

Response template – Incentive on Connections Engagement

- 1.1. We would like to hear the views of interested parties in relation to any of the issues set out in our open consultation letter.
- 1.2. The questions we have asked are directly linked to the minimum criteria set out in the ICE guidance document. You can find this on our website [here](#).
- 1.3. If you have any questions on this document, please contact connections@Ofgem.gov.uk.
- 1.4. **Responses should be sent by e-mail by 28 August 2020 to the address above.**
- 1.5. Unless marked confidential, all responses will be published by placing them in Ofgem's library and on our website www.ofgem.gov.uk. Respondents may request that their response is kept confidential. Ofgem shall respect this request, subject to any obligations to disclose information, for example, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
- 1.6. Respondents who wish to have their responses kept confidential should clearly mark the document/s to that effect and include clear reasons for confidentiality. We ask you to consider this carefully as sharing the comments with the relevant DNO may help improve their performance and ensure a transparent and effective ICE process. Respondents are asked to put any confidential material in the appendices to their responses.
- 1.7. We will consider the responses to this consultation and these will be used alongside other evidence for our assessment of the ICE plans.
- 1.8. Each of the questions asked by this consultation is set out in the template below.
- 1.9. **Please ensure that you indicate the DNO or specific licence area** to which your experiences relate. Each DNO is group and individual DNO is listed on our [here](#). Please note that Northern Ireland is not subject to this consultation.

1.10. When considering your responses to these questions, please consider your experiences, the actions that the DNO has undertaken or committed to undertake, and the actions that you consider it could reasonably undertake.

1.11. **Please make sure you highlight which year a specific event happened in. The regulatory year runs from 1 April to 31 March.**

Annex: response template

About you and your work				
What is the name of your company?	Renewable Connections Developments Limited			
Is your response confidential? Please explain which parts and why. For a fair process, we prefer the DNOs to be able to respond to any comments made, particularly if they are negative. Please consider carefully before marking any part of your response confidential.	No, it is not confidential.			
Which DNO's ICE submission is your response related to? If you wish to provide a response to the ICE submission of more than one DNO group, please use a separate template for each group.	UK Power Networks South Eastern Power Networks Plc Eastern Power Networks Plc Please note that this is for the period September 2019 to August 2020 only when I have been working for the above company.			
What type of connection do you generally require? For each type of connection, how many applications have you made in the past year, and what is the total MVA (Mega Volt Ampere)?	Type of connection (Sept 19 – Aug 20)		Total number of connections	Total MVA of connections
	Metered Demand Connections	Low Voltage (LV) Work	0	0
		High Voltage (HV) Work	1	6
		HV and Extra High Voltage (EHV) Work	0	0
		EHV work and above	5 (as part of DG)	210
	Metered Distributed Generation (DG)	LV work	0	0
		HV and EHV work	10 (2 cancelled prior to offer)	391
	Unmetered Connections	Local Authority (LA) work	0	0
Private finance		0	0	

		initiatives (PFI) Work		
		Other work		

Section 1: Looking Back report 2019/20

We want your views on how well the DNOs have engaged with connections stakeholders over the last regulatory year

1. How many of the DNO's stakeholder engagement events have you been invited to this year? (This can include engagement outside official events.) Please tick a box.	none	1	2	3	4	5	6	>6
			x					
2. How many DNO Stakeholder events have you been to? This can also include meetings outside of official engagement events. Please tick a box.	none	1	2	3	4	5	6	>6
		X						
3. Tell us about how the DNO engaged with you: a) What did the DNO do? b) How did the DNO do it? c) Did the DNO have a robust engagement strategy?	UKPN has a good engagement strategy, with regular forums throughout the year. The forums are general and also geared towards industry groups which are more useful. There are also smaller working groups on things like the DG mapping tool. Unfortunately they don't seem to have had any online DG forums since Covid so have only been able to attend one this year.							

The DNO's work plan

4. <i>Objectives:</i> Have you seen the DNOs work plans and the objectives they outline? a) Does it take into consideration your needs? If so, how? b) If it doesn't please explain why.	Yes, it is quite extensive but doesn't focus much on service improvements for DG customers. However highlights include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curtailment index – more ANM info the better. However this would be preferred pre-application. - Hold subject specific workshops, useful and more focussed however have only seen for DG mapping tool so far. Subjects not specified. - Quote validity extension, up to 30 days if not impacting others. This is a welcome improvement but took some time to filter down to engineers. - Optioneering product. It is unclear whether the cost is in addition to CoE for a full offer. If it isn't this is an attractive product. However a "tipping point" product along the lines of SSEN is more what the industry is asking for, contrary to ENA/Ofgem mandate.
--	--

