

# Customer Performance Report 2021





<b>1 Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2 Introduction</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Company and network overview	10
2.2 Customer Experience Overview	14
<b>3 Gas Industry</b>	<b>21</b>
3.1 Market overview	21
3.2 Shipper queries	22
3.3 Breakdown of issues by type	23
<b>4 Retail Market</b>	<b>25</b>
4.1 Customer service	26
4.2 Call response	30
4.3 Quotations turnaround	34
4.4 Appointment granting	36
4.5 Appointment keeping	38
4.6 Reinstatement commitments	40
4.7 Gas supply interruption	42
4.8 Response to emergencies	44
4.9 Gas supply restoration	46
4.10 Complaints handling	46
4.11 Categories of complaints	48
4.12 Payment guarantee	49
4.13 Customer Charter payments	49

<b>5 Future Development</b> .....	<b>51</b>
<b>6 Conclusion</b> .....	<b>58</b>
<b>7 Appendices</b> .....	<b>60</b>
7.1 Glossary of Terms .....	60
7.2 Customer Centricity Scores .....	62
7.3 List of Figures .....	63
7.4 List of Tables .....	64
7.5 Change of Customer Contact Numbers .....	65
7.6 Charter Payment Breakdown 2021 .....	66

# 1 Executive Summary

The Gas Networks Ireland Performance Report has been published annually since 2008. There are now two specific reports

- A Systems Performance Report; and
- A Customer Performance Report.

The Customer Performance Report provides an overview of how the natural gas transmission and distribution systems have operated during 2021 in relation to customer-oriented activities. Customer processes are measured, and insights gained are shared with stakeholders.

Gas Networks Ireland has a Customer Charter<sup>1</sup> which provides assurance to customers of the company's dedication to ten performance commitments, whereby in certain circumstances, compensation will be provided for failing to meet these standards. The programme of customer satisfaction monitoring continued to score very favourably across all processes in 2021.



<sup>1</sup> [Our customer commitment](#)

This Customer Performance Report analyses the key areas where Gas Networks Ireland provides services to customers over a five-year period from 2017 to 2021. The performance of these services is benchmarked against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as per the Customer Charter. Gas Networks Ireland aims to provide customer services to a high standard in a prompt, efficient and safe manner. The levels of service provided to customers is continuously monitored. We strive to achieve excellence in all aspects of customer interactions.

Ensuring the safety of customers and the general public is of prime importance to Gas Networks

Ireland. In 2021, 99.99% of reported escapes were attended to within the hour. The number of gas escapes reported in 2021 decreased by 1.9% compared to 2020.

The volume of calls received by Gas Networks Ireland in 2021 was 274,791, an increase of 9.7% on 2020. When all channels of communication are included, the customer contact volume with Gas Networks Ireland was 506,864 contacts in 2021,

representing an overall increase of 11.5% with the easing of Covid-19 restrictions behind the increase in contact activity, as expected. The total number of complaints created in 2021 was 1,158 compared to 1,188 in 2020, showing an overall decrease of 2.6%. The largest number of complaints received fell into the meter related category, which is consistent with previous years. Gas Networks Ireland continues to monitor all customer complaints to seek improvements to the services offered.

Following a consultation in 2016, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), issued a decision in 2017 on Gas Networks Ireland's Customer Performance Indicators, deciding to incentivise Gas Networks Ireland in key areas of its customer service such as the customer contact centre response, complaints metrics, and the results from customer surveys. During the PC4 price control period, which commenced in October 2017 continuing for five years until September 2022, the CRU introduced financial incentives for Gas Networks Ireland with respect to these key customer performance indicators. Gas Networks Ireland will look to establish new performance metrics with CRU as part of customer incentives under the PC5 process.



In 2021, Gas Networks Ireland has performed within the KPI levels set out in the CRU approved Customer Charter<sup>2</sup>. There were however, some exceptions as follows: Appointment Granting for metering work came in at 99% against a KPI of 100%, caused by capacity or Local Authority restrictions. Appointment Keeping for metering came in at 99.5% against a KPI of 100% and Appointment Keeping for Service came in at 99.2% against a KPI of 100%, both due to reasons such as in-day delay in making the appointment, human error, called to an emergency response, materials issue or other operational reasons. Reinstatement came in at 94.6% for temporary works and 93.2% for permanent works against a KPI of 100% for both metrics.

In 2021, Gas Networks Ireland connected 6,219 new commercial and residential customers to the gas network and contracted 848 GWh of new natural gas demand. In 2021 we delivered a strong financial performance

With safety as a priority for our assets and operations, we invested €147m in our gas and telecoms network infrastructure with a strong focus on driving growth and increasing new connections to the network, developing Compressed Natural Gas as a transportation fuel and delivering programmes to improve the safety and reliability of the network.

Operating, maintaining and developing our network in an efficient and economic manner is a key element of our strategy. In 2021 we delivered over 40,000 planned maintenance work orders on the transmission and distribution networks. In contrast to 2020, construction activities were not significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout the year Gas Networks Ireland has continued to promote public safety awareness via a range of campaigns, including the Gas Emergency Service, Dial-Before-You-Dig, Meter Tampering, Always Use a Registered Gas Installer and Carbon Monoxide campaigns. During 2021, a new campaign, featuring the banjo-playing canary character 'Tommy McAnairey' was launched for carbon monoxide awareness, promoting the importance of regular testing of carbon monoxide alarms. The latest consumer awareness research conducted on behalf of Gas Networks Ireland at the end of 2021 shows that 75% of people now have a carbon monoxide alarm at home up from 25% in 2014 prior to the launch of the original Tommy McAnairey carbon monoxide advertising campaign. New advertising campaigns were also developed and launched in 2021 for the Gas Emergency Service and Meter Tampering.

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<sup>2</sup> [Customer Charter](#)

Gas Networks Ireland changed all its external telephone numbers in 2021, including the 24-hour emergency service number which changed to 1800 20 50 50. A new public safety advertising campaign was produced and launched in 2021 to communicate the steps to take and the new number to call in the event of smelling gas. In 2021, the total number of calls received via the 24-hour emergency telephone number (1800 20 50 50/ 1850 20 50 50) was 26,956. By the end of December 2021, 65% of calls received were made on the new 1800 number.

The 2019 publication of the Climate Action Plan, which included a political commitment to ban the installation of gas boilers in new builds from 2025 and an installation target of 400,000 heat pumps in homes and businesses, continues to impact on Gas Networks Ireland's operations. Changing building regulations and the growing popularity of heat pumps had a knock-on-effect on our performance in relation to appointment granting, quotations, new connections and reinstatement. Our performance under each of these areas is reported in detail in Section 4.0.

The table below gives a summary of the 2021 Customer Performance Report.

Metric	2021 Target /KPIs	2021 Performance	2020 Performance
Appointment keeping: Contact 1 working day prior	100%	99.5%	99%
Appointment Keeping for metering and services	100%	99.5%	99%
Gas supply restoration Restore as quickly as possible (less than 24hrs)	100%	100.00%	100%
Emergency response (arrive within one hour of report)	97%	99.99%	99.96%
Complaints handling: Resolve within 10 working days	85%	98%	98%
Total number of complaints	N/A	1,158	1,188
Percentage resolved within 30 working days	85%	100%	100%
Call response (Call answered within 20 seconds)	80%	93.89%	96.6%
Calls abandoned after 10 seconds	N/A	0.87%	0.61%
Customer Charter Payments	N/A	€2,215	€995
Quotation turnaround: Respond within 7 working days	100%	100%	100%
Appointment Granting Schedule: appointment within 5 days	100%	99.98%	99.73%
Payment Guarantee Aim to process payment following claim within 10 working days	100%	100%	100%



## 2 Introduction

The Customer Performance Report is produced to comply with the licence conditions pertaining to “overall standards and performance” of the four licences currently held by Gas Networks Ireland, granted by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU):

- **Distribution System Owner Licence;**
- **Distribution System Operator (DSO) Licence;**
- **Transmission System Owner Licence; and**
- **Transmission System Operator (TSO) Licence.**

Gas Networks Ireland is responsible for developing, maintaining and operating the gas transmission and distribution systems.

The performance standards have been developed by Gas Networks Ireland and approved by the CRU, who may amend performance criteria from time to time.

The annual performance reports are produced under licence condition 17 of the TSO licence and condition 19 of the DSO licence. Reporting provides an opportunity for Gas Networks Ireland and the CRU to review the company performance over a twelve-month period. The annual performance reports are published on the Gas Networks Ireland website, [www.gasnetworks.ie](http://www.gasnetworks.ie)

Gas Networks Ireland has a Customer Charter where we outline ten commitments to the customer in terms of the services provided. Section 4 of this report illustrates Gas Networks Ireland’s performance in these ten areas over a five-year period



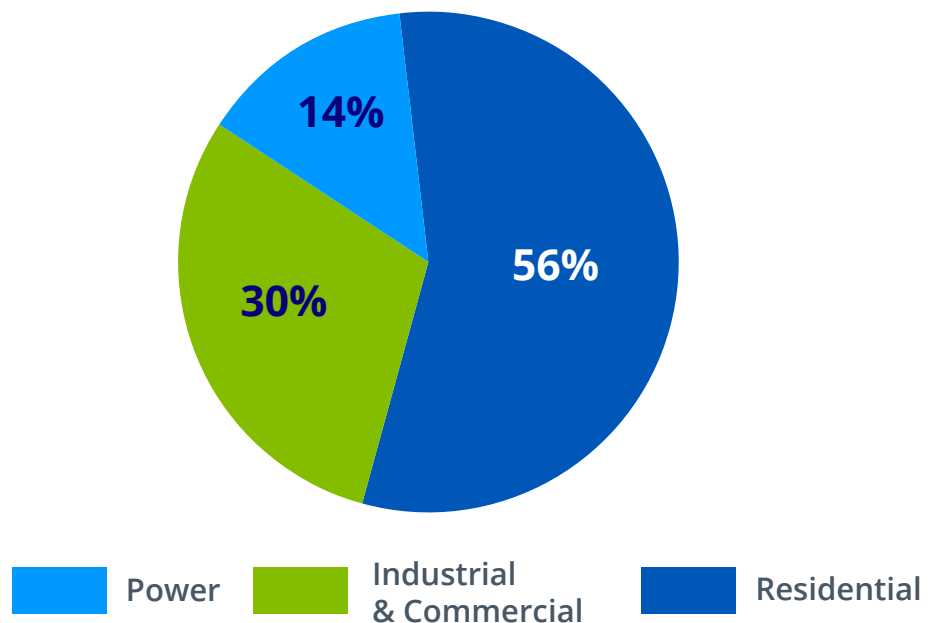
## 2.1 Company and network overview

Gas Networks Ireland is responsible for developing, maintaining and operating the gas transmission and distribution systems. Gas Networks Ireland ensures that over 711,000 natural gas customers throughout Ireland receive a safe, efficient and secure supply of natural gas, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Natural gas continued to play a vital role in Ireland's energy mix and for our country's social and economic progress. In terms of demand, natural gas accounts for 34%<sup>3</sup> of Ireland's primary energy mix. The gas demand market is categorised into Power, Industrial and Commercial (I&C) and Residential sectors accounting for circa<sup>4</sup> 56%, 30% and 14% of the demand respectively.

Figure 2.1: ROI gas market demand

### ROI Gas Market Demand 2021



<sup>3</sup> SEAI Energy in Ireland

<sup>4</sup> Percentages of gas market share calculated based on Gas Networks Ireland gas year 2020/21 data

Natural gas is transported through a total network of 14,664km of pipeline, both transmission and distribution. The pipeline network connects the Republic of Ireland (RoI) to Scotland, Northern Ireland (NI) and the Isle of Man (IoM). The natural gas delivered to end users is not owned by Gas Networks Ireland. Rather, Gas Networks Ireland transports gas on behalf of shippers and suppliers who purchase the gas from the wholesale market and use the transportation services of Gas Networks Ireland to deliver gas to businesses and homes throughout Ireland.

The Gas Networks Ireland system includes infrastructure in RoI regulated by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU); in NI regulated by the Utility Regulator; and in South West Scotland regulated by Ofgem.

The natural gas network is differentiated as transmission and distribution and this is determined by the prevailing pressure in the pipes: High pressure transmission network which operates above 16 barg (the total length of transmission pipeline is 2,476km<sup>5</sup>); and

- Distribution network which operates below 16 barg (the total length of distribution pipeline is 12,188km).

A map of the transmission system is provided in Figure 2.2.

The transmission pipes link Ireland's major urban areas and also connect Ireland to the UK at Moffat in Scotland. Electricity generating power stations and some large industrial customers are also directly connected to the transmission network. Mostly residential and small to medium commercial customers are connected to natural gas on the distribution network.

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<sup>5</sup> Total length of transmission pipeline is the entire network including pipeline in RoI, NI and on-shore Scotland.

