

# Western Power Distribution

## Connections Customer Steering Group

12<sup>th</sup> November 2013

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## 2. Introduction

The Connections Customer Steering Group met for the first time on 12<sup>th</sup> November at WPD's Gloucester office. Members of the Steering Group represented a number of different types of organisation; they can be broken down under 5 headings: Independent Distribution Network Operator / Independent Connection Provider (IDNO/ICP), Distributed Generation (DG) Consultant, Local Authority (LA)/Public Lighting, Utility Provider and Connection Consultant.

The representatives welcomed the opportunity to participate in the first Connections Customer Steering Group meeting and committed to participating for a number of years.

There were four presentations given during the day. The first presentation, An Introduction and outline of the day was given by Robert Symons, WPD's Chief Executive.

Each of the remaining three presentations were split into two sections, a presentation from a WPD representative and a 45-minute round table discussion.

The questions raised and key themes are addressed in each of the individual sections below.

This report is based on the notes taken by our own scribes at the workshops and we have endeavoured to faithfully record all of the comments made. Where possible, we have used verbatim comments.

### 3. Executive summary

The table below outlines the three discussion areas and the key themes arising from the discussions, which are outlined in more detail in each of the sections.

	<b>Information &amp; Application</b>	<b>Quotations &amp; Agreements</b>	<b>Construction &amp; Connection</b>
Straightforward (technical) solutions	Improve functionality and access to CIRT	More information on formal quotation letters  Accepting e-signatures on connection agreements	Better communications to customers throughout process
Improved communications	Proactive alerts to website changes & available services	EHV cost breakdowns	
Clarified legal complexity	Guidance on accepting Section 15 offers		Wayleave agreements clarification
Better processes		Review of interactivity process  Greater clarity on post-acceptance process	PAYG charging process for inspection and monitoring
Strategic considerations	Improved access to online network information	Partial Approval  More flexible options on jointing/SAP responsibilities  Concerns about connection dates as justification for bad performance  WPD consultation on active management of offer queues	

## 4. Information and Application

Before each theme was discussed a WPD representative gave a short presentation. A summary of the presentation can be found below. The full presentation can be found as an appendix to this document. The information and application part of the presentation can be found on pages 26-28 of this document.

### **Information and Application presentation highlights**

The WPD representative focused on three key areas: An Overview of WPD Service; Recent Developments and Planned Developments. Examples of each of these areas are outlined below:

- The website provides information and guidance for customers, developers and connection providers wanting to find out more about connection services.
- WPD note there are a range of connection needs and the documentation available exists to respond to this need.
- Contact Centre teams handle the majority of enquiries; applications for connections are processed by Records Teams based in Bodmin, Ffynnon Menter and Tipton.
- The website is continually being updated, the following information is available on the website:
  - Connections charging statements;
  - New connections process;
  - Legal permissions and consents;
  - Smart metering;
  - DG capacity maps.
- A new online application and tracking system for competitive connection enquiries has been launched.
- A website specifically for Independent Connection Providers has been developed to provide detailed technical information.
- Customer engagement remains a priority for WPD. Full consultation took place on ED1 connection outputs, expert review is undertaken by WPD customer panel; Six connection surgeries have taken place and will now occur on a quarterly basis.
- Looking to the future WPD continually looks for improvements to implement to improve customer service when seeking a connection. This includes: Online connection applications; Online Distributed Generation constraint analysis tool for Lincolnshire Low Carbon Hub; and improving information on the technical information website.

