



# Offshore Co-ordination Introductory Webinar Q&A 28 May 2020

We held first webinar to introduce you to our Offshore Co-ordination project and this document outlines the answers to the questions asked

## Introduction

As the Electricity System Operator, we have started a new project to assess the best outcome for consumers, local communities and the transition to net zero in the connection of offshore wind and interconnectors. On the 28 May 2020 we updated you on what we are planning to do over the coming year and how you can get involved as part of our introductory webinar.

A lot of stakeholders took the time to join the call and ask us some questions about what we will be working on, when and how, which we really appreciate. We have captured these with a written response for everyone to refer to. **Table 1** below shows the questions asked and the answers provided.

As our thinking evolves over the course of the project we will be keeping you updated every step of the way and look forward to working with you to shape our proposals.

This document sits alongside the [slides](#) and recording from the webinar.

**Table 1**

**Questions and answers**

Governance & engagement	
1.How will Ofgem be engaged in the process?	We are working closely with Ofgem and have meetings planned in with them every three to four weeks. As the project evolves, as with the engagement plan this will be targeted to the key milestones in the project. They are very interested in the project
2.Is this a statutory process?	In terms of the project, no its not. It's a project to look at an approach that's out there and see if this can be improved moving forward.
3.Have you heard how BEIS intends to progress their offshore wind deal workstreams following their webinar last month?	We have been speaking to BEIS and will continue to engage with them through the project and ensure we are aligned in our thinking and joined up for deliverables. We anticipate BEIS will provide an update on their work once they are ready.
4.Will the RIIO-2 business plan be updated to reflect all this? When will stakeholders be able to see that?	You will note that there is a similar action within the plan but over a longer time period. Timescales involved have meant that we have brought this forward from the RIIO 2 period. As we move through to scoping the second phase of work we will ensure that we will update the RIIO-2 plan to reflect what we see our role being through the RIIO 2 time period.
5.Will you be engaging with Local Planning Authority's?	Yes, we have identified all of the stakeholder groups and plan to engage with local planning authorities.
6.What can this team do to ensure internal ESO colleagues/stakeholders are fully aware of the key aspects to consider (as raised on this call) and	We are working on a specific internal ESO communication plan in addition to the external stakeholder engagement plan to ensure colleagues are kept up to date with the project.

<p>take these into account on a case worker per project basis?</p>	
<p>7. When you publish the first interim report?</p>	<p>We are planning to publish first interim report end at the end of June/beginning of July. We are currently refining our interim milestones.</p>
<p>8. Does the ESO have an ideal solution(s) prior to this engagement?</p>	<p>We do not at this stage and welcome working in collaboration with stakeholders to start to form solution(s). We are looking forward to the cost benefit analysis providing recommendations on the most beneficial solutions</p>
<p>9. Will interim reports be publicly available before R4 leasing round so that all developers are working with the same level of information ahead of submitting bids?</p>	<p>We are planning to have the final Cost Benefit Analysis report completed by 30 October 2020. There will also be a consultation on the draft CBA in September 2020 and interim reports will be released between now and then as they are completed.</p>
<p>10. Does the team have a view on whether primary legislation (or equivalent) is likely to be required to facilitate or enable some of the more innovative solutions?</p>	<p>We do not yet know the answer to this question, as we start to work through options we will have a firmer view.</p>
<p>11. Is there a danger of being over ambitious and not being able to deliver significant change? Other widescale reviews (e.g. SQSS) were too ambitious and failed to deliver longstanding change. Is there any obligation for BEIS / Ofgem to take on the recommendations?</p>	<p>We will make sure that we will take into consideration view from all critical stakeholders, and we believe that our work is challenging but not over ambitious. We will also make sure that we will learn from work done previously.</p>

<p>12.What are the main existing workstreams out there you are planning to use in your gap analysis of works?</p>	<p>The gap analysis is a review of relevant industry literature. Among others, this will include the Integrated Offshore Transmission Project (East) final report, recent publications by the Offshore Wind Industry Council (OWIC), and reports by European stakeholders. The gap analysis will be used along with the Phase 1 outputs and stakeholder feedback to define the scope of Phase 2.</p>
<p><b>Technical workstreams</b></p>	
<p>Round four seabed leasing timing &amp; alignment</p>	
<p>13.Projects awarded in Round 4 this Autumn would be commissioned the earliest between 2029/33 and they would need to progress their grid connection earlier (starting in 2021). Do you think that offshore coordinated networks could be used in those Round 4 projects?</p>	<p>We are aiming to complete our work in the timescales set out, with the aim that some of our work can be used in R4 connections.</p>
<p>14.Are you aligning with The Crown Estate's future leasing key zones (R4) to assess where future Offshore Wind is most likely to need to connect into and coordinate the likely required connections?</p>	<p>Yes, we will align our work with future leasing key zones (R4 and beyond).</p>

