



POWER SECTOR IN RAJASTHAN



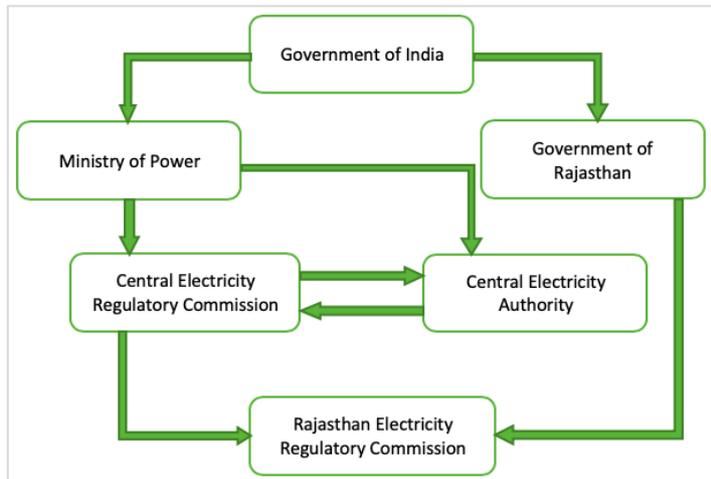
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1. Introduction

Indian power sector comprises various governments, both at the Central and state level, and private agencies carrying out various functions of the electricity value chain. Central and State Governments set up the legal, policy, and regulatory framework, provide budgetary support, and also own most of the transmission, distribution, and generation businesses. The private sector has also grown its presence significantly in the generation business and is increasing slowly in the transmission and distribution (T&D) business.

The Ministry of Power is India's apex Central government body responsible for planning, policy formulation, processing of projects for investment decisions, monitoring project implementation, training and manpower development, and the administration and enactment of legislation regarding thermal, hydropower generation, T&D.



The Central Electricity Authority advises the government on policy matters and formulates plans for the development of electrical systems. It also prescribes the standards on matters such as the construction of electrical plants, electric lines, and connectivity to the grid, installation, and operation of meters, and safety and grid standards.

The Central Electricity Regulatory Commission provides the regulatory framework for power sector governance which is largely emulated by State Commissions, specifies grid code and grid standards, and determines the tariff of Power Generating companies owned or controlled by the Government of India, and any other generating company which has a composite scheme for power generation determines tariff for interstate transmission of electricity and adjudicate upon disputes involving generating companies or transmission licensees.

2. Evolution of Policy and Regulatory Framework in Rajasthan

The power sector in Rajasthan gathered momentum after the formation of the Rajasthan State Electricity Board (RSEB) on July 01, 1957, and planned growth in installed capacity, transmission network and rural electrification took place. In 1993, the Government of Rajasthan decided to reform its power sector to improve efficiency and quality of service to the consumers by allowing private participation in the State power generation. It was followed by a Broad Reform Policy Statement, issued in September 1995, to attract private investment and expertise to expand and improve electricity services in the State and to enable the sector to gain access to capital markets and commercial financing.

The Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan approved the Rajasthan Power Sector Reforms Bill (Reform Bill) on September 25, 1999. The reform bill received the Presidential Assent on December 28, 1999, and became effective from June 01, 2000. An Independent Regulatory Commission was established to regulate the functioning of the Power Sector on sound commercial principles in January 2000.

The State Electricity Board had been unbundled and its activities, assets and liabilities, and staff have been transferred to the RRVPL (Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Prasaran Nigam Limited), RVUNL (Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited), and three distribution companies (Discoms), i.e. JVVNL (Jaipur Vidyut Vitaran Nigam Limited), AVVNL (Ajmer Vidyut Vitaran Nigam Limited) and JdVVNL (Jodhpur Vidyut Vitaran Nigam Limited) in July 2000.

The Electricity Act 2003 was enacted in May 2003 to consolidate the laws relating to the generation, transmission, distribution, trading and use of electricity and generally for taking measures conducive to the development of electricity industry, promoting competition therein, protecting interests of consumers and supply of electricity to all areas, rationalisation of electricity tariff, ensuring transparent policies regarding subsidies, promotion of efficient and environmentally benign policies, the constitution of Central Electricity Authority, Regulatory Commissions and establishment of Appellate Tribunal and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

3. Power Sector in Rajasthan

In Rajasthan, RSEB used to be the primary agency for generation, T&D which was later restructured into 5 different entities to strengthen the sector and separate the functions of generation, T&D. The key institutions of Rajasthan Power Sector are listed below:

Ministry/ Organisation	Functions
Energy Ministry, Government of Rajasthan	Policies, rules, managing companies, providing budget support
Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission	Decide tariffs, oversee the functioning of all generation, T&D companies, approve all important decisions such as power purchase, capital expenditure, operation norms, etc.
Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited	Operate and maintain the existing state-owned power stations
Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Prasaran Nigam Limited	Sets up and manages transmission lines and substations for the supply of electricity in Rajasthan.
Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam Limited	Carries out the power trading business of state power Discoms
Discoms 1. Jaipur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited 2. Ajmer Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited 3. Jodhpur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited	Sets up and manages a distribution network. Is responsible for supplying certain defined quality and for metering and billing
Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation Limited	Responsible for promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency

districts namely Jaipur, Dausa, Alwar, Bharatpur, Dholpur, Kota, Bundi, Baran, Tonk, Jhalawar, Karoli, and Sawaimadhopur.

Ajmer Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited supplies electricity in 11 districts namely Ajmer, Bhilwara, Nagaur, Sikar, Jhunjhunu, Udaipur, Rajsamand, Pratapgarh, Chittorgarh, Banswara, and Dungarpur.

Jodhpur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited supplies electricity in 10 districts namely Jodhpur, Sirohi, Pali, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Barmer, Sri Ganganagar, Jalore, Churu, and Hanumangarh.

6. Key Regulations for Consumers

Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission (Guidelines for Redressal of Grievances) Regulations, 2008

- The regulations have provision for 'Grievance Redressal cum Settlement Forum' at sub-division, division, circle, and corporate levels. However, the DISCOMs are allowed to have more such forums to ensure timely disposal of consumer grievances.
- It provides specific guidelines on the jurisdiction of each forum and makes a clear distinction between the monetary and non-monetary nature of grievances, by putting an incremental fee for the registration of the monetary nature of grievance at each level of forums. The grievances are required to be heard and discussed in the forums in presence of both the consumer and DISCOM representatives.
- The regulation provides the time frame for disposal of grievances within 30 days and not to exceed 45 days from the date of its receipt registration. It also provides an option to reach Corporate GRF or Ombudsman in case of a non-redressal of grievances at lower levels of forums.

Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission (Settlement of Disputes by Electricity Ombudsman) Regulations, 2010

- The regulation provides for provision for any consumer aggrieved by the non-redressal of the grievance by the Forum to make representation to Electricity Ombudsman, himself or through his authorised representative within ninety days from the date of the receipt of the decision of the Forum or within ninety days from the date of the expiry of the period within which the Forum was required to take the decision and communicate the same to the Complainant.
- The regulation provides enough power to the ombudsman to facilitate settlement of representation in a manner he may consider appropriate within the framework of Act, the Rules and Regulations. However, the Ombudsman shall settle a grievance within 3 months of receipt of representation, unless extended for one month at a time with recorded reasons.

Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission (Standards of Performance for Distribution Licensees) Regulations, 2014

- These regulations provide for guaranteed standards of services by distribution licensee for its consumers within the specified time limits. The failure of the licensee to achieve these guaranteed standards along with the provisions specified under the RERC (Electricity Supply Code and Connected Matters) Regulations – 2004 and other relevant regulations, shall entail payment of monetary compensation to the affected persons as per these regulations.
- Such an application can be filed within 30 days of the expiry of the specified time. The licensee shall pay such compensation, by way of adjustment through electricity bills, not later than 90 days from the date of the violation of the Guaranteed Standard failing which an additional compensation @ 1% of the compensation amount shall be payable to the affected consumer for each week of delay or part thereof.
- The regulations provide standards for the handling of consumer complaints by the licensee and mandates publishing of Complaint Handling manual in Hindi and English incorporating the details of call centres, toll-free telephone numbers for registering the complaints & to inform the status of its redressal, details of concerned officers, guaranteed SOP, compensation & its payment mechanism, application format and other relevant details, including that of Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) and Electricity Ombudsman.
- The regulation also made provision for the establishment of Call centres by the licensee with the appointment of sufficient staff and set-ups of adequate technology. The licensee has to run call centres round the clock throughout the year, providing one or more 'Toll-free number' with sufficient lines to register and process the complaints against the services. The affected person can lodge the complaints with respective call centres. The complaints may be received in person or through telephonic voice or SMS or in writing and a complaint number shall be allotted and communicated to the complainant for further reference.