

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201104142, Business Stream Ltd  
**Sector:** water  
**Subject:** policy/administration  
**Outcome:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained that Business Stream failed to read his meter between April 2011 and January 2012. He said that, had they done so, it would have been evident that a large amount of water was passing through the meter, indicating a leak. A leak was eventually identified, but not before Mr C received a sizeable water bill. Business Stream advised Mr C that he should read the meter himself to ensure that his readings were accurate. However, he did not feel comfortable doing so, as the meter was located next to a busy road.

We upheld the complaints about failure to read the meter, and about complaints handling. Our investigation found that Business Stream should have carried out two actual meter readings during the period in question. One of the readings for Mr C's meter was estimated, so we concluded that it might have been possible for the leak to have been identified earlier. That said, it was also possible that the leak occurred after the time the meter should have been read. We found that Mr C's meter was relocated next to the road after meter readers complained that it was contaminated in its former location (a yard inhabited by cows). We were, however, satisfied that, after Mr C raised safety concerns, Business Stream moved it to a safer location. We were critical of Business Stream for failing to provide a detailed response to Mr C's formal complaint.

### Recommendations

We recommended that Business Stream Ltd:

- offer Mr C a credit to his account reflecting the potential impact of the failure to read his meter on his January 2012 water bill.