

20 October 2016

Nicola Sweeney  
The Utility Regulator  
Queens House  
14 Queen Street  
Belfast  
BT1 6ED

Dear Nicola,

**Power NI Supply Price Control 2017 (SPC 17)**

The Ulster Farmers Union welcome the opportunity are the largest landowner/farmer representative in Northern Ireland. According to the 2015 DAERA Census, there are 24,907 active farm businesses in Northern Ireland and the majority of these are with Power NI.

There are 7,000 farms who have declared themselves as non-domestic customers and 90% are with Power NI. These customers are currently on the Power NI "Farm Tariff" which is a regulated farm-specific tariff.

Following de-regulation of the non-domestic market, the most significant development which will arise from deregulation of the non-domestic market and the removal of the regulated farm tariff is that the 7,000 farms will be free to negotiate bespoke or affinity deals with Power NI. In addition, this would open the possibility for the UFU to offer an affinity deal to our members.

The UFU welcomes the fact that the Utility Regulator asked Power NI to provide written commitments specifically in respect to farm premises that are deemed to be non-domestic;

- The continuation of Farm specific tariffs
- The adoption of a non-disconnection policy for farms
- The application of the current domestic licence condition regarding deposits

However, this is one point we wish to specifically address as our Legislation Committee felt that the deposit required by all electricity companies should be less and went onto question why there should be any type of deposit. We would wish for this to be noted and recorded.

That aside, deregulation of the non-domestic market should allow our members to avail of the benefits of a competitive market and the above points will provide added assurances that their specific requirements are protected from the more severe consequences of an unregulated sector.

If you have any queries, give me a call.

**Chris Osborne**  
**UFU Senior Policy Officer**