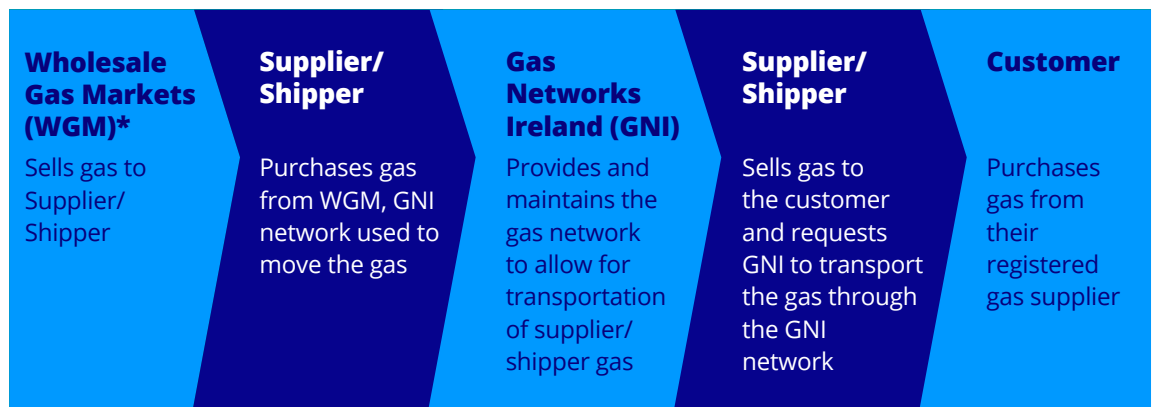
Figure 2.2: Overview of Gas Networks Ireland Transmission System



Suppliers are retail market players that sell gas and provide services to end users i.e. customers. Shippers include suppliers and some large end users such as power stations. These power stations consume large amounts of gas allowing them to

purchase gas directly from the wholesale market and use the Gas Networks Ireland natural gas transmission system to transport the gas directly to their sites to facilitate the generation of electricity.

Figure 2.3: Structure of Irish gas market



\*The Wholesale Gas Market (WGM) is where the gas is purchased by energy traders and shippers.

Natural gas is promoted by Gas Networks Ireland as a clean and efficient fuel choice for homes, businesses and industry, with the purpose of promoting greater utilisation of the gas network and exploring opportunities to expand the network, where viable. There is considerable emphasis on investing in new business areas, such as CNG, hydrogen and renewable gas.

The Corrib gas field, which came into operation at the end of 2015, is the only indigenous supply of natural gas with the Kinsale field having ceased production in April 2020. In 2021, indigenous supply met 28% of Ireland's demand down from 36% in 2020 with 72% of supplies coming via the Interconnectors to the UK. Ireland's interconnection with the United Kingdom (UK) provides a gateway to the European gas markets, ensuring security of energy supply to the Irish economy.

## 2.2 Customer Experience Overview

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Gas Networks Ireland strives to consistently deliver excellent customer experiences through all customer interactions. Working collaboratively with all departments, business partners and stakeholders, Gas Networks Ireland works towards driving a truly customer centric culture and organisation, enabled through our 'Actions into Insights' programme.

The Customer Service 'Insights into Action Strategy' (Figure 2.4) illustrates how Gas Networks Ireland listens, communicates and works on solutions to action improvements of benefit to our customers.





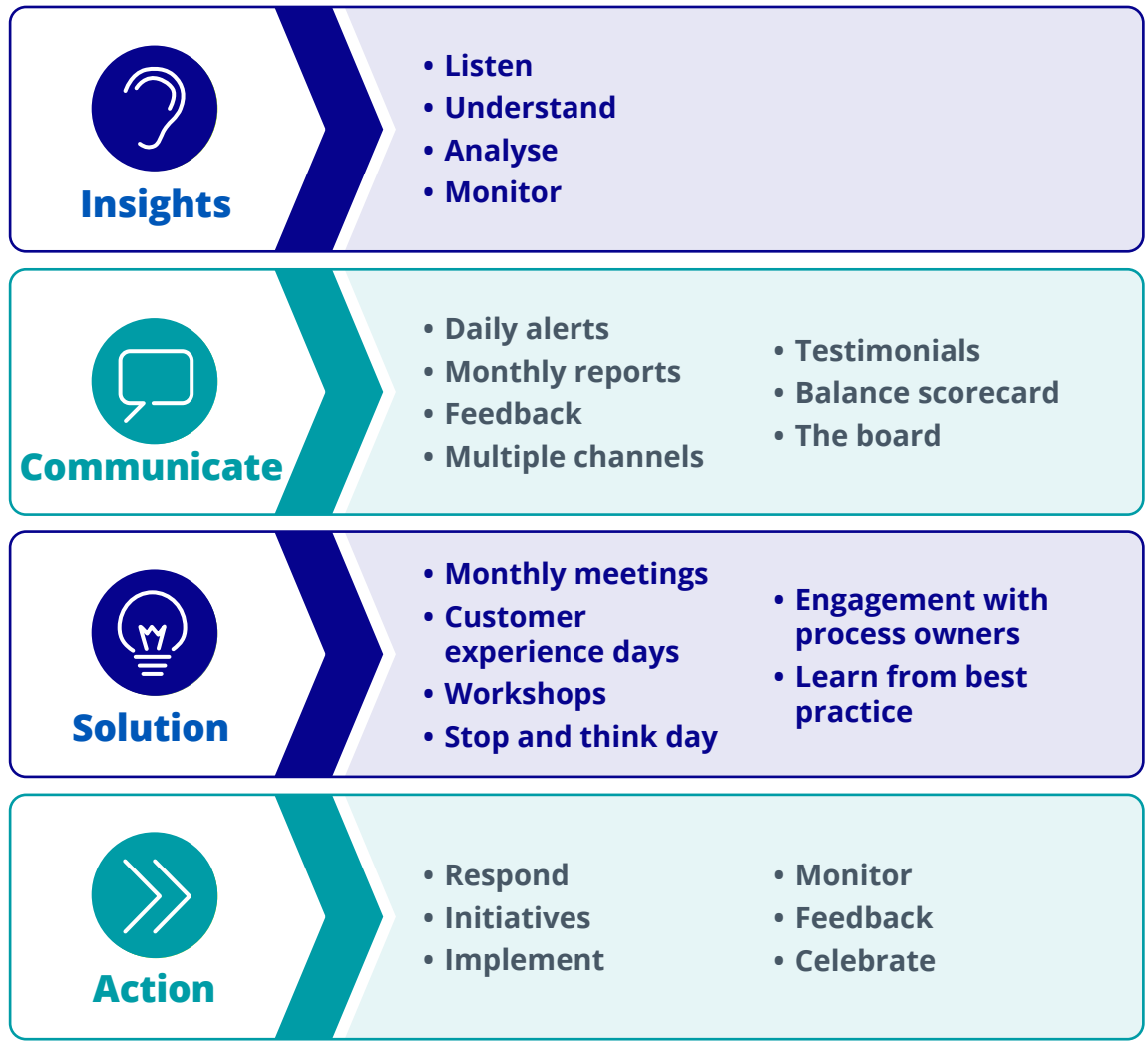
### CX Monitoring and Insights Programme

A sample of customers are surveyed weekly following their interaction with Gas Networks Ireland with each survey tailored to the journey and the segment to which they belong. Core metrics include: Net Promoter Score (NPS) (Likelihood to recommend Gas Networks Ireland as an organisation to deal with); Customer

Satisfaction Scores (CSAT) (Success/Satisfaction with Gas Networks Ireland’s overall performance); and Net EASY Score (NES) (Ease of dealing with as Networks Ireland). In addition, performance across key customer touch points and insight on how customers perceive our staff, and partners, live our brand values are collected.

15

Figure 2.4: Insights Into Action



## Customer Centricity

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This metric is a composite score comprising three other measures from our Net Promoter Score, Net Easy and Satisfied metrics<sup>6</sup>. The customer centricity objective is to constantly understand how customer centric we are as an organisation and ultimately enhance the service we deliver. We performed strongly in 2021 scoring +79 (range of scoring goes from -100 to +100).

Customers provide feedback on their experience; which is linked back to the specific journey to allow for root cause analysis and enable continuous process improvement. All surveys (except complaints) incorporate a service recovery loop where the Gas Networks Ireland Customer Care team contacts the customer within one working day if requested, regarding any issues arising that may be unresolved. As part of our complaints process, customers can escalate their complaint or issue to the CRU, if they are not satisfied with the resolution provided

Reporting is undertaken through an online survey portal to provide transparency and survey feedback for all staff and business partners. A structured bi-monthly session is attended by all process owners to gain employee engagement and commitment to change.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, Gas Networks Ireland moved these sessions from face-to-face to virtual meetings during 2021.

Customer service improvement initiatives are captured on a formal register and are tracked to completion. There were 34 initiatives implemented in 2021, some examples of which are:

- Additional meter types were added to our siteworks charging process. This allowed us to standardise the charge to customers for these meter types thereby simplifying and reducing the timeline for them to connect to our network.
- A checklist for customers requiring a service alteration to simply clarify the steps they; their Registered Gas Installer and their builder need to take in order to complete their alteration seamlessly.

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<sup>6</sup> See appendix 7.2 for further information



- All 1850 public telephone numbers were replaced by 1800 or 0818 numbers. This followed a decision by the telecommunications regulator ComReg to abolish certain Non-Geographic Numbers (NGNs) due to perceived customer confusion and high costs of using NGNs. All replacement numbers went live during 2021 and locations where these numbers were displayed including Gas Networks Ireland's website, corporate liveries, brochures and leaflets were modified to reflect the change
- The process for repairing customers meter boxes was reviewed. On foot of customer feedback, we improved call handling and job set up to better inform field staff in advance of attending site to carry out repairs.
- A Sales Representative handbook was developed as a training aid, ensuring key messages are consistent and up-to-date for all customer interactions.
- A pilot survey of our customers' experience of using our email channel was conducted, delivering many insights to improve this channel.
- Increased engagement with vulnerable groups, and members of the Deaf community, was coordinated, as well as exploration of technology to enhance customer interactions.
- A relationship with MABS was established, with quarterly meetings allowing both parties to share information on challenges faced by customers relating to energy costs.
- Training was provided to our contact centre staff on 'Browsealoud' technology, a suite of products that provides reading support on websites, which provides easier access for hearing or visually impaired customers.

## Customer Service highlights 2021 include:

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- Gas Networks Ireland was announced as the winner of the Outstanding Community Support Award for exceptional customer service and support to communities at the 2021 CCA Excellence Awards. We were also nominated for Chambers Ireland Sustainable Business Impact Awards, including Excellence in Community, Excellence in Volunteering, Best Charity Partnership and Excellence in Environment.
- Gas Networks Ireland handled 506,864 customer contacts, an increase of 13% on 2020.
- We supported the Commission for Regulation of Utilities initiative to implement a general system wide moratorium on debt-related gas meter locks and disconnections during the pandemic up until June 2021. This was managed by shippers and facilitated by Gas Networks Ireland and ensured that customers had access to the gas for heating and cooking.
- Our 'Above and Beyond Recognition Programme' celebrated staff and contractors who received positive feedback from customers via our survey programme. 73 colleagues were recognised for delivering exceptions services to our customers and 129 Contact Centre agents were rewarded through our 'Voice of the Customer Programme'.
- Workshops continued to deliver enhanced domestic and commercial connection processes, resulting in an increase in customer experience metrics for 2021 versus 2020.
- A 2% reduction in customer complaints received in 2021 versus 2020.

- €13,338 was raised through our customer survey programme. These donations went towards the 'Care and Repair Programme' which supports older people who find it difficult to complete household tasks. 24 employees volunteered on Age Action's new technology tutoring programme, 'Getting Started Keep in Touch', supporting older people to keep in touch with friends and family by showing them how to make video calls through their smartphones and how to use the internet. Our partnership with Age Action continued with Gas Networks Ireland competing in (and winning) Age Action's Big Corporate Challenge.
- 34 customer improvement initiatives were implemented against our target of 24.
- Gas Networks Ireland achieved excellent levels of performance in respect of its published Customer Charter service standards and commitments. Our programme of customer experience monitoring continued to score favourably across all processes meeting or ahead of targets for 2021.
- Completed process for changes of 1850 numbers to 1800 numbers as directed by ComReg.
- We helped customers manage their energy costs by enabling supplier switching and by installing Pay As You Go (PAYG) meters. These meters can be used as an important tool in the fight against energy poverty. We exchanged in excess of 18,094 meters under our domestic meter replacement programme (both credit and PAYG).

The customer commitments and KPIs are shown in Table 2.1. These will be explored in greater detail in section 4 (Retail Market).

**Table 2.1: Customer Commitments**

Measure	Target	2020 Performance	2021 Performance
Call response: Call answered within 20 seconds	80%	93.89%	96.6%
Quotation turnaround: Respond within 7 working days	100%	100%	100%
Appointment Granting Schedule: appointment within 5 days	100%	99.73%	99.98%
Appointment keeping: Contact 1 working day prior	100%	99%	99.5%
Reinstatement commitments within 24hrs of completion	100%	95.49%	94.6%
Gas supply restoration: Restore as quickly as possible (less than 24hrs)	100%	100%	100%
Emergency response: Arrive within 1 hour of report	97%	99.96%	99.99%
Complaints handling: Resolve within 10 working days	85%	100%	100%
Payment Guarantee: Aim to process payment following claim within 10 working days	100%	100%	100%



## 3 Gas Industry

### 3.1 Market overview

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The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) has responsibility for regulating the natural gas market in Ireland. Gas Networks Ireland connects all customers to the network regardless of which natural gas supply company the customer chooses. Additionally, Gas Networks Ireland transports gas on behalf of the suppliers who sell the gas to the end users. The role of Gas Networks Ireland is also to facilitate meter readings for end-users.

There are a number of large end-users of gas such as power stations who engage Gas Networks Ireland to transport the gas on their behalf. Collectively, the suppliers and these large end users who use the transportation service are known as “shippers”.



## 3.2 Shipper queries

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Gas Networks Ireland provides transportation services to shippers operating in the wholesale and retail markets. The shippers/suppliers and large end users (circa 300 industrial customers), are supported by the Shipper Services Department. In addition to this, Shipper Services also supports the development of new entrants to both the retail and wholesale markets. It does so by facilitating and mentoring their entry into the gas market through information provision, system setup, training and implementation of the necessary legal and contractual arrangements. Gas Networks Ireland supports initiatives from various industry bodies and ensures compliance with EU legislation as well as playing a driving role in the development of market arrangements to meet with industry best practice. Gas Networks Ireland coordinates industry meetings at both retail and wholesale levels in Ireland; at the Gas Market Arrangements Retail Group (GMARG) and Code Modification Forum respectively. These groups process changes agreed to reduce issues that shippers may have. Gas Networks Ireland continues to work proactively with shippers on initiatives to identify possible issues in advance of problems occurring.

