pre-empt grievances that may arise in the future.
- e. It may be ensured that CGRFs are composed of required members at all times and they conduct the required number of hearings at frequent intervals for faster resolution of grievances

II. Involving and educating consumers through new initiatives will be essential in improving services in the long run

- a. It may be useful to ensure the empowerment of the first-contact customer handlers in all utilities to be able to resolve simple grievances (especially billing and meter related issues).
- b. To ensure that consumers are fully aware of the redressal path for addressing grievances, the SERCs/utilities may ensure earmarking of funds for CGRFs to adequately publicize the process of resolution and relevant contact details in the regions under their purview.
- c. It will be convenient for consumers across regions if submission of grievances is enabled on both web-based and application-based platforms, along with online intimation of status of resolution.
- d. To improve transparency of functioning of CGRFs and Ombudsman, it may be important to mandate all CGRFs for periodic disclosure of all grievance-related information, trends and decisions.

III. *Ensuring independence of working of CGRFs from distribution licensees*

- a. The regulations may ensure that the composition and membership of CGRF shall be independent of the licensee. The CGRFs may endeavor to fill any vacancies in a stipulated period of time and duly inform the respective SERC if facing any constraints in finding a candidate.
- b. Office space of CGRF should be established away from the premise of the distribution licensee to the extent possible. This will also enable all stakeholders to have greater faith in the independence of CGRFs' functioning.
- c. Regulations may also ensure financial independence of CGRFs by ensuring that compensation of members is borne by the SERCs and only administrative and operative expenses of CGRFs are borne by the licensee.

10.2. Proposed way forward

Having understood the framework of grievance redressal which is currently prevalent in various sectors in India such as power, banking and telecom, as well as the energy sector in the international arena (United Kingdom and Philippines), we would like to set out two parallel approaches that can be considered by CGRFs and Ombudsman to enhance consumer services in the long run:

- Handling ever increasing consumer expectations and escalations in the number of grievances
- Improving performance efficiency

Improving performance efficiency of redressal bodies



Handling ever-increasing consumer expectations and grievances

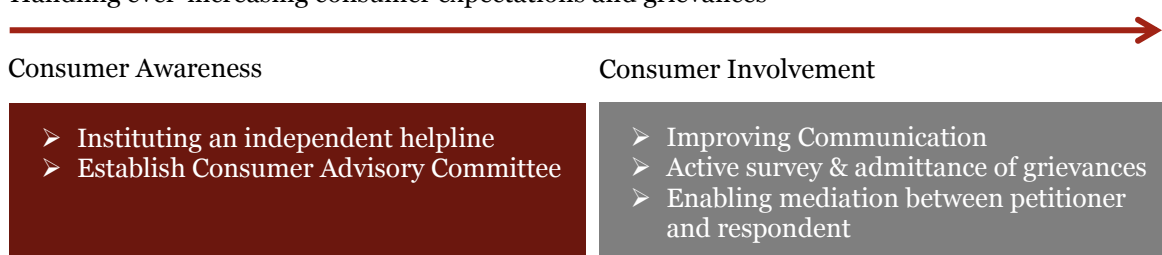


Figure 98: Proposed way forward

The short and long-term measures given for each of the approaches have been elaborated in the following sections.

Prioritization of grievances

The CGRF may choose to assign a 'Critical' status to certain complaints, where exceptional urgency in resolution is required or a significant loss to any of the concerned participants is imminent.

1. Certain types of grievances may always be granted a 'Critical' status, such as the following:
 - i. Request of new connections, which has been regarded by the Electricity Act of 2003 as a vital requirement, and mandated to be achieved by distribution utilities in a maximum time period of one month from the receipt of the application unless such an implementation entails setup of new infrastructure.
 - ii. Priority may be assigned to the resolution of issues regarding disconnection of supply, occurring due to suspected theft, and failure in bill payment or other reasons detrimental to supply of electricity to other consumers. Since disconnection of electricity supply severely handicaps consumers in undertaking daily activities, and all such grievances may require immediate resolution.
2. 'Critical' grievances could be asked to be resolved within an earlier stipulated time (say, 20 days) and non-critical complaints that are not resolved within normal deadlines as provided by state regulations may be granted a 'Critical' status for immediate resolution.

Penalty for non-compliance with regulations

The discoms may be penalized in case of any deviations observed from the regulations. Stricter compliance may be required in:

1. Establishment, constitution, composition etc. of CGRFs and Ombudsman, to be monitored and reviewed by the respective SERCs.
2. Periodic disclosure of grievance-related information in the public domain.

Assigning accountability to forum members

1. Responsibilities of each of the members shall be prescribed with respect to attendance, hearing the cases, decision-making, judgment writing, etc.
2. Assigning such accountability to forum members for efficient functioning of the CGRF would facilitate better management and effective decision-making.

