

Company Secretary
Electricity North West Limited
Hartington Road, Preston,
Lancashire, PR1 8AF

By email Paul Auckland

Email: duos@ofgem.gov.uk

Date: 20 December 2024

Dear Company Secretary,

Direction issued to Electricity North West Limited (ENWL) to derogate from the Distribution Use of System (DUoS) charge setting notice period¹, issued under Section 2A Clause 19.1B of the Distribution Connection and Use of System Agreement (DCUSA)².

This letter contains a Direction to ENWL to derogate from the DUoS 15-month charge setting notice period so that it may publish its final DUoS charges for 2026/27 after 31 December 2024. The period of notice by which the distribution network operator (DNO) must publish its charges is reduced to forty days, however we expect the DNO to publish those charges as soon as reasonably practicable but.

We consider it is in the interests of its customers overall, and in particular its high voltage and low voltage customers, to delay publication of final charges to allow it to produce a complete set of charges for all customers. The Direction is attached as an Annex to this letter.

Background

DNOs recover their allowed revenue from customers through DUoS charges. The methodologies for calculating these charges are the Extra High Voltage Distribution Charging Methodology (EDCM) for the large, industrial customers connected at the highest

¹ Read [Section 2A Clause 19.1A of the DCUSA](#)

² Read [Section 2A Clause 19.1B of the DCUSA](#)

voltages, and the Common Distribution Charging Methodology (CDCM) for the remaining customers. The CDCM and EDCM are detailed in the DCUSA document.

In the 2023 charge-setting period, we were made aware of circumstances in which following the EDCM would result in a negative value 'surplus residual'.³ In some cases, this would result in a fixed daily credit being paid to certain sites. We do not consider that a fixed daily credit for Final Demand Sites is cost-reflective nor conducive to competition in the generation and supply of electricity.

We are similarly aware of limitations with how the CDCM seeks to manage a surplus residual. A process exists to reduce some of the forward-looking charges (discounting fixed charges and unit rates) to bring revenue recovery down to the target value. However, an especially large surplus residual may result in the CDCM exhausting the ability to apply discounting and failing to produce a complete set of charges for some network users. We do not consider that compliance with the charging methodology should result in the failure to produce a set of final tariffs.

From the point of the issues within the charging methodologies becoming known to us, we have sought to identify a robust and practical solution.

In response to a surplus residual arising in the EDCM of two DNOs in the 2023 charge-setting period, for 2025/26 charges, we granted a direction to derogate to the affected DNOs to charge outside of the EDCM.⁴ We described these issues in greater detail in two explanatory notes⁵ published alongside our presentation to the March 2024 Charging Futures Forum.

In July 2024, we published a call for input⁶ to the sector, which detailed and sought feedback on our assessment of proposed approaches to manage the effects of surplus residual charges in both the EDCM and CDCM. We subsequently published our guidance for managing the effects of surplus residual charges⁷ in November 2024, which outlined the process by which DNOs should submit requests for direction to derogate from the DCUSA 15-month notice period and relevant charging methodologies.

³ Surplus residual is also understood as a 'negative residual'. This guidance document uses the term "surplus residual" for consistency with the DCUSA.

⁴ Read directions to derogate under SLC 13B Part E of the Electricity Distribution Licence relating to the EDCM for [National Grid Electricity Distribution](#) and [Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks](#)

⁵ Read the [explanatory note on the issue relating to the EDCM](#) and [the explanatory note on the issue relating to the CDCM](#) on the NESO website

⁶ Read the [call for input on managing the effects of surplus residual charges](#)

⁷ Read [our guidance for managing the effects of surplus residual charges](#)

ENWL's issue and requested direction to derogate

Following our published guidance on managing the effects of surplus residual charges in DUoS charging methodologies, ENWL has reviewed its available indicative charging figures and assessed the likelihood of an excessive residual surplus occurring as a result of applying the EDCM and CDCM to its licence areas.

In keeping with our guidance and in anticipation of the potential occurrence of an excessive surplus residual arising within either the EDCM or CDCM, ENWL has written to us on 12 December 2024 to request a direction to derogate from the 15-month DUoS charge setting notice period, under Section 2A Clause 19.1B of the DCUSA.