Gas Networks Ireland continued its engagement with shippers to maintain the levels of service achieved in previous years. All issues received by the Shipper Services Key Account Management team are logged on the Shipper Services Issues system and issue resolution is managed to successful conclusion. This includes stakeholder management of internal teams (such as Gas Networks Ireland Asset Operations, Grid Control, and Sitework teams) and external organisations (such as Wholesale shipper and gas supply companies). Every issue is assigned a unique issue number and an email confirmation is sent where requested, regarding the status of an issue within three business days. Gas Networks Ireland provides each shipper with an issue update every 20 business days thereafter, as long as the issue remains open on the Gas Networks Ireland system.

### 3.3 Breakdown of issues by type

There were 3,174 issues directed to the Shipper Services Key Account Management department in 2021. A definition of the main categories of issue experienced by

shippers is provided in Table 3.1. The breakdown in the main categories of issues as a percentage of the total recorded in 2021 is illustrated in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.1: Explanation of the main categories of Shipper issues**

Issue Category	Explanation
Siteworks query	Queries relating to the status of various siteworks jobs such as fit meters, meter unlocks, etc
Information request	General Shipper queries on a broad range of issues such as customer historical consumption, market messages, capacity register, etc.
Supply Point Capacity (SPC)/ Annual Quantity (AQ) Queries	Questions relating to customers SPC/AQ values or the annual SPC/AQ process
IT Issues	Gas Transport Management System (GTMS) access requests, problems with GTMS access, issues relating to the marketing messaging (Gasmapi), issues related to PRISMA the European Gas Capacity Booking system
Connection Issues	Any issue relating to a new gas connections or disconnections e.g. disconnection quotations
Financial Security	Questions relating to the financial security policy, the shipper's transactions with GAS NETWORKS IRELAND in relation to financial security deposits, letter of credit etc
Metering/Billing	Any query that relating to billing for individual customers - in general these are driven by meter-related issues such as a notified possible high consumption issue, Pay As You Go (PAYG) end user queries, etc.
Other	Any issue not captured by the above categories

**Table 3.2: Main category of shipper issues recorded by %**

Shipper Issue Category	2019		2020		2021	
	Issue No.	%	Issue No.	%	Issue No.	%
<b>Metering/Billing</b>	817	32%	1019	37%	1101	35%
<b>Information request</b>	708	28%	751	27%	726	23%
<b>Siteworks Queries</b>	565	22%	263	10%	361	11%
<b>IT Issues</b>	245	10%	273	10%	345	11%
<b>SPC/AQ Queries</b>	48	2%	187	7%	250	8%
<b>Financial Security</b>	31	1%	108	4%	194	6%
<b>Connection Issues</b>	17	1%	137	5%	181	6%
<b>Other</b>	133	5%	25	1%	12	0%

Over 90% of shipper issues are resolved within one day. The more difficult issue can take longer to resolve, and their resolution times can vary significantly

## 4 Retail Market

Gas Networks Ireland provides access to the gas pipeline system for shippers. At the end of 2021, there were 28 shippers active in the Irish gas market, supplying and selling gas to customers in all segments of the market from power generation to residential. Of the total 28 shippers, there were 9 who engaged in the retail supply market. Gas Networks Ireland connects all natural gas customers to the network irrespective of which supplier they choose.

Gas Networks Ireland is also responsible for works on service pipes and meters to customers' premises and operates a full 24-hour emergency response service 365 days a year. A range of supporting customer services is managed by Gas Networks Ireland to deliver these activities to its customers, their customers and the general public.





## 4.1 Customer service

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Gas Networks Ireland is committed to putting customers first. This commitment is reflected in day-to-day operations and in both the Gas Networks Ireland Codes of Practice<sup>7</sup> and the Gas Networks Ireland Customer Charter<sup>8</sup>.

The Codes of Practice include the Vulnerable Customer Guide<sup>9</sup>. This outlines Gas Networks Ireland's commitment to providing the best customer service possible for all customers; specifically, the provisions made for those who require special services. Customers are encouraged to register, if necessary, on the Special Services Register with their gas supplier to automatically avail of these provisions.

In addition to this, Gas Networks Ireland also works with our charity partners Age Action to promote the services that we provide for our vulnerable customers and to support Age Action's cause. We have been supporting Age Action since 2016, donating over €200,000 worth of carbon monoxide alarms, for installation in the homes of elderly people.

In 2021, we raised €13,338 through our customer survey programme, which was donated towards the 'Care and Repair Programme' supporting older people who find it difficult to complete household tasks. 24 employees also volunteered on Age Action's new technology tutoring programme, 'Getting Started Keep in Touch,' supporting older people confined to because of the pandemic on how to keep in touch with friends and family by showing them how to make video calls through their smartphones and how to use the internet.

The Customer Complaint Handling Guide<sup>10</sup> provides guidance to customers on how their complaint will be handled. It details the steps Gas Networks Ireland will take to handle all customer complaints. The Disconnection Code of Practice<sup>11</sup> outlines Gas Networks Ireland's obligations towards customers when disconnecting their occupied property; following a request from their gas supplier.

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7 [Code of Practice](#)

8 [Customer Charter](#)

9 [Vulnerable Customer Guide](#)

10 [Customer Complaint Handling Guide](#)

11 [Disconnection Code of Practice](#)



The Customer Charter provides assurance to customers of Gas Networks Ireland’s commitment to these standards and in certain circumstances, compensation will be provided for failure to meet these standards. Details of these standards are outlined in Table 4.1 Customer Commitments.

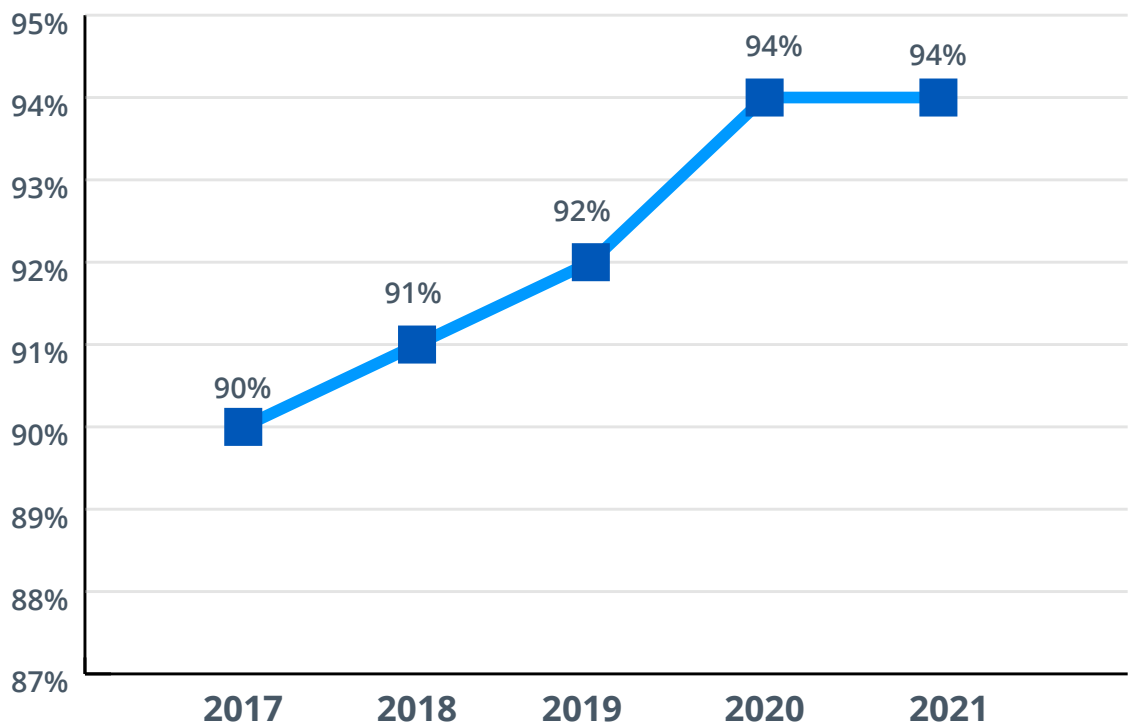
The customer guides have been translated into six different languages with input from disability groups to ensure that they are accessible to all customers.

The guides are available to download on the Gas Networks Ireland website, or by contacting Gas Networks Ireland’s Contact Centre. They are also available in Braille.

End User Customer Satisfaction ratings have steadily increased over the last number of years (please see graph 1 below) from a baseline of 90% in 2017 to 94% in 2021.

**Graph 1: End User Customer Satisfaction Ratings**

### Customer Satisfaction



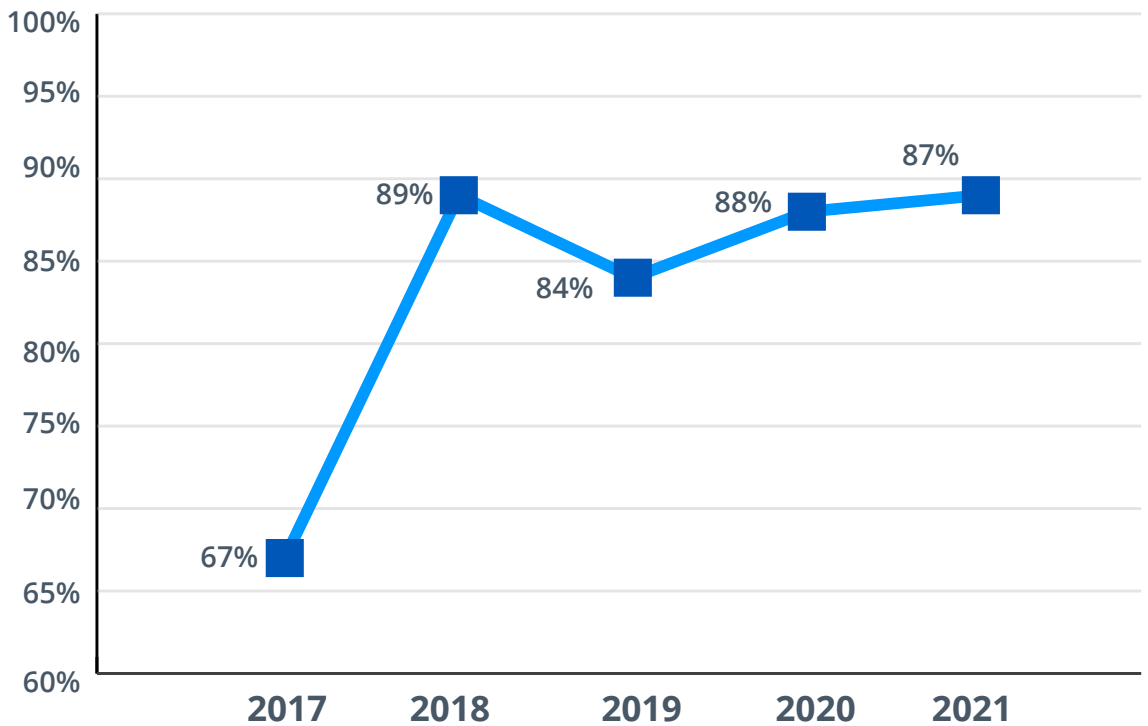


In addition to the above, Gas Networks Ireland carried out three surveys of gas shippers and suppliers in 2021. The first two surveys were aimed at operational staff in supplier organisations with a specific focus on how Gas Networks Ireland handles day-to-day queries from

suppliers in the retail market. Operational satisfaction has dipped slightly to 87% in 2021, down from 88% in 2020 as illustrated in Graph 2 below. Gas Networks Ireland is planning greatly increased our face-to-face interactions with shippers and suppliers in 2022, to strengthen relations.

Graph 2: Shipper Operational Survey Customer Satisfaction Ratings

### Customer Satisfaction Rating Shipper Operational Survey



The third survey, aimed at management level staff in both shipper and supplier organisations, had a much broader remit across wholesale and retail activities. Graph 3 illustrates the Gas Networks

Ireland Net Promoter Score (NPS) (likelihood to recommend) from a negative baseline of -5 in 2017 to +33 in 2021, down very slightly from +36 in 2020.

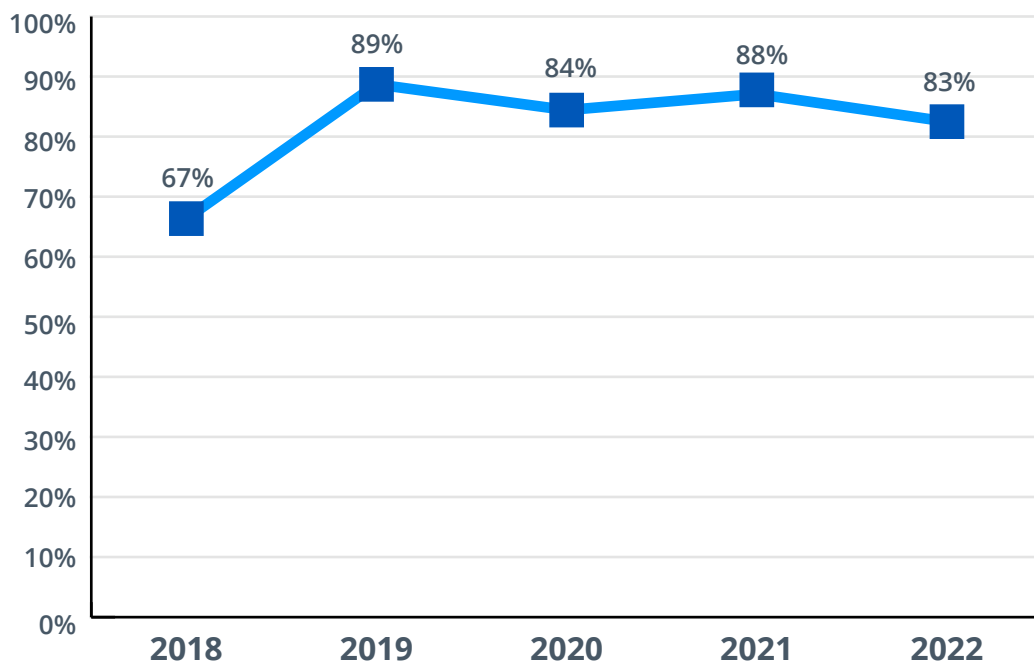
Table 4.1 provides a breakdown of the Shipper & Supplier Management Survey Results.

