

# NORTHERN IRELAND ELECTRICITY PLC

## DISTRIBUTION CODE MODIFICATIONS

### CONSULTATION PAPER

27 FEBRUARY 2009

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Northern Ireland Electricity plc (“**NIE**”) has, in accordance with its obligations under Condition 27 of its Licence to Participate in the Transmission of Electricity (the “**NIE Licence**”), prepared and has in force a Distribution Code that covers all material technical aspects relating to connection to and the operation and use of the Distribution System in Northern Ireland.
- 1.2 Pursuant to paragraph 13 of Condition 27 of the NIE Licence, the form of the Distribution Code currently in force is a ‘short form’ Distribution Code that incorporates by reference sections of the Grid Code that are relevant to the Distribution Code. This was put in place at the introduction of SEM to enable the full Distribution Code to be developed over a sensible timescale after the introduction of SEM with the benefit of practical experience post SEM and discussion with Users on the development of the full Distribution Code.
- 1.3 The Grid Code pre-SEM was a combined Grid and Distribution Code, and as part of the approach on the short form Distribution Code, it was agreed that the Grid Code would not initially have the distribution related parts removed, or any other changes made to reflect the existence of a full Distribution Code. However now NIE understands that SONI is intending to consult on changes to the Grid Code to make the necessary changes to reflect the creation of the full Distribution Code. This should therefore result in both the Distribution Code and the Grid Code being self-standing in all respects.
- 1.4 Over recent months, NIE has been undertaking discussions with Users in the Distribution Code Review Panel Meetings, and has been considering the content for the full Distribution Code, and a full Distribution Code has been produced. In accordance with its obligations under paragraph 2 of Condition 27 of the NIE Licence, NIE believes that the time has now come to review, in consultation with electricity undertakings liable to be materially affected thereby, the Distribution Code and its implementation, by formally consulting on the full Distribution Code. This review therefore relates to the development of the full Distribution Code, which no longer incorporates sections of the Grid Code by reference and which will replace the short form Distribution Code.
- 1.5 Section 2 of this Consultation Paper describes at a high level, in respect of each section of the Distribution Code, the principal changes from the corresponding sections which exist in the short form Distribution Code, generally in relation to the parts which cross refer to the Grid Code.

- 1.6 The proposed text of the full form Distribution Code is set out in the Appendix to this Consultation Paper and NIE seeks comments from consultees on the full form of the Distribution Code or any section of it.
- 1.7 Following receipt of comments from those whom it has consulted by this Consultation Paper and the expiration of the period for making comments referred to in section 3 of this Consultation Paper, NIE will, in accordance with paragraph 2 of Condition 27 of the Licence, send to the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (the “**Authority**”):
- 1.7.1 a report on the outcome of its review;
  - 1.7.2 the proposed revisions to the Distribution Code which NIE (having regard to the outcome of such review) reasonably thinks fit for the achievement of the objectives of the Distribution Code referred to in paragraph 1(b) of Condition 27 of the NIE Licence; and
  - 1.7.3 any written representations or objections from electricity undertakings (including any proposals by such persons for revisions to the Distribution Code not accepted by NIE in the course of the review) arising during the consultation process and subsequently maintained.
- 1.8 The revisions to the Distribution Code proposed by NIE and sent to the Authority then require the Authority’s approval and will, if approved, come into force on such date (or dates) as will be notified by NIE, in accordance with the Authority’s approval.

## **2. Description of the proposed amendments and their effect**

### **2.1 Glossary and Definitions**

The Glossary and Definitions section of the Distribution Code sets out the defined terms used in the Distribution Code and their meaning. Many of the definitions have been amended and updated so that they now reflect the terms used in the Distribution Code.

### **2.2 General Conditions**

The Distribution Code General Conditions sets out the general provisions which apply to the Distribution Code, and has been updated from that which applied to the short form Distribution Code, as necessary to reflect the full Distribution Code and the existence of a separate Distribution Code.

### **2.3 Planning Code**

The Planning Code sets out the information which NIE needs in order for it to plan the Distribution System. The way in which the data required is set out has been designed to make the code easier to use, and as part of the discussions undertaken in the preparation of the full Distribution Code, views have been canvassed on the nature of the information to be provided.

### **2.4 Connection Conditions**

The Connection Conditions in the full Distribution Code set out the technical, design and operational criteria which must be complied with, and has been adapted from the

provisions in what was originally the combined Grid and Distribution Code to contain provisions which will apply specifically to Users connected to the Distribution System. One proposed change is in relation to harmonic content, where the reference to the Engineering Recommendation is being updated to the current recommendation, which is ER G5/4. In practice, the spirit of the updated recommendation has been followed in recent years and NIE believes it would be sensible for the Code to reflect that.

