

Please complete the following Entry Form alongside your Part 1 Submission.

| STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND CONSUMER VULNERABILITY INCENTIVE SCHEME | |
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| <div><p>Making a positive difference for energy consumers</p></div> <div>PART 1 SUBMISSION ENTRY FORM</div> | |
| COMPANY DETAILS: (please complete) | CONTACT DETAILS: (please complete) |
| Company: Western Power Distribution Licensee(s): WPD East Midlands WPD West Midlands WPD South West WPD South Wales | Name: Alex Wilkes Title: Stakeholder Engagement & Social Obligations Manager Telephone: 07912 098826 Email: awilkes@westernpower.co.uk |

| MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS | | |
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| Please provide supporting evidence and high level overview of how your company has met the Minimum Requirements set out below: | Evidence referred to within application (i.e., evaluation, assurance report, survey, etc.) | Overview of your arguments demonstrating compliance with requirement. Clearly signpost as to additional relevant evidence/ information within Submission |
| <p>The network company has comprehensive and up-to-date stakeholder engagement and consumer vulnerability strategies.</p> | <p>Our stakeholder engagement and consumer vulnerability strategies were built, and are regularly updated, following feedback from stakeholders. These strategies also undergo rigorous external evaluation to ensure they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evolve with the rapid change affecting the energy industry, • are fit for purpose, • deliver positive outcomes for customers, and • benchmark against other leading industries. <p>Part One, pages 2-3 details our comprehensive strategies, including how they have been updated for 2017/18. As outlined in Part Two, page 2, we are already looking ahead to the next price control as well as strategically engaging on current service levels and improvements.</p> <p>Part One, page 8 provides an overview of our British Standards Institution (BSI) and Customer Service Excellence (CSE) Standard external assessments.</p> <p>WPD has been assessed as fully compliant by BSI for the fifth consecutive year, demonstrating its services and communication channels are accessible and its consumer vulnerability strategy is comprehensive and fit for purpose.</p> <p>WPD has held the CSE accreditation since its introduction in 1992 and in 2018 achieved five further 'compliance plus' ratings, now holding 43/57. The assessor not only endorses our strategies but interviews Customer Panel members who have been instrumental in challenging and shaping our decisions.</p> <p>Part Two, page 5 explains how we have taken steps to evolve our enduring expert Panel to ensure it provides an even greater level of independent challenge. This year, the Panel reviewed and endorsed our strategies and associated action plans for both stakeholder engagement and consumer vulnerability. We took this further by producing a member-written assurance report to provide an independent view on our engagement process and strategies and the actions they have led to.</p> | <p>Our comprehensive strategies for stakeholder engagement and consumer vulnerability have been in place since 2007 and 2013 respectively. Both are built with considerable input from stakeholders, updated annually and approved by WPD's Chief Executive and Directors. This includes reviewing an action plan with outputs, delivery dates, costs and resources required. Delivery progress is monitored monthly.</p> <p>Part One, page 2 and Part Two, page 2 detail our stakeholder engagement strategy. Working with stakeholders, we have updated our strategy this year. We will focus our engagement on four key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage on current service standards and options to drive improvement. • Allow stakeholders to understand and review our delivery against our current Business Plan. • <i>*NEW*</i> Involve stakeholders at every stage of our transition to a Distribution System Operator (DSO), enabling them to influence our plans. • Seek early input to develop our future business plan and identify longer-term strategic priorities for the business. <p>Our strategy includes identifying stakeholders, understanding their needs, engaging with a purpose, using a variety of engagement methods, delivering measureable benefits and using feedback to improve service. We review the process continuously in order to adapt it to best suit our stakeholders and the changing environment (e.g. this year's engagement portfolio saw vastly improved access channels, podcasts and more webinars).</p> <p>Part One, page 3 and Part Three, page 2 detail our core consumer vulnerability strategy and how we have updated it this year. Our overarching focus on the Priority Services Register and supporting vulnerable customers in power cuts continues to be achieved through four key strategic pillars. These are underpinned by partnership working. In order to drive this forward, this year we worked with stakeholders who identified strategic priorities for the programme in 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSR and power cut vulnerability to be a core focus of every new project (including fuel poverty schemes). • Ensure vulnerable customers benefit in a smart future. • Projects to use social indicator data to target the most in need. • Set stretching targets for projects and drive consistency. • Collaborate with the health sector to target hard-to-reach customers. |