**Shipper & Supplier Management Survey**

Year	2021	2020	2019
NPS	33	36	26
CSAT	7.7	8	8
BV Performance	7.9	8.4	8.1
BV Integrity	8.9	9.1	8.9
BV Safety	9.2	9.4	9.4
BV Collaboration	8	8.1	8.3
BV Customer Service	7.8	8	7.9

**Graph 3: Shipper Management Survey Net Promoter Scores**

**Gas Networks Ireland Net Promoter Score  
Shipper Management Survey**



The purpose of the surveys carried out in 2021 was to gauge shipper and supplier sentiment towards Gas Networks Ireland and to look at ways in which these relationships could be improved, ultimately feeding down to the end customers. Based on the outcomes of

these shipper/supplier surveys, a plan was developed across 15 internal Gas Networks Ireland teams with initiatives for improvement identified and the initiatives shared with both the Wholesale and Retail industry fora. These focus areas are set out in the table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2: Shipper/Supplier Survey Response Focus Areas**

**Shipper / Supplier Survey Response Focus Areas**

- Refresh and re-energise communication in 2022

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- Support stakeholders with knowledge building sessions

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- SMART Metering

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- Pre-Pay Metering

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- Security of Supply

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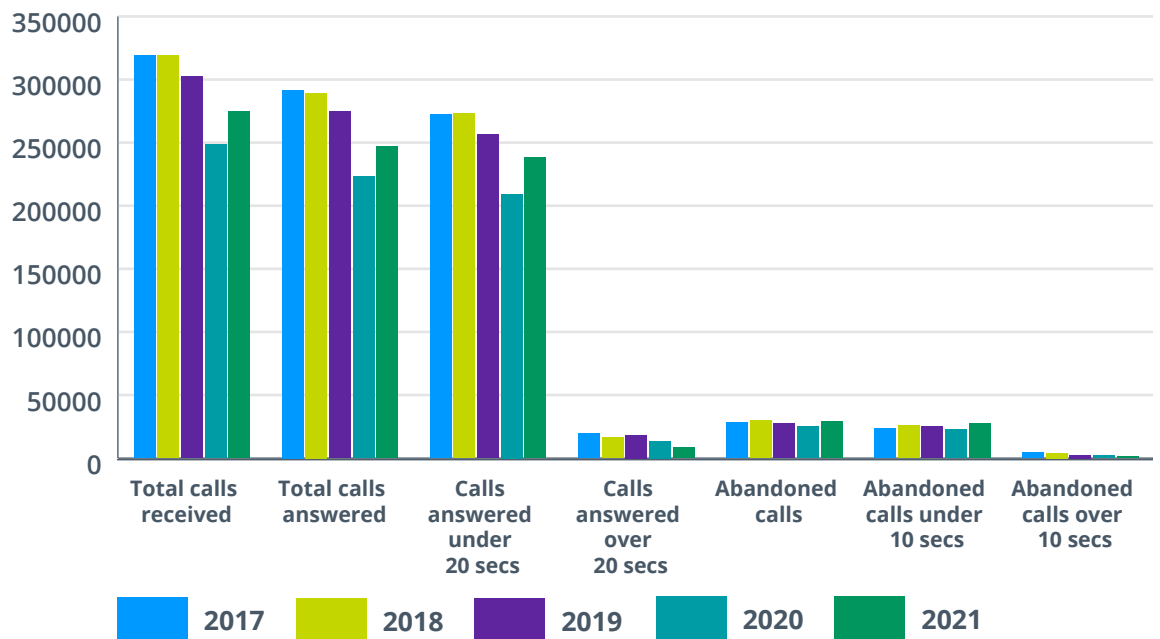
- Future Network

## 4.2 Call response

Gas Networks Ireland operates telephone lines for customers to contact the company in relation to a number of key activities including: the 24-hours

emergency service; domestic connections; commercial connections; Dial Before You Dig; carbon monoxide information; and the meter replacement programme.

Figure 4.2: Call response



In 2021, Gas Networks Ireland handled 274,791 inbound calls. This total includes calls related to emergencies, domestic and business queries, and meter readings. Out of the calls received, 96.6% (3% increase) were answered within 20 seconds and only 0.47% of calls were abandoned by the caller after more than 10 seconds; meaning all call handling targets were achieved. The easing of Covid-19 restrictions seen an increase in contact activity as expected across 2021.

In total, Gas Networks Ireland handled 506,864 customer interactions in 2021, up from 448,785 in the previous 12 months.

**Table 4.2: Contact Breakdown**

Call Type	Volume	% Split	Volume	% Split
	2021	2021	2020	2020
Outbound Call	37,498	7.4%	29,121	6.5%
E-Mail	51,187	10.1%	48,169	10.7%
SMS	84,050	16.6%	67,883	15.1%
Call Handled with IVR	93,664	18.5%	66,329	14.8%
Correspondence (Letters)	59,338	11.7%	55,350	12.3%
Inbound Agent Handled Calls	181,127	35.7%	181,933	40.5%
Total Customer Interactions	506,864		448,785	

Gas Networks Ireland continued to focus on reducing unnecessary inbound customer contacts and to serve customers through more efficient and cost-effective channel. This was particularly important given the constant changes brought about by Covid-19 resulting in ramp up and ramp down of work and resources which affected customer interactions and activity across 2021.

The key customer channels are:

- Enhanced Interactive Voice Recording (IVR) information messages for customers,
- Proactive outbound calling,
- And engagement with gas suppliers on shared customer processes.

The main driver of our customer communication improvements has been a focus on delivering the information in the format that our customers want, and more crucially when they need it. Management of the customer interactions continued to be a focus in understanding both the importance, and cost effectiveness, of alternative channels with regard to displacing unnecessary contacts and delivering improvements in customer effort and engagement.

The consistent focus on driving efficiency in customer communications has mitigated the anticipated increase in customer inbound calls over the past five years and ensured that calls are answered promptly for customers. Fexco



is contracted to provide the Contact Centre service on behalf of Gas Networks Ireland, through to July 2022. Work has commenced on the tender process to deliver a new contract for 2022 to 2027.

Throughout 2021, Gas Networks Ireland focused on updating its social media framework and strategy in-line with changes in the industry. Social media continued to be the 'go to' communication channel for most active online users and its importance is reflected in the company's updated 'Crisis Communications Plan'. Our website and CRM platform are in a state of constant change and continuous

improvement to meet the demand of the business and ever-changing digital trends and search and paid digital advertising is now included in our marketing mix. Our customer and user experience on the website continued to strengthen and we have commenced work scoping a new website for the company that best aligns with our strategic priorities and user/customer expectations. Our CRM capability and reporting through PowerBI continued to expand, adding significant value, informing growth strategies and driving strong efficiencies for the business. Our strategic focus will continue into the coming years.

**Figure 4.3: Calls answered < 20 seconds**

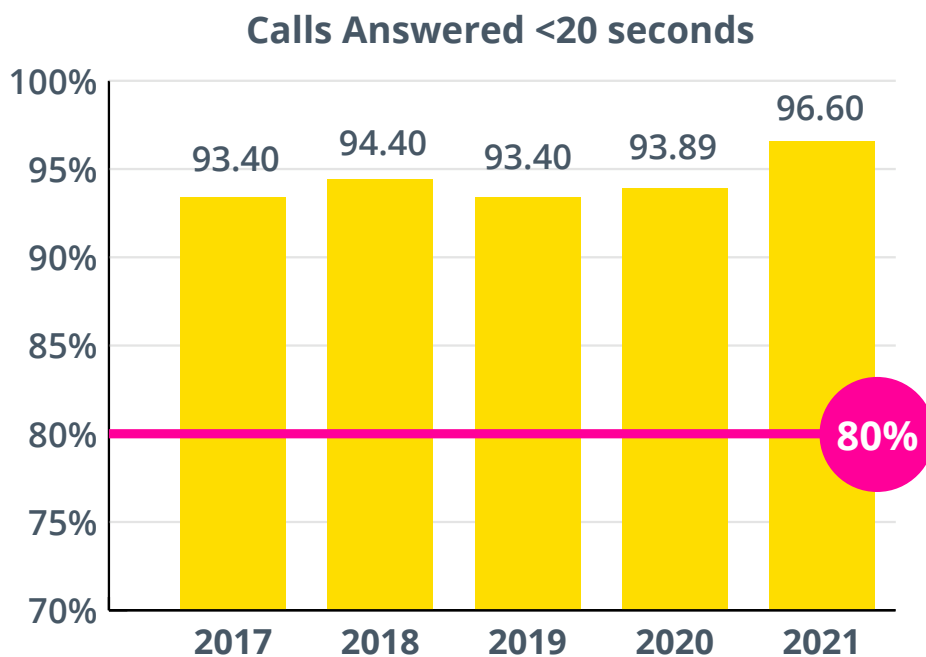
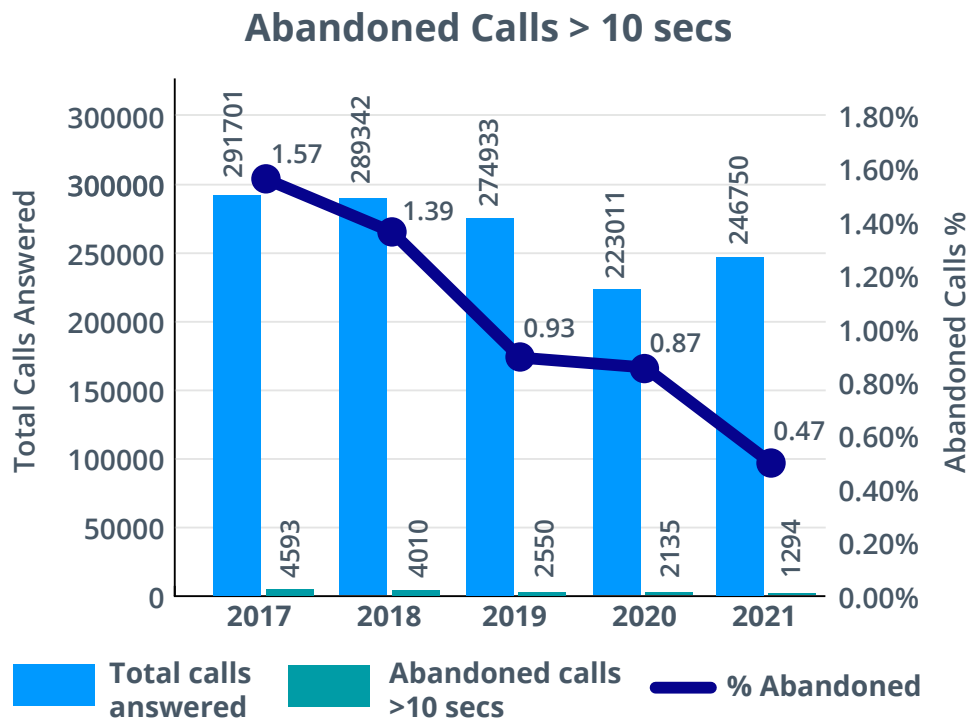


Figure 4.4: Abandoned calls after 10 seconds



### 4.3 Quotations turnaround

Many of the services provided by Gas Networks Ireland are standard and quotations can be provided quickly over the telephone with minimal information. If the job requirements are more complex, a company representative may need to make a visit to the site in advance of a quotation being issued.

For domestic and small commercial service pipe connections (where no design work is required) or connection alteration/reconfiguration involving no main laying activity, the KPI is that quotations will be available within seven working days from receipt of all necessary data.