This is with a view for ENWL to follow the subsequent process set out in our guidance. This would involve ENWL submitting a request for direction to derogate from the charging methodology, by applying the relevant intervention option outlined in our guidance, should the occurrence of an excessive negative residual in either or both charging methodologies be confirmed.

Our assessment

We have considered ENWL's proposal to delay publishing final charges against the process set out in our guidance for managing the effects of surplus residual charges, which has been developed in accordance with our principal objective and wider statutory duties.

We regard ENWL's request to be consistent with our guidance document. By receiving a direction to derogate from the 15-month notice period, ENWL will have sufficient time to confirm the presence of an excessive residual surplus in its charging methodologies, apply the relevant intervention option and produce an impact assessment. It will then submit a request for direction to derogate against the DUoS charging methodology to us and subsequently publish final charges following our decision.

Following this approach will allow ENWL to manage the effects of surplus residual charges within the CDCM and therefore avoid the methodology from failing to produce a complete set of charges for some network users. We do not consider that compliance with the charging methodology should result in the failure to produce a set of final tariffs.

We therefore consider that a delay to publication of charges, that will enable a potential subsequent request to derogate from the charging methodologies, would better facilitate the achievement of our principal objective and wider statutory duties.

Impact on licensed distribution network operators (LDNO)⁸ operating in ENWL distribution licence areas

Under the DCUSA, LDNOs are required to provide 14 months' notice of their charges. This is one month after the DNOs publish their own tariffs. Any directions to DNOs to derogate from the 15-month notice period would therefore have implications for LDNOs operating in those DNO areas.

We are considering a proportionate approach to affected LDNOs in ensuring compliance with their notice period obligations. We will further engage these parties and consider whether any additional interventions are required in early January 2025, once we have confirmation of which DNOs are affected by an excessive surplus residual.

Decision

For reasons set out above we have decided to grant the ENWL a direction to derogate from the 15-month DUoS charge setting notice period as set out in the Annex below. The Direction issued under Section 2A Clause 19.1B of the DCUSA is attached as an Annex to this letter.

In the event that the ENWL's ordinary calculation of charges does not result in an excessive surplus residual being produced, we expect it to publish tariffs by 31 December 2024.

This letter constitutes notice under 49A of the Electricity Act 1989.

If you have any queries or comments in relation to the issues raised in this letter, please contact us by email at duos@ofgem.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,

Andrew Malley

Head of Distribution and Residual Charging

Signed on behalf of the Authority and authorised for that purpose

⁸ LDNO can either be an independent distribution network operator (IDNO) or a DNO operating outside of its own region.

Annex

Direction issued to Electricity North West Limited to derogate from the Distribution Use of System (DUoS) charge setting notice period, issued under Section 2A Clause 19.1B of the Distribution Connection and Use of System Agreement (DCUSA)

1. Electricity North West Limited, to whom this Direction is addressed (a "Licensee") holds a licence granted, or treated as granted, pursuant to section 6(1)(c) of the Electricity Act 1989 (the "Distribution Licence").
2. SLC 20.3 of the Distribution Licence requires each Licensee to comply with (among other codes) the Distribution Connection and Use of System Agreement ("DCUSA"). Clause 19.1A of the DCUSA requires each Licensee to provide notice of their charges 15 months in advance of the relevant charging year. Clause 19.1B permits each Licensee to not have to comply with the notice period set out in Clause 19.1A, where the Authority issues a direction to that effect. In such a circumstance, the notice period will be forty days.

Now therefore:

The Authority hereby directs:

Pursuant to Section 2A Clause 19.1B of the DCUSA, that the periods of notice described in Clause 19.1A shall not apply to the Licensee and that the notice period shall instead be forty days for 2026/27 tariffs, however we expect the DNO to publish those charges as soon as reasonably practicable but no later than 31 January 2025.

This Direction shall have effect from the date stated below.

Dated 20 December 2024

Andrew Malley

Head of Distribution and Residual Charging

Signed on behalf of the Authority and authorised for that purpose