

Connections end-to-end review of the regulatory framework

The British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) represents the demand side of the automotive industry. We have over 1,000 members who **spend over £30 billion annually** to upgrade their fleets. Their commitment to decarbonising road transport is evident in their purchase of around 65% of battery-electric vehicles (BEVs) sold in the UK, making them the **driving force in the shift to net zero road transport**.

BVRLA members fund over **4.3 million cars, vans and trucks, including over half a million BEVs**. All parts of the UK need vehicle leasing and rental businesses, from individual drivers and small businesses to large corporations. They provide flexibility in mobility and support growth as an integral part of UK PLC.

BVRLA members and their customers have frequently highlighted grid connections as a major issue. The BVRLA's [Fleet Charging Guide](#) highlights the lack of standardisation across the Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) as a key challenge. This has resulted in fleets looking to install electric charging infrastructure having to complete different forms, pay varying fees, and deal with inconsistent timescales.

Another significant concern is the length of time required to obtain a connection. Delays occur at every stage of the connections process, meaning it can sometimes take several years to complete a connection. The situation is further complicated by the varying information requested by different DNOs, with no standard form to complete.

Members have reported significant delays in receiving responses after submitting applications to the DNO, and in some cases, they have received no response at all. As a result, they have either been forced to delay their plans or abandon them altogether, often without clear explanations as to why their applications have not been addressed.

We welcome this review and Ofgem's commitment to ensuring better service standards and more timely connections.

Visibility and accuracy of connections data

One issue frequently raised by our members is their ability to prioritise which sites to electrify. Before submitting applications to connect, fleets need to understand how their energy requirements align with their existing site's energy capacity.

Members have consistently highlighted that challenges often arise at the 'pre-application stage' due to a lack of accessible information about current grid capacity. This lack of visibility makes it difficult for fleets to identify which sites have the necessary headroom for chargepoints, significantly hindering their planning process. Without this crucial information, they cannot assess factors like likely costs, timelines, and specific needs.

Where this data is accessible, members have noted that there is no consistent timeframe for receiving it. Providing data through heat maps and implementing a standardised process across DNOs would allow businesses to identify which sites have the required capacity and where they can move forward with their plans.

Another area in need of transparent data is the 'Time to Quote' and 'Time to Connect' metrics and how these align with actual experiences. While the data gathered through our annual [Road to Zero Report Card](#) has shown how DNOs are performing against Ofgem's targets, this information has been difficult to obtain and often presents a more positive picture than many fleets report. We strongly encourage Ofgem to investigate the reasons behind this gap and develop a more accurate way of monitoring delays that better reflects the real times customers are facing.

BVRLA Ltd

River Lodge, Badminton Court, Amersham, Bucks HP7 0DD
tel: 01494 434747 e-mail: info@bvrla.co.uk web: www.bvrla.co.uk

Improved standards of service across the customer journey

It is essential that connection customers receive a high standard of service at every stage of their journey. While DNOs offer valuable tools, these can often be difficult to find unless you know exactly what you're looking for and where to look. The BVRLA's collaboration with the Energy Networks Association (ENA) and the upcoming guidance aim to make these tools more widely accessible and easier to find. This will also help fleets navigate the connections process, signpost additional support, and assist in managing their energy consumption more effectively.

However, this initiative will not address the lack of visibility once a fleet has submitted a quote request or application to connect. If Ofgem is focused on improving service standards throughout the connections process, greater transparency is needed—particularly regarding the customer's position in the queue and when they can expect a response.

Additionally, implementing a mechanism that allows connection customers to escalate concerns or request assistance when they encounter roadblocks with the DNO would be highly beneficial.

Meeting connection dates & ambition of connection offers

We welcome Ofgem's proposals aimed at minimising connection delays, particularly the emphasis on the importance of timeliness. A key cause of delays is often due to connection customers not fully understanding the questions being asked or the data required.

For some time, the BVRLA has requested a list of common questions, along with clear explanations, and a downloadable connection form that customers can print, share amongst colleagues to complete with the necessary information, and submit.

We hope the ENA guidance will help address some of these delays, but we urge Ofgem to monitor where delays persist and take action to resolve them, especially if common issues are identified across different DNOs.

We are also keen to closely monitor the sharing of infrastructure. As this trend grows, we would like to explore how companies that share infrastructure—thereby reducing the overall demand on the energy network—can provide evidence to help expedite the connection process.

Minor connections

We would expect customers connecting EV charge points at a low voltage to receive timely and high standards of service throughout the process.

However, the majority of feedback we have received to date is where a larger connection is needed.

Further engagement

We appreciate the opportunity to respond to this review and thank Ofgem for taking the time to share its proposals with our members in January. We are eager to continue engaging with Ofgem as it progresses with the proposals outlined in the review and would be happy to meet and provide any additional evidence or clarification if needed.

BVRLA Ltd

River Lodge, Badminton Court, Amersham, Bucks HP7 0DD
tel: 01494 434747 e-mail: info@bvrla.co.uk web: www.bvrla.co.uk

About the BVRLA

The BVRLA represents over 1,000 companies engaged in vehicle rental, leasing and fleet management. Our membership is responsible for a combined fleet of nearly 4.3 million cars, vans and trucks – one-in-ten of all vehicles on UK roads.

BVRLA members represent the demand-side of the automotive industry, buying around 50% of new vehicles, including over 80% of those manufactured and sold in the UK. In doing so, they support almost 500,000 jobs, add £7.6bn in tax revenues and contribute £49bn to the UK economy each year.

Together with our members, the association works with policymakers, public sector agencies, regulators, and other key stakeholders to ensure that road transport delivers environmental, social and economic benefits to everyone. BVRLA members are leading the charge to decarbonise road transport.

BVRLA membership provides customers with the reassurance that the company they are dealing with adheres to the highest standards of professionalism and fairness.

The association achieves this by reinforcing industry standards and regulatory compliance via its mandatory Codes of Conduct, inspection regime, government-approved Alternative Dispute Resolution service and an extensive range of learning and development programmes.

BVRLA Ltd

River Lodge, Badminton Court, Amersham, Bucks HP7 0DD
tel: 01494 434747 e-mail: info@bvrla.co.uk web: www.bvrla.co.uk