

# ESO Connections Agora

## 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023



# Introduction

The Customer Connection Agora Sessions are aiming to:

- ✓ Provide an opportunity to learn about a variety of subjects such as Connection Processes, Codes and Policy Changes, Network Operability, Operational Compliance, Security and Liabilities, Cancellation Charges and more;
- ✓ Increase the visibility of the Electricity Connections Team to our customers, stakeholders and the wider electricity market;
- ✓ Facilitate updates on our key workstreams and initiatives, as well as enable engagement and interaction via the Questions and Answers segment.

## Agora presented by

**Jo Greenan**

Senior Connections Strategy Lead

**Kav Patel**

Senior Policy and Change Officer

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Senior Policy and Change Officer

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Senior Connections Design Lead

# Agenda

- 5 Point Plan
- Connection Reform
- Connection Portal
- Questions and Answers

Please ask all questions using chat function. We aim to get through as many questions as possible.



# 5 Point Plan

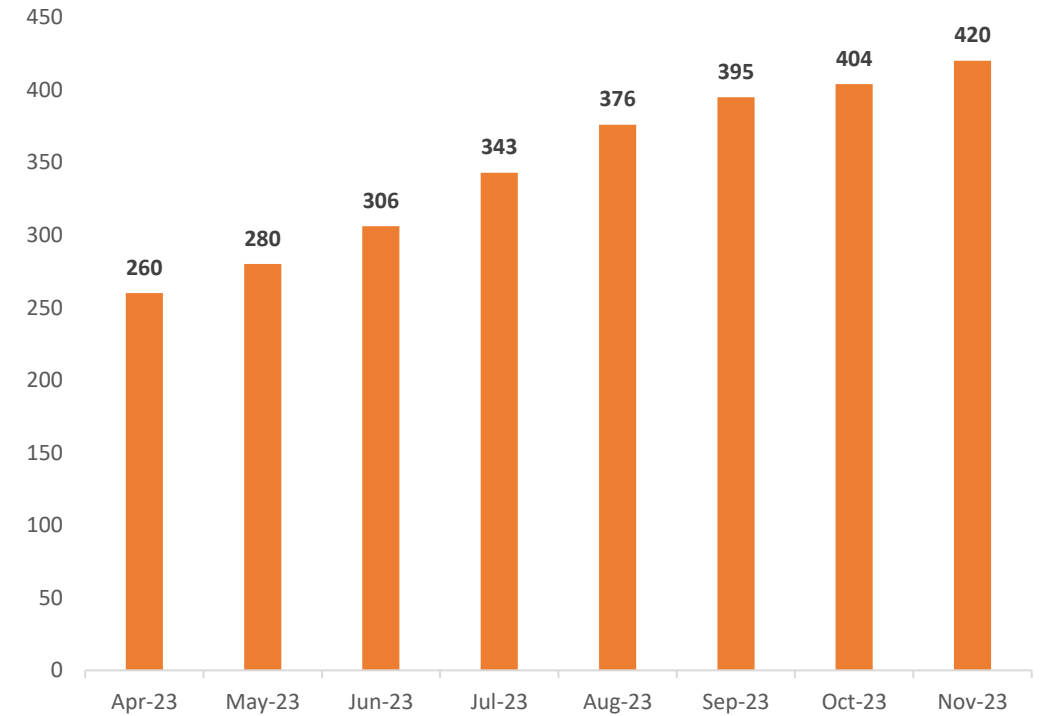
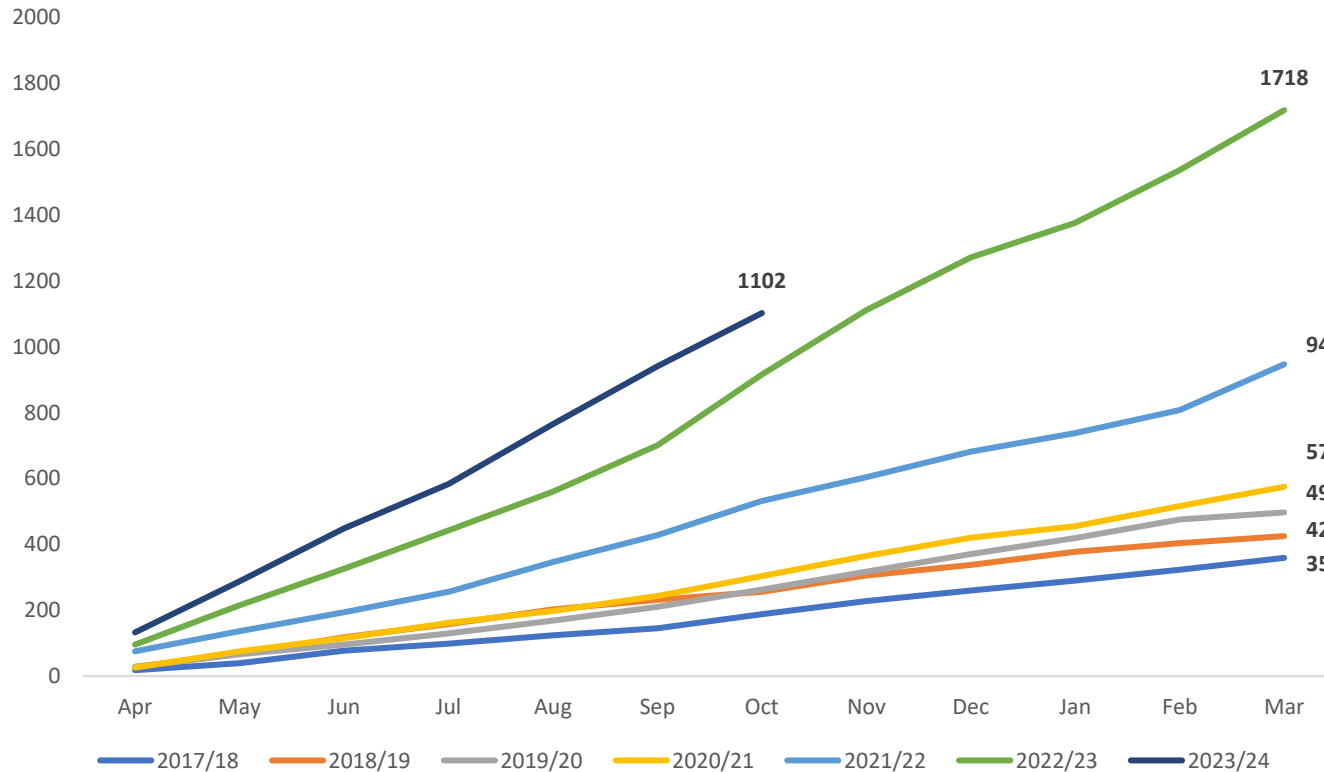