## Connections Customer Steering Group discussion

- A DG Consultant thought it would be helpful to put 11kv network into WPD's network mapping. It was mentioned that such network information would be useful so stakeholders could assess where it would be sensible to make an application for connection. It was confirmed that interactive capacity information was updated every six months. There was a view that this information would be instantly out of date. Representatives also asked if capacity maps took account of National Grid constraints; it was confirmed that they did not at present, but that this was not currently a problem across the South West.
- A Local Authority/Public Lighting representative said it would be helpful to street lighting customers to know when the connections are going to take place, in the same way that ICP's are currently told and whether this would be possible. The representative added that the local authority was receiving enquiries from residents so availability of any such information would be helpful in terms of the local authority servicing its citizens.
- A Connections Consultant asked if you have to be an ICP to be able to access CIRT (Crown Internet Routing & Tracking) - WPD's online application and tracking system for ICP\IDNOs.
- Many representatives commented about how helpful connections surgeries are. It was confirmed they are advertised on the website. A WPD representative confirmed other people can be added to the list to attend the surgeries.
- Representatives were pleased to see the CCSG had been established further to a comment made by ICP/IDNO attendees at a business planning workshop in Bristol.
- A Local Authority/Public Lighting representative asked a service related question. They have a problem with make safes. Unless the equipment is damaged an engineer will not come out under the auspices of GSOPs (Guaranteed Standards Of Performance). These are minimum standards WPD must meet in the provision of certain service or make failure payments to customers. The problem for a local authority is that they often don't know whether it is damaged because it is buried underground.
- A Connections Consultant said they previously had access to WPD's mapping systems and now have access to a disk as an interim measure. This is not as easy a solution as it was first envisaged. There was also concern that the interim disks were not very IT-friendly and finding locations was difficult. It was argued that the web-based system worked fine instances where there was a single customer with one location but that the system needed replacing to be made to work for multiple sites across more than one customer.
- An ICP/IDNO spoke about how easy it was to access online mapping information and the information was provided in a timely manner.
- Many representatives asked about the availability of mapping information. Particularly improving access to online network information including what information is available to which entity, what licences and software are required to use maps and potentially offer software inductions and training. While WPD said that accessibility of mapping information came with licensing issues, depending on the size and resolution of mapping information required, stakeholders argued that the licensing issue might no longer apply as it could be covered by Datalight. There also was consensus, however, that stakeholders would not be adverse to buying licenses; a local authority representative commented that local authorities did already have the required Ordnance Survey (OS) licences. There were also a number of comments made about how the information stakeholders were asking for now had previously been available to them but had been taken away. One representative said that the availability of training and induction sessions for use of the software would be helpful and cited examples where this had previously been undertaken. The discussion

highlighted the varying needs from different representative groups, for example, it was demonstrated how vital this information is for local authorities, which is why they already have an OS license. It was noted that the issue regarding up-to-date information on the intranet link had been recently resolved.

- Improving functionality and access to CIRT was supported by a number of representatives that do not currently use the system: extending email registration to more than one person or enable later registration of a different or additional email address and grant access to customers other than ICPs, e.g. agents with multiple sites.
- The importance of good interactivity with planning engineers was stressed by a number of representatives. However, there were comments with regard to feasibility studies, with one representative commenting that he would not want to get to the feasibility stage of his application and pay for information on constraint maps where they should be freely available.
- A Connections Consultant commented that the variety of service can vary between regions.
- A DG Consultant asked where the cost of an application goes. Fees were discussed as an issue. One representative asked about the current situation in RIIO ED1 on application fees. It was said that DNOs had refreshed their case for fees but that demand and generation sides were not currently separated by the regulator. A representative commented that Assessment and Design fees were generally bad. Another commented that DNOs were overworked with speculative applications and that other customers were "picking up the costs on unsuccessful applications". It was suggested that a letter of authority should be included in the standard application document to reduce speculative applications that are never going to be progressed by the applicant. Developers who want to sell off a site with planning permission were given as the main culprits. A discussion then took place to consider how this issue could be overcome, as it would be difficult to show that one group was not being discriminated compared to another group of people wanting to submit an application. The question was asked whether charging up-front would reduce the amount of speculative applications coming forward, the views differed around the table.
- A Connections Consultant asked whether when you are quoting for a project WPD should ask if a customer wants to do the overhead works. It would be helpful if a customer could know upfront the cost of the works they would like WPD to undertake (this was specifically relating to generation).
- A Local Authority/Street Lighting representative asked for a more proactive communication and alerts approach to inform customers to changes on the WPD website and availability of information so as to avoid people having to monitor the website for changes or going on a treasure hunt to find the required information. Others agreed that they don't "spend their lives looking at the WPD website" and have previously found information they were looking for "purely by accident". One customer said that he had considered employing somebody solely to monitor DNOs' websites. It was also mentioned that none of the designers had pointed customers to the information available on the WPD website. UK Power Networks (UKPN) was mentioned as a comparator with one representative stating that once a customer had registered their DG Forum attendance, they would be bombarded with information.
- An ICP/IDNO asked WPD to consider offering partial approval e.g. for when 95% of designs have been submitted to allow customers to proceed more quickly. One representative said that WPD had accepted partial designs last year and acknowledged that the DNO may have been "done over" in the past, which might be why they less keen on doing so now. It was noted that previously partial designs were accepted and people put in poor designs, which ultimately impacted the overall timeframe. Representatives felt that it wasn't right for all organisations to be penalised for the behaviour of a few and that they should be spoken to

