

Summary Minutes of the SONI Grid Code Review Panel Meeting

SONI Offices, Castlereagh House, Belfast



Tuesday 19th November 2019 11:30am to 13:00pm

Member Attendance:

Name	Company	Position on the GCRP
Sam Matthews	SONI	Chairperson
Marie Therese Campbell	SONI	Member
Daniel McSwiggan	SONI	Member
Alan Kennedy	SONI	Member
Ian Bailie	NIE Networks	Member
Jody O'Boyle	UREGNI	Member
Jim Wynne	Electric Ireland	Member
Sam Gibson	Moyle	Member
Claver Chitambo	SSE Renewables	Member (Alternate for Cathal Martin)

Other Attendance:

Name	Company	Position on the GCRP
Matthew Whiteside	SONI	TSO Observer
Alastair Cooke	SONI	TSO Observer
Jason Kennedy	SONI	TSO Observer
Kenny McPartland	UREGNI	Observer

Apologies:

Name	Company	Position on the GCRP
Ronan McKeown	NIE Networks	Member
Stephen Hemphill	Mutual Energy	Member
Leigh McCarthy	SONI	GCRP Secretary
Tim Steele	SEMO	Member
Tony McElroy	Energia	Member
Cera Slevin	ESB	Member
Jim Cooke	ESB Coolkeeragh	Member
Kevin McKeown	Gaelectric	Member
Sam Thompson	Powerhouse	Member
Cathal Martin	SSE Renewables	Member

1. Chairpersons Introduction to the Meeting

- Sam Matthews (chair) welcomed all members, observers and presenters to the meeting.
- Sam Matthews confirmed that the number required for a quorum was satisfied.

2. Minutes of Northern Ireland GCRP meeting held 26 June 2019

- No objections were raised on the minutes and actions from the previous GCRP meeting held on 26th June 2019.
- Sam Matthews reviewed actions from the previous meeting and the following updates provided:

ACTION (26/6/19): Marie Therese Campbell to provide update on other generators current status for fuel switching agreement.

- Marie Therese Campbell confirmed that one generator has signed up to fuel switching agreement and had completed testing
- Fuel switching agreements have been redrafted based on generator comments around template, dual fuel and I-SEM and SONI legal review. Fuel switching agreements have been re-issued in November.
- The Department will work with SONI to determine compliance requirements as soon as possible
- Marie Therese Campbell highlighted that fuel switching agreements only apply to conventional generators
- Sam Matthews believes the conventional generators in NI are in a position to sign fuel switching agreements
- Once signed Marie Therese Campbell stated that Utility Regulator will have to approve agreements

ACTION (26/6/19): Roisin McLaughlin to circulate network code status table.

- No update provided

ACTION(26/6/19): : Leigh McCarthy to update list of members on SONI website.

- Daniel McSwiggan stated that members list has not been updated on SONI website as SONI legal advised it is not a requirement under the Grid Code constitution and may impact data protection rights.
- Sam Matthews noted that a potential solution may exist in the form of asking members if they are happy to have their membership details published on the website. Sam also suggested that SONI should review proposal to update Grid Code constitution to make publication of members a requirement.
- Ian Bailie requested if full membership list including alternates can be shared with GCRP members.

ACTION: Sam Matthews to seek if members are happy to be listed on the SONI website (name/company/status)

ACTION: Leigh McCarthy to seek circulate members and alternates list to GCRP members

ACTION (26/6/19): Daniel McSwiggan to follow up with Jody O'Boyle (UREGNI) on battery storage requirements.

- Daniel McSwiggan clarified that this meeting was to address treatment of batteries under RfG and that the meeting had taken place.

ACTION (26/6/19): Daniel McSwiggan note in consultation paper that RfG modifications are based on consolidated version of the Grid Code (as approved in December 2018).

- Daniel McSwiggan confirmed that consultation paper reflected this.

