



Introducing Contestability in Electricity Connections in Northern Ireland

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UR published Forward Work Programme in 2014-15 :

- In this it set out plans for the introduction of contestability in electricity connections in order to promote choice for customers and reduce both connection costs and timescales.
- Intention is for this to be across all types of connections and voltages

The UR has issued a number of papers in relation to the introduction of contestability in Northern Ireland:

- Contestability in Connections Consultation Paper, 2nd December 2014
- Contestability in Connections Proposed Next Steps Paper, 11th May 2015
- Contestability in Connections Decision Paper (“the Decision Paper”), 31st July 2015

The UR set up and has chaired the Contestability Working Group with representatives from ICPs, DNO, TSO and others

Timelines for contestability

Distribution Connections

- From 31st May 2016 Contestability has been introduced for generation and demand connections to the distribution system where the customer has requested a capacity of 5MW or greater
- Applications are made to NIE Networks for distribution connections

Transmission Connections

- Contestability for transmission connections and transmission works to open end August 2016.
- Applications are made to SONI for transmission connections

Our readiness for Contestability

- ✓ Industry guidelines
- ✓ NERS accreditation (Lloyds)
- ✓ CiC charges
- ✓ Material specs & design policies
- ✓ ICP portal
- ✓ New ICP engagement framework
- ✓ Documentation

Scope of Contestability

Contestability may not be practicable where:

- a customer received a connection offer for a generation or demand connection with a capacity of 5 MW or greater, and
- the customer accepted the offer prior to the introduction of contestability, and
- where NIE Networks has already commenced pre-construction works in accordance with the connection programme,

The option to switch to delivering the assets contestably will be considered by the Licensee(s) on a case-by-case basis.

It should be noted that contestability will have no impact on the connection queue.

Non-Contestable Works

The following Connection Works have been identified in the Decision Paper as Non-Contestable

- Definition of point of connection
- Design of point of connection
- Upstream reinforcement
- Making final connection to existing system
- System protection, metering and communication
- Handover and acceptance of contested assets
- Design review
- Commissioning
- Functional Specifications
- Determination of Ownership Boundary
- Inspection and Monitoring
- Work within existing live substations

Contestable Works

The following Connection Works have been identified in the Decision Paper as Contestable

- Detailed Design, Procurement and Construction
- Route and Site Selection
- Site Acquisition
- Planning Permission/Wayleaves
- Procurement
- Construction
- Pre-commissioning

Connection Offer and Acceptance Process

Application

- To meet Licence conditions NIE Networks are required to issue an offer to complete the full works. The offer validity period will remain at 90 calendar days and the offer will not split the Connection Works into Contestable and Non-Contestable Works.

Modification of the Offer

- Should the customer be interested in undertaking the Contestable Works, notification shall be submitted to NIE Networks at any point up to 10 calendar days after the date of issue of the Offer.
- Following receipt of the notification, NIE Networks will provide within 25 calendar days a modification to the Offer which will set out, among other things, the Non-Contestable Works.

Acceptance

- If the customer wishes to proceed then either the initial offer or the modified offer must be accepted within 90 days from issue of first offer