separately and have the right to be able to submit for partial approval removed if they were not able to comply with the criteria set out.

- A Connections Consultant noted the success of the CIRT system and asked whether it would be possible to have a similar database for agents doing lots of connections? The Connections Consultant offered to be part of a trial if WPD were interested. This was noted by WPD.
- A DG representative felt that an application form for generators would be a good idea, as the current form asks for more information than a windfarm developer would be able to provide. It was also noted it was strange that no one has to sign it.
- An ICP/IDNO asked whether a second email address could be added to CIRT as otherwise it tends to be a pre-sales email rather than a member of the design team.
- A utility provider asked if WPD would move to accepting online applications (as opposed to the current state of play where applications forms can be downloaded but still have to be sent in via post). WPD explained that this functionality had gone live the previous day with the new online applications on the WPD website.
- A DG representative asked about online DG constraint analysis. It was mentioned that the work in relation to the Low Carbon Networks Fund was looking at tools beyond conventional reinforcement and would seek to address these questions.
- A number of representatives called for improvements of the technical information on WPD's website.
- A number of representatives commented that the budget estimate seems to work well and commented that WPD's fortnightly turnaround time enabled them to make informed decisions on whether there was grid capacity for his requirements.
- Questions were raised regarding WPD's policy on the point of connection. UKPN was referred to as being extremely flexible on a recent 18MVA datacentre connection where the original point of connection had not been feasible, and UKPN had extended it by 200 metres. WPD explained that they are also flexible when dealing with requests to carry out part of the contestable works on a scheme.
- An ICP/IDNO suggested it would be helpful for WPD to offer guidance on the legal rules involved with regard to who is allowed to accept (contractual) Section 15 offers (connection offers for competitive connection schemes). This issue was raised by way of an example where WPD had not accepted a developer working on behalf of a landowner. Again, lack of consistency across WPD was bemoaned. One representative said that the Section 15 process might be easier if the initial application form contained details of the roles of those involved.

## 5. Quotations and Agreements

### Quotation and Agreements presentation highlights

The quotations and agreements part of the presentation can be found on pages 29-31 of this document.

The WPD representative focused on three key areas: An Overview of WPD Service; Recent Developments and Planned Developments. Examples of each of these areas are outlined below:

- Up to 33kV quotations are provided by localised Network Service Teams and by 4 Primary Systems Design teams in Bristol, Cardiff, Tipton and Castle Donington.
- Planners are responsible for a section of the network. Their knowledge is invaluable when it comes to discussing and designing connections for customers.
- Unmetered connections can be self-quoted by Local Authorities from fixed prices or from planners where required.

There have been a number of recent developments including:

- Detailed breakdown of charges in connection offers.
- Internal standard implemented to contact customers to discuss the connection after application to be made within two days
- Innovative offers where capacity is constrained
- Internal standards have been applied to the wayleaves and consents process to ensure consistency and improve turnaround times.
- IDNO legal process agreed to improve the service in this area

Planned developments discussed include:

- A new bi-lateral agreement for Competition in Connections adoption process and network access.
- New connection agreements being developed for innovative connection offered where connection can be curtailed.
- Dual option offer letter for Distributed Generation EHV schemes, this then makes it possible for either the whole works option or the Competition in Connections option.