3. Update on the RfG Incorporation Consultation

- Daniel McSwiggan presented on the RfG incorporation consultation the presentation noted that:
 - SONI launched public consultation for RfG and housekeeping grid code on 8th July 2019. Consultation ran for 8 weeks and ended on 30th August 2019
 - One confidential response was received.
 - SONI provided respondent with comments and are awaiting confirmation on whether their comments can be published.
 - No comments were made on housekeeping modifications received.
 - SONI have provided all necessary documentation to utility Regulator on proposed modifications and are awaiting approval
 - Once approved SONI will notify GCRP members and issue updated Grid Code on SONI website

4. Incorporation of the Connection Codes – next steps

- Alastair Cooke presented an update on SONI's incorporation of network codes, presentation noted that
 - Incorporation of the exhaustive requirements of the RfG into the Grid Code is in progress. Presently undergoing analysis of parallel EU Network codes before implementation decisions are taken
 - Presentation of further proposals to be given at SGCRP in Q1 2020 on amendments for DCC & HVDC, as detailed in the UR decision paper
 - Incorporation of the non-exhaustive & exhaustive requirements of the DCC & HVDC into the Grid Code due in Q4 2020
- Alastair Cooke presented update on application of CNC to existing users following modernisation or refurbishment. Open discussion followed:
 - Alastair Cooke suggested that there may be an opportunity under application of RfG to existing users to make older non-controllable distribution connected wind farms intending to renew/extend their time limited connection agreements to be RfG compliant
 - Jody O'Boyle highlighted that any refurbishment of new plant would require a modification to their associated connection agreement
 - Daniel McSwiggan stated the intention of RfG was for System Operators to determine if any modernisation to existing plant would require a change in connection agreement. It was not the System Operator's role to impose RfG on an existing user if they are not modernising plant but just asking for a renewal to the connection agreement.

- Jody O'Boyle asked if any existing connection agreements were coming to an end. Marie Therese Campbell answered and stated that a number of distribution connection agreements were due to expire down the pipeline, but stated that generators can request an extension to their agreement.
- Marie Therese Campbell asked how existing connection agreements for conventional generators that are coming to an end would be handled.
- Claver Chitambo asked for clarity on how existing conventional generators will be treated when compared to existing wind farms
- Alan Kennedy stated most conventional generators in NI have legacy status which allows modifications to existing agreements to be made
- Ian Bailie stated that if an extension to existing connection agreements was requested in order to cover their lifetime O&M costs, NIEN were likely to approve
- Alan Kennedy recommended that if an extension to existing connection agreements were requested, it should be approved if controllability can be provided to SONI
- Alastair Cooke highlighted that the distribution network was already congested and the extension of existing generators connection agreements would prevent the connection of new technologies onto the system
- Ian Bailie stated NIEN are getting enquires by generators to extend connection agreements to end of life. Ian also suggested that existing distribution connected wind generators intending on renewing/extending connection agreements could potentially have to meet new RfG Grid Code arrangements in order to reapply for renewal. This would allow for an opportunity to replace non-controllable plant with plant with a greater level of controllability.
- Claver Chitambo stated that there is a risk that new RfG Grid Code arrangements are too onerous and may force existing users to shut down plant rather than re-apply for connection agreement renewal

ACTION: Marie Therese Campbell to provide update on how many connection agreements will expire in the near future

Post Meeting Note: As per Article 4 (a) (ii) of RfG, in relation to generators modifying plant to such an extent that their connection agreement must be substantially revised the onus is on the relevant system operator to consider the extent of the modification and notify the relevant regulatory authority if said modification requires a new connection agreement. For clarification if an existing distribution connected generator is modifying plant or seeking a renewal to a connection agreement the onus is on NIE Networks as the relevant system operator to determine if any changes made by the existing generator party will require a new connection agreement.

It should also be noted that SONI will be issuing a discussion paper on the *Application of Connection Codes to existing users* with the circulation of GCRP meeting minutes (as presented at the Joint GCRP). This paper only considers application of connection codes to existing users in terms of transmission connected existing users.

For clarity SONI has not formed a position on the application of RfG Grid Code requirements to existing distribution connected wind generators (PPMs) seeking renewal/extension to their connection agreements without having undergone any plant upgrading or modernisation and the discussion taken place in the GCRP (above) should not be construed as such.

