

23rd September 2015

Renewables Grid Liaison Group

Minutes of Meeting

Attendees	
Utility Regulator	Tanya Hedley (TH) Jody O'Boyle (JOB), Casper Swales (CW)
NIRIG	Billy Graham (BG) Mervyn Adams (MA(d))
NIE Networks	Michael Atkinson (MA), Aidan Bradley (AB), Caron Malone (CM) Adrian Macauley (AM) Roger Henderson (RH) Stephen Thompson (ST) Nigel Crawford (NC)
SONI	Eimear Watson (EW), Gerry Hodgkinson
DETI	Alison Clydesdale (AC)
Solar Power Representative	
Offshore Representative	
Ulster Farmers Union	
Energy Storage Representative	Michael Harper (MH)
Apologies	Dick Lewis (DL) Michael Harris (MH(arr)) Damian Bettles (DB) Chris Osborne (CO) Gary Hawkes (GH) Neil O'Brien (NOB)

No	Item	Action
1	Apologies Meabh Cormacain (MC), Michael Harris (MH(arr)) Damian Bettles (DB) Robert Wasson and Ronan McKeown will not be attending meetings going forward	
2	Minutes and actions from previous meeting Minutes agreed for publication	
	Actions from previous meeting <u>Action 1</u> DETI to check if DECC have consulted with SSG in Northern Ireland and pass on details-carried forward- closed <u>Action 2</u> SONI to provide update at next meeting on timeframes for the GOR report update- new NI constraints report due Q1 2016 <u>Action 3</u> UR to send final version of revised ToR to group and upload to the website- complete <u>Action 4</u> NIE Networks to confirm timeline to consider at a high level the impact of re-bating- to be updated under item 6 <u>Action 5</u> UR to circulate placement students final paper to group- complete	
3	Renewables Integration Status report <u>NIE Networks Update</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 110kV circuits into Tamnamore- due for completion in next few months Tamnamore phase 2- due end of this year 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 clusters (Rasharkin, Tremoge and Gort) progressing through civil works at construction phase. Expect better timelines for delivery in new year- there is likely to be a phased approach to commissioning/energisation. • NIE Networks are working with SONI on 3rd Omagh-Tamnamore 110kV line <p><u>SONI Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brockaghboy- pre construction continuing on schedule and plan to go to second round of public consultation in the second week of October • Drumquin cluster- pre construction continuing on schedule- second round of public consultation carried out in September • Omagh-Tamnamore 3rd circuit- pre construction continuing on schedule- completing wayleaving process. At present 80% of landowners have agreed to wayleaves and SONI have applied for Article 40 from DETI to begin construction where possible. May need DETI involvement for remainder of wayleaves. • NSI- DOE completed statutory consultation on SONI addendum with 10 submissions in response to this so far. Also consultation on cross boarder element- 880 submissions in ROI. Public Inquiry expected to commence Q1 2016. SONI have also engaged with Armagh/Banbridge county council • Kells, Newtownstewart, Cam clusters all in progress at planning stage. PMN; Garvagh cluster is also at pre-construction stage. <p><u>Network 25 & Deeper reinforcement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking account of uncertainties around renewable targets, SONI intend to engage with DETI over coming weeks around this. It is important that Network 25 is considerate of any update to the SEF • SONI think it is prudent to delay Network 25 until DETI position on targets is clear • Network 25 was originally planned to be based on the outcome of RIDP however the assumptions underpinning RIDP have now changed. SONI are therefore reviewing the RIDP preferred scheme; this has the potential to result in a revised optimal development. SONI consider that it will be 2016 before Network 25 is publicised. • SONI and NIE Networks are continuing to progress MTP in the meantime and will continue with future investments as necessary- including proposals within price control. 	