<p>15. Considering the Round 4 areas: Dogger Bank, Eastern Regions, Southern Region and Northern Wales and the Irish Sea, do you think that any of those areas have more potential than others for these solutions?</p>	<p>We will treat all areas in R4 equally.</p>
<p>Consenting</p>	
<p>16. Is the consenting process and acquisition of land rights, including engagement and consenting timescales, being factored in?</p>	<p>We are conscious of the timescales involved in delivering offshore wind projects, including the contribution of the consenting process. In the first phase of work we are considering the technical aspects and cost-benefit analysis, with any changes required to enable more coordination proposed for our second phase or for other people to progress.</p>
<p>17. Does the work you are doing include reference to the consents process for delivering these projects?</p>	<p>We are conscious of the timescales involved in delivering offshore wind projects, including the contribution of the consenting process. In the first phase of work we are considering the technical aspects and cost-benefit analysis, with any changes required to enable more coordination proposed for our second phase or for other people to progress.</p>
<p>18. Consents: do you know whether it will be DCO or Local town planning?</p>	<p>We are conscious of the timescales involved in delivering offshore wind projects, including the contribution of the consenting process. In the first phase of work we are considering the technical aspects and cost-benefit analysis, with any changes required to enable more coordination proposed for our second phase or for other people to progress.</p>
<p>Innovation &amp; conceptual design scope</p>	

<p>19.Does the scope include looking at interconnection and EU grids?</p>	<p>In our initial planning methodology for conceptual design we will take into consideration interconnectors and the impact on EU grid.</p>
<p>20.Is there a renewable export scenario being considered? The scale change in renewables might inform workstream 2 outcomes</p>	<p>Yes, the renewable export scenario will be considered.</p>
<p>21.Are there more innovative approaches being considered regarding grid connections e.g. offshore? Other?</p>	<p>We aim to use innovative approaches in grid connections.</p>
<p>22.Will connection points close to the shore or will it be more inland?</p>	<p>Connections will be the most optimal points of connection.</p>
<p>23.Are you considering an Offshore Ring Main? and what is BEIS view on the potential for Offshore Ring Main?</p>	<p>We will be using an offshore ring main in our assumptions, which we take to be offshore grid infrastructure that wind developments can plug into. BEIS will be able to advise of their view on the ring main.</p>
<p>24.Could you clarify when and how you will be assessing technology options/possibilities?</p>	<p>The technology options will be assessed in Workstream 1 of our scope of work</p>
<p>25.How are you thinking about anticipatory investment and when will it be justified?</p>	<p>The anticipatory investment will be considered in the least regret analysis, which forms part of the cost-benefit analysis.</p>

<p>26. Who will pay for any additional infrastructure required - such as an Offshore Ring Main? Will it be public or private investment used to pay for any infrastructure solution/s?</p>	<p>Who pays for any additional infrastructure will not form part of this initial phase of our work. We will consider if it is most appropriate for us or another organisation to consider this question in a second phase of the project.</p>
<p>27. Will there be recommendations on how the infrastructure is delivered?</p>	<p>We will provide recommendation how the infrastructure will be delivered.</p>
<p>28. Projects already deploying coordinated approach like Vattenfall's Norfolk Vanguard and Norfolk Boreas are using HVDC transmission technology, will that be required for other projects too? supply chain capacity?</p>	<p>HVDC transmission technology will be considered for the projects.</p>
<p>29. How is the use of hybrid infrastructure (combined energy evacuation and interconnection) considered in the project?</p>	<p>The proposal for use of hybrid infrastructure will be considered in one or more of the conceptual network designs.</p>
<p><b>Connection process &amp; Use of System charges</b></p>	
<p>30. For the connections process review will any changes/improvements be applied to all in flight connections</p>	<p>The connections process review will look at a range of timeframes for connections. We anticipate there is the greatest potential for change in projects not yet with connection agreements.</p>



<p>or solely future ones beyond a certain / date / status?</p>	
<p>31.Are you going to also consider potential impacts on the transmission use of system charges as an outcome of the different solutions/options?</p>	<p>Yes. The impacts on transmission use of system charges will be a factor in the assessment of different solutions and options.</p>