

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?	Premier Energy Services Ltd
What is the nature of your company's business?	Utility Infrastructure Consultants
Why do you need to make new connections to the electricity distribution network?	We organise new connections for all utilities on behalf of our developer clients

What past experience does your business have in getting new connections to the electricity distribution network?	We have been in business for nearly 20 years now and average about 300 projects per year ranging from single houses to major developments.
What areas of the country does your business have facilities in that have required new connections to the electricity distribution network?	We are South East based and work in UKPN, SSEPD areas mainly but have on occasion ventured beyond these borders.
What type of connections do you make to the distribution network?	Have procured all types from EHV, HV and LV although not much DG. We test the market on all projects and use a combination of ICP's, IDNO's and DNO solutions.

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?	We are the consultant.
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>1 The cost of connection</div> <div>5 Customer service</div> <div>4 The time it takes to issue a connection quote</div>

	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 The time in which a connection can be made <input type="checkbox"/> 2 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?	Cost, ability of company to deliver, technical knowhow, accuracy of quote, previous experience with a customer, information provided, technical solution (ie. basement substations, meter locations, installation of risers and laterals or only BNO offer)
Please rank these factors that you described in the previous question in order of importance to you, with 1	1. <u>cost</u> 2. delivery 3. technical solution

being the most important.	4.knowhow 5.accuracy 6.previous experience Etc.
Please give an indication of who you have tended to award work to.	<p>Please tick one box only.</p> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Always the DNO </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Mainly the DNO </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> About half and half between the DNO and others </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Mainly an ICP or IDNO </div> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Always an ICP or IDNO plus always the host DNO </div>
What do you think are the risks/problems with using an independent connections provider?	Their relationship with the DNO to get things approved and the non contestables completed.
How has your view on who to award work to changed with experience?	No. DNO's ICP' and IDNO all have bad projects at some point in time. Its how they deal with the issues to put them right is the key.
When would you only seek a quote from the local DNO?	Possibly if there were complicated diversions associated with the site or when its too small a job to interest an ICP or IDNO.

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?	Better cost, easier to deal with, flexible technical solutions.
What do you think are the risks/problems with using an independent connections provider?	See answer and Part 4
What would need to change in order for you to use a different connections provider?	No change required. We understand the market and how it works.

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?	Yes there is freedom but in some areas of limited capacity the burden of unknown costs, lack of investment by DNO and who pays is an issue.
How big a factor is the cost of connection in your decision on where to locate your business?	A big factor when purchasing sites that's why quick accurate budget costs are essential.

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.

My biggest issue is dealing with disconnections, diversions and the general service offered when we have no choice but to go to a DNO such as on small sites where the competition is seemingly not interested.

For larger sites, those who understand the market can work around the problems and it's got much better but the industry as a whole is going to suffer from a lack of investment in engineers, contractors, and people with the right skills to make an installation happen. With the upturn in housing, especially in London delivery is getting worse and all ICP's IDNO's and DNO's are getting very stretched and it's going to be more of a case as to who can deliver rather than how quick a quote comes out. I think that nut has been cracked with GSoP's to some extent although it does fall down in reality, especially on the non GSoP services which are just as much a part of the customer experience as connections.

Cost and programming is another factor, again in London with road pricing, lane rental, noticing, TfL, Highways and the myriad of 3rd parties and red tape that all have a say in when stuff can happen. It's a nightmare getting work programmed and everyone uses the other parties as an excuse for delays.

I could go on about second comer rule, reinforcement costs, lack of investment by DNO's in known development areas, green costs, and regulation in general but will leave that for the time being.