# Connection Applications

The number of licenced connection applications has increased over the last 5 years, with a marked increase over the last 2 years. This increase is driven mainly by new Offshore Wind and Battery Energy Storage applications.

The increase in applications has in turn increased the contracted background and connection queue to **420GW**, which is an increase of **160GW** in the last 8 months (transmission only).

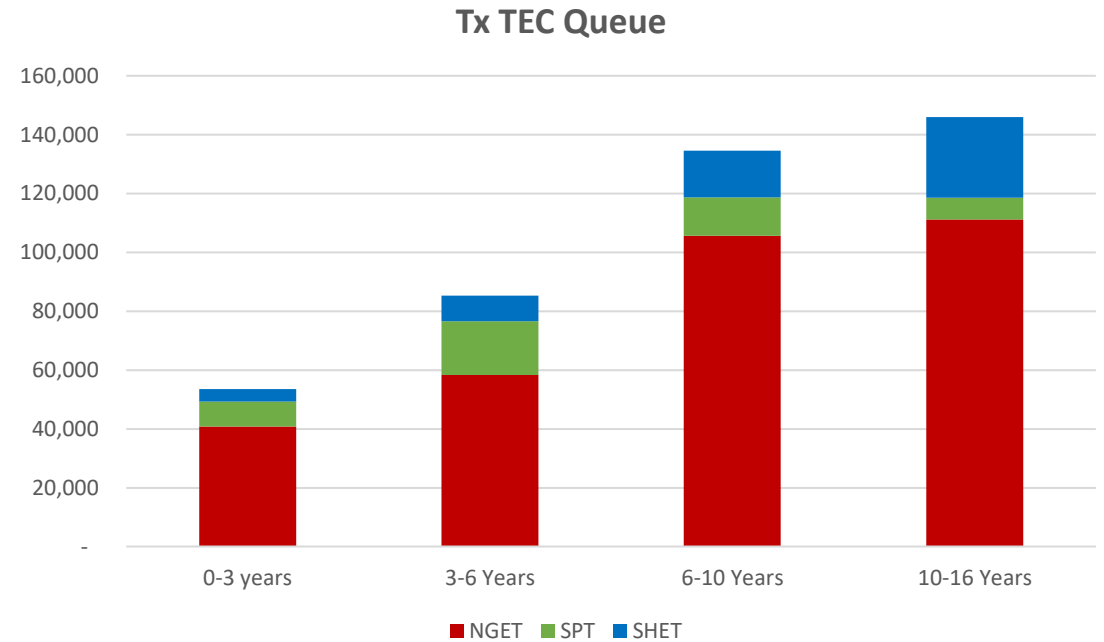
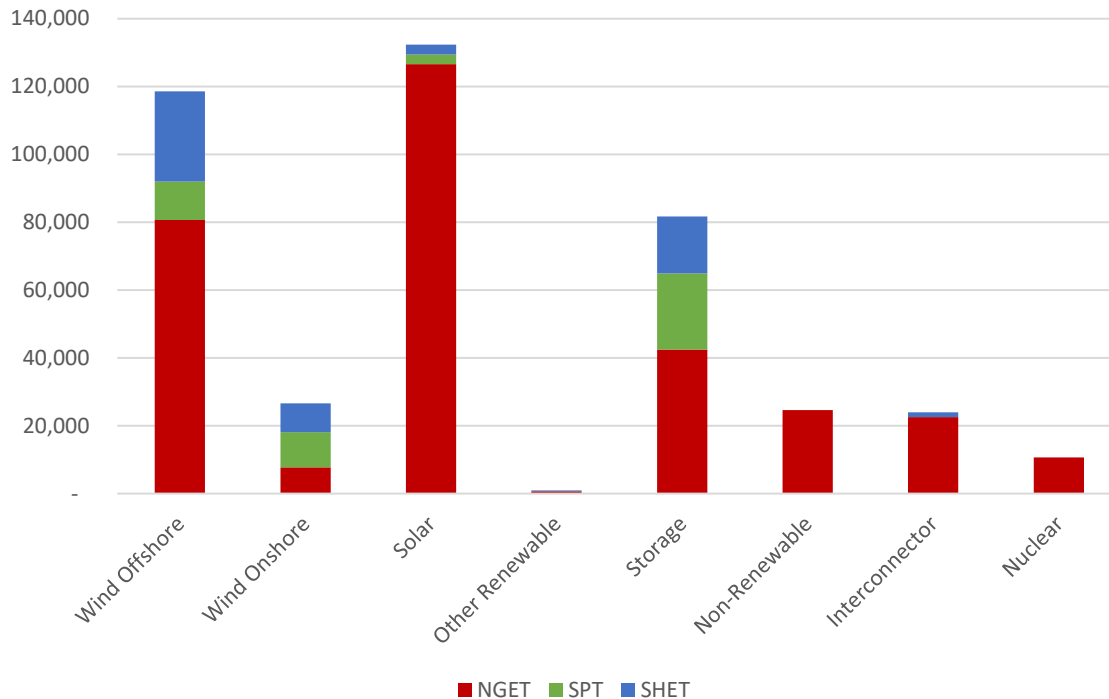
Licensed Applications Received



# Connections Queue

The contracted background is still growing, with more applications offsetting a falling acceptance rate.

Circa **420GW** of generation projects are currently seeking to connect to the electricity transmission system, yet our data shows that up to **70%** of those projects may never be built. There is **142GW** currently in the distribution queue.



