

**24<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

**Renewables Grid Liaison Group**

**Minutes of Meeting No22**

<b>Attendees</b>	
<b>Utility Regulator</b>	Tanya Hedley (TH) Ciaren MacCann (CMcC) Jody O'Boyle (JO'B)
<b>NIRIG</b>	Andy McCrea (AMcC) Meabh Cormacain (MC)
<b>NIE Networks</b>	Ian Craig (IC) Brian Moorhead (BM) Sinead Ferris (SF) David McDonald (DMcD) Amy Hamilton (AH)
<b>SONI</b>	Helen Gallagher (HG) Raymond Smyth (RS)
<b>Department for the Economy - Energy Renewables Division</b>	Trevor McBriar (TMcB) Kelly McKenna (KMck)
<b>NISTA</b>	Neil O'Brien (NO'B)
<b>Offshore Representative</b>	No attendee
<b>Ulster Farmers Union</b>	Chris Osborne (CO)
<b>Energy Storage Representative</b>	No attendee
<b>Apologies</b>	Mervyn Adams

No	Item	Action
1	<b>Apologies</b>	
2	<p><b>Minutes/Updates from last meeting</b></p> <p>Minutes agreed for publication subject to correction of spelling errors.</p> <p><b>Actions from previous meeting</b></p> <p><b><u>Action 1</u></b> NIE Networks and SONI to produce prediction to 2020 on meeting 2020 RES target.</p> <p>TH asked for it to be noted that the NIE Networks/SONI call for evidence contains a statement suggesting that Northern Ireland is expected to meet its 2020 RES target. DMcD stated that NIE Networks was happy to provide information regarding connections to the network but that output and curtailment information would require collaboration with SONI. HG stated that SONI have a connections register on their website listing valid and connected transmission applications. HG stated that the list would be updated this week.</p> <p>TH stated that the 2020 target may not be met annually due to fluctuations in wind levels and curtailment requirements. TH stated that NIE Networks and SONI had been asked to perform scenario planning in relation to the range of potential annual output values for 2020. TMcB commented that the output had sat at 25.4% for two consecutive six month periods due to a lack of wind. TH stated that the purpose of this prediction was to form part of a Ministerial Briefing Pack. TH asked NIE Networks and SONI to produce a prediction in writing by 31<sup>st</sup> October.</p> <p><i>Not Complete</i></p> <p><b><u>Action 2</u></b> SONI to forward copy of latest consumption report.</p> <p>TH stated that this had been received.</p> <p><i>Completed</i></p> <p><b><u>Action 3</u></b> UR to engage with DfE on rebates.</p> <p>TH stated that this had been carried out and that a follow up meeting had been held on 12<sup>th</sup> October with DfE. A letter to the department is to be written in response to correspondence received from Chris Stewart in May 2017. TH stated that the question of rebates would be addressed in this letter along with the current position of NIE Networks and SONI. MC asked if conversations regarding policy direction would continue to take place in</p>	<p><b>SONI/NIEN</b></p> <p><b>SONI</b></p>

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	<p>the absence of a Minister. TH responded that the UR had engaged with the department regarding work areas they shall be taking forward. MC asked if the letter from Chris Stewart to Jenny Pyper was direct correspondence. TH stated that it was and therefore the letter would not be put in the public domain. TH stated that the department would be consulted regarding the possibility of putting something into the public domain.</p> <p>. TH confirmed that rebates would require a legislative change and that this could not be implemented in the absence of a Minister. DMcD asked if these rebates concerned generation only. TH responded that the rebates would cover generation and demand.</p> <p><i>Complete</i></p> <p><b>Action 4</b> Ministerial Briefing Pack.</p> <p>TH stated that SONI and NIE Networks had produced documentation for this without the range of figures relating to wind penetration in Northern Ireland. TH stated that the pack was incomplete without these background figures but that this action should be taken off the list as it is the role of the department to produce Ministerial Briefing Packs.</p> <p><i>Complete</i></p> <p><b>Action 5</b> Date of next meeting.</p> <p>December 2017. Date to be confirmed</p> <p><i>Complete</i></p>	<p>UR</p> <p>UR</p> <p>UR</p>
3	<p><b>Consultation Update</b></p> <p>BM gave an update on the status of the connections consultation. Items covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Joint Industry Workshop in August 2017 for generation applicants with ongoing applications</li> <li>- c1800MW renewable generation now committed to connect to the network</li> <li>- The lack of transmission capacity and saturation of distribution nodes</li> <li>- Refusals to be sent to c250 Generation Applicants in the Queue at the end of November 2017</li> <li>- Workshop broken down into smaller groups to allow personal conversations about specific applications</li> <li>- Positive feedback from industry regarding the workshop</li> <li>- Call for Evidence released on NIE Networks and SONI</li> </ul>	