Decentralization of duties

Empowering all CGRF members to conduct various forum activities and make swift decisions would help resolve various types of grievances in the stipulated time period consistently. The following measures can be instituted to grant greater authorization to all CGRF members.

1. To conduct more hearings and resolve pending issues, CGRFs may be constituted with members who can meet regularly and conduct more sittings. While the non-critical issues may be decided by the members, final approval for critical issues may rest with the Chairman of CGRF.
2. Sittings and hearings for resolution of grievances can be conducted with a quorum of any three members, with only two members required in case of non-critical issues. However, the technical expert should be necessarily present in all such sittings, since a technical point of view will be indispensable in providing fair and incisive decisions.
3. On similar lines, critical issues may require approval of any 3 members, with final approval from the Chairman, while non-critical issues may require approval of any 2 members. The technical expert may necessarily be required to approve both non-critical and critical issues.

Establishing Consumer Advisory Committees

Consumer Advisory Committees can provide expertise to consumers on the prevalent escalation structures and on representation of grievances to the relevant body

1. Consumer Advisory Committees can tackle grievances on behalf of many consumers, especially rural consumers, and help them maintain evidence for filing and escalation.
2. In cases with significant imminent loss, Consumer Advisory Committees can help consumers obtain interim reliefs, if required.

Active survey and admittance of grievances

By conducting scheduled forum tours across designated regions and ensure complete coverage in a one year period, CGRFs may ensure greater admittance and feedback of grievances in each region.

1. Forums may set up camps across the designated region to resolve non-critical issues in a fast-track manner. This process may also help resolve many simple cases without registration.

2. The presence of the Technical expert may be necessary for all such tours and approvals.

Improving Communication

To increase awareness levels of consumers, they should be enabled to locate and understand grievance resolution details easily and conveniently on all communication avenues set forth by utilities and redressal bodies. This can be done with the following measures:

1. Improving the look and layout of bills to simplify billing information.
2. Providing the escalation structure clearly on electricity bills.
3. Providing a standardized layout for bills, websites and mobile applications in the long run.

Facilitating mediation before approaching CGRFs

To ease the burden of resolution on CGRFs, grievances can also be resolved through a process of mediation between consumers and licensees.

1. The process of grievance resolution through mediation has been instituted in countries such as Philippines, where it has proved to be an effective model for swift resolution of grievances.
2. The mediation proceedings can be overseen by CGRFs or SERC to help the concerned consumer and licensee arrive at an agreeable solution.

Establishing an independent helpline service for consumer queries

Since consumers frequently experience the need to understand the process of billing, meter reading and other related procedures, an independent helpline can be set up wherein trained helpline executives can answer all the consumer queries.

1. Consumers may redirect all such queries to the independent helpline service without the need of finding necessary contact details for getting specific queries answered, or visiting the utilities.
2. Changes in tariff rates, payment procedures, etc. can also be informed by helpline executives.

11. Appendix

11.1. Templates for data collection

Table 92: Collective grievance redressal data for CGRFs

Name of CGRF	Number of grievance at the beginning of year	Number of grievance received during the year	Number of grievance disposed of during the year	No. of CGRF sittings during the year	No. of decisions in favour of consumer	No. of decisions in favour of licensee
CGRF 1						
CGRF 2						
CGRF 3						
CGRF 4						

Table 93: Collective grievance redressal data for Ombudsman

Name of Ombudsman	Number of grievance at the beginning of year	Number of grievance received during the year	Number of grievance disposed of during the year	No. of sittings during the year	No. of decisions in favour of consumer	No. of decisions in favour of licensee
Ombudsman 1						
Ombudsman 2						

Table 94: Category wise complaints in CGRF and Ombudsman

Type of Complaint	Pending complaints of previous years	Fresh complaints received during the year	Total Complaints	No of complaints redressed during the period			
				In stipulated time	Beyond stipulated time	Total	Balance complaints to be redressed
Incorrect Bill							
Quality of Supply							
New Connection							
Meter Related							
Disconnection of Supply							
Security Deposit Related							
Street Light Related							
Miscellaneous							
Others							