# Our 5 Point Plan

Our 5-Point Plan is a set of Tactical Initiatives ahead of the wider connections reform

1. ~~TEC Amnesty~~

2. Construction Planning Assumptions Review

3. Treatment of Storage

4. Queue Management

5. Non-firm Offer Development





# CPA Review and Treatment of Storage

## Construction Planning Assumptions Review (CPA)

We are changing the assumptions that most projects in the queue will connect to reflect a 30-40% connection rate

## Treatment of Storage (BESS)

We are revising the way storage connections are modelled using insight resulting of a better understanding of its behavior. These changes will allow storage to connect quicker and support unlocking more capacity to connect others.

## Transmission Works Review (TWR)

Together the above changes are being reflected in the Transmission works review where we hope to improve connection dates and reduce works.

In England and Wales the two step offer process has been introduced to allow the TWR to be completed alongside the usual connections process

The existing connections process is still in operation in Scotland.



# Queue Management

- There is currently no mechanism in the CUSC to terminate projects that are not progressing.
- CMP 376 is the CUSC Mod which would give the ESO powers to terminate agreements that are not progressing
- Final work group report was submitted to Ofgem on the 7th June
- Currently developing a substantial guidance document and working with TO's on implementation
- CMP 376 was approved on the 13<sup>th</sup> November



# Non-firm Offer Development

## Context

We published an [update](#) in June. It allows storage to connect once certain non essential enabling works are completed on a non-firm (customer choice) basis.

## What has happened since then

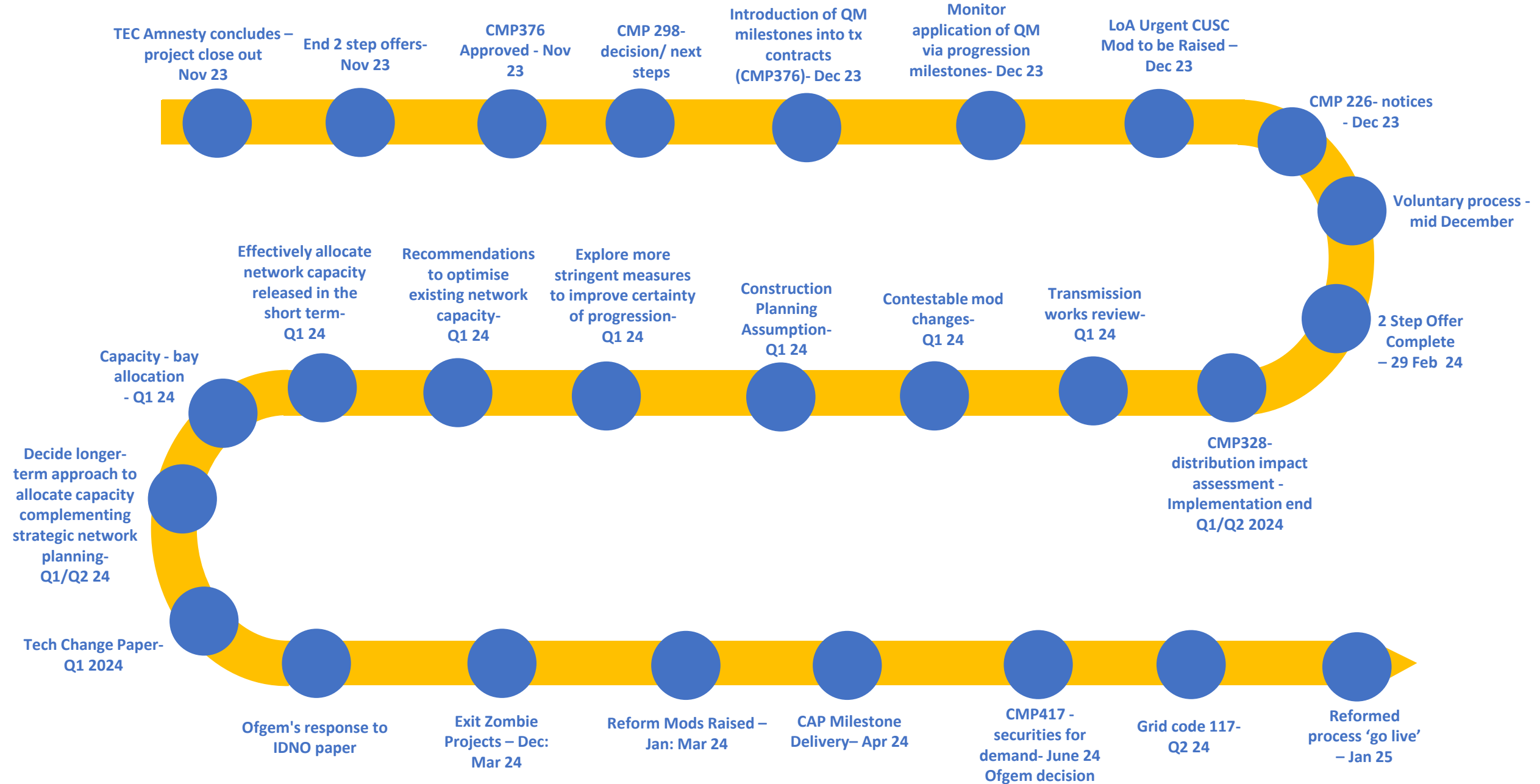
We have been working with the TOs and the DNOs (through the ENA's Strategic Connections Group) to develop the detail that underpins the policy. In addition we have analysed our [EOI](#) to understand the appetite for an accelerated non firm connection date for storage.