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	<p>websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NIE Networks Connections Mailing List</li> <li>- Market information</li> <li>- Connections Process</li> <li>- ENA Milestone document</li> <li>- Feedback on previous consultation</li> </ul> <p>MC asked if attendees at the RGLG meeting shall be automatically added to the connections mailing list. BM stated that this was not the case but he was happy to transfer all attendees onto the mailing list. MC stated that any connections process agreed to must be fit for purpose for connections in the long term. AMcC asked when the consultation shall be opened. BM responded that it shall be opened in late November/early December 2017.</p> <p>TH asked if any attendees who were present at the Joint Industry Workshop had any feedback. MC suggested that the groups in the workshop should be smaller to allow more one to one discussions. DMcD stated that this would be implemented in any future workshops. NO'B commented that it was difficult to please all parties and NIE Networks were well equipped to answer queries. CO stated that the feedback from landowners was very positive and that they appreciated the opportunity to voice their concerns.</p> <p>MC asked if there were other consultations being planned. DMcD stated that there were no new consultations being planned at present. NO'B asked if there was any new information since the workshop that NIE Networks wished to share. BM stated that there was a refreshed renewable capacity update on the NIE Networks website, that there is 1771 MW of renewable generation committed at present and that the total connected is almost 1.4GW. MC asked for the link to this update to be sent to all persons on the mailing list.</p>	
4	<p><b>DfE – General Update</b></p> <p>TMcB stated that there was no positive information on the re-establishment of an Executive in the short term. TMcB stated that the Department has been involved in discussions about the effect of Brexit on the SEM. It is too early to reach a conclusion, however, the intention is that the SEM will remain.</p> <p>TMcB advised that Kelly McKenna has joined Energy Division as the Head of Renewable Electricity Branch and that Michelle Bell has taken responsibility for Brexit and the Clean Energy Package, which includes a recast Renewable Energy Directive which is currently in draft. BM enquired if there was any indication</p>	

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	<p>regarding what the new renewable energy targets might be. TMcB confirmed that the draft includes a 27% renewable energy target which would include electricity, heat and transport. BM commented that if there were to be new targets for 2030 then work towards meeting those targets would need to commence soon.</p> <p>TMcB stated that the target was likely to be EU wide and that individual Member States may not have individual targets. TH highlighted that the CRU have published a note indicating that the licence modifications for suppliers and generators relating to the I-SEM project have been suspended pending investigation by the Minister in the Republic of Ireland. MC asked what implications this would have for the distribution market opening to competition. TH stated that all of the implications were currently being considered.</p>	
5	<p><b>Contestability Update</b></p> <p><b>Distribution</b></p> <p>SF gave an update on contestability in distribution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Market for greater than 5MW connections went live in May 2016</li> <li>-Five contestable offers issued to date</li> <li>-One offer has been accepted and one is within its validity period</li> <li>-Market opening for less than 5MW distribution connections is in April 2018</li> <li>-Currently there are 16 ICPs accredited to operate in Northern Ireland under the Lloyds National Electricity Registration Scheme (NERS)</li> </ul> <p>NIE Networks is continuing to engage with Lloyds in relation to the market opening. SF stated that there would be more information on NIE Networks' website between January and March.</p> <p><b>Transmission</b></p> <p>HG gave an update on contestability in transmission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-SONI have engaged with NIE Networks regarding indemnity issues</li> <li>-In certain circumstances, NIE Networks and SONI could be open to considerable losses</li> <li>-SONI and NIE Networks have jointly written to the Regulator regarding potential ways to manage the risk</li> </ul> <p>TH stated that the Regulator currently has a response letter in draft to be finalised shortly. MC asked what the next steps were in relation to this issue. TH stated that contestability for transmission connections currently exists and that the Regulator believes the issue regarding indemnity may be resolved fairly quickly. TH said that it should not impact any customer requesting a transmission</p>	