## Connections Customer Steering Group discussion

- Clarification was sought by a Connections Consultant about the IDNO legal process. They were referred to the information available on the website to answer their question.
- It was asked by a number of representatives whether it was time for a national connections offer letter. A WPD representative commented that this would not be possible as there is not a common connection methodology. A representative said this had been considered through the Electricity Connections Steering Group, but that as it was a commercial decision it was unlikely to ever come forward.
- General view that as long as connections are made "at the right time", it doesn't matter whether they are made by the DNO or the ICP but there are resourcing issues, particularly for low voltages, so WPD should offer more flexible options on whether and who undertakes jointing and SAP resource.
- A DG Consultant asked whether it would be possible to include more detail on charging methodology and cost breakdown for Extra High Voltage (EHV) (and remind EHV staff on the requirements with which they have to comply). They argued that the cost breakdown was working for the 11kV network but that for EHV, he tended to receive larger figures and no explanation of what they were.
- A Connections Consultant asked WPD to address customers' concerns about the manner in which connection dates included in offer letters are being used by planners/engineers to refuse meetings/updates or justify mediocre performance. It was mentioned that the expectation of a connection date often "frightens our clients to death". A local authority representative said that he tended to start talking "reasonable dates" once the second payment had been made; another representative confirmed that he tended to take a collaborative approach to working with the planning engineer. A developer mentioned that he preferred a twin-track approach in terms of planning and connection applications, particularly for renewable connections. It was confirmed that customers should seek to escalate issues with WPD if designers were being unhelpful.
- A DG Consultant raised the issue that often a Local Authority planning consent is needed for a connection to take place. If an application is refused and appealed this can have a significant impact on timescales.
- An ICP/IDNO asked for how long WPD allow a project to sit on their books (this question was particularly based on developers who intend to gain planning consent and then sell on a site, with no intention to build it out). There was a view that allowing developers to secure a grid offer on small deposits risked distorting the system and a general call for larger fees as "those who are serious about a connection will pay it". A representative said that the issue about reserved capacity that was not being taken up was that it killed small-scale projects.
- General request from a number of representatives on WPD to more actively manage the queue and accepted offers --> WPD to consult customers on ways to "act fairly" whilst avoiding "chancers blocking capacity" e.g. by:
  - Making it a condition to make a planning application/start construction within a set period of time (6-12 months)
  - Increasing upfront charges
  - Throwing projects out of the queue that are not progressing.

- An ICP/IDNO asked whether WPD would consider charging all upfront rather than a deposit as that might prevent people from joining the queue in the first instance if they had no intention of ever getting the connection completed.
- Questions were asked by representatives about how long WPD let a project "sit on the books" for and were there any processes in place to remove "bed-blockers" from the system? It was noted that the time that each of the people in attendance could vary and therefore how would it be possible to determine who was a "bed-blocker" and who had an intention to connect, but due to circumstances beyond their control was unable to, for example the Local Planning Authority did not give planning permission and there was a delay whilst an appeal was being heard.
- A DG Consultant asked for greater clarity on moving things forward after acceptance: what is being done when and what steps are required, with a view to avoiding unnecessary delays. One representative said that telecoms were "a real blocker at the moment". Others said that a greater understanding of the process was needed, including on who can do what and when, when construction representatives should be informed, when a shutdown should happen etc.
- A Connections Consultant asked WPD to provide more information regarding quoter/address on formal quotation letters. The representative said that the only address provided for S16 quotations was the depot address. Not having a named individual often made it difficult to know who to have contact with if there were questions that needed to be answered. It was also noted that there were a number of inconsistencies in terms of approach across the different areas. This can result in the price being substantially different (up to double the amount between areas, for exactly the same scheme).
- A Local Authority/Public Lighting representative commented the process for unmetered connections is very simple and there have been no complaints from other Local Authorities.
- A DG Consultant asked how unmetered supplies fit in with the desire to see more people using smart meters?
- A Connections Consultant requested WPD review its interactivity process including consider limiting the number of times/duration of moratorium periods as well as looking at establishing a formal process for "getting offer back if a third party drops out". Clarification was sought on how this situation is dealt with?
- A Utility Provider asked for an update on progress with regard to accepting e-signatures on connection agreements as sometimes paper agreements can take months, a specific example was given.
- An ICP/IDNO representative spoke about their live-jointing agreement; they are working with a local Private Finance Initiative (PFI) to deliver 2000 connections.
- A Utility Provider asked what is the adoption agreement period for ICP Metered Connections? WPD explained that there was a 2-year liability period for the works.
- A representative raised a specific issue of why High Voltage (HV) sites were changed to EHV sites without customers being told. It was confirmed that such changes had been due to Ofgem's redefinition. Discussion took place regarding this as it was felt it would have been good to have been informed that this was the case.
- In relation to live jointing, representatives said that most problems had been ironed out and they had sufficient flexibility. Others argued that there was no visibility of the live jointing process and there was no offer to do HV jointing even though they had the capacity to do it.