## Update

We will imminently launch tranche 1 for E&W . This will be for ~20 customers (~10GW) and will include Queue Management milestones  
Tranche 2 (E & W) to be worked up from March onwards.  
Dates to roll out the initiative for Scottish storage sites are still under discussion and are dependent on us finalising the policy  
Distribution connected sites are being progressed together with ENA Strategic Connections Group



# Connections Roadmap - the next 6 months...



# Connections Reform



# Connections Reform – Final Recommendations published

**Summary of our Final Recommendations - <https://www.nationalgrideso.com/document/298491/download>**

**Final Recommendations - <https://www.nationalgrideso.com/industry-information/connections/connections-reform#Key-documents>**

The screenshot shows the ESO website's navigation menu and a sidebar with various links. The main content area is titled 'Connections Reform' and includes a description of the project. Below this, there are tabs for 'Overview', 'Key documents', 'Phase 2 – Solution design', and 'Phase 1 – Case for change'. The 'Key documents' tab is active, displaying a list of documents under the heading 'December 2023 Final Recommendations'. The list includes a main report and five annexes.

December 2023 Final Recommendations	
	Name
	Connections Reform - Final Recommendations Report - Dec 23
	Connections Reform - Final Recommendations Summary - Dec 23
	Annex 1 - Consultation Question Response Summaries
	Annex 2 - Target Model Option (TMO) 4 Process Overview
	Annex 3 - Revised Design Criteria Assessment
	Annex 4 - Gate 2 Options
	Annex 5 - Connections Process Advisory Group Terms of Reference (draft)

**Still time to subscribe to our Webinar on 14 December - [Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams](#)**

## Next Steps

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- Webinar 14 December 2023
- Moving into implementation phase Q1 2024



**Email us**

[Box.connectionsreform@nationalgrideso.com](mailto:Box.connectionsreform@nationalgrideso.com)

# Connections Portal Update





# December Release

December's Portal release covers a number of features including functionality directly drawn from your feedback at our recent Stakeholder Workshops



## SINGLE SIGN ON

We received a number of requests from Customers to improve our login process.

A number of users indicated the Salesforce Authenticator App caused issues for their company.

Therefore we are introducing a simplified single sign on process that will undertake MFA via a code sent to your mobile phone.

This single sign on feature will allow access to other ESO accounts you may have – SMP, Data Portal for example.

Instructions for existing users have been issued on 6<sup>th</sup> December and can also be found on our website.



## CLEARER INFORMATION

### Pre- Application

Meeting dates for Pre-Applications will now be visible on the Portal. Email and Portal notifications will be sent automatically once the meeting date is set.

### Application

Clock start visible on Application tile

### Project

Agreement ref and version visible on Portal

### DNO Mod Notice

Related embedded Projects name visible in all notifications and system generated Mod Notice itself.

