

**Question for written answer E-010762/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
José Blanco López (S&D)

Subject: Electricity supplier fraud

The Spanish Consumers and Users Organisation has recently drawn attention to an alarming increase in the number of complaints made by consumers who are complaining that they are powerless to defend themselves against electricity suppliers who accuse them of having tampered with their meters.

This situation is made worse by the fact that according to the Consumers Organisation, under the current regulations the utilities are both judge and interested party, since they are responsible for detecting the alleged fraud and for penalising it. This means that customers are forced to pay their bills even if they have done nothing wrong, otherwise they risk having their electricity supply cut off. And this despite the fact that the regulations do not specify the criteria that the utilities must comply with to prove the existence of fraud.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?
2. Does the Commission consider it acceptable for the electricity companies themselves to be responsible for both detecting and penalising the alleged frauds?
3. Does the Commission consider this situation to be compatible with the necessary protection of consumer rights, or does it think that the law should be reformed?