| <p>KEY: 'Part One' – Part one submission, Stakeholder and consumer vulnerability strategies; 'Part Two' – Part two submission, Stakeholder engagement outcomes; 'Part Three' – Part three submission, Consumer vulnerability outcomes</p> <p><i>Ofgem Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability Incentive - Full copies of any documents or additional evidence available on request</i></p> | | |

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| <p>A broad and inclusive range of relevant stakeholders have been engaged. This specifically includes engaging with challenging or hard-to-reach stakeholders (eg community energy).</p> | <p>This year we engaged over 21,000 stakeholders at over 475 events. We continue to maintain an up-to-date database of over 5,500 stakeholders, segmented by interest area.</p> <p>Networks are undergoing a rapid period of change as customers invest in low carbon technologies and alter their consumption behaviour. Stakeholders are playing a crucial role to help us understand these changes as we move from being a DNO to becoming a more passive Distribution System Operator (DSO).</p> <p>This means we must continue to identify emerging stakeholders and the most effective ways to interact with them. For example, this year we consulted on an extensive DSO engagement programme, conducted more government engagement than ever before and introduced local investment workshops for local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) and developers.</p> <p>Part One, page 8 explains how WPD are now rated 'Compliance Plus' in 43/57 elements of the CSE standard, with the assessor reporting "<i>WPD has impressively engaged an extensive range of stakeholders.</i>"</p> <p>Furthermore, the BSI standard continues to assess whether we continue to provide flexible and inclusive services and our ability to recognise the broad and complex nature of vulnerability. WPD's compliance demonstrates the inclusivity of our approach, including identifying and engaging hard-to-reach stakeholders.</p> <p>Part One, page 10 details feedback from a range of stakeholders used to measure the effectiveness of our engagement including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributed generation and major connections customers. • Community energy (CE) groups. • Vulnerable customers. • Customers who have engaged with us on social media. <p>Part Two, page 4 details our annual stakeholder workshops which are attended by a broad range of stakeholders including domestic and business customers, connections providers, councillors, major energy users and utilities, etc. 100% of those surveyed this year were satisfied with the event and 64% of stakeholders were return attendees.</p> <p>Part Two, page 9 covers our CE events and the resulting outputs. Overall satisfaction with our CE workshops was 97% and CE stakeholders tell us that our actions in this area are leading to: a) increased interest in CE groups, thus playing an active role in network innovation projects and b) more proactive, sustainable groups with interests extending to vulnerable customers.</p> | <p>A broad, evolving range of stakeholders attend our workshops, Customer Panel and topic-specific events. Our approach includes setting clear objectives before we engage, identifying relevant stakeholders and tailoring our approach to suit their needs. The recent emergence of energy storage providers is a prime example of this. Before consulting with stakeholders to obtain feedback to inform our Distribution System Operability Framework, we first had to proactively identify the relevant stakeholders – from manufacturers to trade bodies – then tailor our engagement accordingly.</p> <p>Part One, pages 2-3 provides an overview of our stakeholder engagement and consumer vulnerability strategies. Our approach to all engagement is underpinned by a commitment to be inclusive, tailored and focussed on actions. Page 2 explains that we consider our stakeholders in relation to their level of knowledge and interest. Our strategy includes recognising emerging stakeholders, identifying the range of stakeholder interest areas and annually updating our database of contacts.</p> <p>Part One, page 4 demonstrates that our tailored engagement reaches a broad and inclusive range of stakeholders, detailing a comprehensive list of our stakeholders and the segments they belong to. New Customer Panel members this year include Carbon Trust, CBI and a connections consultant, Teal Hippo Ltd. New stakeholders identified for workshops or bespoke engagement sessions included academics, major users and energy storage providers.</p> <p>Part One, page 4 also evidences that we continue to share best practice with a broader range of stakeholders and industry parties than ever before. This enables us to deliver significant improvements for customers and tackle shared objectives in a joined-up, efficient way.</p> <p>Part Two, pages 6-9 explains that we recognise and respond quickly to the requirement to engage in significantly new ways with new parties. Impressively, this year we have engaged with over 13,000 stakeholders at 154 events to discuss our transition to a DSO alone, including LEPs, local authorities, community energy groups, storage providers and aggregators.</p> <p>Our round-table DSO sessions held in our four licence areas are a prime example - they included a range of stakeholders including businesses, customer groups, local and national policy makers (e.g. MPs including the Shadow Energy Minister) universities and industry bodies.</p> |