### Embedded Developer

Dates visible of Mod Notice sent and DNO Submission deadline



## ADDITIONAL FEATURES

### Query Management

All users in your company will be able to see all queries raised by your company.

Hyperlinks will be visible associating the Case number with the relevant Application / Pre-application / Project etc. Additionally the user will be visible who raised the query.

### LOA

Letter of Authority template added to digital Application form for Directly Connected Onshore Applications (as mandated by Ofgem)

Q&A



Please ask any questions using Q&A function.

# Questions and Answers

No.	Question	Answer
1	Will Queue Management be added to "in flight" Modification Applications?	Yes, they will be. We encourage all customers to speak with their CCMs or you can respond to the WACM 7 notice which was issued on the 27 November.
2	Does the Queue Management process apply for embedded generation schemes governed under BEGA Offers?	Queue Management applies to all directly connected customer including directly connected demand (it does not apply to BEGA's/BELLA's and Embedded Customers).
3	Is there an opportunity to not have Queue Management added to "In flight" Construction Agreements? If yes, what are the options ?	<p>No, customers with a contracted Completion Date of 2 years or more from CMP376 Implementation Date are offered two options:            Option 1- Keep existing date and have QM Milestones applied. No fees            Option 2- Submit a Modification Application. Normal fees apply.</p> <p>Customers have 6 months to notify ESO of their decision for any agreements they have.</p>
4	Note that Agreements to Vary will be submitted on the 27th May 2024 to apply Queue Management. Does this mean that the last day to clock start a Modification Application to change connection date is then 26th May 2024?	Customers need to apply before 27 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 – the project does not need to have clock started.
5	When will I get my new Appendix Q? Do I need to do anything to get it?	<p>Customers with a contracted Completion Date of 2 years or more from CMP376 Implementation Date are offered two options:            Option 1- Keep existing date and have QM Milestones applied. No fees            Option 2- Submit a Modification Application. Normal fees apply.</p> <p>Customers have 6 months to notify ESO of their decision for any agreements they have.</p> <p>If you have not received your notice from ESO which was sent on the 27 November 2023 then please email your Contract Connections Manager.</p>

# Questions and Answers

No.	Question	Answer
6	How does Queue Management work for HND FUE projects especially for coordinated projects which are inter-dependent on each other's progress ?	For holding offers for Holistic Network Design Follow Up Exercise (HND FUE). If the User in question is happy, we propose to introduce the Queue Management Process when we update the Agreement without the need for (under the specific Queue Management implementation) either a Modification Application or an ESO ATV.
7	Is there any update on when the Milestone Calculator will be functional and available for use?	We are looking to add the calculator functionality to the Connections Portal for future release. Please contact your Contract Connections Manager to discuss Milestone dates.
8	Can you provide the weblink to the Queue Management drop in sessions?	<u><a href="#">Slides for Workshop 1 can be found here</a> and <a href="#">Teams recording here</a>.</u> <u><a href="#">Slides for Workshop 2 can be found here</a> and <a href="#">Teams recording here</a>.</u>  <u><a href="#">FAQ for workshop can be found here</a>.</u>
9	The information on what you're doing is useful. But the gap is what impact your inputs will have on the connection queue. The 'S diagram' is an illustration of what you're doing but would be more useful if there is a mapping to how these inputs will bring the queue down.	The CAP requires recommendations to be shared with TO & Ofgem by end of Q1 2024 and we will use these Agora sessions to keep you updated.
10	Does Project Progression interact with the two step offer process?	Yes - DNO project progression applications have fallen into the 2 step offer process
11	When does the two step offer process come to an end?	Any application clock started from the 27th November will now be receiving a full offer, so not included in the Two step process. Second step offers will be coming out to customers ahead of 29th February 24.
12	Is there a criteria for choosing which two step offer is sent out sooner?	NGET have got a detailed plan to ensure that their Transmission Owner Construction Offer (TOCO) come across to ESO as efficiently as possible, the order is determined by the order NGET send them to ESO to ensure we get them all out by the 29 Feb. ESO have already started receiving 2 step offers.

