

The Questionnaire – For customers

Hello. Thank you for taking the time to complete our questionnaire.

We hope all the questions are clear, but if you have any difficulties please email connections@ofgem.gov.uk.

Once you have completed the questionnaire please send it back to us to the email address above. You need to return the completed questionnaire to us by 31 July 2014.

After we have read your answers we might want to have a chat with you to understand a bit more. We'll try and do this in August.

Part 1 - About you

Question	Your response
What is your name?	
What is your position?	
What are your contact details?	

Part 2 - About your business

Question	Your response
What is your company's name?	Utility Customer Service Management Ltd
What is the nature of your company's business?	Utility consultancy representing Customers in gas, electricity, water and telecom markets
Why do you need to make new connections to the electricity distribution network?	Large proportion of my work comes from builders and architects.

What past experience does your business have in getting new connections to the electricity distribution network?	Personally I am ex DNO. Hundreds of connections (all utilities), mainly small in size (whole current) ranging from one offs to medium size development sites.
What areas of the country does your business have facilities in that have required new connections to the electricity distribution network?	Mainly in Midlands but to a lower level, across whole south of UK
What type of connections do you make to the distribution network?	Mainly new, domestic and small commercial.

Part 3 - About how you get a new electricity connections to the local grid.

Question	Your response
Does your business manage the process of getting a connection using your own staff, or do you use a consultant to guide you through the process?	Own staff
What issues are important for you when getting a connection? Please rank in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and 7 the least important.	<div>2 The cost of connection</div> <div>1 Customer service</div> <div>5 The time it takes to issue a connection quote</div>

	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 The time in which a connection can be made <input type="checkbox"/> 3 The certainty around the cost of connection and the timetable for delivery <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Ability to offer innovative connection solutions <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Other _____(please specify)
In the past have you had quotes for connection(s) from a range of companies, or solely from the local DNO? Please tick one box.	<input type="checkbox"/> Y A range of quotes – <u>please go to part 4</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Just a quote from the local DNO – <u>please go to part 5</u>

Part 4 – About how you choose between a range of quotes.

Question	Your response
You've indicated that you normally receive a range of quotes for connection, both from your local DNO and other independent connection providers. When deciding which quote to accept, what factors do you consider?	Customer service and cost.
Please rank these factors that you described in the previous question in order of importance to you, with 1	1. 2. 3.

being the most important.	4. 5. Etc.
Please give an indication of who you have tended to award work to.	<p>Please tick one box only.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Always the DNO</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainly the DNO</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> About half and half between the DNO and others</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mainly an ICP or IDNO</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Always an ICP or IDNO</p>
What do you think are the risks/problems with using an independent connections provider?	Consistency
How has your view on who to award work to changed with experience?	DNO's vary as much as IDNO's and ICP's. The service levels provided by each varies considerably.
When would you only seek a quote from the local DNO?	Small schemes

Part 5 – About why you chose to use the local DNO

Before engaging with this process, were you aware that you could use a company other than the local DNO to complete your connection?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What do you think are the benefits in using a company other than the local DNO to provide a connection?	Cost comparison (please note, this is NOT costs – it is cost comparison)
What do you think are the risks/problems with using an independent connections provider?	Service
What would need to change in order for you to use a different connections provider?	Customer service and costs.

Part 6 - About how the cost of connections informs the location of new business development

How much opportunity is there for you to freely choose the location of new business developments?	100%
How big a factor is the cost of connection in your decision on where to locate your business?	30-40%

Part 7- Other comments

The questions we've asked are designed for you to give us important information for our review. We'd also welcome any other comments about the market for new electricity connections, or problems you've experienced.

Operating mainly within the WPD area and having first hand experience and their efforts towards great Customer Service, I am amazed at how poor many of the other DNO's are.

The same can be said of the gas and water markets i.e. there are few excellent performers and many poor performers.

The suppliers market is even worse with only the occasional reasonable service.

In terms of completion we would like to offer the following comments:

- Small schemes are generally more difficult to experience completion simply because there is low incentive for completion to enter this area of the market.
- I would not expect competition to develop rapidly within the WPD operating area simply because they (WPD) have very good levels of Customer Service and this reflects in their price structure.