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	<p>NIRIG have sent letter to UR about concerns with deep transmission reinforcement. There are long timeline with this and these reinforcements are required to give FAQs to developers already in receipt of connection agreements. NIRIG concerned that delaying N25 will have further impacts and said they think it will be worthwhile to consider a second tranche of medium term plan investments.</p> <p>SONI confirmed that just because Network 25 would not be published in the short term this will not prevent stop SONI from proceeding with individual investments as required.</p> <p>UR asked if Network 25 will become redundant because SONI have to publish 10 year plan every year as part of licence which will take to 2025 and beyond anyway. SONI explained that the present 10 year statement is presently based on some elements of the RIDP preferred scheme and would be updated to reflect the outcome of the review of RIDP.</p> <p>SONI confirmed that some of the ATRs may refer to reinforcements such as the 3rd Omagh-Tamnamore circuit and some may refer to RIDP or others. SONI need to make sure they only bring forward developments which will be utilised- need to balance this with timely delivery. There may be less wind coming forward- SONI will be driven by demand rather than targets.</p> <p>NIRIG raised the point that NIE Networks previously stated that overall transmission development is required- not just for renewables.</p> <p>SONI explained that in addition to development for renewables, there is a risk to the security of the north west area from a demand perspective and that this had been considered as part of RIDP plan.</p> <p><u>JOINT SONI & NIE NETWORKS LOAD FORECASTING PROJECT</u></p> <p>The scope is still being finalised for this. Information is being collated at Bulk supply point level</p> <p>ACTION- SONI and NIE Networks to provide update at next meeting on progress of this work</p>	<p>SONI/NIE Networks</p>
4	<p>Contestability in Connections</p> <p>UR published decision paper at end of July.</p> <p>SONI and NIE Networks are currently working on draft implementation guidelines for transmission and distribution. Due to be published in next few weeks. Will outline to interested parties how contestability will work in practice and the roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>UR expects to consult for 4 weeks then will ask NIE Networks and SONI to provide recommendation report to UR.</p> <p>NIE Networks/SONI are reviewing timelines that UR has suggested which would be a phased approach with phase 1 to take implementation Q1 2016- limited to >5MW. SONI and NIE</p>	

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	<p>Networks are currently reviewing this UR proposed timeframe. The phased approach will reduce volume and also give NIE Networks/SONI time to review IT programs.</p> <p>Once guidelines pushed around mid Oct; UR intend to hold workshop to engage with stakeholders.</p> <p>NIRIG asked who the guidelines would be published by.</p> <p>UR confirmed this would be published by UR.</p>	
5	<p>DETI Update on consultations</p> <p>No minster in place at the moment but department continues to carry out functions.</p> <p>Yesterday ETI committee cleared legislation for non-wind. The next stage is to debate this at assembly. Awaiting date for this</p> <p>DETI outlined that they hope to consult shortly on wind closure for NIRO.</p> <p>NIRIG asked how this can be published without a minister. DETI outlined there is a process to enable them to publish with a minster absent.</p> <p>NIRIG asked will this have impact on closure dates if it takes longer to publish consultation. DETI informed NIRIG that the dates would be clear in the consultation document</p>	
6	<p>Rebate Policy</p> <p>NIE Networks have had a number of meetings with NIRIG and UR around introducing a rebate policy and the legislative changes and timeframes required for this.</p> <p>More work has progressed around work on clusters in relation to this. As part of Project 40, NIE Networks have been working on ways to arrive at a more equitable arrangement to charge for 2nd transformer. Formal dispute had been raised around this issue but the dispute was withdrawn.</p> <p>NIE Networks therefore took steps to make changes to SoCC to implement a short term fix for 2nd Transformer charging for clusters and SoCC has been amended (version 9th September).</p> <p>A consultation has also been prepared in tandem to look at a more long term solution to this (this had been put on hold when the dispute was taken) and NIE Networks are keen to get industry feedback on this.</p> <p>NIRIG recognise why NIE Networks have taken the steps they have taken- however they think this falls short of a desirable solution i.e. if there was a cluster with 3 people driving the need for a second transformer, at this point the onus falls on the first applicant in the queue to fund this. If they don't take this risk then they fall out of the queue. NIRIG think there is a potential solution which has been developed through Project 40 and are very keen to see this as a subsequent amendment to SoCC. They do not want to see the current arrangement become permanent.</p> <p>NIE Networks intend to reconvene work under Project 40 around</p>	