## Questions and Answers

No.	Question	Answer
13	Will the two step offer be combined into one full offer if there were multiple applications at one Grid Supply Point?	A single application will receive one offer as per usual. Bilateral Connection Agreements and Construction Agreements, are between the ESO and one customer for one connection project.
14	How did you choose which 20 Expressions of Interest (EOIs) went into Tranche 1?	Tranche 1 is for transmission-connected sites in England & Wales. Sites were determined by NGET according to suitability based on the following criteria: storage only (ie no hybrid), which had declared an interest in the EOI for an accelerated non-firm connection, were simple sites for acceleration (ie no new substation build or where a wider site strategy is needed) and that had no detrimental impact on existing customers or other projects in delivery.
15	Can you please confirm when the EOI process results will come out to the developers?	We are starting to send out offers for tranche 1 and reviewing the remaining England & Wales transmission-connected EOI submissions from March onwards as part of a tranche 2. Tranche 2 will also aim to consider large embedded customers who have submitted an EOI, and who may potentially benefit from this initiative depending on the identified critical enabling works. This is subject to updating/accepting the BESS Policy. Dates to roll out the initiative for Scottish storage sites are still under discussion. Lastly small and medium distribution connected sites are being progressed together with ENA Strategic Connections Group
16	Given it would appear that the Tranche 1 recipients may be receiving offers immediately before Christmas, will the previously indicated 3 month response time be extended to account for this?	We will not be looking to extend the three month response time.
17	Will the projects that submitted an EOI for accelerated connection dates jump ahead of those that did not in the capacity queue?	As their firm date will remain unchanged, their queue position remains unchanged.

# Questions and Answers

No.	Question	Answer
18	We have submitted EOI to various DNOs where we have projects with distribution connection offers. Can you confirm if the ESO EOI from springtime 2023 was only relating to projects connecting direct to transmission or if that is feeding into the DNO EOI process?	DNOs have gone out with an EOI to identify sites to accelerate through technical limits. If projects want an accelerated connection through technical limits, they need to respond to the DNO EOI. The DNOs do have the ESO EOI data, however they have a separate targeted EOI per DNO substation (rather than GB wide) to identify projects to accelerate through technical limits. More information can be found here: <a href="https://www.energynetworks.org/operating-the-networks/connecting-to-the-networks/improving-and-accelerating-customer-connections">https://www.energynetworks.org/operating-the-networks/connecting-to-the-networks/improving-and-accelerating-customer-connections</a>
19	Will there be a second opportunity (Tranche 2) to submit an EOI?	We are working to understand how this initiative could be rolled out on an enduring basis. Our current plan for tranche 1 is for the remaining EOI transmission-connected England & Wales submissions to be reviewed as well as aiming to consider large embedded customers who have submitted an EOI, and who may potentially benefit from this initiative depending on the identified critical enabling works. This is subject to updating/accepting the BESS Policy.
20	How can new developers request for non – firm?	We are working to understand how this initiative could be rolled out on an enduring basis.
21	If customer has connected through Technical Limits offer, would their Cancellation charges & Securities fall away?	The Cancellation Charges and securities will be removed once a project is connected – even if the project connects years before the transmission works to deliver a firm connection are completed. This includes the liability for any wider works.
22	Do you have a link to the "technical limits" offer you referred to there?	<a href="https://www.energynetworks.org/operating-the-networks/connecting-to-the-networks/improving-and-accelerating-customer-connections">https://www.energynetworks.org/operating-the-networks/connecting-to-the-networks/improving-and-accelerating-customer-connections</a>
23	When will LOAs become a requirement?	We are currently raising an urgent CUSC code modification for this requirement. We will keep customers updated on the progress of this process. Should the modification be approved by Ofgem, customers will be notified of the implementation date accordingly.

