

# **Response to Ofgem Consultation on RIIO-2 sector specific methodology consultation**

Dr Jim Halliday (Head of the STFC Energy Research Unit, and UKERC Co-Director responsible for the UKERC Energy Data Centre)

Email address for correspondence: [Jim.Halliday@stfc.ac.uk](mailto:Jim.Halliday@stfc.ac.uk)

# A response submitted to Ofgem's "[RIIO-2 sector specific methodology consultation](#)"

## Introduction

This response specially addresses the points raised in Chapter 8 (pages 65-84) entitled "Driving Innovation and efficiency through competition" – and in particular, paragraphs 8.36 – 8.42 which discuss whether the NIA should continue, and if so whether it should be reformed and asks two specific questions :

***CSQ48. Do you think there is a continued need for the NIA within RIIO-2? In consultation responses, we would welcome information about what projects NIA may be used to fund, why these could not be funded through totex allowances and what the benefits of these projects would be.***

***CSQ49. If we were to retain the NIA, what measures could be introduced to better track the benefits delivered?***

Paragraphs 8.43-8.46 discuss increasing third party involvement, though do not raise any specific questions.

## Background

The UK Energy Research Centre's Energy Data Centre (EDC) was established in 2004 with funding provided the Research Councils' Energy Programme. It is widely used, typically having over 6,000 unique users each month. The Centre's Data Catalogue points to over 130 unique dataset collections, and provides dedicated secure storage for a selection of them. The EDC has worked with the Energy Systems Catapult to create the [Energy Knowledge Exchange \(EKX\)](#) with the aim of making energy information and data more accessible to the UK's energy SME's.

In 2018 the UK Energy Research Centre's Energy Data Centre was pleased to work with SSEN to make data collected by the LCNF Tier 2 SDRC 9.8D Project SSET201 "New Thames Valley Vision" publically available to the UK academic research community. An example of an NTVV metadata record is shown [here](#) .

The UKERC Energy Data Centre (EDC) was approached by SSEN to host the NTVV data (which amounted to over 200 GB in size) as a) the EDC uses the expertise of a long-term Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) data repository to hold valuable datasets in a safe and secure way, b) the EDC is widely used by UK academics carrying out energy research to locate data, c) the EDC's data scientists have considerable experience in preparing data to archival deposit (knowledge of appropriate formats to use, specification and review of documentation, checking of data etc). Since their deposit last year the five NTVV datasets have already been accessed by many users.

At a recent conference joint academic / industry energy conference the importance of sharing the results of monitoring experiments between the different actors in the UK energy R&D community was highlighted. Frequently considerable time and effort is spent setting up sophisticated monitoring, carrying out data calibration and analysis, after which the datasets are stored on a non-public server where they slowly becomes lost from view. Then, all too often, a similar experiment is repeated some years later by a different organisation/company to record similar data. The conference attendees unanimously agreed that a long-term, publically accessible data archive would be a valuable UK-wide resource.

## Proposal

Rather than Ofgem set up such a facility, the author suggests that the Ofgem work with the UKRI-supported UKERC Energy Data Centre (EDC). The EDC uses the NERC-supported [Centre for Environmental data Analysis \(CEDA\)](#) and is also especially suited to curating energy data.

In particular, the EDC is able to :

- a) Offer expert guidance and advice about how to make datasets suitable for deposit in a long-term well-established NERC curation facility at the STFC Rutherford Appleton Laboratory – ie provide information about suitable formats, file structures, and documentation. (Ideally this guidance is given before data measurements and storage commences);
- b) Create searchable online Metadata describing datasets (both for datasets held within the EDC and elsewhere);
- c) Mint internationally unique Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) for deposited datasets;
- d) Receive and check datasets before they are deposited in the archive;

- e) Provide a range of access restrictions – from depositor-only (useful whilst a paper is being written & reviewed), consortium-only, access controlled by the depositor, access to a defined user community (eg academic), or open access. Alternatively custom-made access controls can be created. The access controls of any particular dataset can be easily changed - thus controls can be relaxed/changed over time;
- f) Provide a long-term signposting service to Data Deposits (via the Energy Data Centre [www](#) site);
- g) Provide detailed information about data access – number of downloads, location of users etc.;
- h) Ensure that information about the datasets is shared with the Energy Systems Catapult's Energy Knowledge Exchange (EKX) system (which was launched in June 2018) with the aim of sharing data and information with the UK's energy SME's.

The author also suggests that use of such a facility would not only strengthen the links between UKRI and Ofgem, and between the electricity and gas supply industries and the relevant academic communities, but also be in the national interest.