

Customer Supplied Meter Scheme Agents

 zetdc.co.zw/customer-supplied-meter-scheme-agents

By ZETDCPR

16 April
2018

In the scheme, customers will be able to purchase their own prepayment meters from the 17 licensed Agents/Vendors through a Customer-Supplied Meter Scheme. ZETDC used to have similar arrangements in the past. It has a precedent of customer supplied meters from the electromechanical meter days.

The guests were advised that ZETDC has engaged its parent Ministry to request for priority in terms of forex allocation to procure from the tender of 130,000 meters that is still running and these steps will ensure that all domestic and small business installations are converted to prepaid.

Currently, to get connected to the electricity network, one needs to pay a subsidised connection fee to ZETDC, which then assumes the responsibility of supplying connection materials, including meters.

For ZETDC to procure meters, it has to go to tender through the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) (formerly known as State Procurement Board) and recent tenders for prepayment meters have not been consummated because of the prevailing short-age of foreign currency and the general tight liquidity situation in the country.

Awarded suppliers have to spent a year apply-ing for lines of credit and trying to obtain for-eign exchange approval to purchase meters.

Said Chinembiri: "The Customer Supplied Meter Scheme seeks to introduce private players who have their own financial muscle into the process of supplying meters. The yet-to be connected customers can purchase meters from the licenced Agents. The scheme applies to small business and domestic customers.

"This scheme is part of a broader strategy of customer-supplied materials, where customers can acquire their own material to get connected. In terms of timelines, some agents have already started sourcing meters and the meters are expected as early as 2 to 4 weeks."

The Managing Director said that there is also another section of customers whereby residential areas have been constructed but backbone infrastructure has not been set up.

"There are over 100 000 customers under this category and this challenge is being addressed by engaging housing developers to ensure that such infrastructure, which have electrical reticulation as much as they have roads and water services is put in place. This implies that when a customer pays for that stand, the prices cov-er for such services. This development is now at regulatory stage and various stakeholder engagements are being done from that perspective as well."

Banks such as CBZ, ZB and FBC are also coming in to fund backbone infrastructure at Medium voltage level and the monies are recovered from the prepaid meter unit purchases.