5. Discussion on the Connection of Energy Storage Units

- Marie Therese Campbell presented opened a discussion on the connection of energy storage units
- Marie Therese Campbell gave all attendees an update on the development of energy storage technologies in NI. She demonstrated that 300 MW of battery storage connections are in the process of making a connection agreement with SONI, with more potentially in the pipeline.
- How to facilitate energy storage technologies in I-SEM is in progress. Marie Therese Campbell highlighted that National Grid have completed work in facilitating such technologies from 2006 and had made the relevant modifications to their retrospective Grid Code. She stated that SONI could use this as an example on how to make modifications to facilitate energy storage technologies in NI.
- EirGrid Group has previously issue papers on the integration of *Battery Energy Storage Systems to the Ireland and Northern Ireland Power Systems & Volume Capped: I-SEM Interactions for Battery Storage Systems*. Marie Therese Campbell voiced that it was important for SONI to align with EirGrid and provide a consistent approach in the incorporation of energy storage technologies.
- Marie Therese Campbell raised that considering batteries as PPM's as outlined in the Grid Code, though suitable, is not a perfect fit as it was originally written for PV and wind generator applications
- The next steps were discussed:
 - Further work will be required to facilitate energy storage technologies into all of SONI's systems (e.g. EMS)
 - Harmonisation with EirGrid on incorporation of energy storage technologies sought after
 - Claver Chitambo stated that from a power perspective, considering batteries as PPMs provides no issues/problems
 - Marie Therese Campbell flagged that further discussions were needed on how to handle the removal of control action from batteries in relation to constraints and curtailment. The removal of control action needs to avoid a ramp to full availability (as currently expected by WFPSs) – ramp to full availability expected to follow an EDIL instruction OR a frequency event
 - Sam Matthews noted whether someone from the battery storage community should be added as a member to the GCRP. This was received positively as it is important to have all relevant parties involved in future development of the power sector.

6. UR Update

- Jody O’Boyle confirmed UR had received RfG derogations from SONI which is currently under consideration with intention to approve.
- The panel was informed that the Clean Energy Package will commence down the line

7. AOB

- Alastair Cooke discussed Metering Code: Sub Code 4 which refers to large demand customers
 - One upcoming large scale demand customer connection and potential interest of additional connections has prompted SONI to review the current provisions of the SONI Metering Code for these purposes.
 - SONI to propose changes to Sub Code 4 which will require demand customers to update demand operational metering requirement. This will cater for outstanding requirements of the SONI DDC proposals that the UR would not approve reference Articles 28.2(e&i) and Article 18.3.
 - Changes proposed to the following in Sub Code 4:
 - Housekeeping changes to be included in Sub Code 4. This will require existing metering code definitions to include references to the new sub code
 - SONI are of the view that this change does not introduce any new or enhanced requirements. No additional equipment will be required
 - Ian Bailie requested a copy of any proposed modifications to the Metering Code be shared with NIEN

ACTION: Alastair Cooke to provide NIEN with redline version of Grid Code Metering Code proposed modifications

- Sam Matthews made the panel aware of EirGrid discussions on the interpretation of Registered Capacity definition in ROI TSO
 - EirGrid have proposed an amendment to the definition of registered capacity as it presently refers based on the use of “sustained basis” in EirGrid’s Grid Code definition of Registered Capacity
 - The modification will attempt to define what a providing active power on a sustained basis means for varying technologies i.e. gas-fired plant, PPM’s, energy storage
 - SONI does not have any sustained basis regarding Registered Capacity
 - EirGrid to make proposal public next year (2020)
- Lastly, SONI informed the panel that an update on the over-installation modification will be presented at the next GCRP with the intention of launching a consultation on over-install modification post the next GCRP meeting

8. Arrangements for next meeting

- Next GCRP proposed to be held in March 2020 in The Oval, Shelbourne Road, Dublin
- Sam Matthews made closing statement and ended GCRP