
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1996 No. 275

The Gas (Northern Ireland) Order 1996

PART II

GAS SUPPLY AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES

Introductory

General duties of the Department and Director

5.—(1) It shall be the duty of the Department and the Director to exercise their functions under this Part in accordance with the following provisions of this Article.

(2) It shall be the duty of the Department and the Director to exercise their functions under this Part in the manner which the Department or the Director considers is best calculated—

- (a) to promote the development and maintenance of an efficient, economic and co-ordinated gas industry in Northern Ireland; and
- (b) to secure that licence holders are able to finance the carrying on of the activities which they are authorised or required by their licences to carry on.

(3) Subject to paragraph (2), it shall be the duty of the Department and the Director to exercise their functions under this Part in the manner which the Department or the Director considers is best calculated—

- (a) to protect the interests of consumers of gas supplied by persons authorised by licences to supply gas in respect of—
 - (i) the prices charged and the other terms of supply;
 - (ii) the continuity of supply; and
 - (iii) the quality of the gas supply services provided;
- (b) to protect the interests of licence holders in respect of the prices at which, and the other terms on which, any services are provided by one licence holder to another;
- (c) to promote the efficient use of gas supplied to consumers;
- (d) to protect the public from dangers arising from the conveyance, storage, supply or use of gas; and
- (e) to facilitate competition between persons whose activities consist of or include conveying, storing or supplying gas;

and to take into account, in exercising those functions, the effect on the environment (whether by way of pollution or otherwise) of activities connected with the conveyance, storage or supply of gas.

(4) In performing the duty under paragraph (3)(a)(iii), the Department or Director shall take into account, in particular, the interests of those who are chronically sick, disabled or of pensionable age.

(5) A person is of pensionable age for the purposes of paragraph (4) if—

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- (a) he has attained pensionable age (within the meaning given by the rules in paragraph 1 of Schedule 2 to the Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 1995); or
- (b) in the case of a man born before 6th April 1955, he is the same age as a woman who has attained pensionable age (within the meaning so given).