



James Veaney,
Head of Distribution Policy
Ofgem
9 Millbank
London SW1P 3GE

Our ref
WPD CiC

Date
14th January 2013

Dear James

Competition in Connections - Consultation on WPD's Competition Notices

We understand that Ofgem is currently seeking views on the development of Competition in Connections in WPD's operating areas, following the submission by WPD of "Competition Notices" on 26 October 2012.

Sterling Power Utilities Ltd undertakes a range of contestable activities throughout WPD's four licensed geographic areas. We have dealt with an array of private and commercial customers and installed electrical networks across different voltage ranges (from unmetered supplies up to and including 33kV generation) under our ICP accreditation.

Due to our location within the Midlands, our interaction with WPD is proportionally higher when compared with other DNO's; we have experience of working with most if not all of the Distribution Network Operators.

In our opinion, WPD offer a professional service with respect to Competition in Connection projects. The assistance and guidance provided post acceptance during design approval and installation stage is a key strength. We particularly value their willingness to work with the ICP to achieve the customer's desired outcome.

In response to Point of Connection Applications, we have found that WPD provide an efficient response within timescales and with sufficient detail to enable design completion. Interaction with WPD staff has been of a good standard and they provide information and advice when requested. They have proved to be helpful when dealing with specific project issues at both the design and installation stage.

We have welcomed WPD's recent approach to extending the scope of contestability. They have recently held open workshops with ICPs to understand their views on extending the contestability of connections to their LV and HV networks. Working together with the ICP's WPD have progressed this to a workable trial position. In our opinion this will deliver benefits to the customers through allowing the ICP to manage the project and deliver to the customer's timescales.

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Please find enclosed our views on our experience of operating in WPD's licensed areas in relation to the details within the Consultation.

If you require any further information or wish to discuss any specific projects then please contact me on using the details below.

Yours sincerely

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New Connections Manager
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Competitor Feedback

Do you agree with the following statements?	Agree	Disagree	Any other comments
Customers are aware that competitive alternatives exist.	X		There still appears to be varying levels of awareness amongst customers of the options available and the differing processes within the Competition in Connections arena. From our experience this mixed level of awareness is UK wide (rather than limited to any specific DNO area).
WPD takes appropriate measures to ensure that customers are aware of the competitive alternatives available to them.	X		WPD provides such information within their Connection Offer Letter, on their website and within their New Connections Process. We are aware of instances where individual WPD staff have also provided further information and details to customers relating to the competitive market.
WPD's procedures and processes allow competitors to compete effectively including access to network data and policy documents.	X		WPD are increasingly making available access to their network records and in particular their technical standards and specifications to assist in the design and installation process.
WPD provides assistance to competitors in entering the RMSs (Relevant Market Segments).	X		WPD have run workshops to engage ICPs in assisting in developing their Competition in Connection processes and assisting ICPs with any queries they may have.
WPD listens to our requirements and responds positively and acts pro-actively to improve processes.	X		Individuals within WPD have demonstrated willingness to assist and flexibility in approach, however process changes within the organisation inevitably take time to work through.
WPD's non-contestable charging regime compares favourably with others.	X		WPD have a very competitive pricing mechanism which is reflected in their non-

Do you agree with the following statements?	Agree	Disagree	Any other comments
			contestable quotations. Our opinion is that this approach has provided substantial benefits to customers.
WPD compares favourably with other DNOs.	X		We believe that our good working relationship and understanding of WPD's and processes delivers a standard of service compares well with other DNOs.
Our experience of working with WPD gives us confidence that they will operate appropriately if price regulation is lifted.	X		We do not anticipate any changes in regulation should affect the current levels of service we experience.

Which areas do you operate in – please tick

East Midlands	X
West Midlands	X
South Wales	X
South West England	X

LV	X
HV	X
HV and EHV	X
EHV and above	
LV generation	
HV/EHV generation	X
Unmetered Local Authority	
Unmetered PFI	
Unmetered Other	X

Name.....Corina Cain.....

Company...Sterling Power Utilities Ltd.....

Date.....14 January 2013.....