

**Minutes of Electricity Connections Steering Group (ECSG)**

**05 August 2005**

**10:30 – 14:30, (Millbank, London SW1P3GE)**

Present:

Sean O'Hara (SOH)	Ofgem (Chair)
Laura Nell (LN)	Ofgem
David O'Sullivan (DOS)	Ofgem (minutes)
Thomas Guilfoyle (TG)	Ofgem (minutes)
Phil West (PWe)	WPD (member of ENA group)
Jeff Hunt (JH)	SP Tran & Dist (Member of ENA group)
Vas Siantonas (VS)	ASLEC
Lee Evans (LE)	Department for Transport Lighting Board
Vince Colby (VC)	Chair of MCCG
Tony Stephens (TS)	Institute of Lighting Engineers

Apologies:

Ray Farrow	House Builders Federation (HBF)
Peter Whiffen	ASLEC

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record

2. Matters arriving from the minutes of the previous meeting:

SOH to update from last National Electricity Registration Scheme Advisory Panel (NERSAP) meeting regarding ICP accreditation:

SOH informed the group that within 18 months all contractors currently on the DNO scheme will transfer to the NERS accreditation scheme. Lloyd's Register stated that 29 ICPs have been included on the web based register. Of these, 14 currently have their Safety Management System accreditation (SMS), 13 have an approved National Operations Procedure accreditation and 6 have their passport process implemented.

Lloyd's Register stated that any of the ICPs listed on the website under NERS which did not have a fully implemented SMS, National Operations procedure and passport by the date of the next surveillance visit will receive a major deficiency.

LN to present draft consultation on the extension of non-contestable works to ECSG

Ofgem presented a draft paper outlining its proposals to extend contestable works in relation to CinC – specifically areas of reinforcement and diversionary works.

SOH stressed that the proposed works would be physically and electrically separate from the DNO network with the DNO undertaking the physical disconnections of existing equipments and the physical connection of the new equipment installed by the ICP to the DNO's network.

PWe drew attention to the fact that a reader could construe that all of the connection could be deemed contestable including the final connection. The ECSG agreed that the final connection would remain non contestable whilst laying the cable is contestable.

SOH also stated that Ofgem intended for the document to make clear that Ofgem saw no reason for generator connections to be treated differently to demand connections in respect of DNOs treating new generation assets as contestable

It was agreed that for generator connections reinforcement/ diversion LC4 applied.

**Action:**

**JH and PWe to submit comments on draft paper to Ofgem.**

LE/TS to provide a progress report on Unmetered Service Level Agreement/Competition in Connections (SLA/ CinC):

There was a mixed picture from user group meetings

LE initially stated the original planned meetings with DNOs had to be postponed for 3 months as there was insufficient time to coordinate adequate data.

LE then gave feedback from Local Authorities (LA) user groups with regard to the SLA:

1 DNO - no report to LA, no report to Ofgem, Tripartite Agreement prepared

1 DNO – Mixed performance, some resource issues.

1 DNO - good supply of information

1 DNO – very poor supply of information; LAs have stated they will end the trial if there are no significant improvements.

1 DNO – operating in a consistent manner with a steady performance level throughout the trial

1 DNO – after an initial delay, LAs receiving information on a monthly basis

1 DNO – Some information supplied to Ofgem but none supplied to LA

As a result of the different levels of information supplied to the LAs, LE stated that useful LA assessments would not be possible after the first 3 month trial period in most cases.

It was also reported that not all DNOs are supplying data on a monthly basis to LAs. LAs require information updates to clarify data on a monthly basis. It was decided that the trial period should be extended to 12 months, with selective use of the initial 3 month trial period data as appropriate.

LE felt that it would be useful to get representatives from DNOs/ LAs to meet to reach agreement on a number of issues.

#### **Actions**

**- SOH to chair a meeting at Millbank between 4-5 representatives from both DNO and LA Champions in order to greatly improve clarity, with an agenda centred on interpretation issues rather than performance**

**- LE to identify LA Champions**

**- JH to identify DNO Champions**

**- LN to circulate between ECSG details of Ofgem's knowledge of Champions**

Ofgem to provide feedback on DNOs in relation to unmetered SLA:

SOH identified one DNO which has as having implemented a very user friendly data management system for presenting performance reports to LA customers.

#### 3. Report on Unmetered supplies to be led by TS

Possible extension of trial period:

It was agreed that the trial would be extended to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006

#### Replacement of damaged cut outs:

It was reported that different approaches exist within different DNO areas regarding a definition of a fault. Some DNOs regard vandalism of a connection point not as a fault, but as a maintenance issue. Charging policies vary across DNOs.

LE stated LAs regard a loss of supply as a fault, but maintenance work and updating systems are not regarded as faults.

PWe stated a loss of supply signifies a fault.

#### **Actions**

- **A definition of 'fault' to be proposed by TS**
- **The definition of 'fault' to be added to the agenda for the SLA meeting to be chaired by SOH**

#### 4. ECSG to debate whether specific requests for generation connections should be included within the scope of CinC (i.e. POC requests and non-contestable breakdowns).

ECSG members discussed Licence Condition 4 which does not exclude generation connection. VC highlighted that all cable laying regardless of voltage level has been contestable since 1995; it is only the final connection that is not

**Action: Ofgem to draft a consultation letter providing definitions of contestable/ non-contestable work if existing guidelines are not appropriate.**

#### 5. ECSG to debate the contestability of works associated with load variations at existing sites.

SOH outlined to ECSG for consideration a reinforcement scenario not entailing access to existing DNO assets.

ECSG agreed that the scenario could be used as a case study in the extension of contestable works consultation letter.

**Action: LN to include case study in revised version of consultation letter.**

#### 6. ECSG to review signatories to adoption agreements

It was agreed that this was a matter for the ECSG rather than NERSAP

**Action: Ofgem to contact NERSAP to confirm**

7. ECSG to debate the issue of charging for design data and plans with a view to establishing the level of information that should be disseminated by a DNO to ICPs where a quotation has already been provided on a section 16 basis.

The ECSG members discussed the issue of charging for design and or POC work where a Customer had sought a s16 quotation but then requested an ICP to quote, resulting in the ICP making a separate approach to the DNO. PWe pointed out that the costs of undertaking the ICP initiated POC / design work should follow the normal Ofgem “cost reflectivity” approach, in that those initiating the need should bear the costs. Under s16, the costs would be recovered by DNOs as part of the charge to the Customer for the s16 work; if this s16 work did not proceed, the successful ICP should still pay for the work it had requested. It should be noted that there is no “double recovery” under such an arrangement.

8. Update on Triangular Agreements for unmetered connections

VS requested a progress update from the ECSG’s DNO representatives in respect of Triangular agreements

PWe and JH stated that in their own DNO areas they have the necessary arrangements in place to begin using the Triangular Agreement scheme. LE stated that he would prefer to have a trial first. SOH told the group that DNOs should be ready to enter into discussions with partially and fully accredited ICPs who have gained permission from the LA. He also stressed the need for ICPs and LAs to get together and show that there is a demand for the Triangular scheme.

Ofgem will assist if there is a problem with terms or unreasonable costs but Ofgem will not dictate the charges levied.

9. AOB

None

10. Date of next meeting

Thursday 6 October 2005, 10:45.