

Final Version

Ofgem Electricity Connections Steering Group (ECSG)

2nd Meeting - 4 November 2003 at 10:30 9 Millbank, London, SW1P 3GE

PRESENT:	Sean O'Hara	Ofgem (Chairman)
	James Copeland	Ofgem
	Julie Doshi	Ofgem (Minutes)
	Jeff Hunt	Scottish Power (Chair of the ENA Group)
	Phil West	WPD (Member of the ENA group)
	Vince Colby	M ^c Nicholas Construction (Chair of the metered connections customer group)
	Ray Farrow	House Builders Federation
	Tony Stephens	The Institution of Lighting Engineers
APOLOGIES:	Vas Siantonas	ASLEC (Chair of the unmetered Connections customer group)

1. Matters arising from previous minutes:

The wording of item 3 discussed at the last meeting on 6 October was discussed. It was agreed that Ofgem would draft a suitable paragraph and issue it for comments before a final version of the minutes would be placed on the website.

One group member asked whether the result of the discussion of non contestable breakdowns discussed in item 5 was that quotations should be broken down in the

format outlined in the LC4 statement contained within the Final Proposals document or as outlined within an alternative ECSG document currently on the Ofgem website.

Item 2, reference the 3 standards of performance was raised by a group member. The appropriateness of the standard 'Timely provision of on-site connection works' was raised. A group member believes that the standard requires greater definition and possibly amendment in the light of the current work. The current lack of definition is leading to differing interpretations across DNOs with some DNOs treating only connections on Greenfield sites as being covered by the SofS and not the closing joint between the DNO's existing network and the new network to be adopted.

Action: Ofgem to draft paragraph regarding item 3. Ofgem will circulate this paragraph to the group for comments before the final version of the minutes are placed on the website.

Ofgem to check agreed format of non contestable breakdown and circulate to members for agreement.

Ofgem and VC to review the standard and provide greater clarification / definition

2. Draft report presented by the Electricity Network Association (ENA) group

It was confirmed that all DNOs are participating in the ENA group. However, it was stated that the output of the ENA group was not necessarily something that would be adopted in all cases by all DNOs. It was suggested by a non-DNO representative that Ofgem should consider how to compel DNOs to comply with the ECSG's recommendations in order to help move competition forward. Ofgem stated the use of Ofgem's powers would have to be considered if DNOs were unwilling to adopt proposals to assist in the development of competition, particularly when other DNOs

were implementing these proposals. The group was then taken through the proposals formulated by the ENA group

ESCQ Regulations

A detailed legal assessment of DNO liabilities following the introduction of the new regulations had been completed following meetings with DTI/Ofgem and written guidance by the DTI. There was agreement that primary liabilities were associated with a “distributor” (a person who owns or operates a network) although constructors and other third parties also faced some liability.

Consent to Connect

The consent to connect subgroup discussed the appropriate time at which adoption of an asset should occur. Three options had been considered.

- Adopt immediately upon connection (i.e. making live)
- Adopting a network after post energisation commissioning (usually same day as physical connection)
- Adopting a network at the end of the development

The first option of adopting an asset at the point of connection was supported by all DNOs as best, subject to satisfactory control measures.

Action: Final version of consent process to be produced for ENA report.

Contractor Accreditation

The ENA sub-group has considered the relative merits of an advisory (as at the present time) or management group. The subgroup had concluded that the best option is an

advisory body, providing there is robust governance of the scheme. The sub-group has set out what the governance issue centred upon.

- Definition of eligible members, process for election and voting rights
- Disputes resolution process
- Process for appointment of the scheme administrator (i.e. Lloyds Register or alternative service providers)
- Process for changes to the scheme content (e.g. contractor accreditation, technical requirements etc.)
- Process in the event that wider consultation on changes (i.e. with stakeholders outside the Advisory Body) is considered necessary
- Safeguard for DNOs (i.e. to ensure that the integrity of the scheme is maintained and not undermined over time).
- **Action: SO'H to pass details to Lloyds Register.**

Audit and Inspection Regime

The subgroup has confirmed that the process whereby inspection levels are determined by ICP performance (as proposed by the original ESCG) is still appropriate.

Improvements to the scheme currently being considered include a refinement of the process for varying inspection levels in relation to ICP performance.

Action: Final version to be produced for the ENA report.

Record System and Technical Framework

It was reported that the technical Framework document had been reviewed and amended to take account of the ESQC regulations. It was recommended that if DNOs decide to adopt a network as soon as it is energized, safety signs should be supplied in advance to the ICP. The need to take appropriate measures on the risk of vandalism was

discussed. It was reported that the revised document had been circulated to 'the metered customer group' and been favourably received.

Action: Final version to be produced for the ENA report.

Unmetered Supplies

The ENA sub-group had agreed to produce a national service level agreement (SLA) incorporating penalties for failure. This will be based on the key targets and standards currently used by various DNOs in existing SLAs. It was agreed that there was a need to involve customers in the sub-group's work as soon as possible. There would need to be an agreement on issues such as work volumes and information requirements.

Rent-a-jointer – some DNOs intended to continue to offer this service.

The subgroup would produce a proposal for enabling customers to select from a panel of DNO approved contractors for provision of UMS. The group will work closely with Highway Authority and contractor representatives to identify and develop the most appropriate contractual relationship.

Action: Final version to be produced for the ENA report.

Live Jointing

The Live Jointing trials currently in operation in Scottish Power and United Utilities are being used to inform the ENA subgroup's review and arrangements for a forthcoming trial in the YEDL/NEDL area.

Action: Final version to be produced for the ENA report.

3. AOB

The view from a non DNO member was that the work presented in the initial proposal document mainly focussed on the back-end process and not enough emphasis had

been given to upfront process issues e.g. provision of information / quotations. Ofgem agreed to review the front end of the process to ensure alignment with the revised DNO proposals.

The issue of Ofgem's power to determine connection disputes was briefly discussed. The DNO view was that Ofgem was unable to determine disputes while Ofgem believed the terms of adoption were an integral component of a DNO terms of connection. It was likely that the issue would shortly be the subject of a request for determination by a customer.

It was agreed that in view of the workload imposed on DNOs in relation to DPCR4 it was appropriate to delay the target date for the ENA report to 22 January 2004.

Date of next meeting

Thursday 29 January 2004 in Room 8 at Ofgem, Millbank