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	this.	
7	<p>NIAUR determination on planning permission requirements</p> <p>NIRIG understands that opening up of the planning concession has led to huge numbers of applications to NIE Networks. NIRIG feel this undermines NIE Networks policy.</p> <p>NIRIG commented that SONI are adopting a stance that inclusion to FAQ queue still requires planning permission.</p> <p>NIRIG commented that the quotation system is now backlogged with non planning applications which NIE Networks have to deal with on a date received order. NIRIG questioned whether this was the right approach as SONI will not deal with applications unless they have planning.</p> <p>NIRIG commented that they thought the previous policy was a viable policy which was accepted by industry.</p> <p>UR outlined their role is as a dispute resolution body and are limited with what their boundaries are. Once someone raises a dispute- which can be about a policy or process, UR has to look at this from legislation point of view. UR also commented that the output of this was based on how legislation is written and as a result that someone can apply without planning permission.</p> <p>There was no dispute raised against SONI. If someone was to raise a dispute against SONI this would have to be looked at. UR can only look at the individual dispute. UR commented that when a determination is made, it only applies to the individual case in question.</p> <p>NIE Networks outlined that in the immediate term they have to deal with situation as it stands. This was not a welcome change to the position which had been broadly supported by the industry. NIE Networks felt that they had to interpret the outcome of the determination for all, not just for the single party in question.</p> <p>NIE Networks then made a statement on 12th August on website stating that planning permission was no longer required for applications. NIE Networks have established dedicated team to deal with this influx of application and are also working closely with SONI on this.</p> <p>An exercise has been carried out to review the impact at bulk supply point level from combined SSG & LSG and NIE Networks will be interacting with SONI on this.</p> <p>NIRIG said they also were concerned about the creeping impact of the determination- cluster requirements require weighted measure for projects in planning. NIRIG asked where these fit into cluster calculation mechanism.</p> <p>NIE Networks outlined they are in discussion with UR about the SoCC - view that a value needs to be allocated for those who have applied to NIE Networks without planning. If these are ignored and given a weighting of zero then this has impacts on overall network planning. NIE Networks expect to introduce recognition of these applications and a proposal is with UR for approval.</p>	

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	<p>SONI outlined that they were not party to the determination, and it was only when it was made public they saw the details. SONI are not an electricity distribution licence holder so are not subject to same legislation. SONI and NIE did a joint consultation on the “Consenting requirements for in advance of application for offshore generation connection” in 2014 in which industry were supportive of the planning permission requirement. Therefore any change to SONI’s current policies would be subject to consultation as well. SONI explained that UR confirmed at the time of publication of the decision on this consultation that the decision on consenting requirements was within SONI and NIE’s remit.</p> <p>UR explained that in a dispute, this confirmation would not be taken into account, only licence and legislation is considered. The change in NIE Network’s policy does have an indirect impact on SONI as although parties are connecting to the distribution system, SONI have to assess their impact on the transmission system, and are working with NIE Networks to determine how best this can be done. SONI wrote to UR on their position and said they are willing to discuss, but have not yet had a response from UR.</p> <p>In addition, entry into the FAQ list was also consulted upon in 2014 by NIE and SONI and this policy clearly stated that both completed application and planning permission were needed to secure place in FAQ list. Any change to this would need further consultation..</p> <p>DETI raised that this issue of removal of planning permission requirement was discussed at ETI Committee and they plan to write to UR and NIE Networks around this. ETI Committee recognised this would have an impact on NIE Networks.</p> <p>B9 energy raised the point that legislation should reflect policy and vice versa. This issue here is how UR carries out disputes. This looks at making a decision for one party which has implications for the rest of industry. If legislation is silent on an issue then it means that policy cannot be backed up.</p> <p>There was a question around NIE Networks/SONI carrying out consultations to help shape policies when the dispute resolution process does not appear to put any weight on them.</p>	
8	<p>SSG Update on Capacity/Safety constraints</p> <p><u>Progress of £2.3m</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tap changers left only at a few substations. Work nearly complete • All c120 offers have been issued out of these substations • In some cases capacity was fully exhausted and remaining customers are waiting on managed connections <p><u>Further investments June 2015</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIE Networks have identified about 36 substations where more low level investments can be funded and carried out to release offers. • Expectation and risk here that ROC incentives might come 	