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| <p>The network company has used a variety of appropriate mechanisms to inform and engage their stakeholders – these have been tailored to meet the needs of various stakeholder groups, and are fit for purpose in allowing a detailed analysis of a breadth of stakeholder perspectives.</p> | <p>We continue to inform, consult and engage stakeholders in a way that is committed to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive: of all stakeholders, including the hard-to-reach. • Tailored: using methods to best suit each group. • Focussed on action: with engagement leading to measurable outcomes. <p>In 2017/18 we surveyed 8,565 customers in addition to the 22,313 included in industry customer satisfaction surveys. This enabled us to assess performance, measure the impact of our actions and identify areas for improvement. Furthermore, this allowed us to undertake a detailed analysis of stakeholder views on the most effective methods and techniques to engage them, and use this to inform our ongoing approach.</p> <p>The introduction of new engagement mechanisms including webinars on our future networks programme, podcasts for community energy groups and local network investment events was as a result of insight provided by responses to satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>Surveys cover service areas such as webchat and Twitter satisfaction (new this year), and feedback from CE groups as well as more established research covering our ‘major’ connections and vulnerable customers. Headline feedback from all these surveys, including Ofgem’s Broad Measure of Customer Satisfaction is summarised in <u>Part One, page 10.</u></p> <p>Both our strategy and our engagement methods undergo rigorous external annual assessment (detailed on <u>page 8 of Part One</u>) to ensure they are tailored, appropriate and fit for purpose.</p> <p>The BSI standard, in particular, assesses our ability to engage with customers and stakeholders in a way that is inclusive and accessible for all.</p> <p>We were also awarded five new ‘Compliance Plus’ ratings in this year’s CSE assessment. The assessor reported that we <i>“have developed insight about customers through a very wide range of mechanisms”</i> and <i>“demonstrate a very clear commitment to making things easier for customers”</i> – for example, commending our accessible 24-hour social media platforms.</p> | <p>We favour face-to-face engagement wherever possible. It enables us to hold in-depth conversations about complex issues, negotiate solutions based on a range of views and build long-term relationships. We acknowledge this method does not suit everyone, however, so we continue to introduce innovative methods to ensure we engage in the most appropriate ways. For example, this year we have introduced podcasts and extended our social media reach and use of webinars for “time poor” stakeholders. We have also undertaken more collaborative events than ever before.</p> <p>The table in <u>Part One, page 4</u> shows the variety of mechanisms we have used to inform and engage stakeholders – evidencing that methods have been tailored to meet the needs of various stakeholder groups. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WPD’s ‘expert’ Customer Panel (also covered in <u>Part Two, page 5</u>) includes presentations, CEO question sessions, critical challenge and debate, policy and action plan drafting, topic-specific surgeries and member-only meetings. A Board Director always attends. • Our annual stakeholder workshops (also covered in <u>Part Two, page 4</u>) and topic specific events for ‘interested’ stakeholders include presentations from WPD Senior Managers and industry experts. Discussions are facilitated by our Operational Managers, supplemented with interactive voting and social media polls. • Engagement for those with limited knowledge about WPD can include focus groups, satisfaction surveys, research such as ‘willingness to pay’, newsletters and storm bulletins. <p>Specific examples of initiatives where we have tailored our approach, as outlined in our submission, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Part Two, page 6:</u> Long term engagement culminated in the publication of our DSO Strategy and fully-costed Transition Plan. This included a launch event for 120 stakeholders and round-table workshops in all four of our licence areas, facilitated by senior WPD Operational Managers. • <u>Part Two, page 8:</u> Bespoke engagement which included writing to local authorities, LEPs and developers to share a suite of information we have published online to aid their long-term planning. • <u>Part Two, page 9:</u> Highlights of this year’s engagement with CE groups, including workshops and an innovative new “CE Feast” approach, allowing more informal engagement over a meal and site visit to share learning and inspire prospective schemes. • <u>Part Three, page 5:</u> Some of the innovative mechanisms we have in place to ensure customers, including the most vulnerable, can engage with us in a variety of ways including through new website features and smartphone applications, video interpreters and by text messaging. |