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	connection and that so far no applicant to the transmission grid has requested a contestable connection.	
6	<p><b>FAQ Update and ATR</b></p> <p>MC requested for FAQ Update and ATR to be made a regular agenda item. HG stated that this document was originally being produced on a six monthly basis but that it was lost in the handover. HG stated that the document was a collaboration with NIE Networks regarding the current environment, potential ongoing projects, timelines and identifying reinforcements. HG stated that SONI would take an action to have the document completed for the next meeting. TH requested that the document be produced for the end of November.</p> <p>MC asked if this document would contain a section on firm access, specifically regarding timelines for providing firm access. HG stated that all projects to date have their FAQ reports which contain timelines tailored to each project. MC stated that it would be useful to aggregate these figures to produce a single figure showing what is still awaiting firm access. BM stated that it could be useful to produce a condensed version of the report. HG stated that the back section of the report contained tables regarding network development and long term planning. DMcD stated that links could be inserted to the QVC update to avoid duplication of information in multiple documents. TH stated that the format should be retained with links inserted. TH stated that an updated version of the format would be discussed at the December meeting.</p>	
7	<p><b>Constraint/Curtailment procedures</b></p> <p>MC stated that there were issues surrounding the new RoCoF Group and that there were concerns regarding the process used to determine the group, communication between the group, SONI and NIE Networks and the procedure for moving out of the RoCoF Group. MC stated that group members have a lack of clarity regarding whether or not the process is defined and if the process required consultation. HG stated that 0.4Hz connections information from NIE Networks has been added to WSAP (an operational tool for the SONI control room to analyse wind levels). SONI stated that these 0.4Hz connections were breaching SONI system security contingencies. HG stated that SONI had engaged with NIE Networks regarding the operational difficulties but ultimately the Control Room made an operational decision based on system security.</p> <p>HG stated that the Control Room Manager, Sam Matthews wrote to those affected and that there was an ongoing dialogue between SONI and NIE Networks. HG stated that when RoCoF members move out of 0.47Hz then they are removed from the constraint group. DMcD stated that there would be increased operational issues in future. DMcD proposed that an operational representative, possibly David Hill should be included in the</p>	

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	<p>RGLG meetings. DMcD stated that some applicants had booked witness testing appointments for RoCoF changes and that these would be completed for the December deadline. MC commented that consideration should be given to how this process is implemented in future to avoid communication of contradictory information or minimal notice being given to constraint group members. DMcD suggested that an Operational Group could be created to avoid miscommunication in future. TH stated that operational issues could be discussed at RGLG meetings. AMcC stated that it would have been preferable if a consultation had been carried out. TH suggested an action for NIE Networks and SONI to provide written information on the next steps should this issue arise again for the next RGLG meeting.</p>	
8	<p><b>Publication of Applicant Details</b></p> <p>BM stated that MC has raised this issue previously regarding the possibility of applicants in the Generation Queue, Committed or Connected having their details published. NIE Networks legal advice stated that the Data Protection Act, NIE Networks' distribution licence obligations and the Electricity Order restricts NIE Networks from publishing applicant information unless given express permission by the applicants. NIRIG had suggested writing to applicants to ask for their permission to publish certain details in a similar format to the process used in the Republic of Ireland, or including a tick box on application forms for applicants to agree to have their details published.</p> <p>BM stated that in the short term cluster applicants would be approached to give their authorisation for data sharing. BM stated that in the long term NIE Networks is happy to write to all connection applicants to ask for their permission however this could lead to confusing information being published if less than 100% of applicants agree. BM stated that NIE Networks produced an 11kV heat map in 2015 and are still receiving a number of complaints regarding incomplete information. MC stated that all applicant information is released in the Republic of Ireland. DMcD enquired if this only applied to Large Scale Generation as it would be feasible to obtain their consents and publish their information. BM stated that there had been a change in legislation in the Republic of Ireland by CER to allow this level of information to be made public. TH stated that the primary stumbling block was the Data Protection Act and that the decision of a Minister would be required to alter policy.</p> <p>BM commented that it may be easier to publish data regarding company projects. DMcD stated that with the support of NIRIG, NIE Networks would be happy to write to large scale applicants as a first step in this process. JO'B stated that information regarding large scale applicants was already published on the SONI connection register but that currently there was no data regarding firm access quantity. MC stated that NIRIG members were not aware that aggregated values involving the local</p>	