Review of Contestable Works

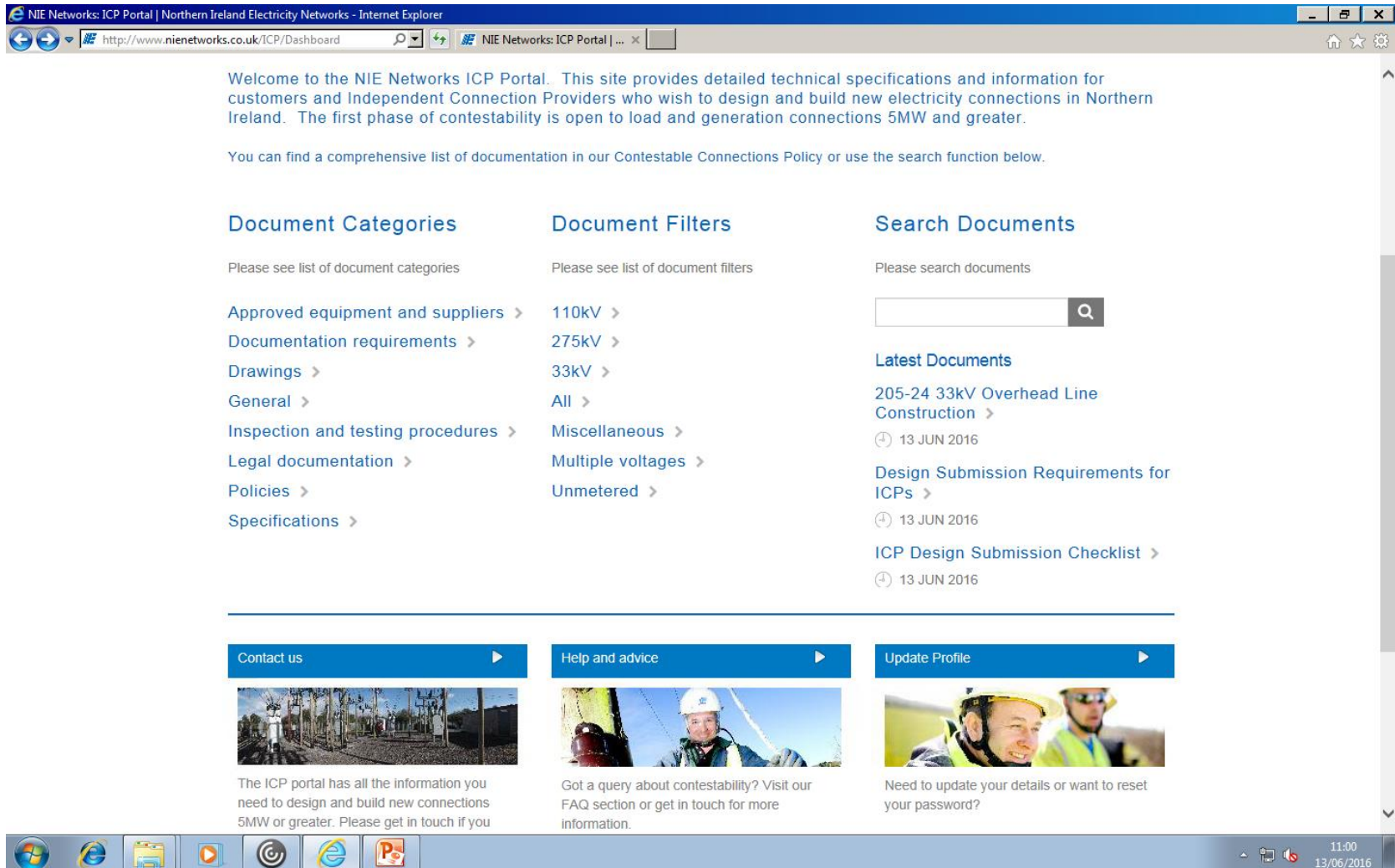
- Throughout the connection process NIE Networks may carry out design reviews, audits and/or inspections of the Contestable Works against the relevant NIE Networks technical specifications and standards provided
- The review and inspection process will include the review and/or inspection of the following aspects of the Contestable Works:
 - The applicant's route and site selection
 - The applicant's detailed design
 - Any plant, materials and installation during the construction phase
 - Progress of the Contestable Works against agreed timelines.
 - Changes proposed by the applicant
 - Witnessing pre-commissioning tests
- **Distribution Statement of Connection Charges**
 - An updated Distribution charging statements has been approved and published to introduce transactional charges / rates for review of contestable designs and works and inspections

Adoption of Contestably Built Assets

- Where the customer (or the customer's appointed Independent Connection Provider (ICP)) wishes to provide the Contestable Works then the customer and/or their appointed ICP must enter into an Adoption Agreement with NIE Networks
- A template Adoption Agreement is available on the ICP portal
- The Adoption Agreement must be signed by the customer and/or the ICP and returned to NIE Networks prior to the ICP commencing works

NIE Networks Specifications & Policies

- The development and provision of technical specifications and policies are Non-Contestable.
- These specify the Licensee's minimum requirements for all Contestable Works that the customer and ICP must adhere to.
- They consist of specifications for plant and materials as well as best practises in relation to activities such as route selection, site selection, wayleaving and installation of plant.
- These are published on the NIE Networks ICP portal
- The ICP portal also has a list of current suppliers and approved plant.



The screenshot shows the NIE Networks ICP Portal website. The browser title is "NIE Networks: ICP Portal | Northern Ireland Electricity Networks - Internet Explorer". The address bar shows the URL "http://www.nienetworks.co.uk/ICP/Dashboard".

Welcome to the NIE Networks ICP Portal. This site provides detailed technical specifications and information for customers and Independent Connection Providers who wish to design and build new electricity connections in Northern Ireland. The first phase of contestability is open to load and generation connections 5MW and greater.

You can find a comprehensive list of documentation in our Contestable Connections Policy or use the search function below.

Document Categories
Please see list of document categories

- Approved equipment and suppliers >
- Documentation requirements >
- Drawings >
- General >
- Inspection and testing procedures >
- Legal documentation >
- Policies >
- Specifications >


Document Filters
Please see list of document filters


- 110kV >
- 275kV >
- 33kV >
- All >
- Miscellaneous >
- Multiple voltages >
- Unmetered >


Search Documents
Please search documents

Latest Documents

- 205-24 33kV Overhead Line Construction >
13 JUN 2016
- Design Submission Requirements for ICPs >
13 JUN 2016
- ICP Design Submission Checklist >
13 JUN 2016

Contact us

The ICP portal has all the information you need to design and build new connections 5MW or greater. Please get in touch if you

Help and advice

Got a query about contestability? Visit our FAQ section or get in touch for more information.

Update Profile

Need to update your details or want to reset your password?

Taskbar: Windows 7 icons for Internet Explorer, File Explorer, Windows Media Center, Control Panel, and Photoshop. System tray: 11:00, 13/06/2016.