

Connections update

Issue 14 | Statement of Works

Reforming Statement of Works (SoW)

What it means for you...

In recent years there has been a significant rise in the number of Generators wanting to connect to the Distribution Network. This is great news for the industry and end consumers. The rise in Distributed Generation (DG) is beginning to have a significant impact on the national transmission system and existing industry processes. UK Power Networks has over 8GW of distributed generation connected to its network, with over 4GW of this connected in the last five years. Consequently, we have experienced considerable difficulties with the existing Statement of Works process and have been championing the need for a change in approach.

Traditionally, DG volumes were low and either manageable through the Week 24* process or through a Statement of Works submission (as outlined in the Connection and Use of System Code (CUSC)) where the generator was >50MW or deemed to impact the transmission system. The existing process generally worked well for these low volumes. The significant rise in DG has resulted in relatively small generators having a cumulative impact on the transmission system, thereby triggering the need for a SoW to be submitted.

Where an impact is identified this would then be followed by a Modification Application, adding to the complexity and longevity of the process. The growth in DG has challenged the existing methodology leading to some customers experiencing longer waiting periods for post acceptance, before having a full understanding of all the works required, and associated costs to be able to connect to the network.

Customers have expressed their frustration with the existing arrangements which have created uncertainty, additional costs and protracted timescales. These issues have ultimately impacted the viability of their projects.

UK Power Networks has listened and has been a driving force in promoting the need for greater visibility, flexibility and a more streamlined end to end process. The aim is that we are able to provide customers with all the information they need, within their connection offer, to enable an investment decision to be taken.

*(DNOs obligation under the Grid Code to provide National Grid with information on demand and generation for the previous year).

Your feedback

"The timescales are too long"

"Need to see complete picture (D&T) before signing."

"Limits should be agreed at each Grid Supply Point."

"The process doesn't account for the needs to smaller DG."

"The process is too complex and difficult to understand."

Planning your work

A visual of transmission constraints and capacity headroom.

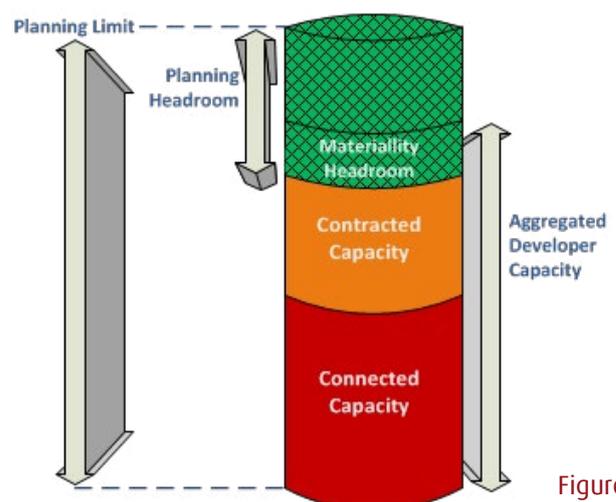


Figure 1.0

The Solution

Under the auspices of the Working Group formed by the Energy Networks Association (ENA) we have been working with the transmission and distribution network operators to redefine the process.

Five key work-streams/requirements were identified:

1. **Planning Limits** – to give greater visibility of transmission constraints and capacity headroom
2. **GSP Schedules** – to allow for better queue management and flexibility on the use of available capacity
3. **Data Requirements** – in the wake of new types of generation, ensuring that the transmission operator gets consistent data from DNOs to enable more accurate and efficient network studies
4. **Payments/Charging** – modifying the current arrangements to reduce timescales and meet the requirements of the revised process
5. **Code Changes** – identify and make the necessary code modification applications to allow the process to work efficiently

See figure 1.0

Progress update

As part of the on-going trials in England & Wales UK Power Networks was one of the first to sign up to trialling the new Appendix G (GSP schedules) and currently has five of its GSPs in the SPN region being managed through this new process. In addition, a further 14 schedules are currently being produced for GSPs in both the East of England (EPN) and South East of England (SPN) areas.

Planning Limits (figure 1.0) is a more complex area to address, with National Grid currently only providing a lower level of Materiality headroom across England and Wales. UK Power Networks have worked closely with National Grid on this key deliverable and have co-developed a methodology which will potentially enable the provision of both GSP and regional planning limits. An area of the SPN network has been identified and trials are underway to assess the viability of this approach, with a view to being able to replicate it nationally.

The learning from these trials and those taking place in Scotland will inform the necessary code and charging modifications needed to deliver the new process.

This work, in conjunction with the CMP238 modification (removal of Stage 1 of the process – see National Grid website for further information), will inform the streamlining of the existing Statement of Works process. Providing greater flexibility and control to the DNOs in managing the application process and cross-network interactions. This will result in an improved customer experience. The visibility and management of system capacity will be essential as DNOs begin the transition to Distribution System Operator (DSOs).

The Process

