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SEP Industry Working Group

Terms of Reference

Background and context

Strategic energy planning (SEP) considers energy needs at national and regional levels, and across different types of energy such as electricity, gas and hydrogen. This whole energy system approach also takes into account societal and environmental interests, as well as safeguarding system resilience and ensuring a low system cost. There are several connected plans and projects including:

- Gas and Whole Energy Network Development (GWEND)
- Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP)
- Centralised Strategic Network Plan (CSNP)
- Regional Energy Strategic Planner (RESP) role
- Net Zero Operability
- Offshore Co-ordination.

Considerable and effective engagement is pivotal to ensuring that the plans we produce are robust and deliverable. Input from industry stakeholders will be key to shaping and influencing our strategic energy plans.

The SEP Industry Working Group is being establishing as a core channel to support this, co-ordinating and aligning engagement across SEP projects. We have given careful consideration to membership, to ensure the representative bodies on the Group give a voice to a cross-section of the sector.

Purpose and scope

The purpose of the Industry Working Group is to co-ordinate and align engagement across SEP projects, provide consistent messaging and reduce duplication and stakeholder fatigue by:

- Creating a central engagement channel
- Provide a single, clear overview of all SEP strategic projects in one place, and how they fit together
- Test understanding, gather data, insights and feedback and ensure the outputs are deliverable
- Opportunity for stakeholders to challenge and review
- Networking amongst members
- Signpost to project and programme specific updates, proposals and consultations.
- Establishing subgroups to provide specific or technical input.

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Membership

Invited participants will include senior representatives from key energy industry stakeholders such as Transmission Owners (TOs), Distribution Network Operators (DNOs and GDNs), developer representatives, Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and academics. We have taken an approach that, with the exception of network operators, members of this Group will be membership bodies to enable a fairer, wider representation across industry.

Sector	Organisations
Distribution Network Operators	Electricity North West
	National Grid Electricity Distribution
	Northern Powergrid
	SP Energy Networks
	SSEN Distribution
	UK Power Networks
Electricity Transmission Owners	National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET)
	SP Energy Networks
	SSEN Transmission
Gas Distribution Networks	Cadent
	Northern Gas Networks
	SGN
	Wales and West Utilities
Gas Transmission Owner	National Gas
Specialist	UKERC, Strathclyde University
	Royal Academy of Engineering
Industry Associations	Hydrogen Scotland
	Hydrogen UK
	Scottish Renewables
	Solar Energy UK
	Association for Decentralised Energy (ADE)
	BEAMA
	British Hydropower Associate (BHA)
	British Ports Association
	Energy Networks Association
	Energy UK
	Institute for Gas Engineers & Managers
	Nuclear Industry Association
	Renewable Energy Association (REA)
	Renewable UK
Renewable UK Cymru	
Tech UK	

Membership can be reviewed by the Chair and NESO and, if necessary, adjusted to ensure suitable representation from across industry stakeholders. Members may propose a delegate or substitute should they be unable to attend, but these should be at a level of expertise sufficient to engage with the Group in line with these terms of reference.

Chair

The Chair will be Graham Stein, Head of Offshore Co-ordination Network Planning at NESO. If the designated Chair is not available for part or all of a meeting, then a suitable representative will be provided by NESO. Guest speakers/participants may be invited to join the meetings if it is deemed appropriate to the discussion and/or the successful functioning of the Group and its outputs.

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Participation

Members will be responsible for proactively identifying and raising issues to be addressed and providing stakeholder group specific input into discussions. Where a member represents a particular stakeholder group, we expect that they should attempt to reflect the views of as many stakeholders in their sector as possible. We would like members to:

- Make reasonable endeavours to attend all meetings. Where a member cannot attend it is expected that they send an appropriate deputy and inform the technical secretary of the change prior to the meeting.
- Consider and review all documentation circulated ahead of the meeting.
- Seek views proactively ahead of meetings and represent broader views of their stakeholder group.
- Bring their expertise, insights and engage with new ideas.

The Group is established in good faith to hear the views of stakeholders, ensuring that all discussions are conducted with the utmost confidentiality and trust. Should that not be the case, where behaviour is contrary to the aims of the group, NESO reserves the right to withdraw the invitation to Group membership.

The Industry Working Group may from time to time set up sub-groups to further consider technical details in the strategic plans. Where this happens, these sub-groups will, amongst other things, be provided with a clear brief from the Industry Working Group on scope; objectives; timeline and membership.

Feedback/Engagement

To ensure there are opportunities to provide quality feedback NESO will:

- Send pre-read materials, when required, ahead of the session which will detail the key areas of discussion we intend to have within the group.
- Open up feedback windows to receive member's key insight and feedback following the discussions held at the group.
- Share summarised content with membership organisations and trade bodies, to share with their membership to garner views.

The advice provided will be collated and summarised where appropriate to be included in final documentation. Feedback may be used to inform the methodology/approach, options and final pathway for SEP projects. Views of this working Group will be taken into consideration, but members will not have the right to decision making for SEP projects.

Confidentiality

NESO may wish to provide early insights or pre-publication material to Britain's future energy infrastructure for review and feedback. We may also share interim views that may evolve as strategic plans progress. It is therefore likely that Group members will be party to views, opinion, data and material that is not in the public domain and members must commit to maintain that confidentiality.

Information shared by NESO will be marked as "CONFIDENTIAL". Where this applies, NESO are expecting that members do not copy or share this information outside of the Group. If members share confidential information outside of the Group without first consulting and agreeing with the

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Chair, this may result in the exclusion of this member from the Group. Members may wish to share information within their organisation or with the members they represent, to provide further feedback. This must be done so under the confidentiality basis of this Terms of Reference and Group members will be responsible for the data shared. We will endeavour to provide as much information as possible that can be shared with members and where this is not possible, we will provide an external, summarised version of the content that can be shared with their membership.

Reporting

Meeting summaries and action points will be documented and distributed to all participants within one week after each meeting. This terms of reference and meeting summaries will be published on the NESO website to provide full transparency of the Group.

Representatives of the Industry Working Group will sit on the SSEP Expert Advisory Group and feed in views of the Group. If escalation is required, this will be made to the Expert Advisory Group and shared with NESO's SEP team. Any information to be shared between the governance and/or working groups must be agreed.

Secretariat

A secretariat team from NESO will be appointed to organise and co-ordinate the meetings, manage communication among participants, and handle documentation and reporting.

Pre-read materials will be circulated to the group at least 5 working days in advance of each meeting.

The Industry Working Group shall typically meet once every 6 – 8 weeks, or in line with key milestones. with meetings lasting up to 90 minutes. Meetings will ordinarily take place via Microsoft Teams and will be arranged by NESO. Members shall confirm notice of attendance or apologies of absence to the Technical Secretary no less than a week in advance.

Review and amendments

These Terms of Reference may be reviewed and amended as necessary by agreement among the participants to reflect changes in circumstances or priorities.

Privacy notice

As a member of the SEP Industry Working Group you agree to us holding contact information, including name, email and phone number. You have the right to ask us to delete any personal contact information we hold at any point.