

*These notes refer to the Energy Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
(c.6) which received Royal Assent on 10 February 2011*

Energy Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

EXPLANATORY NOTES

BACKGROUND AND POLICY OBJECTIVES

Guaranteed standards of performance by gas companies

The Gas (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (the **Gas Order**) contains measures designed to provide consumer protection within the gas market. The Act enhances these consumer protection measures by introducing legislative provisions that allow the Department and the Utility Regulator to determine standards of performance in connection with the activities of licensed gas suppliers and those who are licensed convey gas. There is a similar regime in operation in the electricity industry.

Individual standards are applicable in relation to each customer separately and failure to meet individual standards will give rise to a duty to pay compensation. Overall standards are typically percentage targets to be achieved by companies over all their customers or classes of customers. Gas licence holders are subject to a duty to conduct their businesses with a view to achieving overall standards of performance which will be published.