11.2. Charts used for data analysis

Resolution of different types of grievances, CGRFs – 2013-14

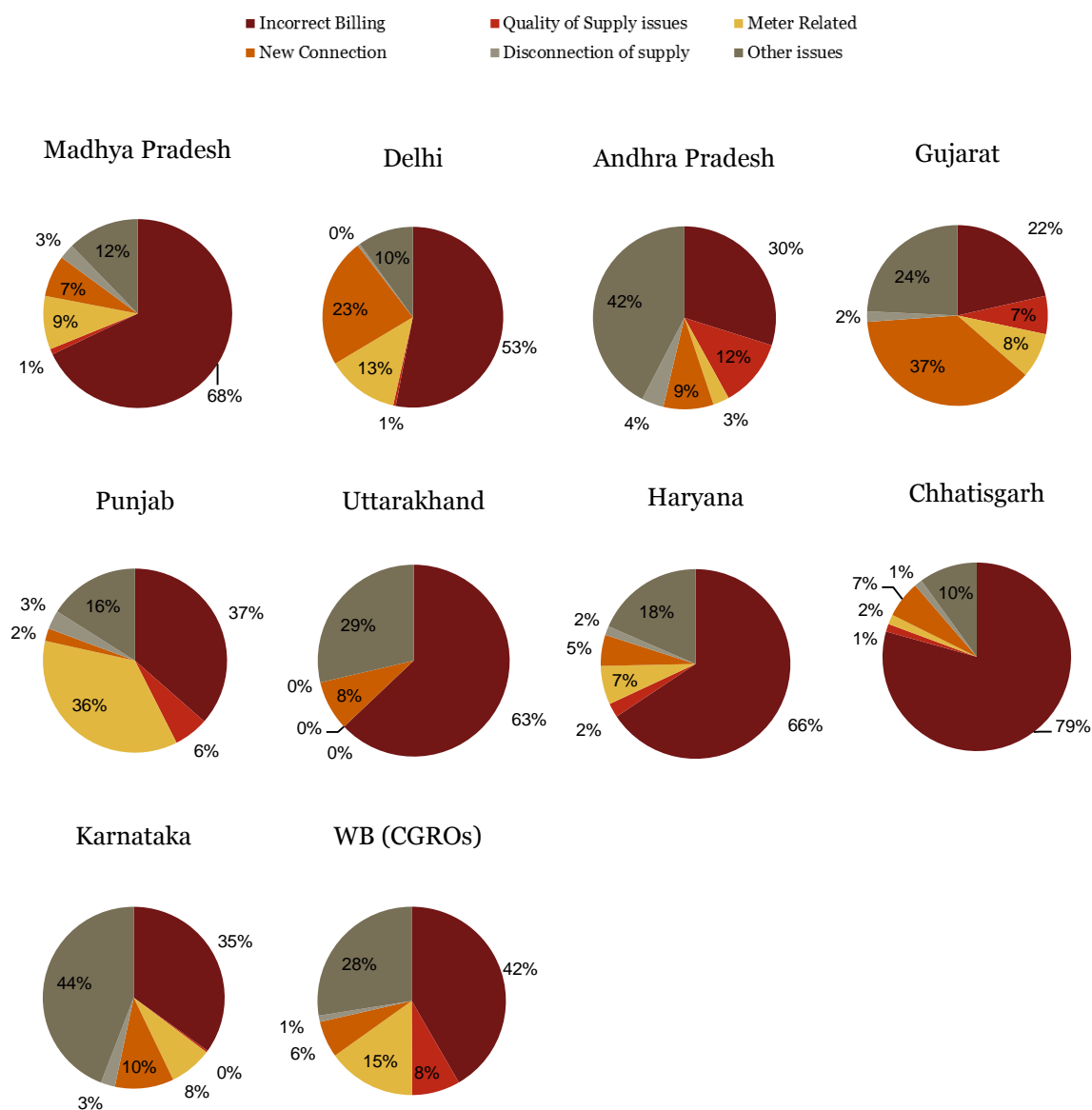