In 2021, a total of 1,016 quotations were issued within the seven-day period, achieving the KPI of 100% performance rate. The KPI of 100% has been achieved consistently over the past five years, see Figure 4.6. In 2021, there was a decrease in domestic quotations of 15.7% and an increase in I&C quotations of 6.7%. This decrease is largely due to changing market demand and new preferences following the publication of the 2019 Climate Action Plan and the negative affect of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Figure 4.5: Quotations

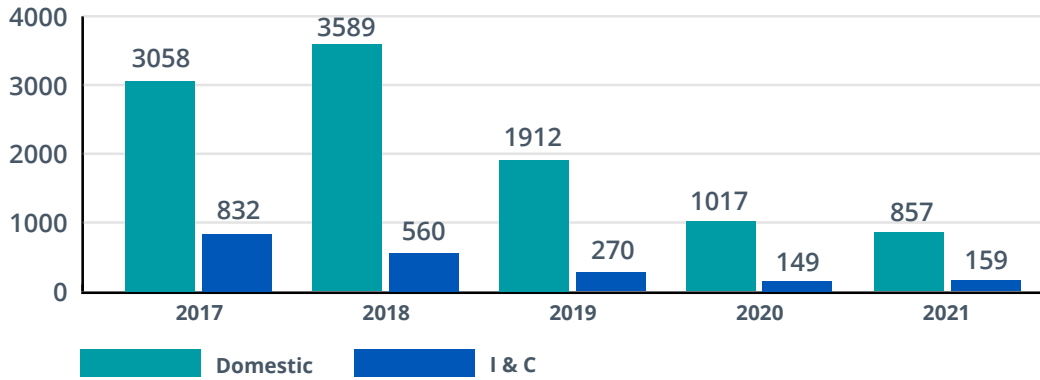
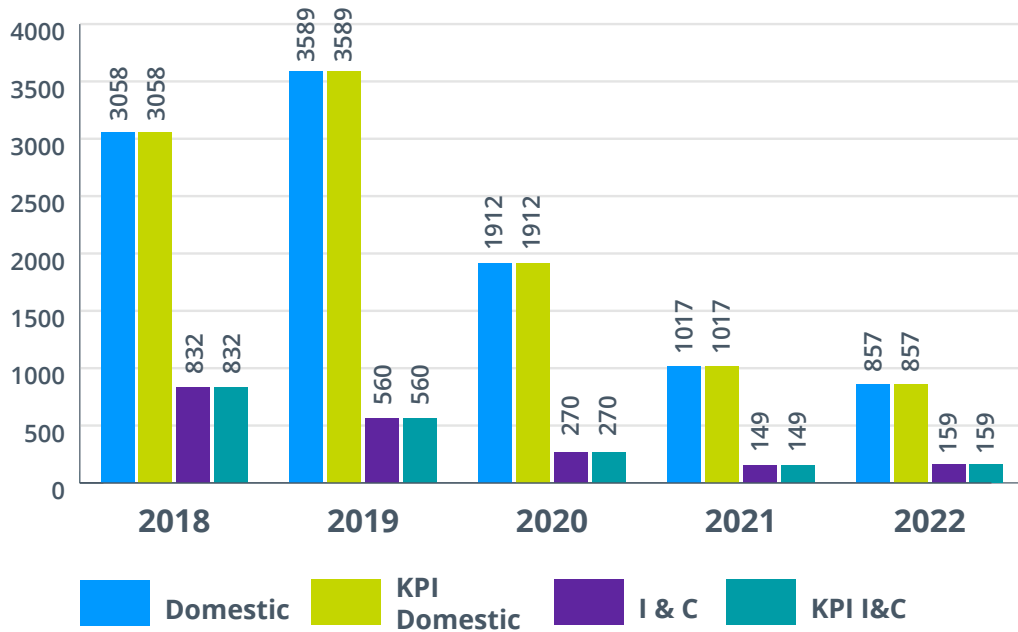


Figure 4.6: Quotation turnaround in 7 working days against KPI



## 4.4 Appointment granting

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For quotation site visits and domestic metering service appointments, a choice of morning or evening day appointments is scheduled within five days of receipt of request. For domestic pipe laying appointments, an appointment is given, on receipt of payment which takes into account the realistic timeframe to acquire a Road Opening Licence (ROL) if required. If no ROL or additional restrictions are required, Gas Networks Ireland endeavours to offer an appointment within four weeks. Closer to the time a firm date will be agreed with the customer, ensuring that sufficient notice is give

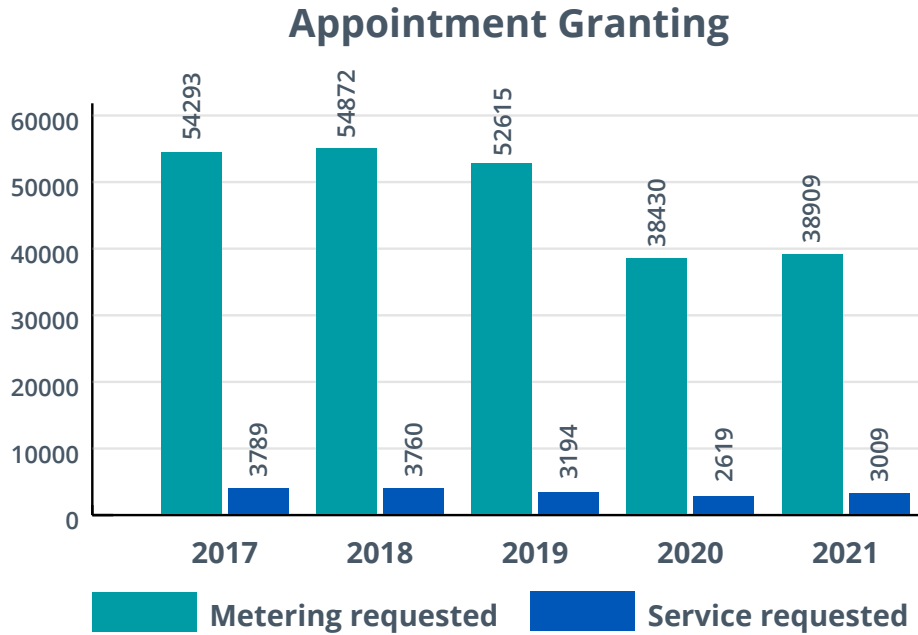
If Gas Networks Ireland fails to grant an appointment commitment within five days (quotation) or four weeks (domestic works), applicable compensation can be claimed, subject to conditions. These conditions include, but are not limited to, restrictions put in place by local authorities including road closures, moratoriums, operation free flo<sup>12</sup> and severe weather restrictions on certain roads. These conditions would prevent charter payments taking place. This request will adhere to the Customer Charter process.

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12 Operation free flow covers situations when Gas Networks Ireland is instructed by a local authority not to undertake physical works except for emergencies, for example at busy retail times such as Christmas.



Figure 4.7: Appointment Granting



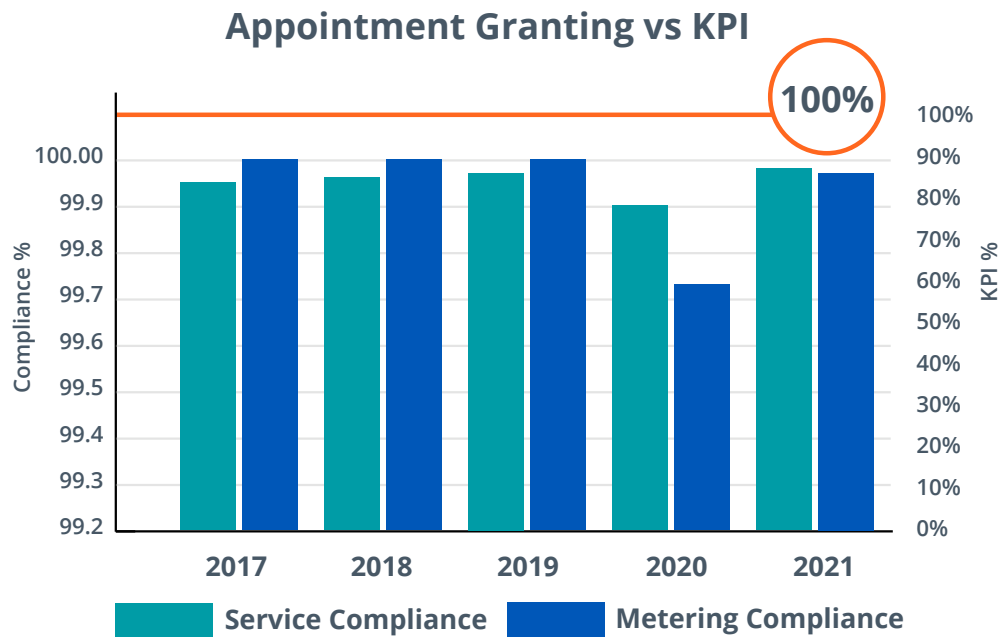
In 2021, Gas Networks Ireland’s compliance around pipe laying was adhered to and customers were advised as necessary, while compliance was at 99.98%, just below the KPI of 100%, where nine requests were not granted. Gas Networks Ireland endeavours to achieve maximum compliance with Customer Charter performance commitments, in relation to the granting of appointments.

In 2021, Gas Networks Ireland granted 3,009 service appointments. This represents an increase of 14.89% on the 2020 figure of 2,619. The performance for service requests was 99.97% which is in line with 2020 results.

The performance rate of meter appointment requests was 37,909 in 2021, this was down 1.35% on 2020 figures of 38,430. The performance for meter compliance was 99.98% which is in line with 2020 results (see Figure 4.8).

In relation to appointments, it is important to note that there has been continued downward pressure on domestic connections due to new building regulations and the increasing competitiveness of heat pump pricing.

Figure 4.8: Appointment granting performance against KPI



This graph depicts the compliance of metering and service appointments granted between 2017 and 2021. The graph

illustrates the KPI performance for each sector was 99.5% and 99.2% respectively.

## 4.5 Appointment keeping

Gas Networks Ireland endeavours to keep all appointments with customers on the assigned day and within the nominated timeframe (morning, afternoon, or all day). If unable to keep this appointment, contact will be made with the customer a minimum of one working day prior to the scheduled appointment.

Failure to make the appointment or notify the customer of the cancellation on or before the working day prior to the scheduled appointment results in the customer being able to make a request for a compensation claim. This request will adhere to the Customer Charter process.

In 2021, there were a total of 56,046 appointments (metering and services) which was a decrease of 3.05% on the 2020 figure. This decrease was driven mainly by Covid-19 pandemic and Government restrictions on lockdown levels. Total compliance for these appointments was at 99.5%, compared to 99.0% in 2020. In 2021, there were 3,244 service appointments which represents an increase of 15% on 2020. The compliance rate for service appointments was 99.2%; which is an increase of 1% on 2020 figures

There were 52,802 metering appointments which represents a decrease of 3.97% on 2020. The compliance rate for metering appointments was 99.5%; which is a slight increase of .05% on 2020 figures

The KPI of 100% is the ultimate service level that Gas Networks Ireland strives to achieve in collaboration with business partners and key stakeholders.

Gas Networks Ireland maintains active engagement with all relevant Local Authorities. Regular meetings take place to improve the Road Opening Licence (ROL) applications process. Gas Networks Ireland is also engaged with key stakeholders and agencies such as the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS); City & County Managers Association (CCMA) and the Road Management Office (RMO); other utilities; and representative organisations. Ongoing engagement continued throughout 2021 to provide service excellence to customers and to improve the customer experience.

**Figure 4.9: Appointment keeping (metering)**

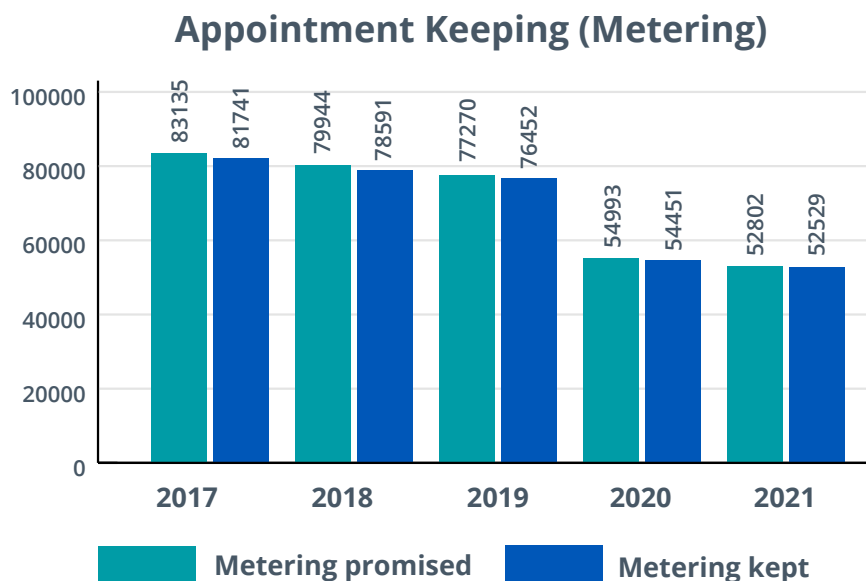
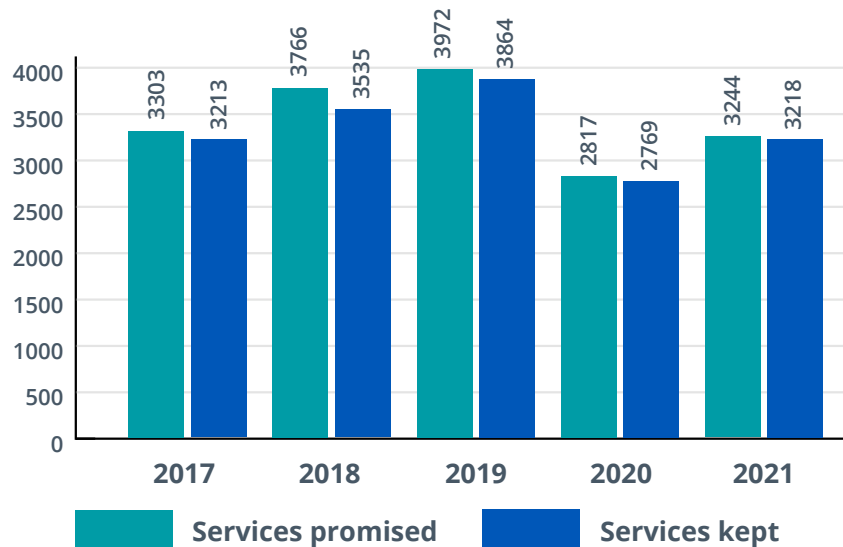




Figure 4.10: Appointment keeping (service)

### Appointment Keeping (Services)



## 4.6 Reinstatement commitments

In order to facilitate the laying of the gas connection pipework, Gas Networks Ireland may need to excavate ground on the premises. It is the aim of Gas Networks Ireland to backfill and securely cover all excavations within 24 hours of work completion.

If there is a failure to complete a temporary reinstatement within 24 hours (as per the KPI) of the work completion, compensation will be paid to the customer, if applied for. Commitments

apply only to circumstances where clear access to the site and premises has been provided. Reinstatement commitments do not extend to excavations arising from emergency, renewal or unplanned work.

