
DISTRIBUTION CODE REVIEW PANEL

6 December 2021

Meeting held on Zoom

MINUTES OF MEETING

a. Attendees

Members	Non-members
Carl Hashim (CH), NIE Networks (Chair) <i>[alternate for Trevor Harron]</i>	Neil MacDougall (NM), NIE Networks
David Hill (DH), NIE Networks	Andrew Cupples (AC), NIE Networks
Jonny Pollock (JP), NIE Networks	John Boden (JB), NIE Networks
Jody O'Boyle (JOB), Utility Regulator	Cormac Bradley (CB), NIE Networks
Brian Mongan (BM), Powerhouse Generation <i>[alternate for Sam Alexander]</i>	Edel Creery (EC), NIE Networks
Joe Duddy (JD), RES	Kenny McPartland (KM), Utility Regulator
	Sam Matthews (SM), SONI
	Marie Therese Campbell (MTC), SONI
	Maureen Treacy (MT), Perceptive Insight

b. Apologies

Apologies received from:

- Trevor Harron, NIE Networks
- Denis Kelly, NIE Networks
- Sinead Ferris, NIE Networks
- Sam Alexander, Powerhouse Generation
- William Steele, Power NI
- Andrew McCorrison, SSE
- Gemma Monaghan, Air Core NI

Attendance unconfirmed from:

- Kevin Hannafin, Energia

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair noted that attendance constituted a quorum.

2. Update on Panel membership

No updates were noted.

3. Review of minutes of previous meeting, including actions

Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed; there were no actions from the meeting. The Panel agreed the minutes.

4. RP7 – what do stakeholders want from NIE Networks

Two presentations were circulated to the Panel in advance of the meeting.

- The first presentation focused on issues including innovation, visibility and open data, and market operability. JP gave a brief overview of the presentation, and then invited questions from the Panel.

JOB asked what did NIE Networks consider would happen if innovation funding was provided during RP7, but was not spent. JP said there were several options available including ex-post reviews and adjustments etc. NIE Networks would consider this issue in conjunction with UR during the RP7 business plan development process.

JOB also asked if NIE Networks was developing a digitalisation strategy. JP confirmed this would be included as part of the RP7 business plan.

- The second presentation focused on network resilience and reliability. JP gave a brief overview of the presentation, and then invited questions from the Panel.

JD asked a question regarding GB standard P2//6. JD wanted to know why the DNOs had chosen to go 'above and beyond' the standard, asking if perhaps the DNO have (or had) a regulatory incentive to go further than required.

Analysis for engineering consultancy, Threepwood, gives a good rationale –

'However, it is acknowledged that many networks in the UK (Northern Ireland and Great Britain) do achieve a security of supply which goes beyond the minimum levels set in P2. The reasons for this are many and varied but legacy network configuration (duplicate transformers and lower voltage network interconnection) is one of the main factors in the 'elevated' security performance.'

AC drew the Panel's attention to a Call for Ideas that NIE Networks would be launching on 10 December.

Panel members were also invited to provide any further thoughts / comments / questions regarding RP7. Responses should be emailed to Carl Hashim and/or Maureen Treacy. (carl.hashim@nienetworks.co.uk) (Maureen.Treacy@pimr.co.uk)

5. Consultations updates

a. Connections update

CH gave a verbal update advising that further engagement with the UR had taken place and updated wording proposed for inclusion in the Statement of Connection Charges (SoCC). An interim connection process whereby NIE Networks would issue distribution connection offers with non-firm market access to generators 5MW and above will go live one month after SoCC update is approved.

b. Over-install policy

CH gave a verbal update advising that NIE Networks and SONI will be issuing a joint consultation paper on this topic (expected in January 2022).

c. Demand connections into clusters

CH gave a verbal update advising that further engagement had taken place with the UR on an outstanding issue and, pending a response from the UR, the consultation will be issued.

d. FLEX update

CB provided an update on the FLEX initiative. Key points as follows –

- flexibility contracts successfully awarded following negotiations;
- unplanned negotiations led to delay in commencement, primary trial period now 15 November 2021 to 15 May 2022;
- Unit Proving Tests ongoing (various operators at different stages).

6. Updates from UR

JOB advised that the UR is undertaking a review of the governance arrangements in respect of SONI's Grid Code Review Panel. JOB said the outcome of this review may lead to amendments to governance documents such as the Panel Constitution, to mirror relevant documents applicable in GB. JOB said the arrangements in GB give better transparency on process and timelines for how the Panel should operate, including things such as how Codes are modified.

JOB advised that after it had concluded this work for the Grid Code Review Panel, it may consider doing same for the Distribution Code Review Panel.

7. Update on EU network codes

DH gave an update on the status of the G98/NI and G99/NI consultation. Drafting had been completed but had to be revisited due to a number of additional queries. DH plans to circulate to the Panel before the end of January 2022.

8. SSG SCADA update

JB presented an update to the Panel (the presentation was circulated to the Panel).

9. TSO procurement of system services

DH gave a verbal update to the Panel, noting that the Gate 6 procurement exercise was underway, tender deadline is 5 January 2022, DNO consent letters to be in place for 18 February 2022 and contract execution on 1 April 2022.

10. AOB

(1) DH reminded the Panel of the ongoing review of the definition of "Registered Capacity" by all four system operators on the island of Ireland and in all four Codes. The plan is to review "Registered Capacity" and related terms in each of the Codes and assess its suitability for existing and new technologies. If it is deemed a new definition(s) is required, the appropriate change and consultation and approval processes will be followed for each of the four Codes. This work is due to conclude Q4 2022.

BM asked the UR has any involvement in the review, and if any thought had been given to whether Licence amendments might be needed. JOB said he would consider this further.

MTC asked if there would be a consultation on any potential code changes, and DH confirmed there would be a consultation if changes needed to be made.

(2) JOB noted it would be useful for the Panel to know what D-Code amendment proposals that will be forthcoming. CH said he would action.

(3) JD noted that Renewable NI members had raised concerns that the D-code requirements for reactive power capability CC 7.4 could and have resulted in extra costs or restrictions e.g. when a type C generator is producing rated power and producing reactive power at 0.95 power factor, the voltage at the connection point might be raised above the statutory limit unless –

- the connection is constructed with conductors/cables of a greater size than strictly necessary for thermal reasons, thus increasing costs; or
- the connection capacity is reduced such that the connection point voltage does not exceed the statutory limit.

Different requirements could be reasonable in some circumstances. Therefore, Renewable NI members are considering proposing an amendment to the D-Code.

Action:

- i. **Secretary to provide the Panel with a note of forthcoming D-Code amendment proposals. (CH)**

11. Date of next meeting

Late Q1 / early Q2 2022 was proposed for the next meeting.

Action:

- ii. **Secretary to send invite for next meeting. (CH)**