Figure 99: Category-wise share of grievances, CGRFs - 2013-14

Resolution of different types of grievances, CGRFs – 2014-15

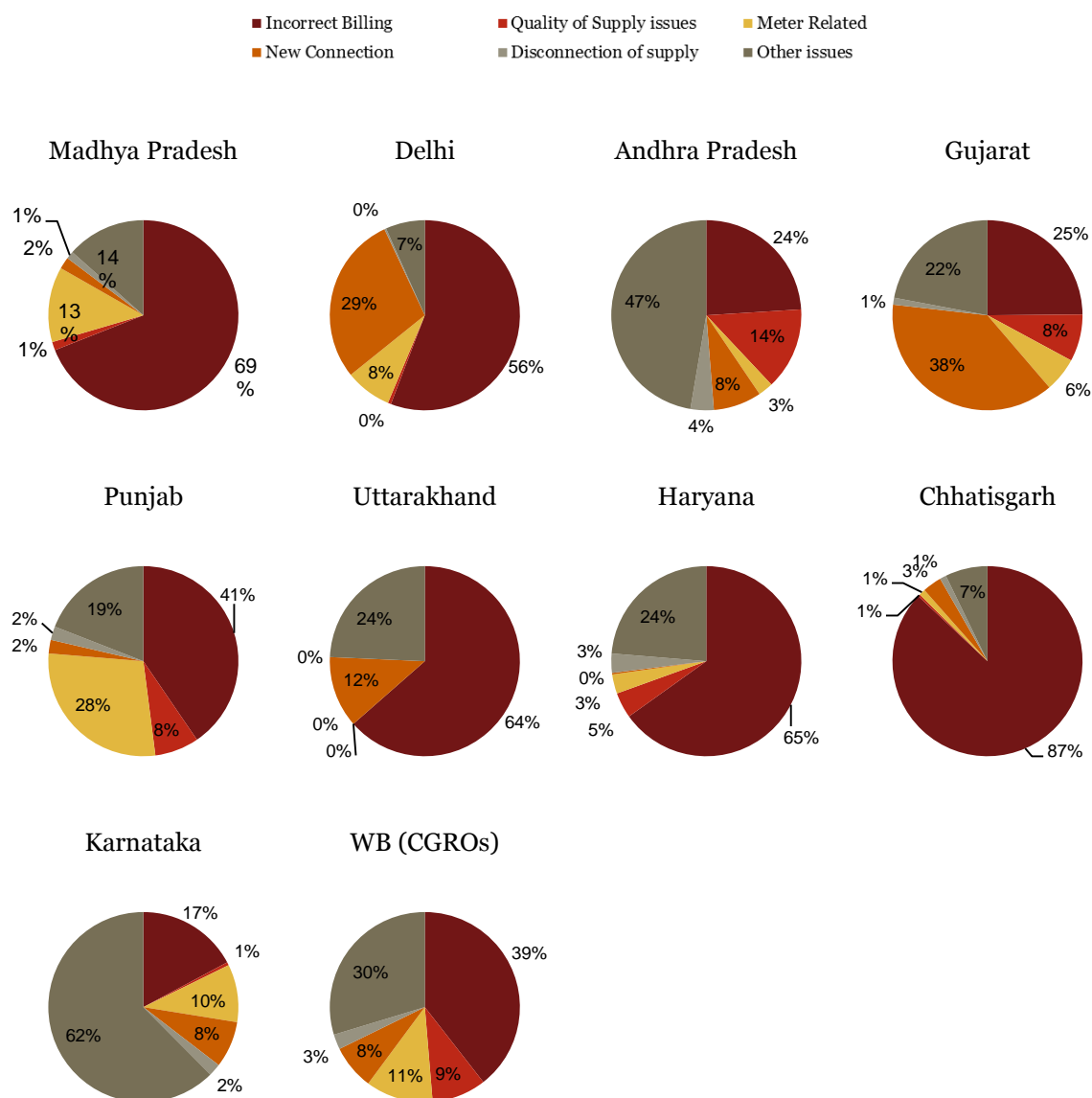
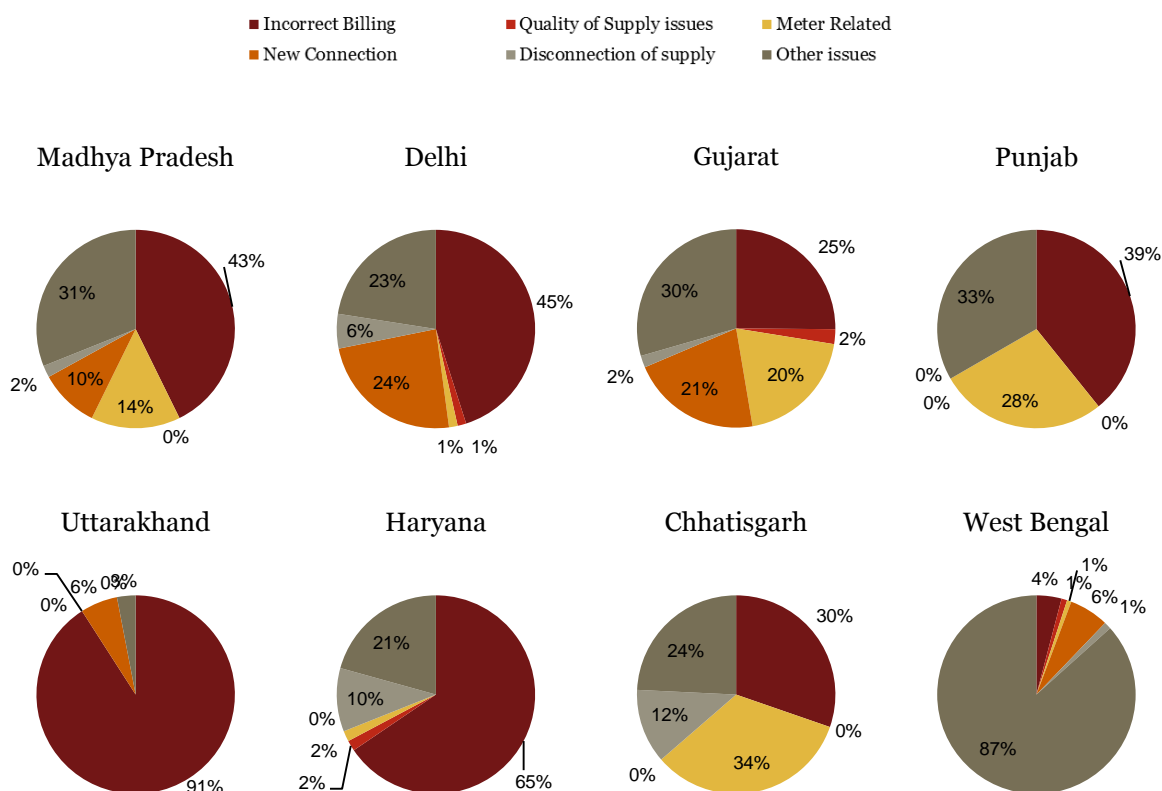
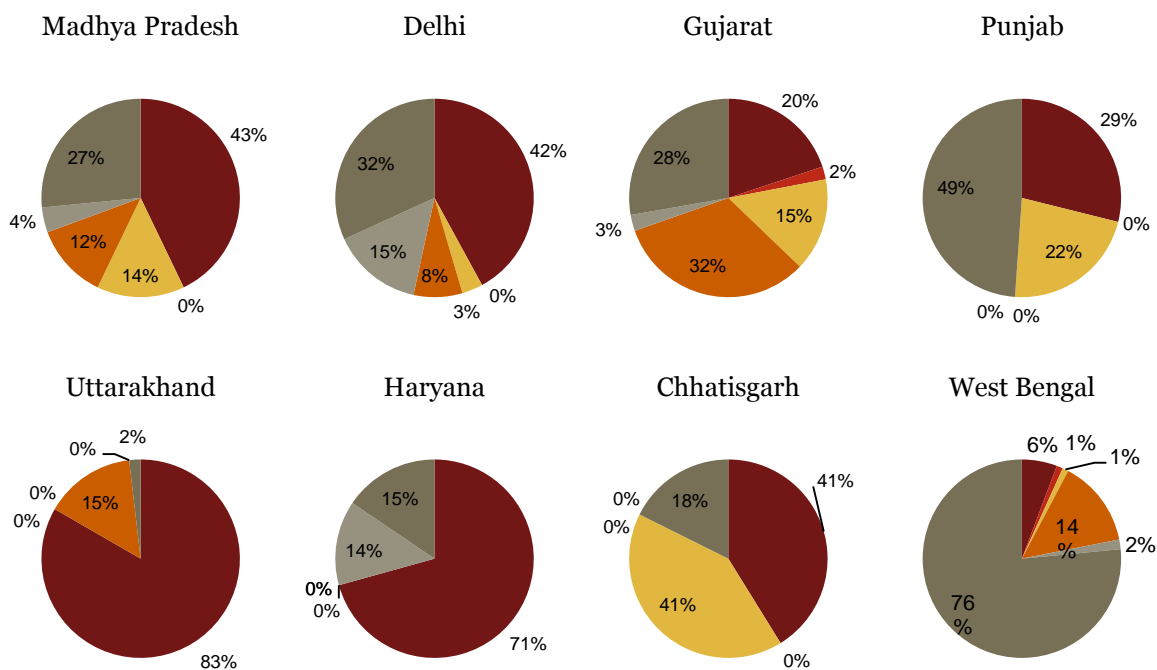