Reinstatement is associated with the level of new connection activity. In 2021, there were 2,706 temporary works completed, all of which were completed within the 24 hours commitment, which shows that performance against the KPI was at 100%.



Works are all either permanently reinstated first time; temporarily reinstated; or selected openings are backfilled, secured with barriers/steel plates or footpath boards and reinstated within two days.

The total permanent works carried out in 2021 was 5,149. Of these, 346 were completed outside the 20 working days commitment. The majority were addressing legacy reinstatements, an issue in getting

Road Opening Licence extended to complete the reinstatement, or difficult in accessing the area due to parked vehicles etc. By carrying out permanent reinstatement sooner, Gas Networks Ireland provides better customer service by minimising customer impact. Progress will continue into 2022 with a target of achieving D+2 permanent reinstatement on 60% of works. Figure 4.12 shows the reinstatement performance against the KPI.

41

**Figure 4.11: Reinstatement commitments**

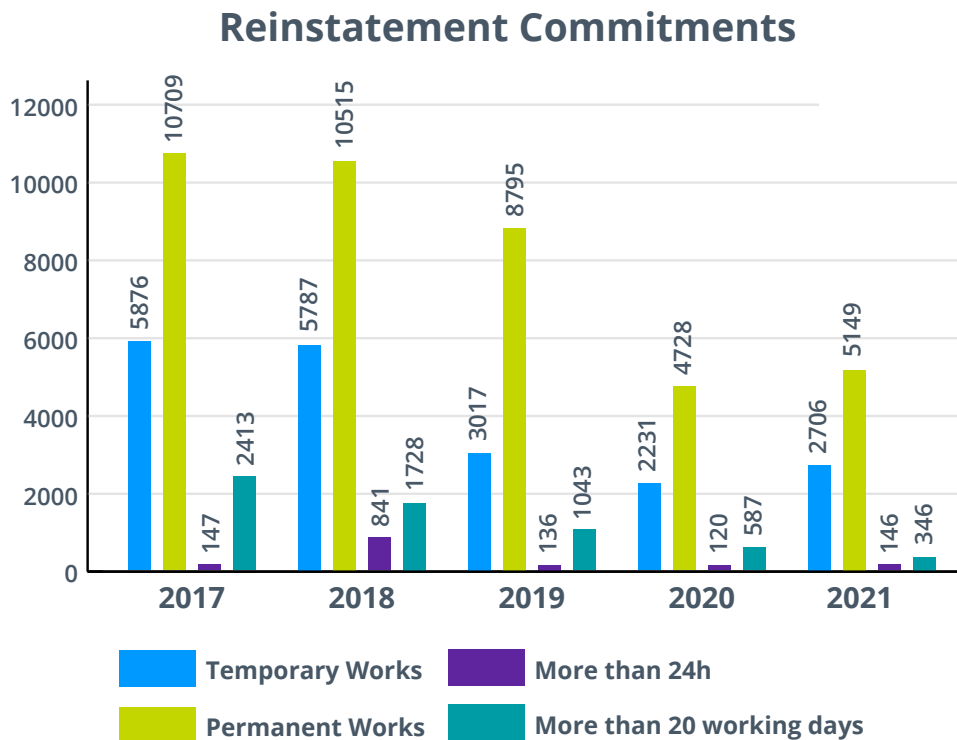
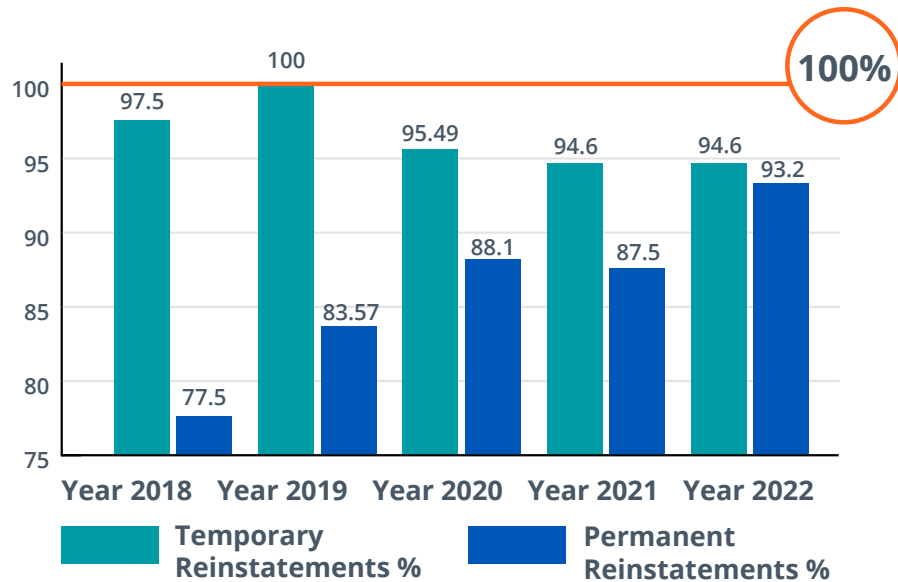




Figure 4.12: Reinstatement performance vs. KPI



42

## 4.7 Gas supply interruption

In some instances when carrying out essential planned maintenance work or connecting new customers, Gas Networks Ireland may need to interrupt the gas supply. If this is necessary, customers will be given at least two days' notice. Failure to do so allows the affected customer(s) to claim for compensation. However, very short supply interruptions and interruptions arising from network faults or third-party actions are exempt from the guarantee.

Every effort is made to minimise the inconvenience caused to customers in these instances. For customers listed as vulnerable on the Special Services Register (as registered by their natural gas supplier); Gas Networks Ireland will offer alternative heating and cooking facilities during planned gas supply interruption or network outage.

In 2021, there were 13,318 vulnerable customers registered. See Figure 4.14 – Gas supply restoration and Table 4.3. The Register of Vulnerable Customers is managed by the gas suppliers (shippers). In 2021 there was no system wide emergency

that necessitated the download/use of the vulnerable customer list (For example GPRO was not asked to produce a report at short notice in response to any incident.) but it may have been required for local incidents, though these are not recorded.

**Table 4.3: 2021 Register of Vulnerable Customers**

Description	Count of GPRN
Dexterity Impaired	226
Elderly	9,857
Hearing Impaired	2,136
Language Difficul	450
Learning Difficul	528
Mental Health	834
Mobility Impaired	2,417
Speech Impaired	413
Visually Impaired	755
Grand Total	13,318

## 4.8 Response to emergencies

One of Gas Networks Ireland’s primary objectives is to respond to all emergencies as soon as possible. On notification of an actual or suspected gas escape report, one of the emergency response personnel will be dispatched immediately. The objective is for the response personnel to arrive on site within one hour of the gas escape report being notified. The KPI for arriving and dealing with such incidents is 97%.

At Gas Networks Ireland safety is a key priority. There are several ongoing safety campaigns to advertise the steps to

take in case of a gas emergency and to promote the emergency number (1800 20 50 50), for instances where a response is required. The aim is to make the general public aware of what to do if they smell gas at a premise or on the street.

The number of reported emergency gas escapes was 14,646 in 2021, 99.99% of which were attended to within one hour. Annually this has been a consistent achievement (see Figure 4.13). The average response time for 2021 was 29 minutes, equal to the 2020 figure.

Figure 4.13: Response to emergencies

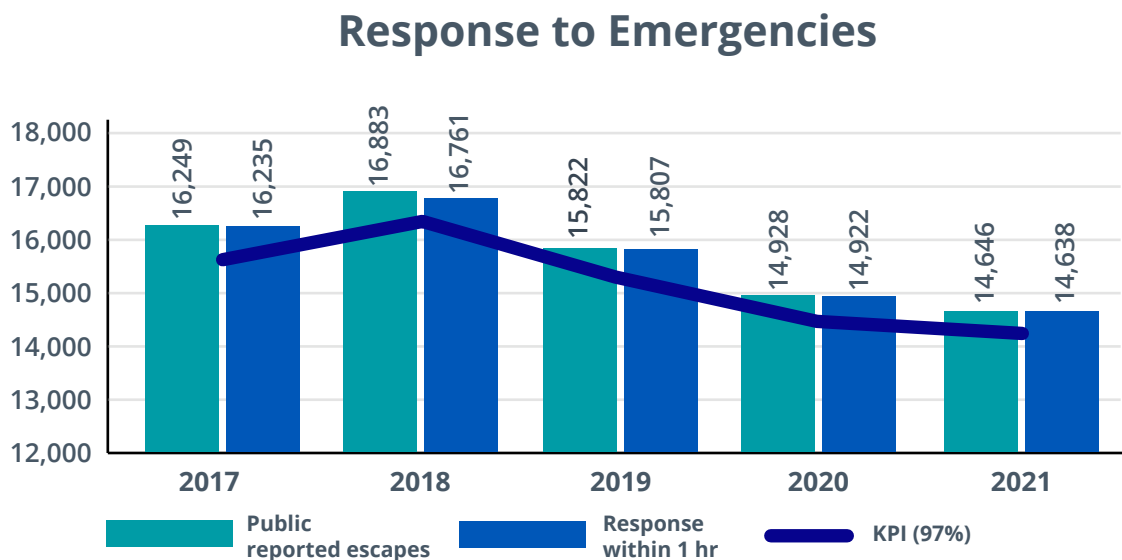
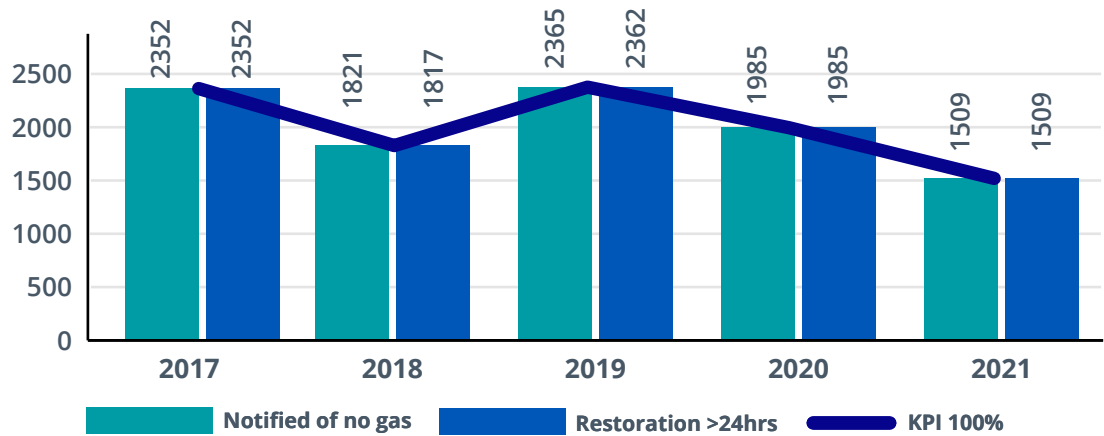




Figure 4.14: Gas supply interruption and restoration



Gas Networks Ireland has been appointed the National Gas Emergency Manager (NGEM) by the CRU in accordance with Statutory Instrument (SI) 697 of 2007, should a major gas incident occur. The NGEM has responsibility for declaring a natural gas emergency, as well as

coordinating planning arrangements and any emergency response in accordance with the Natural Gas Emergency Plan (NGEP). The scope of the NGEP covers emergency arrangements, emergency planning and operational response.

## 4.9 Gas supply restoration

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Occasionally faults may occur on the gas network and as a result there may be an interruption to supply. On receiving a report, Gas Networks Ireland will do everything possible to restore the supply as quickly as possible. However, if there is a failure to restore the supply by the end of the following day after notification and it is a network fault, customers may make a claim for compensation per day, for each 24-hour period without gas subject to a maximum amount. Where there are exceptional circumstances such as extreme weather conditions or extensive disruption

to gas supplies, the guarantee and the compensation will not be offered. The number of gas supply interruptions has decreased over the past five years, with the number of instances reported declining.

The number of customers who had service restored outside 24-hours has been steadily declining (see Figure 4.14 above). The performance was at 100% in 2021 with restorations taking place within a 24-hour period. It should be noted that there was a decrease of 4% in the number of gas interruptions on 2020 figures

## 4.10 Complaints handling

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Complaints may be registered with Gas Networks Ireland. The company endeavours to resolve all complaints within ten working days of registration of the complaint. However, property damage or meter mix-ups may take up to 30 days from notification to resolution. Complaints are acknowledged within one day from receipt and the complainant will be contacted by Gas Networks Ireland within four working days of registering their complaint to check on the progress of the issue. This check is carried out when the complaint is allocated to an owner who must contact the customer within the given

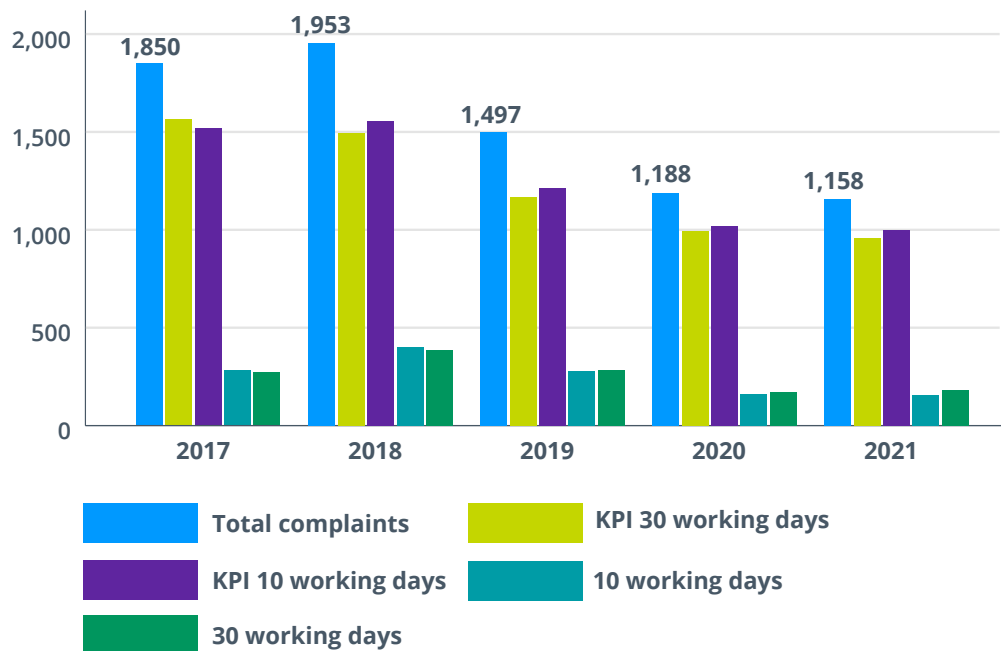
time frame, if there is no record against the complaint, the complaint advocate will contact the customer. Gas Networks Ireland has exceeded the complaint handling performance measure since 2011.

