

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201202850, Business Stream  
**Sector:** water  
**Subject:** leakage  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C owned a hotel. He found that the water bills for his business were disproportionately high and queried the amounts owed with Business Stream. It was established that there must have been a leak but due to the nature of the business it was several months before the floors could be lifted and the leak located. Mr C complained that, having located the leak and proved that his business did not use the water he had been charged for, Business Stream failed to grant a 'burst allowance' for the full duration of the leak. A burst allowance is made in cases where a leak has been caused by Scottish Water's actions or on pipework for which they are responsible or in cases where the customer can show that the leaked water did not drain into Scottish Water's sewers.

We found that the grounds for this allowance were limited in Mr C's case. The leak was on his pipework and there was no suggestion that Scottish Water had caused the problem. Furthermore, there was no clear evidence as to where the water drained to. We were satisfied that Business Stream submitted a burst allowance application to Scottish Water on Mr C's behalf and that, when it was rejected, they sought further information from him to support his claim. Mr C did not provide the requested information and Business Stream offered a credit to his account as a goodwill gesture, separate from the allowance. Although we acknowledged that Mr C clearly had a leak and had anecdotal evidence to support his case, there were no apparent grounds for a burst allowance. We were satisfied that Business Stream made a generous offer that was reasonable, based on the evidence available to them.