Figure 100: Category-wise share of grievances, CGRFs - 2014-15

Resolution of different types of grievances, Ombudsman – 2013-14**Table 95: Category-wise share of grievances, Ombudsman - 2013-14****Figure 101: Category-wise share of grievances, Ombudsman - 2014-15**

Decision Trends for CGRFs

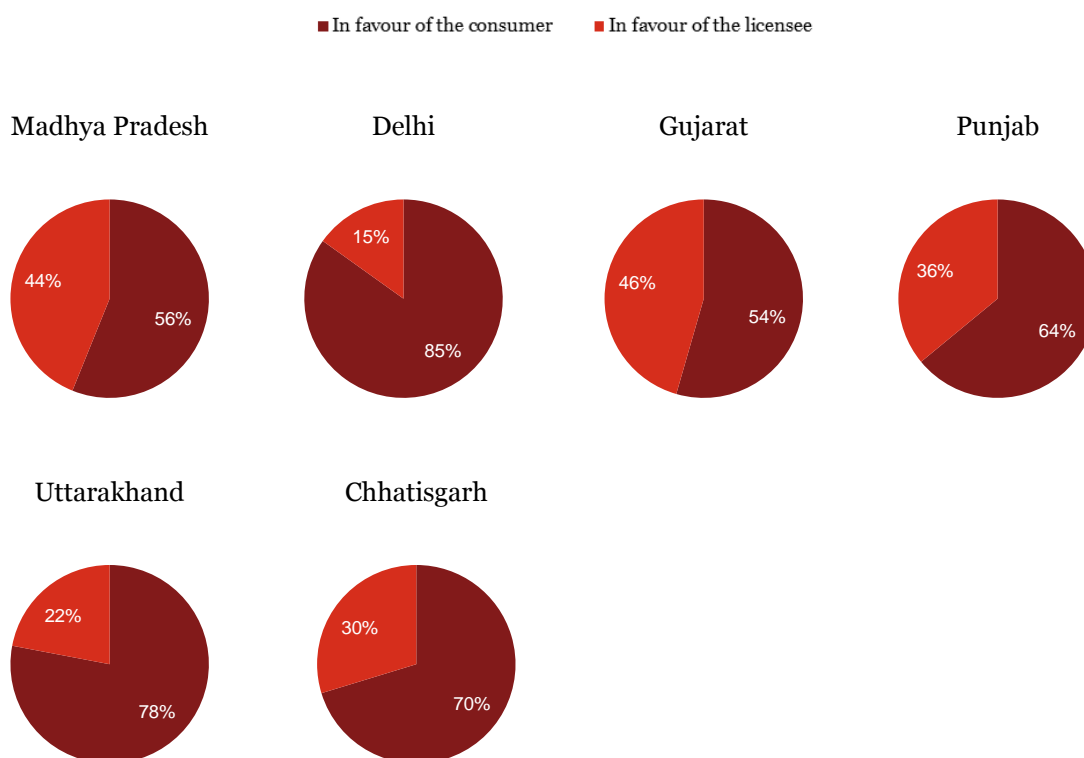


Figure 102: Outcome of decisions for CGRFs, 2013-14

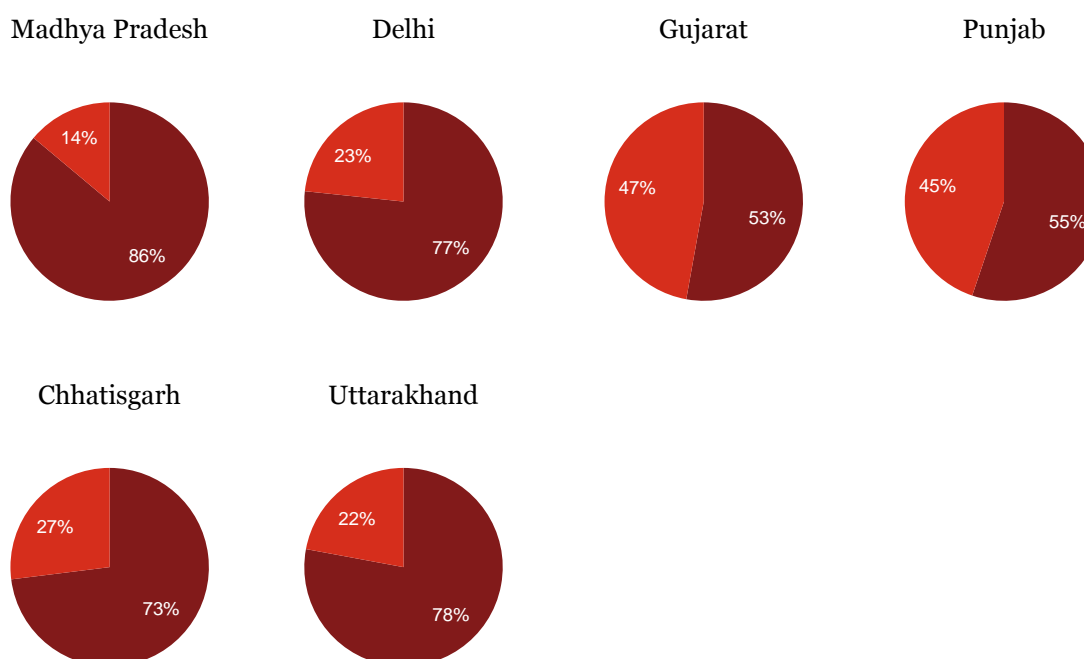


Figure 103: Outcome of decisions for CGRFs, 2014-15

Decision Trends for Ombudsman

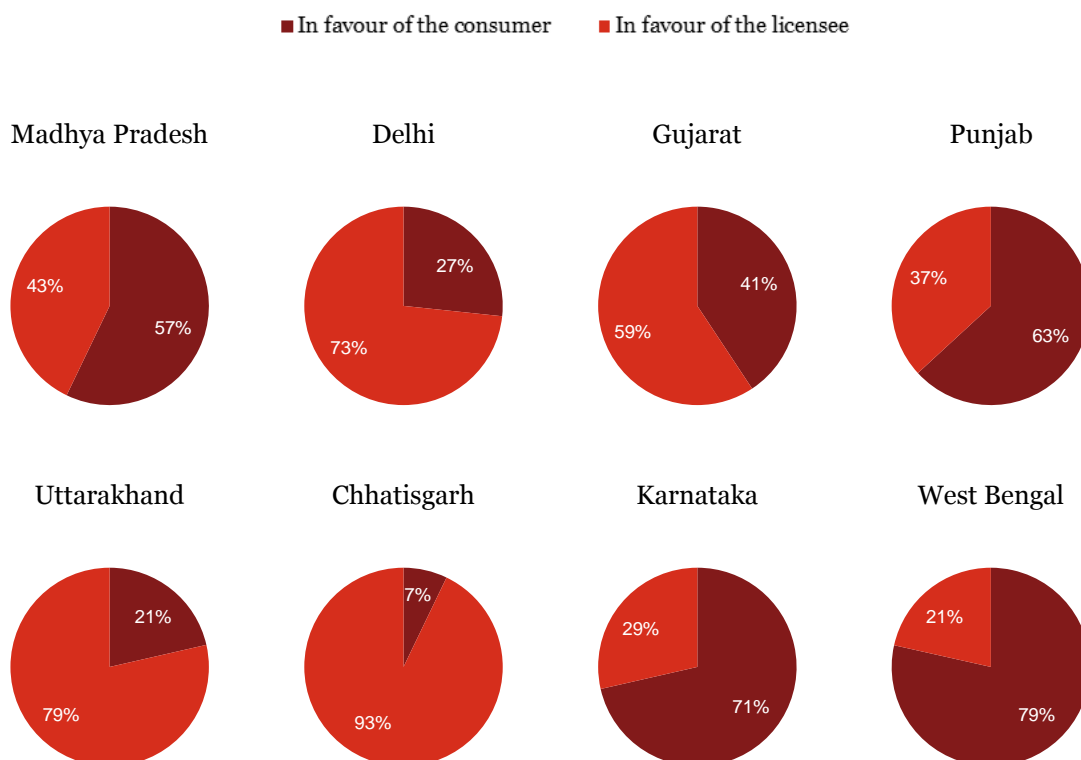


Figure 104: Outcome of decisions for Ombudsman, 2013-14

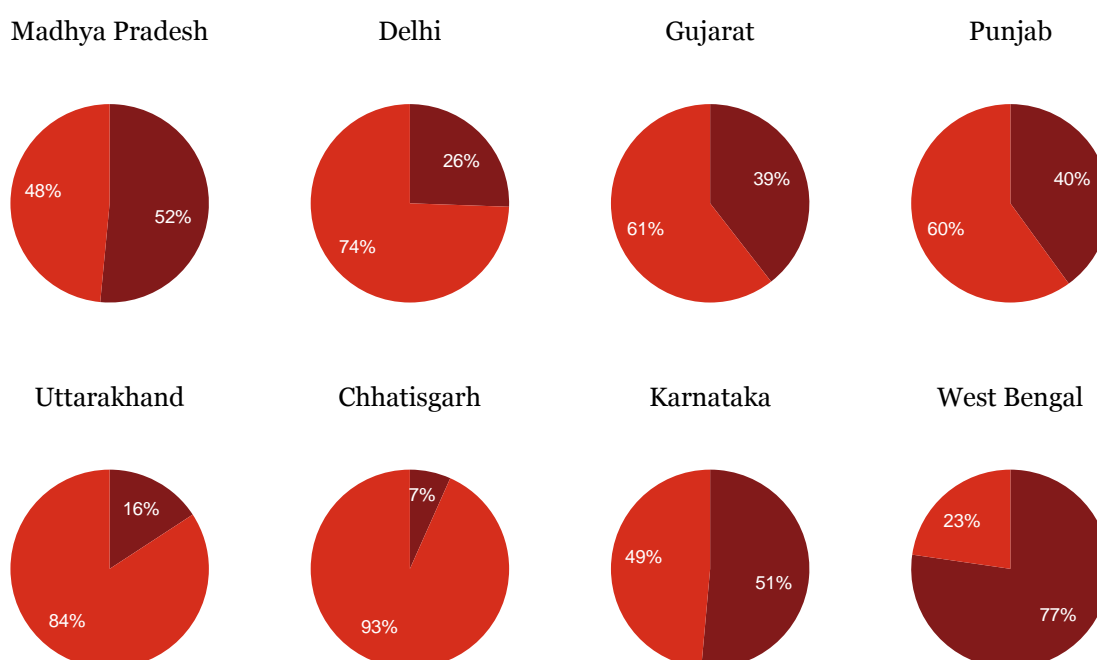


Figure 105: Outcome of decisions for Ombudsman, 2014-15

11.3. Questionnaire for consumer survey

1. Which state do you belong to?
2. Which category of consumer do you belong to?
 - Domestic
 - Non Domestic
 - Agriculture
 - Public Street Lighting
 - State/Central Government
 - Others (Please mention)
3. What is the most common problem that you face in electricity supply? *(can select more than one option)*
 - Meter related issues
 - Billing related
 - Voltage Fluctuations
 - Frequent Power outage
 - Others (please mention)
4. Have you ever filed a complaint to the distribution company?
 - Yes
 - No
5. What was the time taken by the distribution company to resolve the issue? *(If answer to Q4 was yes)*
 - 15-30 days
 - 31-45 days
 - 46-60 days
 - More than 60 days
6. Why have you never filed a complaint with Distribution Company? *(If answer to Q4 was no)*
 - Satisfied with services
 - Not aware of internal grievance cells within distribution companies
 - Lack of trust
 - Others (Please specify)
7. Are you aware of CGRF?
 - Yes
 - No
8. Where did you get the information on CGRF and Ombudsman?
 - Newspapers
 - State Regulatory Commission's Website
 - Electricity Bills
 - Internet
 - Friends and Family
 - Others
 - Not aware
9. Have you ever appealed to CGRF?
 - Yes
 - No
10. Why have you never appealed to CGRF? *(If answer to Q9 was no)*
 - Satisfied with the distribution company
 - Not aware
 - Lack of trust