In 2021, Gas Networks Ireland received a total of 1,158 complaints. There was a total of 977 10-day complaints of which 957 were completed within the ten days, 20 were outside criteria. There was a total of 181 30-day complaints of which 155 were completed within the 30 days, 13 were outside criteria.

The number of complaints has fallen by approximately 41% since 2017, from 1,850 to 1,158 in 2021, driven primarily by continuous improvement and improved internal feedback processes. The number of complaints between 2018 and 2021 were 1,953, 1,497, 1,188 and 1,158 respectively. The complaints handling process is illustrated in Figure 4.15.

In 2021, Gas Networks Ireland achieved 98% compliance against the targets set for them by the CRU. Gas Networks Ireland's performance for resolution of all complaints was 98% in 2021 against a CRU approved KPI of 85%.

**Figure 4.15: Complaints handling**



Under the terms of the Natural Gas Distribution Licence, Gas Networks Ireland published a Complaint Handling

Procedure<sup>13</sup> as agreed with the CRU. This document outlines how Gas Networks Ireland handles complaints.

13 [Customer Complaint Handling PDF](#)

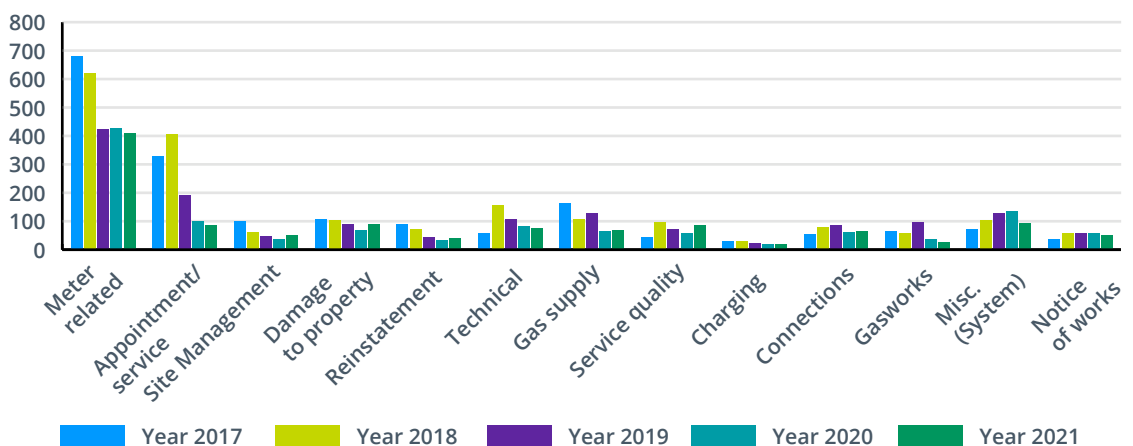
## 4.11 Categories of complaints

Due to the diversity of work managed by Gas Networks Ireland, there are many categories of complaint type. These categories are outlined in Figure 4.16 below. The total number of complaints received was 1,158 in 2021, representing a decrease of 2.6% on 2020 figures.

The largest number of complaints received fell into the meter related category, which is consistent with previous years. The meter related category consists of 30 different types of complaints which includes complaints pertaining to Meter

Mix Up, Meter Replacement and Inaccurate Estimates used in the billing process. Gas Networks Ireland continues to monitor all customer complaints to seek improvements to the services offered and address any issues that are within its control. Gas Networks Ireland has appointed a Customer Advocate in the Contact Centre to be a single point of contact for complaints. In addition, individual reports are issued to departments highlighting the volume and type of complaint received. This helps to highlight areas in need of improvement.

Figure 4.16: Customer complaints by category





## 4.12 Payment guarantee

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Gas Networks Ireland will issue a cheque for the appropriate sum in respect of a requested or notified refund or any validated Charter compensation claim within 10 working days. If the KPI of ten working days is not met, then compensation

will be made in respect of failure to meet this standard. The performance rate payment guarantee has been 100% since 2012. All claims and refunds in 2021 were paid within the required time frame.

## 4.13 Customer Charter payments

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Gas Networks Ireland connects all natural gas customers to the network and is responsible for carrying out related work at the customer's premises. Every effort is made to provide services in a prompt, efficient, and safe manner and to a high standard. The Customer Charter provides assurances to customers regarding the standards to which these services are provided. In certain circumstances, compensation will be provided for failing to meet these standards where the customer makes a claim. In such instances, the customer is directed to the Customer Charter page on the Gas Networks Ireland website where instructions on making

a claim are available. The Customer is normally expected to look for a Charter Payment if Gas Networks Ireland does not fulfil its service correctly, however on some occasions they may be offered a payment as a result of a complaint or just a delay on work being carried out. Other payments are made because Gas Networks Ireland is directed to do so as a complaint resolution by the CRU.

In 2021, seven compensation payments were made to customers. The total value of these payments was €2,215. A further seven payments to the value of €1,516 were made to customers as directed by the CRU.



Figure 4.17: Customer Charter payments and compensation claims

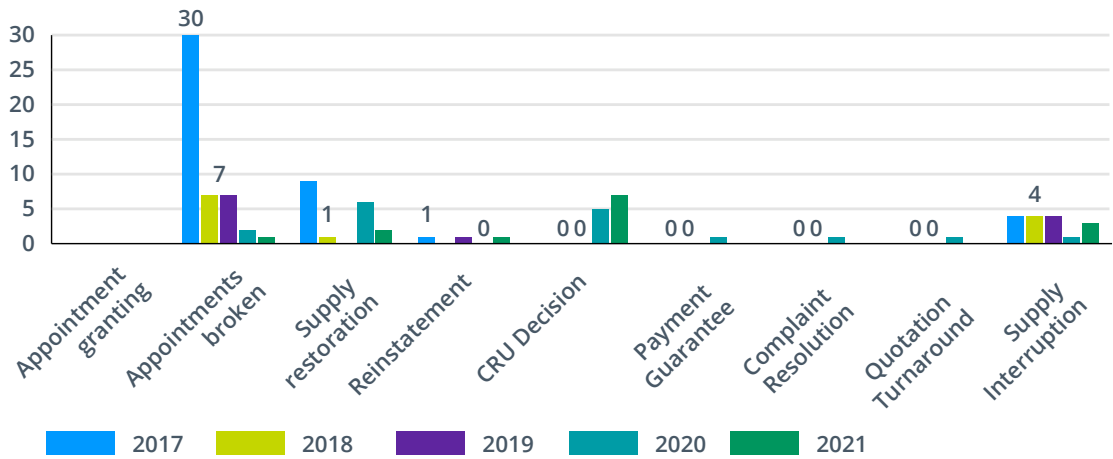
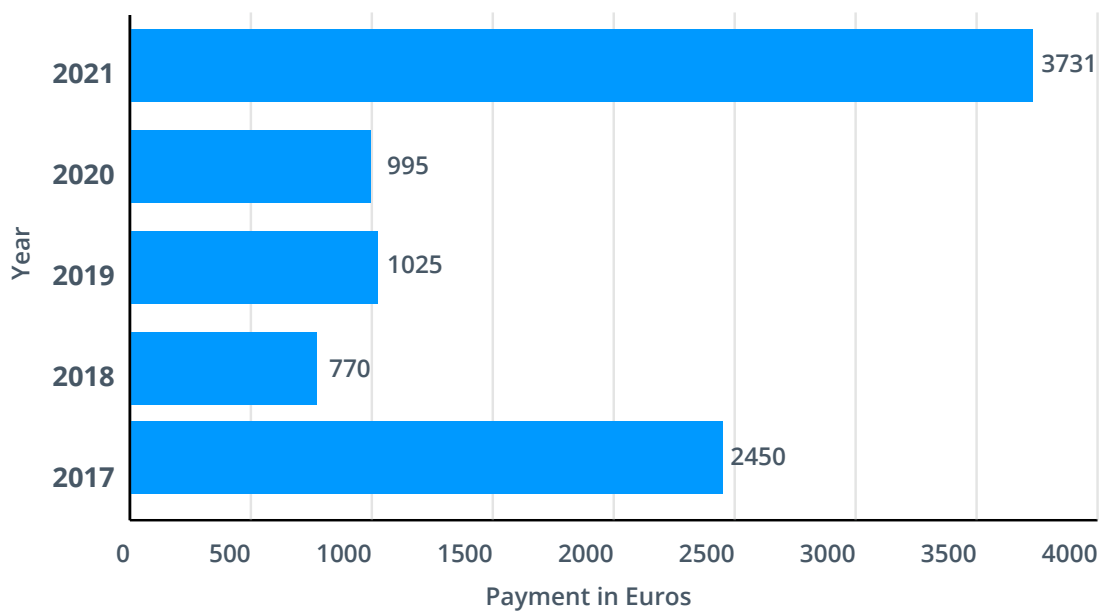


Figure 4.18: Customer Charter payments

### Customer Charter Payments



## 5 Future Development

Gas Networks Ireland continually brings the benefits of natural gas to new customers and new towns across the country. The Connections Policy, a Gas Networks Ireland document approved by the CRU, facilitates high level objectives that encourage the connection of new customers, offers transparency around charges, treats connections consistently and minimises the impact on tariffs. The more customers connected to the gas network, the more throughput on the system, which in turn reduces tariffs for the benefit of all gas customers



Gas Networks Ireland actively promotes natural gas as a fuel of choice for homes, businesses and industry, encourages greater utilisation of the natural gas network and looks for opportunities to expand the network where economically viable. Towns connected to the gas network have a significant competitive advantage over towns without a natural gas network. Sales and marketing efforts continued in Listowel, Wexford, Nenagh and Ballymahon during 2021, restricted only by the continuing

Covid-19 government restrictions, and significant commercial orders were secured as a result of these ongoing efforts

Gas Networks Ireland continued to work with Sligo Sustainable Energy Community to ascertain the potential viability of a satellite gas network connecting cluster(s) of large energy users in the town and supplying the network with both compressed natural gas from the main gas network and local/regionally

produced biomethane. Efforts continued with a comprehensive assessment of the local potential for biomethane production from agricultural, marine, and municipal resources and residues. This project is supported by Gas Networks Ireland through collaborative assistance and co-funding from the Gas Innovation Fund.

Across Gas Networks Ireland, there is considerable emphasis on investing in innovation and new business areas. This will improve customer experience and ensure that Gas Network Ireland will continue to underpin the social, environmental, and economic progress of Ireland. The Gas Innovation Fund continues to promote and encourage an environment of innovation in the gas industry. The

fund provides support for research and demonstration projects and is driven by a number of key priorities. These are:

- increase throughput through the gas system,
- assist in the transition to a low carbon economy,
- deliver significant carbon savings and
- provide measurable value to all gas customers.

Below we set out further detail on developments in hydrogen, biomethane and compressed natural gas. These areas are part of the solution in meeting Ireland's emission reduction targets.

## Hydrogen

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Hydrogen is a carbon free gas that can be made from renewable electricity through a process known as electrolysis and stored until needed, making it an attractive option to decarbonise the Irish and EU energy systems and a strong example of how greater integration between Ireland's gas and electricity networks can support a low carbon economy.

A hydrogen research project investigating the use of blends of hydrogen and natural gas for use in Irish homes and on the distribution gas network commenced in the summer of 2021. Led by Gas Networks Ireland's Innovation Delivery team, together with Dr Ali Ekhtiari and Dr Eoin Syron from University College Dublin's Energy Institute (UCDEI) the research team is testing the operation and performance of household appliances with varying levels of hydrogen and natural gas blends at the Gas Networks Ireland's Network

Innovation Centre in Citywest, Dublin, and University College Dublin's Energy Institute (UCDEI) Integrated Energy Lab.

Gas Networks Ireland is participating in a major European project to help the European Union meet its new accelerated goals and radically increase the use of hydrogen by 2030. The European Hydrogen Backbone initiative is focused on planning for the future development of a European hydrogen market through new pan-European hydrogen transport infrastructure. Five large-scale hydrogen pipeline corridors are envisaged. These new corridors will initially connect domestic local hydrogen supply and demand in Europe, before expanding and connecting European regions amongst each other, and then connecting neighbouring regions with hydrogen export potential.

## **Biomethane**

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Biomethane is a carbon-neutral renewable gas that is fully compatible with the existing national gas network and appliances, technologies and vehicles, meaning no expensive retrofitting is required. Gas Networks Ireland first introduced small volumes of domestically produced biomethane into Ireland's gas network in Cush, Co Kildare, and we continue to receive many enquiries from farmers and potential producers across the country.