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| <p>The network company can demonstrate it is acting on input / feedback from stakeholders.</p> | <p>We continuously improve service by seeking feedback on policies, procedures, projects and our long term priorities. 64% of this year's 250 attendees at our flagship workshops had attended previously. Stakeholders tell us they continue to engage with us because we listen to, and value, their opinions.</p> <p>Part One, page 10 describes how we measure the impact of the key outputs outlined in our Part Two and Three submissions. Key findings from customer satisfaction research, workshops, bespoke events and social media platforms are included, with examples of the actions the surveys are measuring the impact of.</p> <p>Part One, page 8 demonstrates that both the BSI and the CSE assessor reported that we improve services, implement policy changes and introduce new initiatives as a result of stakeholder feedback.</p> <p>The CSE assessor said, about the insight we developed through engagement, <i>"WPD has improved service and developed appropriate action plans as a result"</i> and noted that we had improved social media services <i>"in response to stakeholder feedback"</i>.</p> | <p>At WPD, engagement is the first thought before every new decision. Staff who are responsible for the actions we take as a result of feedback are involved first-hand in leading WPD's engagement in the first place.</p> <p>Key to this year's engagement has been the rapid change impacting WPD as it moves towards becoming a Distribution System Operator. Feedback from stakeholders was instrumental in the development of both our fully costed DSO Transition Plan and our Distribution System Operability framework, for example (see Part Two, page 7).</p> <p>Our strategy outlined in Part One, page 2 shows how we use feedback to improve service and publish the actions we intend to take following engagement. Part One, pages 5-7 summarises the 195 key outputs we have delivered along with the source of engagement they stemmed from.</p> <p>Further examples of WPD acting on feedback include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four new Business Plan commitments identified by stakeholders. • New policy to allow vulnerable customers to tailor their proactive contact. • All vulnerability projects use our social indicator mapping to target the most in need. • New Affordable Warmth Health fuel poverty schemes introduced. • Distribution charging overview published and webinars introduced. • £125m fully costed DSO Transition Plan agreed. • Four new podcasts published with CE groups. • E-learner published to train partners to refer PSR customers to us. |
| <p>The network company can demonstrate that stakeholder engagement has led to positive outcomes for stakeholders.</p> | <p>Our stakeholder engagement and consumer vulnerability programmes undergo rigorous external assessment to ensure they deliver positive outcomes for stakeholders.</p> <p>Over 150 separate pieces of evidence are assessed as part of the BSI and CSE Standard audits. Front line and senior staff, Customer Panel members and external partner agencies are interviewed (often in closed sessions) and our policies and processes are audited.</p> <p>Part One, page 8 and Part Three, page 2 summarise these assessments. The BSI assessor said our engagement strategy is leading to <i>"extremely positive outcomes for customers"</i> and <i>"an embedded culture of vulnerable customer focus is evident throughout WPD"</i>.</p> <p>Part One, page 10 details results from our satisfaction surveys and demonstrates that our engagement has led to positive outcomes for customers and stakeholders. In addition to surveying customers about their satisfaction with our services we also seek views on the effectiveness of our engagement methods. This year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We were the highest rated DNO for customer satisfaction for the seventh year running. • We achieved our highest ever PSR satisfaction of 9.2/10 • Stakeholders were 100% satisfied overall with our flagship workshops and 97% satisfied with our local network investment events and CE events. | <p>Our stakeholder engagement strategy ensures we 'listen (to feedback), act (as a result) and measure benefits'. We always publish the actions we propose to take as a result of feedback. Stakeholders return to engage with us because they know their feedback leads to action.</p> <p>Crucially, in 2017/18 our engagement has led to over 195 positive outcomes for customers. Part One, pages 5-7 lists the key actions and positive outcomes we have achieved this year and the benefits achieved for stakeholders and customers.</p> <p>Our Part Two and Three submissions give more detail of the positive outcomes our engagement has led to, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New communication methods and process innovations prompted by Sustainability First's Project Inspire. • £125m fully costed DSO Transition Plan agreed. • New guides, videos and podcasts for community energy groups. • Fuel poverty schemes helped 15,229 customers to save £5.4m. • Smart meter power cut trials led to new customer contact processes • Power cut alert alarm developed for sleep apnoea customers. • Increased number of referral networks leading to an increase in direct PSR registrations for vulnerable customers. • Data share agreement in place with a water company allowing the sharing of PSR customers who have given informed consent. • Connections applications forms improved by the Customer Panel. |

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