

Public

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National Energy System Operator

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Dear requester

### **Request for Information**

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 15 October 2024

### **Request**

You asked us:

*Dear Sirs,*

*Please treat this e-mail as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.*

*This request is made in light of the publication of "Introducing NESO; Our Strategic Priorities". The document makes several references to the cost of energy (e.g. "affordable" and "economical") and to decarbonisation (e.g. "net zero" and "low carbon").*

*Please provide NESO's definition and quantification of the maximum electricity price that would be tolerated in pursuit of given degrees of decarbonisation. The price should be quantified as an annual average unit price (in kWh or MWh) for consumers of various sizes (from households to large industrial sites). Standing charges should be accounted for separately or excluded, as preferred. The price could be expressed in nominal or inflation-adjusted terms, as preferred. The degrees of decarbonisation could be defined as preferred, but should include the "2030 clean power" and "zero carbon" objectives, as set out in the aforementioned document.*

## Our response

You have specifically asked us to consider your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

The Environmental Information Regulations 2004(EIR) contain a definition of “environmental information” at Regulation 2(1) which includes measures affecting or likely to affect the elements and cost-benefit and other economic analyses and assumptions used with the framework of these measures and activities. NESO is mindful that the Information Commissioner has set out a view that public authorities should adopt a broad interpretation of environmental information. Having considered the definition of environmental information it is our opinion your request falls within the scope of the EIR. The exemption at Section 39 of the FOIA covers information that a public body is obliged to consider under the EIR and has the effect of routing all requests for environmental information via the EIR rather than the FOIA.

Whilst NESO has a duty to have regard to the consumer impact of our relevant activities, this chiefly relates to consideration of ways to minimize, and ideally reduce, the costs of the energy transition; building and operating the future energy system, NESO does not set energy prices. It is DESNZ and Ofgem’s role, not NESO’s role, to determine how policies and activities are funded and the pricing implications for consumers. NESO does not hold information setting out NESO’s definition or quantification of the appropriate maximum electricity price as it is not our role to determine this.

The exception at regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR allows us to refuse a request or parts of a request where we do not hold that information at the time when a request is received. We are not required to create new information in order to respond to an EIR request. This concludes our response to your request.

## Advice and assistance

The National Energy System Operator was asked by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to provide independent advice on the pathway towards the Government’s 2030 ambition, with expert analysis of the location and type of new investment and infrastructure needed to deliver it. For more information about this commission please see: [ESO commissioned to provide key advice and expertise on how Great Britain can achieve clean power by 2030 | National Energy System Operator](#). This work was in progress at the time that your request was received.

We have now submitted our advice to Government and published the report. Please see: [Our Clean Power 2030 advice to Government | National Energy System Operator](#) which is published alongside four annexes. You will see that there is some information relating to costings and the

impact on consumers, although it does not set out the specific pricing information as you have requested, as that is a matter for government.

In terms of information about costs to consumers, we suggest that you contact DESNZ and/or Ofgem. Both organisations are subject to the EIR and/or FOIA.

### **Next steps**

You can ask us to review our response. If you want us to carry out a review, please let us know within 40 working days and quote the reference number at the top of this letter.

If you are still dissatisfied after our internal review, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). You should make complaints to the ICO within six weeks of receiving the outcome of an internal review. The easiest way to lodge a complaint is through their website: [www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints](http://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints). Alternatively they can be contacted at: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF.

Thank you for your interest in the work of the National Energy System Operator (NESO).

Regards,

The Information Rights Team

National Energy System Operator (NESO)