# Questions and Answers

No.	Question	Answer
24	Are LOAs to be requested for already contracted connections?	Customers with existing connection agreements are encouraged to submit a copy of the LOA for their project to their Connections Contract Manager on a voluntary basis.
25	Is the LOA template on the digital application going to be same as that which will be agreed upon as part of the urgent CUSC Modification?	The full details of LOA requirement, including the template, will be developed as part of workgroups for the CUSC modification. Therefore, the template on the Connections Portal may be revised following the implementation of the mod.
26	Is the requirement to provide an LOA mandatory once CUSC Modification finalised?	Yes, the aim of the CUSC modification is to make the LOA a mandatory requirement when submitting a connections application.
27	Is the ESO's LOA template the only version that can be accepted - we have our own LOA template and would want to submit them those and not ESO template?	Customers are encouraged to use only the template provided by the ESO. This is to reduce the risk of customers providing insufficient or unclear information under this requirement.
28	With the remodelling of how BESS is treated, will this result in BESS being able to connect without curtailment? The current changes coming through the DNOs are letting BESS projects in the stack be accelerated but only if they accept curtailed connections.	<p>The option to connect without uncompensated curtailment is always available to customers. They just need to wait for all the enabling works to be completed. Where customers prefer to reduce the waiting times to connect, they can opt for a non-firm connection which will involve some form of curtailment. The ESO has also launched an initiative as part of its five-point plan to allow storage customers to accelerate their connection dates if they are willing to accept curtailments.</p> <p>Whilst the remodelling of BESS can result in a less onerous background and therefore less enabling works and earlier connection dates, it may not completely remove the need for curtailment if customers wish to connect ahead of the completion of all their enabling works.</p>
29	When can we expect to see the outcome of the Construction Planning Assumptions review and treatment of storage being reflected in customer's offers?	The outcome of the revised CPAs will be reflected in customers' offers when these are issued in Q3 2024 in England and Wales. We are developing a new timeline with the TO's and Ofgem

# Questions and Answers

No.	Question	Answer
30	When are the new assumptions for BESS connected projects likely to become practically applicable?	The revised assumptions for storage projects in CPAs has already been implemented as part of the transmission works review (TWR) initiative in England and Wales and is currently being implemented in Scotland.
31	How will demand applications be affected by 5-point plan etc and could we see how the release of capacity for demand will land?	The Transmission Works Review will benefit both Transmission and Distribution customers, we hope to be able to send out updated agreements during spring/summer 2024, we also work closely with the ENA on their 3 point plan to ensure we are improving connections process across both Transmission And Distribution.
32	Given the removal of pre-application calls/ meetings, what is the process of identifying potential capacity to better tailor applications? Do you have plans to work with new projects to better steer the most efficient and proactive capacities to reach net zero more efficiently?	<p>The England and Wales pre-application webinar process for 2024 will be as follows:</p> <p>Quarterly webinars for each region (1 per week) starting March 2024.</p> <p>The Portal will be used by customers to book on to the webinars. Customers can then raise queries through the Portal. These queries will be shared with NGET upon receipt. NGET have committed to providing a substantive response to the ESO within 14 calendar days from receipt of the queries. This will be shared with relevant customer ahead of the webinar event.</p> <p>This process will be kept under review and may change in the future.</p>
33	Are pre-application meetings going to be reinstated and if so when?	Please see the above response.
34	Will the connections forum online meeting on 14th be recorded?	Yes and you can listen to recording <a href="#">here</a>
35	Will it be possible to adding more than one email address for email communications and portal notifications? e.g for holiday cover.	Thanks for your feedback. We don't currently have this option but will feed this into our improvement backlog for a future release.



# Questions and Answers

No.	Question	Answer
36	Can one email address in portal be used for different companies' connections (we have more than one company with offers/agreements)?	An email id can only be linked with one user account. There are ways to manage more than one company account and it depends upon how these are setup in the system. Please raise a query on your Portal account or get in touch with the team at <a href="mailto:transmissionconnections@nationalgrideso.com">transmissionconnections@nationalgrideso.com</a> so that we can help.
37	Will in-flight applications which were made outside of the portal, be migrated on to the portal?	You should be able to view all your contracted Projects currently in the Portal. You will not be able to see earlier Applications which did not get contracted before the go live in March 2023. Any Applications made post March will be visible, whether they were contracted or not. Please get in touch if this is not the case.
38	How do we find out more about Portal new sign in arrangements?	Please visit our Connection Portal <a href="#">page</a> and refer to User guides for further information.
39	Can you provide link to the User guide?	<a href="#">Connections Portal   ESO (nationalgrideso.com)</a>

Thank you

Please spare few minutes to give us feedback using the QR code.