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	<p>to an end quickly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIRIG asked how quickly these offers would be issued and are concerned that even if they are issued the ROC criteria might have impact anyway. • NIE Networks pursued the issue of these offers with extreme urgency. Have processed c120 designs and issued offers. Have encouraged parties to accept quickly where possible in light of ROC uncertainty. • NIE Networks also trying to alert others who have not accepted offers to the uncertainty with ROC incentives. <p>Removing those that are released from investments leaves c250 projects remaining on hold with capacity issues.</p> <p>NIE Networks continuing to seek time extensions from UR on the offers remaining in the queue.</p> <p><u>Timelines to connect SSG connections</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated resources here to look at delivery of jobs • For those that already have accepted offers, NIE Networks expect to deliver these for March 2017. (c120MW) • Resourced being strengthened to meet this delivery challenge. • For anyone coming into the process now or without an accepted offer by end September, expectancy is these will be unlikely to connect by March 2017 unless they are very small jobs • For those jobs coming in from October 2015 and getting offers issued going forward NIE Networks will add estimated dates for connection <p>NIRIG asked about issue of offers for clusters. NIE Networks responded that this was being looked at with urgency.</p>	
9	<p>NIE Networks Project 40</p> <p>At a high level - the amount of activity in the market in terms of connected quantities and the amount in the work pipe to be connected is very high across large and small sale generation.</p> <p><u>Large Scale Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work has been carried out on shape of offers, charging mechanism etc. • Some areas which have been stalled are charging arrangements around clusters - as discussed - NIE Networks have developed options for charging and the intention is to consider these options for consultation. NIE Networks plans to reconvene the cluster group again. • Development of technical analysis for long cables is at a stage where NIE Networks will work with some external consultancy on this. The intention will then be to engage industry on this as this looks to be finalised. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIRIG said they would be fully in support of this. <p><u>Small Scale Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIE Networks has now published the consultation 'Consideration of Proposed Changes to Small Scale Generation Connection to the Northern Ireland Electricity Networks' Distribution System' and we encourage interested parties to read and respond to this consultation. Implementation of the 'managed connection' will be subject to successful completion of the consultation process and resolution of the technical, commercial and regulatory issues detailed in the consultation document. NIE Networks is also implementing a technical 'managed connection pilot scheme' at Toome East which is progressing in parallel with the consultation and is due for completion by the end of December 2015. A copy of the consultation can be downloaded from the NIE Network website. The consultation will close for responses on Friday 16th October 2015 at 5pm. NIE Networks noted that DETI consultation may not be helpful for those waiting on Managed Connections. <p><u>Microgeneration Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIE Networks have tried to organise a meeting but NISTA have been unavailable due to impending ROC changes. NIE Networks have had meetings with a number of other developers in parallel to this Levels of G83 connections have been very high as people try to connect before ROC changes, NIE Networks has put more resources in this area to deal with this NIE Networks has also had a number of interactions with UR around this and timelines for G83 NIE Networks continue to get installers installing under fit and inform rather than the G83 Stage 2 process. There are instances where installation has been completed before assessment carried out and in some instances this leaves customers with reinforcement costs. 	
10	<p>Move from G59/1 to G59/2</p> <p>NIE Networks are proposing to use one of the academic institutions in the mainland to work on this and have been in regular contact with them over last few months.</p> <p>When last in contact with them they had been delayed by work with the GB DNOS but they are now completing this work. NIE Networks will meet with them in early November to discuss the studies.</p> <p>Initial studies for NIE Networks will be required for ROCOF and increase in over frequency setting. In addition when the final report is complete for GB DNOS NIE Networks will review this and see</p>	

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	what can be taken on board from this.	
11	<p>RP6 Stakeholder management</p> <p>RP6 next price control for NIE Networks. Approach document issued today, and contains a number of minded to statements.</p> <p>UR made a presentation on the consultation for the approach of NIE Network's RP6.</p> <p>There are 6 main issues highlighted within document.</p> <p>ACTION- RP6 engagement slides to be circulated</p> <p>SONI questioned how NIE Networks would be in a position to justify transmission network investments that are included in RP6 but under the direction of SONI. UR explained that SONI would input to NIE Networks and not to UR directly. SONI asked for the process to be mindful of their involvement.</p> <p>NIRIG raised concern that the original 5 year plan does not tie in well with long term development plans for transmission.</p> <p>UR said the 5 year plan has to sit within the long term transmission plan.</p>	UR
12	<p>AOB</p> <p><u>Publication of Licence mods</u></p> <p>In relation to this group- there is a connections issue raised within consultation regarding removal of pass through connection costs. UR would welcome responses to the consultation on this.</p> <p><u>Restructuring within NIE Networks</u></p> <p>Roger Henderson now has responsibility for Connections, contestability and generation connections. NIE Networks has realigned so there is one director with responsibility for all connections.</p> <p><u>NIE Renaming project- NIE Networks</u></p> <p>As of Tuesday 22nd September NIE has officially been renamed to NIE Networks in an effort to clarify the role NIE Networks plays in the market.</p>	
13	<p>Dates of Meetings for 2015</p> <p>Tuesday 24th November 2015.</p>	

Summary of Actions

Action No.	Action Description	To be Actioned by
<u>New Actions</u>		
1	SONI and NIE Networks to provide update at next meeting on progress of load forecasting project	NIE Networks/SONI
2	RP6 engagement slides to be circulated	UR