

Ofgem
Governance of electrical standards
Consultation Document
April 2002

Response by
The Energy Saving Trust

Introduction

The Energy Saving Trust is the primary organisation dealing with domestic energy efficiency and renewables in the UK. We are partners in the management of the DTI's large-scale photovoltaic demonstration programme, and have a strong interest in the development and promotion of micro- and mini-CHP as energy efficiency technologies in the UK. The aim of the Energy Saving Trust is to reduce Carbon emissions from UK households.

General comments

The Energy Saving Trust has a direct interest in the connection aspects of new, domestic electricity generation equipment, such as PV panels or micro CHP. Achieving fast, low-cost and no-hassle electricity connections is a critical aspect in the delivery of the programmes we are managing, and will help increase the uptake of these technologies in the UK. Under the current governance arrangements, the EST has little influence on the development of these standards. We would therefore welcome a more open, consultative approach to the development of electrical standards than the current one.

The current system of governance by a trade association creates problems for new entrants, and those challenging the status quo in an industry, such as micro CHP developers. It was an appropriate system for governance when the industry was based on monopoly supply at all stages, and with electricity flowing only one way, but this is no longer the case, and competition and liberalisation of the electricity market need to be reflected in the governance structure.

Answers to the consultation's questions

- 18) The preferred approach is that an independent body should be created, with the responsibility for the governance of electrical standards. The body should answer directly to government, to ensure that government policy is the driver behind the future development of the industry.
 - 1) A new approach to standards should include all connection standards, grid and distribution networks.
 - 6) We would think that a new, independent body would be the most appropriate way for the governance of electrical standards.
 - 7) The body would contribute to the future development of the electricity industry, in line with government objectives for the growth of distributed generation. It would appear appropriate to charge the industry, with a contribution from government, with the cost for the running of the body.
 - 10) A DTI sponsored body could be the way forward, to ensure that it will be able to influence the development of electrical standards in the future.

- 12) Publication on a website would ensure that interested parties can gain easy access to the proposed standards. Allowing on-line comments would reduce the administrative load associated with the consultation process.
- 14) Meetings do not need to be open to the public, but minutes should be published on the inter-net.
- 15) Chairpersons should be appointed by government, and be independent. They should be experienced in the electricity industry.
- 16) By ensuring that small players have the opportunity to participate, through making access to the consultation process easy, and by allowing representation through their trade associations, this should not be a problem. Funding of participation should come from the interested players.