<p>5. <i>Actions:</i> Do you think the DNO has delivered its work plan?</p> <p>a) How has the DNO done this?</p> <p>b) If you do not think the DNO has delivered its work plan, please explain why.</p>	<p>It would appear to be, however not all of the actions are relevant to my sector so it's hard to tell.</p>			
<p>6. <i>Outputs:</i> Were the outputs (KPIs, targets etc) in the DNO's work plan appropriate?</p> <p>Did the DNO meet these outputs?</p> <p>Please explain why.</p>	<p>Yes</p>			
<p>Your feedback on the DNOs stakeholder engagement performance</p>				
<p>7. Do you think the DNO's strategy, activities and outputs have taken into account ongoing feedback from a broad and inclusive range of connections stakeholders?</p>	<p>Yes</p>			
<p>8. How satisfied are you with the DNO's overall engagement performance? Please tick one box.</p>	<p>very unsatisfied</p>	<p>not satisfied</p>	<p>satisfied</p>	<p>very satisfied</p>
		<p>x in some areas post connection application</p>	<p>x</p>	
<p>9. General feedback – please provide any further feedback on the DNO's 2019/20 engagement performance not covered in your responses above.</p>	<p>Instead of constantly focussing on "new" targets each year, DNOs need to be more incentivised to improve on what they are already doing as there becomes a limit to the amount of new things required.</p> <p><u>Positive:</u></p> <p>I am pleased to see improvements to the DG mapping tool including LTDS data which can give us more confidence in our pre-app assessments and is more in-line with other DNOs. Some gaps still to be filled in this.</p> <p>UKPN is industry leading in its innovation such as ANM, Power Potential, flexibility, DSO, flexible demand etc which customers essentially benefit from.</p> <p>UKPN's DG surgeries remain some of the best and provide quick, useful and timely feedback. However we have sometimes had contradictory info about the same area, which has resulted in clarifications and wasted time</p>			

visiting unviable sites. On three occasions we have had to cancel applications after the planner has assessed it and the connection solution was different and unviable. UKPN have been good at engaging early in the process and offering to cancel down applications for free post cooling off. We understand that UKPN's network is one of the busiest for new applications, however the frequency of this occurrence compared to other DNOs has become frustrating. More direct access to the planners could help alleviate this. At present, though the DG Surgeries mailbox works well.

To be improved:

Our experience with UKPN this year has been noticeably more frustrating than in previous years. It appears, and has been confirmed, that there have been staffing issues in EPN and customer service has suffered as a result. Service in the SPN region has generally been more responsive and flexible.

Post acceptance we have also had poor service on one of our schemes in EPN. It took 5 months post acceptance to action a novation, which in the end was confirmed as not required. Following a successful pre-acceptance meeting, the communication has been very poor with numerous unreturned phone calls and e-mails. We are still awaiting confirmation of a few things in writing raised at acceptance. There is a complex Statement of Works situation on this project, which we are now informed of, but again this took months to relay. However DNO/NGET communication is an issue across the industry. It appears that staff sickness and leave had slowed down this process, but there was not always a clear handover to a new point of contact and despite escalating our issues within the business there does not appear to have been any improved communication. This project is now in the planning process and we are looking to progress.

Slow communication post-offer/acceptance appears to be a common theme across our projects and anecdotally those of other developers too.

It was disappointing to see LOAs required for budget estimates as these are often required to kick off conversations with landowners and the relevant planners if a surgery isn't sufficient. Action should be taken instead against the developers abusing the system.

Finally the ANM roll-out has been a success in UKPN but appears to have had some implementation teething problems compounded by large uptake. The up-front curtailment assessment was an industry leading product and it is a retrograde step to revert to an estimate, that can be as wide as 15%. It's difficult to make an

	investment decision on this and results in more abortive applications. The ANM reports with the offers are good.
--	--

Section 2: Looking Forward plans 2020/21	
We want your views on what the DNO aims to achieve in the coming year	
10. Are you satisfied that the DNO has a comprehensive and robust strategy for engaging with connection stakeholders and facilitating joint discussions where appropriate?	Yes, UKPN have a robust engagement strategy and do take a deep interest in what their customers have to say.
11. Do you agree that the DNO has a comprehensive work plan of activities (with associated delivery dates) that will meet the requirements of its connection stakeholders? If not, has the DNO provided reasonable and well-justified reasons? What other activities should the DNO do?	<p>Yes, on the whole. I am very happy to see the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appendix G publication, this should be mandatory across the industry. - Flexible demand ANM, this is a huge improvement as it makes no sense to treat BESS like domestic load. It would be good if we could capture it in offers ahead of time. - Timed connections are positive. - The innovation on constraint trading too is good. <p>However I would also like to see the following, which have been asked for previously:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full network mapping, regularly quoted that it is too expensive, but scans of the existing non-vectorised mapping will suffice, particularly for 11 kV. - More focus on customer service and communication post offer - A contact map for engineering and commercial contacts across the region - Quick provision of DUoS data
12. Do you consider that the DNO has set relevant outputs that it will deliver during the regulatory year (eg key performance indicators, targets, etc.)?	Yes
13. Would you agree that the DNO's proposed strategy, activities and outputs have been informed and endorsed by a broad and inclusive range of connection stakeholders?	Yes

If not, has the DNO provided robust evidence that it has pursued this engagement?	
---	--