- Distance related issues
 - Others (Please specify)
(If answer to Q9 is no, answering further questions is not required)
11. Why did you apply to CGRF? *(Answer following questions if answer to Q9 was yes)*
- Case was unresolved with distribution company
 - Case not registered with the distribution company
 - Not satisfied with the decision
12. For which issue did you appeal to CGRF?
- Meter related issues
 - Billing related
 - Voltage fluctuations
 - Frequent power Outage
 - New connection/ Re-connection issue
 - Others
13. What was the time taken by CGRF to arrive at the decision?
- 0-30 days
 - 31-45 days
 - 46-60 days
 - More than 60 days
14. Were you satisfied with the decision of CGRF?
- Yes
 - No
15. Did you appeal to Ombudsman? *(If answer to Q14 was no)*
- Yes
 - No
16. What was the time taken by Ombudsman for the decision? *(If answer to Q15 was yes)*
- 0-30 days
 - 31-60 days
 - 60-90 days
 - More than 90 days
17. Would you appeal to CGRF/Ombudsman again if you face any problem with electricity supply?
- Yes
 - No
18. What could be the possible reason for you to not appeal to CGRF and Ombudsman again?*(if answer to Q17 was no)*
- Distance/ geographical reach related issues
 - Very time consuming activity
 - Not happy with the decision
 - Others (Please specify)
19. According to you, how can functioning of CGRF/Ombudsman be improved? *(can select more than one option)*
- Reduce maximum time for grievance redressal
 - Improve geographical proximity
 - Ensure compliance by the distribution licensee to the order passed
 - Others (Please specify)
20. Do you feel that legal assistance is required in filing an appeal to CGRF/Ombudsman?
- Yes
 - No

21. According to you, which industry has the best customer grievance redressal mechanism out of the following:

- Telecom
- Electricity
- Ecommerce
- Indian Railways (IRCTC)
- Banking

11.4. Bibliography

Information regarding CGRFs and Ombudsman regulations, forum details, consumer service initiatives and other relevant details were found from the following sources:

Table 96: Bibliography

State	SERC Website	Distribution Licensees' Websites
Delhi	http://www.derc.gov.in/	http://www.bsesdelhi.com/HTML/index.html http://www.tatapower-ddl.com/ https://www.ndmc.gov.in/
Uttarakhand	http://www.uerc.gov.in/	https://www.upcl.org/
Punjab	http://www.pserc.nic.in/	http://www.pspcl.in/
Haryana	https://herc.gov.in/index.aspx	http://www.uhbvn.com/ http://dhibvn.org.in/web/portal/home
Gujarat	http://www.gercin.org/	http://www.mgvcl.com/index.php http://www.ugvcl.com/ http://www.pgvcl.com/ http://www.dgvcl.com/dgvclweb/index.php http://www.torrentpower.com/
Madhya Pradesh	http://www.mperc.nic.in/index.htm	http://www.mpcz.co.in/portal/Bhopal_home.portal http://www.mpwz.co.in/portal/Indore_home.portal http://www.mpez.co.in/portal/Jabalpur_home.portal
West Bengal	http://www.wberc.net/	https://www.cesc.co.in/
Chhattisgarh	http://www.cserc.gov.in/	http://www.cspdc.co.in/cseb/(S(001hhcarrev14zrqxoraomvw))/frmHome.aspx
Karnataka	http://www.karnataka.gov.in/kerc/Pages/home.aspx	http://bescom.org/en/ http://www.mesco.in/ http://www.hescom.co.in/ http://www.gescom.in/
Andhra Pradesh	http://www.aperc.gov.in/aperc1/index.php/main/index/29	https://www.tssouthernpower.com/ http://cgrfepdcl.cgg.gov.in/home.do https://www.apearternpower.com/ http://www.tsnpdcl.in/ http://www.apspdcl.in/
Other countries	Ofgem website - https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/ Ofgem – Report on complaints to energy companies Ofgem – Standards of Conduct Department for Business Innovation & Skills – Consumer redress schemes in Gas and Electricity Gas and Electricity Regulated Providers (Redress Scheme) Order 2008	
Other sources	http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/bangalore/any-idea-what-kerc-cgrf-are/article7806695.ece http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Madurai/power-consumers-have-forum-to-resolve-their-grievances/article6069153.ece http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/pune/Electricity-ombudsman-reaches-out-to-consumers/articleshow/47569974.cms	