- A representative argued that there was conflict potential regarding HV as the DNO issued the permit of work even though ICP authorisation had been granted previously. A representative argued that employing SAP was quite expensive and that he liked the idea of the ICP delivering the jointing resource.
- Inconsistency in customer service ethos across WPD areas was raised as an issue, including with regard to waiting times and price variations

## 6. Construction and Connections

### Construction and Connections presentation highlights

The construction and connections part of the presentation can be found on pages 32-34 of this document.

The WPD representative focused on four key areas: An Overview of WPD Service; WPD Processes; Recent Developments and Planned Developments. Examples of each of these areas are outlined below:

- WPD operates Network Service Teams on a geographical basis. Each team is responsible for the delivery of network activities, including connections. They handle all competitive and non-competitive connection enquiries up to 11kV for unmetered, metered demand and generation schemes.
- 33kV and above connections are managed and delivered by Major Projects in each region.
- This structure means there is a co-ordinated approach to all activities ensuring the most efficient delivery for customers.

When considering WPD's processes the focus was on the importance of good customer services and effective communication, this enables WPD to:

- Build relationships enabling the needs of the customer to be satisfied
- Have skilled and experienced staff available to deliver new connections
- Plan any outages and shutdowns for connections - This is done by the Network Services Team, therefore improving ownership and efficiency minimising their impact.

There have been a number of recent developments including:

- ICPs are now able to carry out live Low Voltage jointing on the existing WPD network under their own safety rules, thereby removing the requirement for WPD Authorisation for ICP staff.
- High Voltage trial is underway for ICPs to joint to existing High Voltage network and carry out switching operations. This will require close working with Network Service Teams and ICP as safety of staff, contractors and customers has to remain our number one priority.

Planned developments discussed include:

- Continued focus on improving delivery timescales.
- Improved communications with customers

- Improvements to ICP inspection and monitoring process to combine existing regime with live Low Voltage and High Voltage jointing regime moving to pay as you go and improving transparency.

### **Connections Customer Steering Group discussion**

- A Local Authority/Public Lighting representative said "Central Networks used to be absolutely dreadful and WPD are absolutely brilliant, well done". They particularly highlighted that WPD's local engagement was really good and different from other DNOs.
- A Utility Provider echoed the previous comment, "WPD go the extra mile".
- A Utility Provider asked what the restoration timescales are on an unmetered supply as they were moving from metered to unmetered and wanted to keep the same timescales. They thought it was important for WPD to understand what their connections are used for. For example their connections not being connected can mean that a lot more than just one connection is not working.
- A Local Authority/Public Lighting representative asked for communications on when things are happening / when a connection has been made to be improved. They said that there was no notice on shutdowns for unmetered connections.
- A Local Authority/Public Lighting representative asked whether it would be possible for something go on the WPD website where a customer could log in and see how things are progressing using their CROWN reference number?
- A Local Authority/Public Lighting representative asked what was WPD's view of ICP's undertaking Low Voltage (LV) overhead connections? It was confirmed that WPD currently allowed this.
- A Local Authority/Public Lighting representative asked for WPD to clarify process on allowing ICPs priority access at short notice, how quickly could access be gained? It was confirmed that short notice (12-24 hours) access was available under current live jointing agreements.
- A Connections Consultant asked WPD to look at charging process for inspections under Pay As You Go (PAYG) – preference for charging at the end of the project rather than on a monthly basis. It was confirmed that WPD was currently seeking to include the inspection charge into the quote but would invoice for this charge only once the inspection had taken place; it was also confirmed that comments would be considered as the process was being refined.
- An ICP/IDNO requested further clarity on the legal complexity around wayleave agreements. In relation to wayleave agreements, reference was made to there being two different Acts of Parliament that needed to be considered and that comparisons to gas networks were not fair. A representative emphasised that WPD was the "best of the bunch" but "not perfect".
- An ICP/IDNO asked WPD to look at access right covered within DNO/ICP live jointing agreements. In relation to access rights, it was pointed out that there were safety issues at play with regard to identifying the LV cable. It was emphasised that WPD should look at the legal aspects guidance on their website and make sure to clarify the roles and responsibilities for the DNO, ICPs etc.
- A Connections Consultant asked for consideration of how WPD are going to charge non-contestable inspections, as their client would want to understand how much this could be dependant upon the inspection level you are listed at.