Gas Networks Ireland was granted planning permission by An Bord Pleanála in December 2020 for a proposed development of a renewable gas injection facility near Mitchelstown in Co. Cork. The time period for Judicial Review lapsed in February 2021 and the project land purchased completed during 2021. The Mitchelstown facility is part of the GRAZE Gas project, short-listed for funding by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications under the Climate Action Fund.

Mitchelstown CGI will facilitate the injection of biomethane produced at approximately 20 anaerobic digestors ranging in size from 20 to 40GWh per year. These producers will be made up of a variety of suppliers including farmers and private investors. At maximum capacity, the Mitchelstown facility will inject enough biomethane to meet the requirements of up to 64,000 homes.

A large-scale domestic biomethane industry has many benefits, both for the energy sector and Irish agriculture. It will create significant employment – up to 6,500 new jobs mainly in rural Ireland – and provide new income opportunities for local communities from the sale of biomethane, feedstock used to produce the renewable gas and also a highly effective organic bio fertiliser digestate that is a by-product of the process. A domestic biomethane industry will not only support the decarbonisation of the agricultural sector, but it will also provide significant opportunities for rural communities and facilitate sustainable circular economies, with businesses powering their operations via renewable gas made from their own waste.

## Compressed Natural Gas

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Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) is natural gas that has been compressed to high pressures (over 200 bar) and is typically used as a transport fuel. It is particularly suitable for use in heavy commercial vehicles where electric solutions are not a viable option. The gas used can be either natural or renewable gas that meets the network specifications, providing a pathway to more sustainable transport.

To support more hauliers in making the sustainable switch, Gas Networks Ireland launched a €2.9m CNG Vehicle Grant scheme in 2021 to support the purchase of up to 400 gas powered trucks, buses and vans. The Grant covers 20% of the difference between CNG and diesel-powered vehicles, capped at €5,000, with a maximum €60,000 available to any one applicant. The scheme is open to any Irish business that wishes to obtain grant support for the purchase of an approved CNG vehicle.

During 2021, two more publicly accessible fast-fill Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) stations, opened at Circle K's forecourt at Clonshaugh in Dublin and Ballysimon Road in Limerick City bringing the country's total number of public stations to four. Dispensed

usage of CNG has doubled as a result. The country's four publicly accessible, fast-fill CNG stations, form part of the developing national network of CNG stations aimed at providing clean fuel to the HGV sector.

Strategically located to support prominent haulier routes, the state-of-the-art stations have the capacity to fill 50 Heavy Good Vehicles (HGVs) a day, with each fill taking no more than five minutes. The new stations allow hauliers and fleet operators in the region to begin the journey to sustainable transport by switching their fuel from diesel to CNG today and ultimately transition to networked renewable gases, including biomethane and hydrogen, in the future.

Future priorities include:

- Support the Government in developing its plan for hydrogen and provide a formal submission to the Department Hydrogen Consultation Paper
- Continue research and trials of the safe injection of hydrogen (at various blend levels) at the Gas Networks Ireland Network Innovation Centre and more broadly work with the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) to develop the Safety Case for hydrogen.
- Proactively engage with farmers, investors and interested parties in industry to seek further information on what infrastructure, policy supports and grants the sector needs to develop a sustainable indigenous biomethane sector in Ireland.
- Progress the network of CNG refuelling stations and build the projects with planning permission.
- Advance current discussions with the Power Generation sector to enhance Ireland's energy security and the Data Centre sector in relation to meeting their needs with natural and renewable gasses.

## Smart Metering

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The National Smart Metering Programme (NSMP) is led by CRU and saw the commencement of electricity smart meter installation in late 2019, with deployment across three distinct phases, originally scheduled to complete in 2024. It is now likely that the electricity deployment will run into 2025 at least, and while gas deployment was originally planned to commence in 2024 there is currently no firm date for gas smart metering deployment.

Gas Networks Ireland carried out a technical and economic review (including CBA) of smart metering options for gas in the first half of 2021 and issued its 'Gas Smart Metering Options Analysis' report to CRU in July 2021, seeking direction from CRU regarding next steps.



The following recommendations were included in the report:

## Recommendations



### **GNI supports roll-out for full meter population over time, prioritising PAYG Initially**

Given the positive business case for Scenario 3 and the efficiency benefits to both homes and businesses, GNI recommends the roll-out of smart metering across the full meter population (homes and businesses), with the deployment of PAYG meters being prioritised in the deployment timeline.



### **GNI's recommends Independent gas comms and data processing**

GNI recommends an independent gas communications approach rather than an integrated approach leveraging the ESNB comms network. The availability of low power communications solutions can reduce the overall costs and complexities associated with the integrated solution, reducing challenges in design, procurement, operations, governance, and regulatory & commercial arrangements. This solution also provides resilience and autonomy for the gas market.



### **Further investigations required to determine optimal approach to retrofitting of 'smart ready' meters**

GNI recommends that further investigations be carried out before making a decision but are aware of the concerns raised over the complexity, challenges and risks associated with the retrofit option.



### **GNI recommends an alternative solution to an IHD based on consumer technology**

GNI proposes that smart metering data is provided to the consumer via the consumer's personal device (i.e. computer, phone, tablet) rather than via a dedicated In-Home Device (IHD) provided by GNI. As a result, the provision of a Home Area Network (HAN) to support the IHD is unnecessary.



### **GNI favours a 'thin' metering model**

GNI favours the 'thin' metering model due to lower battery consumption and lower unit costs per meter asset. However, GNI is mindful of the benefits of the inclusion of some 'thick' functionality particularly for PAYG (e.g. keypad on the meter to facilitate top-ups at the meter if comms are unavailable).

Following receipt of the report, CRU requested further information from Gas Networks Ireland, which will be prepared in 2022, with a CRU decision expected by the end of 2022.

## 6 Conclusion

The Customer Charter, which outlines Gas Network Ireland's ten guaranteed performance commitments, is also a means to measure performance of Gas Networks Ireland's customer interactions. Gas Networks Ireland works in partnership with its stakeholders, including the CRU and shippers to ensure the safe, secure and reliable delivery of gas to all users. Our customer service performance is benchmarked against key performance indicators (KPIs) as per the Customer Charter.

Our operating environment is constantly changing, presenting new opportunities and challenges. The business is continually adapting to meet customers' needs

and identifying areas for improvement. Customers are empowered to make contact through various means of communication, which include telephone and digital channels. Their feedback is also encouraged through surveys. Regular active participation with shippers takes place through the GMARG and Code Modification Forums. Gas Networks Ireland continuously seeks and monitors customer feedback, analyses results and KPI metrics.

In 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic continued to cast its shadow over customer interactions by, continued to work from home, and the ramp down and ramp up of nationwide restrictions and lockdowns. Despite the challenges presented by the



pandemic, Gas Networks Ireland was able to continue its customer facing operations and succeeded in achieving excellent levels of performance in respect of our published Customer Charter service standards and commitments. Our programme of customer experience monitoring continues to score favourably across all processes as illustrated in this report. Some of the Customer Service highlights from 2021 include a continued reduction in complaints received, the implementation of 34 customer improvement initiatives and increase on key CX metrics- Customer Centricity, NPS and Easy scores on 2020 values.

Looking ahead, Gas Networks Ireland's customer strategy will continue to drive a customer centric focus across the business, by proactively monitoring feedback and undertaking monthly trends analysis to identify areas for improvement and maintain a high consistency of service. Working in collaboration with teams across the business and our customer contact centre, we will host monthly meetings, workshops and Customer Experience Days for relevant stakeholders to meet and agree areas for improvement.

As we work towards our vision for Ireland's gas network to be net zero carbon by 2050, customers will remain at the fore of our business. Developments in innovation provide customers with choice and presents new opportunities for customers to make a positive impact on emissions. By transitioning the gas network to combine renewable gas, hydrogen and natural gas, Gas Networks Ireland will deliver net zero gas for home heating, transport, industry and electricity generation. In doing so, we will empower our customers to actively partake in a low carbon economy and contribute to meeting Ireland's renewable and carbon reduction targets.

# 7 Appendices

## 7.1 Glossary of Terms

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CCA Customer Contact Association	FDI Foreign Direct Investment
CNG Compressed Natural Gas	GNI Gas Networks Ireland
CO Carbon Monoxide	GMARG Gas Market Arrangements Retail Group
ComReg Commission for Communications Regulation	GTMS Gas Transportation Management System
CRU Commission Regulation of Utilities	IoM Isle of Man
CSAT Customer Satisfaction Scores	IVR Interactive Voice Recording
DBYD Dial Before You Dig	I & C Industrial & Commercial
DSO Distribution System Operator	I/C Interconnector
DTTAS Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	Km Kilometre
EU European Union	KPI Key Performance indicator
ESBN ESB Networks	MPD Market Process Documents

NGEM National Gas Emergency

RMO Road Management Offi

NGEP Natural Gas Emergency Plan

RoI Republic of Ireland

NI Northern Ireland

ROL Road Opening Licence

No. Number

SI Statutory Instrument

NPS Net Promoter Score

TMP Traffic Management PI

NSMP National Smart Metering Programme

TSO Transmission System Operator

PAYG Pay as you Go

UK United Kingdom

PRISMA operates the internet platform where capacity rights for natural gas transport can be traded or marketed

## 7.2 Customer Centricity Scores

Metric	Assessment of metric (Survey Question & Scale)	How score is calculated?
Net Promoter Score (NPS)	<p>Following your recent experience how likely are you to recommend Gas Networks Ireland as an organisation to deal with?</p> <p>(On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is 'Not at all likely' and 10 is 'Very likely')</p>	<p>Subtract the % of detractors (scoring 0 to 6) from promoters (scoring 9 to 10)</p>
NetEasy	<p>Overall, how easy was your experience of dealing with Gas Networks Ireland?</p> <p>Out of 10 (On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is 'Extremely difficult' and 7 is 'Extremely easy')</p>	<p>Subtract the % stating it was difficult to some extent 1 to 3, from those stating it was easy 6 to 7</p>
Satisfied	<p>Overall, how satisfied were you with your experience?</p> <p>(On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is 'Very dissatisfied' and 10 is 'Very satisfied')</p>	<p>Overall satisfied define as those scoring 7 to 10, with Very Satisfied define as those scoring 9 to 10</p>
Customer Centricity	<p>This metric is not a score, but rather a composite score comprising three other measures.</p>	<p>An average of total promoters (9-10), total easy (6-7) and total very satisfied (9-10), i.e. take the three scores and divide by 3.</p>

## 7.3 List of Figures

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Figure 2.1: Rol gas demand

Figure 2.2: Overview of Gas Networks Ireland Transmission System

Figure 2.3: Structure of Irish gas market

Figure 2.4: Insights into action illustration

Figure 4.1: Ten customer performance commitments

Figure 4.2: Call response

Figure 4.3: Calls answered < 20 seconds

Figure. 4.4: Abandoned calls after 10 seconds

Figure 4.5: Quotations

Figure 4.6: Quotation turnaround against performance

Figure 4.7: Appointment granting

Figure 4.8: Appointment granting performance against KPI

Figure 4.9: Appointment keeping (metering)

Figure 4.10: Appointment keeping (service)

Figure 4.11: Reinstatement commitments

Figure 4.12: Reinstatement performance against KPI

Figure 4.13: Response to emergencies

Figure 4.14: Gas supply interruption and restoration

Figure 4.15: Complaints handling

Figure 4.16: Customer complaints by category

Figure 4.17: Customer Charter payments and compensation claims

Figure 4.18: Customer Charter payments

## 7.4 List of Tables

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Table 2.1: Customer Commitments

Table 3.1: Explanation of top 10 categories of shipper issues

Table 3.2: Main categories of Shipper issues recorded

Table 3.3: Average number of business days to resolve shipper issues by type

Table 4.1: Shipper/Supplier Survey Response Focus Areas

Table 4.2: Contact Breakdown

Table 4.3: Register of vulnerable customers



## 7.5 Change of Customer Contact Numbers

Old Number	Description	Area
1850 200 694	Customer Care (Dom)	Customer Care
1850 205 050	Gas Control Emergency Line	Emergency Dispatch
1850 211 447	IC Cert	Customer Care
1850 211 512	Fitter Support Line	Emergency Dispatch
1850 211 540	RGI Line	Customer Care
1850 211 573	Regulatory and Corporate services	Regulatory Services
1850 211 615	Scada Test Line	IT
1850 211 792	Scheduling & Dispatch (GNI Fitter Support)	Scheduling and Dispatch
1850 211 816	IT Service Desk	IT
1850 411 511	Business Link Line	Customer Care
1850 427 261	Gas Point Registration Office (GPR)	Regulatory Operations
1850 427 399	Aurora Emergency Line	Aurora
1850 427 732	Automated Meter Reading Service	Customer Care
1850 427 737	Project Line	Customer Care
1850 427 747	Dial before you Dig Line	HSQE
1850 504 060	New Connection Line	Commercial
1850 774 636	Leak Survey	Scheduling and Dispatch
1850 797 979	Carbon Monoxide Line	HSQE

## 7.6 Charter Payment Breakdown 2021

Charter Commitment	Total Payment €	YTD	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Call Response	€0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Quotation Turnaround	€0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appointment Granting	€0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appointment Keeping	€50	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Reinstatement Commitment	€250	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Gas Supply Interruption	€1,495	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0
Emergency Response	€0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gas Supply Restoration	€420	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Complaint Resolution	€0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Payment Guarantee	€0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CRU	€1,516	6	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
<b>Total Number</b>		14	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	1	4	3
<b>Total Payment €</b>	€3,731	€3731	€0	€35	€35	€0	€0	€830	€35	€0	€571	€350	€1,275	€600

The main contact details for  
Gas Networks Ireland are:

.....  
**General Enquiries**

**1800 464 464**

Lines open Monday to Friday 8am – 8pm  
and Saturday 9am – 5.30pm

.....  
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**1800 20 50 50**

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