To whom it may concern.

I have been looking at the draft and there is one section of concern, which does not seem to have a specific question.

From:Table 15: SSEN’s bespoke PCD proposals

The section:

Subsea cables – strategic  
upgrades: Three new cables  
between Skye and Uist, and  
Pentland Firth West to Orkney  
Reject: We are proposing to reject this proposal as  
it is covered within NARM

My response is regarding the Uist cable link.

The SSEN supporting evidence states “The existing Skye - South Uist 33 kV subsea cable is 46.17km in length and has been in service for 31 years. The probability of failure is 1.8858 in 2023/24 rising to 6.1268 by the end of ED2, 2028. The Skye - Harris 33 kV subsea cable had a Probability of Failure of 1.3126 and failed in October 2020. This provides a reference of the potential for failure of this critical cable.”

From this it would seem that the single cable is currently of an age where failure can be anticipated, and should therefore be a high priority for replacement. However the SSEN determination is quite rightly looking at both the current and future resilience, and has identified the use of two cables being required for long term increased requirements as well as security.

Therefore I propose Option 7 should be accepted. The North Uist link should be considered as a feature required in the network to support the future, especially with increased demands with migration to electric vehicles and removal of the majority of carbon generating fuels. With this link in place the replacement of the end of life Southern cable still needs to be managed as identified, to avoid the increased costs and complexities of an emergency replacement.

Without the upgraded link, the Uists will be at risk of continued or increased use of diesel power generation and prolonged use of petrol and diesel road vehicles due to the limited provision of the current cable. In addition the potential for renewable energy generation will be diminished if the transmission lines are not reliably connected to the mainland grid.

Regards

Mike Protts