- A DG Consultant asked for WPD to remain alert to two issues:
  - Initiate legal conversations as soon as practically possible.
  - Make sure the part that involves lawyers is still as customer-facing as possible.
  
- An ICP/IDNO was interested to consider the duty of care to ensure engineers'/jointers' quality of work is to a high standard. There was much discussion about where responsibility for jointers' quality of work should lie. One representative was concerned that jointers who had previously been kicked off the network could go back to work for an ICP and get authorised. There was discussion about how best to authorise jointers. Some representatives were clear that it should not be DNOs' responsibilities to police jointers. It was confirmed, however, that engineers had a duty of care to stop things from going wrong, including raising concerns about jointers' qualifications, where appropriate, but that ultimately it was ICPs' responsibility to deal with "rogue jointers". Lloyds are the auditors of the process and that if anyone has a concern about a jointer; it should be reported to them.

## 7. Appendix – Connections Customer Steering Group Presentation



## Housekeeping

- **Building Evacuation**
- **Facilities**
- **Introductions**

Connections Customer Steering Group



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## Agenda

Introduction and purpose of today's meeting
ICE and RIIO-ED1
ICE Connection Customers Steering Group
Connection Key Stages
Expert presentations and feedback sessions
Review and Summary
Next Steps

Connections Customer Steering Group



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# **WESTERN POWER DISTRIBUTION**

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## **Inaugural meeting of WPD's Connections Customer Steering Group**

Introduction and purpose of today's meeting

Robert Symons  
Chief Executive

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## **Contents**

- **Background**
  - Connections and WPD
- **Listening to our customers**
  - Our current performance
  - Areas for improvement
- **Our plans for RIIO-ED1**
- **Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE)**
- **How this forum will work**

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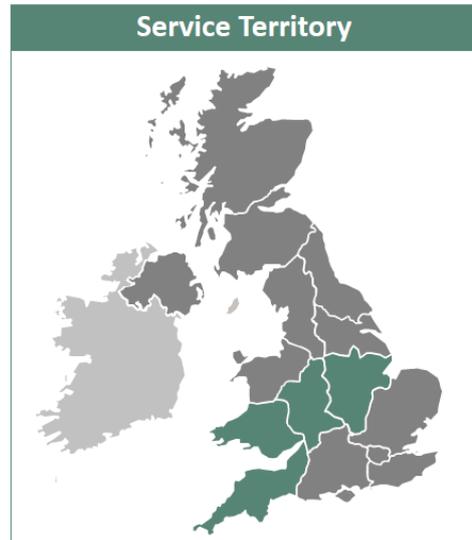
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## WPD overview

**This is an engineering business...  
...it's simple:**

- Restore supplies to customers
- Maintain the network and replace network assets
- Install new supplies and reinforce the network

Service area	55,500 km <sup>2</sup>
Customers	7.8m
Network	220,000km
Overhead network	42%
Transformers	183,000



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## WPD approach

- WPD pursues an “in-house” model – we can outperform by using our own staff for day-to-day tasks
- No diversification – WPD is a single-purpose company
- WPD has low overhead costs
- Clear, decisive and approachable management
- WPD is committed to the long-term health of the business:
  - Apprentice programme – ahead of all other DNOs
  - Capex programme – full implementation of agreed plan with Ofgem
  - Continued improvements in business efficiency
- Helpful and transparent approach in our dealings with Ofgem