Technically, Engineering Recommendation G5/4 would supersede G5/3 which currently forms part of the Licence Standards, as well as being specifically referenced in the Distribution Code, and so the effect of this change is also to change the Licence Standards. Therefore in this one instance only this consultation is also a consultation pursuant to Condition 19 of the NIE Licence in relation to the Licence Standards, which in future will contain G5/4 rather than G5/3.

## **2.5 Operating Code 1 – Generation and Demand Forecasting**

Operating Code 1 relates to the provision of generation and demand forecasts by Users, and has been simplified from that which applies to the demand forecasting information needed by the TSO for Transmission System demand forecasting, to reflect the different role of the DNO.

## **2.6 Operating Code 2 – Outage Planning**

Operating Code 2 relates to the requirements in respect of the exchange of certain information between the DNO and Users in respect of outages and applies to certain Distribution connected Generators and Demand Customers above 10MW and certain others. In contrast to the equivalent code at the Transmission System level it deals with outages alone rather than the wider issue of operational planning, which is essentially a TSO matter.

## **2.7 Distribution Operating Code 3 – Demand Control**

Distribution Operating Code 3 relates to the procedure and requirements in respect of Demand Control, describing the relevant types of demand control and how its implementation will be by the TSO and/or by the DNO. The section applies to Suppliers and Customers.

## **2.8 Distribution Operating Code 4 – Operational Liaison**

Distribution Operating Code 4 relates to the requirements for the exchange of information between the DNO and Users in respect of operational liaison when events and operations take place, and applies to Distribution connected Generators and Demand Customers connected at HV.

## **2.9 Distribution Operating Code 5 – Operational Event Reporting and Information Supply**

Distribution Operating Code 5 relates to the requirements for operational event reporting and information supply between the DNO and Users in respect of significant incidents and applies to Distribution connected Generators and Demand Customers connected at HV.

## **2.10 Distribution Operating Code 6 - Safety Co-ordination**

Distribution Operating Code 6 sets out the standards procedures to be followed by the DNO and Users in respect of Safety Co-ordination and applies to Distribution connected Generators and Demand Customers connected at HV. It has been designed so that the Record of Inter-System Safety Precautions (RISSP) shall apply to all Users who are connected at 33kV or above, including Demand Customers. Users connected below 33 kV have an obligation to comply with the NIE Safety Rules.

## **2.11 Distribution Operating Code 7 – Contingency Planning**

Distribution Operating Code 7 deals with Contingency Planning and applies to Distribution connected Generators and Demand Customers in respect of their sites of 1MW and above. Although it broadly follows the form of the equivalent Operating Code in the Grid Code, it has been designed to enable the DNO to co-ordinate with Users on the Distribution System in order to support the TSO's restoration plan.

## **2.12 Distribution Operating Code 8 – Numbering and Nomenclature of Plant and Apparatus at Connection Sites**

Distribution Operating Code 8 applies to Distribution connected Generators and Demand Customers who are connected at 33 kV and above, and certain others where notified by the DNO. It broadly follows the form of the equivalent Operating Code in the Grid Code, save for those consequential differences required as a result of changes in terminology.

## **2.13 Distribution Operating Code 9 – System Tests**

Distribution Operating Code 9 relates to system testing by Users and the DNO and applies to Distribution connected Generators and Demand Customers. It broadly follows the form of the equivalent Operating Code in the Grid Code, and also provides for what is to happen in the case where a system test initiated on the Transmission System could affect Distribution System connected Users.

## **2.14 Distribution Operating Code 10 – Testing, Monitoring and Investigation**

Distribution Operating Code 10 sets out the procedures to be followed by the DNO in carrying out testing, monitoring and investigation of Users on the Distribution System and applies to Distribution connected Generators and Demand Customers. It is limited to Distribution Code Compliance Testing but otherwise broadly follows the form of the equivalent Operating Code in the Grid Code.

## **2.15 Distribution Metering Code**

The Distribution Metering Code has been developed from the Grid Code Metering Code and applies to both Generators and Customers connected to the Distribution System. The Distribution Metering Code has been designed to reflect metering requirements at the Distribution level.

## **2.16 Introduction**

There is also a revised "Introduction", which does not form part of the Distribution Code but which is included in order to give a general overview. This has been based on the Grid Code version, with changes to reflect the fact that it is in the Distribution Code.

### **3. Comments**

3.1 NIE would be pleased to receive your comments on, or any suggestions you may have in relation to, the proposed full form of the Distribution Code by **17 April 2009**, in order that we can prepare our report to the Authority.

3.2 Your formal responses should be in writing and addressed to:

Leslie Bryans  
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Or sent by email to: [dave.thornton@garrickconsulting.co.uk](mailto:dave.thornton@garrickconsulting.co.uk)

**Northern Ireland Electricity plc**  
**27 February 2009**

**APPENDIX  
PROPOSED FULL FORM DISTRIBUTION CODE**