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	<p>Generation Queue included the capacity of their own project. DMcD stated that NIE Networks was reluctant to publish Queue position information as this could be misleading. BM stated that some applicants would be receiving an extension as there was grid capacity to connect them; however this would require a consultation process with each applicant.</p>	
9	<p><b>Update Circulation List</b></p> <p>BM stated that NIE Networks would like to invite a representative from Operations (possibly David Hill) and the Future Network Team. In future questions could arise regarding storage and NIE Networks already has a candidate in mind to answer these questions but this shall be confirmed at a later date. HG stated that it was important for the right people to be included in the circulation list. TH stated that it would be worthwhile writing to all those on the current circulation list to confirm their interest in attending RGLG meetings.</p> <p>MC stated that she had spoken to DP Energy and they were keen to engage with these meetings but may not send the same representative on every occasion. BM commented that Sara Armstrong (DP Energy) and Kieran O'Malley (Open Hydro) should be added to the circulation list. CMcC enquired if there were any representatives for demand. TH stated that as this group concerned renewable energy, representatives from demand would be welcome. BM enquired if storage fell under the jurisdiction of renewables. TH confirmed that this was the case and that a note could be put on the Utility Regulator's website to highlight the existence of the RGLG group and invite interested parties to attend.</p>	
10	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>MC enquired if updates from the Hybrid Sites Working Group should continue to be highlighted at RGLG meetings. HG enquired how frequently these updates would be reported. DMcD stated that updates could be useful to the RGLG meetings.</p> <p>JO'B stated that there is a new licence condition on SONI to produce a ten year development plan. JO'B stated that the Utility Regulator shall be engaging with SONI in the next few weeks with the intention to publish this draft plan for consultation in quarters one and two of 2018.</p> <p>JO'B enquired about the timescales regarding the update of the G59 and G89 standards. BM stated that the current deadline was May 2018. DMcD stated that the intention was to align the standards with those in Great Britain. ENA have planned workshops regarding G98 and G99 in November. JO'B enquired if the G59 was to be replaced by the G99. TH asked for an update on this at the December meeting.</p>	

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	<p>DMcD stated that a new D Code has been approved and all new offers shall be issued against this. DMcD stated that connections must comply with the D Code listed in their connection offer letter. DMcD that the D Code was likely to change more frequently. BM stated that in line with the newly approved D code processes, there is now a D Code declaration to be signed before connections can be energised. JO'B enquired which D Code a connection must comply with if a major modification is made to the connection. DMcD stated that the connection must comply with the D Code in force at the time the offer was made for the modification works.</p>	
11	<p><b>Dates of 2017/2018 meetings</b></p> <p>TH proposed that a meeting should be held on the first Tuesday of December, March and June. TH requested for attendees to confirm their availability to attend these meetings.</p>	

## Summary of Actions

<b>Action No.</b>	<b>Action Description</b>	<b>To be Actioned by</b>
<b>1</b>	NIE Networks to send link for Renewable Capacity Update to all attendees	<b>NIE Networks</b>
<b>2</b>	SONI to forward FAQ Update and ATR document for end of November	<b>SONI</b>
<b>3</b>	SONI and NIE Networks to produce written documentation on next steps for constraint/curtailment issues prior to next RGLG meeting	<b>NIE Networks/SONI</b>
<b>4</b>	Write to Large Scale Generation applicants to ask for their permission to share their details	<b>NIE Networks</b>
<b>5</b>	Place a note on the UR website to announce the existence of the RGLG group and to invite interested parties to attend	<b>UR</b>