

# **Western Power Distribution one of first UK companies to obtain Inclusive Service Verification from the British Standards Institute (BSI).**

Western Power Distribution is one of the first U.K. companies to obtain Inclusive Service Verification from the British Standards Institute (BSI).

The new program has been developed in order to help organisations achieve vulnerability objectives and prove they provide an inclusive service.

In order to achieve verification certification, organisations undergo an independent assessment including a rigorous on-site audit to demonstrate that they have the processes for identifying and responding to consumer vulnerability. The outputs of these processes are also tested to ensure they are working in practice. Following the initial assessment, organizations will be assessed annually.

“The standard provides us with an ongoing opportunity to evaluate our support for those customers who are most in need, said Nicki Johnson, Stakeholder Engagement Officer at WPD. “We are delighted to be officially recognised for the work we do to deliver inclusive services for our customers.”

“Inclusivity is embedded in WPD’s business culture and processes. We design our services inclusively and train staff to have the flexibility, autonomy, skills and ‘confidence to care’ so they can continue to improve services for all customers,” Johnson said.

UK Product Certification Director at BSI Natasha Bambridge said that identifying and responding to consumer vulnerability is important for any organisation dealing with the public.

“The Inclusive Service Verification Standard, BS 18477, is designed to help service providers identify and respond appropriately to different consumer needs and to deliver services that do not discriminate,” said Bambridge. “As any consumer can experience vulnerability at any time, this verification scheme applies to organisations regardless of type, size and the services provided.

“By achieving verification certification to BS 18477, WPD has demonstrated that they have the relevant policies and procedures, training plans and fair and accessible practices in place when dealing with consumers,” Bambridge said.

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