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| Change proposal: | Grid Code H/09: Submission of Detailed Planning Data | | |
| Decision: | The Authority ¹ directs that the proposed change to the Grid Code ² be made | | |
| Target audience: | National Grid Electricity Transmission PLC (NGET), Grid Code users and other interested parties | | |
| Date of publication: | 04 October 2010 | Implementation Date: | To be confirmed by NGET |

Background to the change proposal

A party (User) which wishes to connect to the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) is required by the Grid Code (Planning Code 4.4.2) to submit planning data to NGET regarding its proposed connection in two phases:

- Standard Planning Data (SPD) is required at the time the User applies for a connection and is used by NGET in deciding whether to make a connection offer;
- Detailed Planning Data (DPD) is required within 28 days (or a longer period if agreed to by NGET) of NGET making a connection offer to the User. This data is used by NGET in detailed planning work for the NETS, including assessment of whether the User complies with the Grid Code.

When a generator makes a connection application, it usually has not chosen the actual type of generating unit which it plans to connect. The time between submission of a connection application and actual connection may be several years and, in NGET's view, most (around 90% of) DPD is not needed until the generating plant is under construction. A number of generation developers, particularly wind farm developers, view the current timescales in the Planning Code for submitting DPD as narrow and inflexible.

NGET reviewed the existing timescales in the Planning Code and which data is required when. After discussions with the Grid Code Review Panel (GCRP), NGET agreed that the timescales for submission of some parts of the DPD could be relaxed subject to the continued provision of SPD and of other parts of the DPD within existing timescales. NGET advised that it requires some types of data at or close to the application stage to enable it to meet its licence obligations.

As a result of NGET's review, DPD would be split into two categories:

- DPD I – this subset of DPD would continue to be provided in the existing timescales, i.e. within 28 days of the making of a connection offer (or such shorter or longer period as determined or agreed to by NGET with the User)
- DPD II – this subset of DPD would require to be provided no later than 2 years (or such shorter or longer period as determined or agreed to by NGET with the User) prior to the date on which the connection is complete and ready to start (the Completion Date) as agreed bilaterally between the User and NGET.

¹ The terms 'the Authority', 'Ofgem' and 'we' are used interchangeably in this document. Ofgem is the Office of the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority.

²This document is notice of the reasons for this decision as required by section 49A of the Electricity Act 1989.

The change proposal

NGET raised Grid Code change proposal H/09 prior to the May 2009 GCRP meeting at which the review of the existing data submission requirements was discussed. The proposal would:

- amend the definition of DPD and add definitions for DPD I and DPD II in the Grid Code to reflect the splitting of DPD into two phases;
- amend the Planning Code to define the timescales for each of DPD I and DPD II, and
- amend the Data Registration Code to specify which data items are required for DPD I and which are required for DPD II.

NGET issued a consultation on its proposal in December 2009. There were five responses to the consultation, all of which were supportive and which, in two cases, offered alternative suggestions for, or clarification of, the proposed legal drafting changes which NGET accepted.

NGET's recommendation

NGET submitted its final Report to the Authority in August 2010. In NGET's view, the changes to the Grid Code proposed by H/09 would better facilitate Grid Code objective ii (facilitate competition in the generation and supply of electricity) by ensuring that the data submission timescales which Users are required to meet better reflect both the realistic project delivery timescales of those Users and the needs of NGET for specific planning data.

The Authority's decision

The Authority has considered the issues raised by the change proposal and in the final Report dated 27 August 2010. The Authority has considered and taken into account the responses to NGET's consultation on the change proposal which are included in the final Report³. The Authority has concluded that:

1. **implementation of the change proposal will better facilitate the achievement of the objectives of the Grid Code⁴; and**
2. **approving the change is consistent with the Authority's principal objective and statutory duties⁵.**

Reasons for the Authority's decision

Users who develop generation projects often seek an offer of connection to the NETS at an early stage. The application for a connection offer may be made in advance of other generator procurement decisions regarding which generating units Users will install. The timescales in which technical information should be provided to NGET ought to reflect the time at which NGET requires the information to facilitate the economic and efficient development and operation of the NETS. Where possible, NGET should take account of

³ Grid Code proposals, final reports and representations can be viewed on NGET's website at: <http://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/Electricity/Codes/gridcode/consultationpapers/>

⁴ As set out in Standard Condition C14(1)(b) of NGET's Transmission Licence, see: http://epr.ofgem.gov.uk/document_fetch.php?documentid=14343

⁵The Authority's statutory duties are wider than matters which NGET must take into consideration and are detailed mainly in the Electricity Act 1989 as amended.

the User's timetable for its project and the availability to the User of suitably robust planning data.

Grid Code objective i (to permit the development, maintenance and operation of an efficient, coordinated and economical system for the transmission of electricity)

We note that NGET has reviewed the requirements for the provision of planning data and has proposed two distinct categories of DPD. We also note that NGET has proposed clear timetable requirements for each of these DPD categories. We consider that this change will improve the efficiency of the data provision process by ensuring that data need only be provided to NGET when it is required.

We also consider that the proposed change to the timescales for data submission to align it more closely with Users' procurement decisions will improve the quality of DPD that is provided at the time it is provided. We note that NGET uses User planning data when undertaking design and other planning activities in respect of the NETS. We consider that the proposed Grid Code changes will enhance the quality of Users' data submissions which will facilitate the development, maintenance and operation of an efficient, coordinated and economic system of electricity transmission.

Grid Code objective ii (to facilitate competition in the generation and supply of electricity)

We agree with NGET that the proposed changes to the Grid Code would allow the timescales for data submission of DPD to match project delivery timescales in a more realistic manner, assisting Users as a result. Clarity in the Grid Code about which DPD items are required in which timescales would also provide certainty to Users about the data they need to make available to meet NGET's requirements. We consider that the additional clarity and changes to timescales regarding the applicable data provision requirements will facilitate competition in generation.

Decision notice

In accordance with Standard Condition C14 of NGET's Transmission Licence, the Authority, hereby directs that change proposal Grid Code H/09: '*Submission of Detailed Planning Data*' be made.

Hannah Nixon
Partner – Smarter Grids & Governance

Signed on behalf of the Authority and authorised for that purpose