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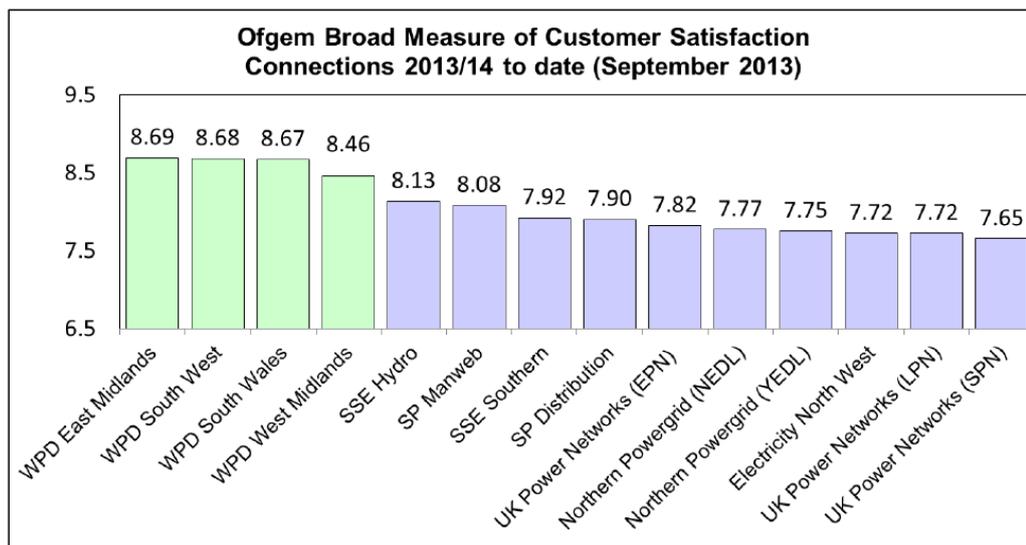
## Background - Connections

- We handle over 50,000 connection enquiries every year
- Typically we prepare over 15,000 formal offers
- Since 2011 requests from customers wishing to connect generation have become a larger proportion of the enquiries we handle

WPD	2012/13	2010/11
Connection enquiries handled	<b>52,547</b>	38,522
Enquiries resulting in an offer	<b>16,391</b>	13,919
Applications for demand connections	<b>36,514</b>	29,661
Applications for generation connections	<b>6,099</b>	2,939



## Listening to our customers - Our current performance



## Listening to our customers - Areas for improvement

- Our current performance gives us a strong foundation to build on
- But we are under no illusions – **connections remains an area where our customers want us to improve further**
- Monthly customer satisfaction surveys and annual DG research reveals in particular, our customers would like to see:
  - **Clearer explanation of the process**
  - **Better explanation of charges**
  - **More frequent communication throughout the process**
  - **Alternative methods to access information**

## Our plans for RIIO-ED1

- Our Business Plan covers 2015 -2023 and has been built with stakeholders in stages
- WPD engaged over 4,200 stakeholders, with a significant focus on face-to-face engagement
- Connections stakeholders reinforced the message that further improvements are needed
  - E.g. 43% of business customers and 40% of developers/connections customers wanted improvements to the overall time to connect
- We listened – our business plan includes 75 outputs, including 10 connections commitments

## Our plans for RIIO-ED1

### Provide a faster and more efficient connections service

- **Improve the overall time to deliver a connection by 20%**
- Provide excellent customer service so that customers rank WPD as the top performing DNO group in customer satisfaction surveys
- Conduct surveys with distributed generation customers to gauge their satisfaction and identify improvements to the service provided

### Improve communication with customers

- **Develop and enhance online connections processing and progress tracking**
- Ensure information provided in documentation and online is effective

### Enhance engagement with major connections customers

- **Work with major customers to identify process improvements & quickly implement changes**
- Host quarterly 'surgeries' for connections customers to better understand processes

### Guaranteed Standards of Performance (GSOPs)

- **Target zero failures of the connection GSOPs**

### Facilitation of competitive market

- **Improve customer awareness of third party connection providers and carry out regular checks with customers so that they understand the options available to them**
- Work with third party connection providers to extend the scope of contestable work to HV and reinforcement work

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## RIIO-ED1

### - Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE)

- Potential penalty of up to 0.9% p.a. of allowed revenue for DNOs that have not satisfied minimum requirements
- ICE requires DNOs to submit evidence (for different connection market segments) that they have:
  - Engaged with a broad range of customers
  - Responded to the needs of their customers
  - Set relevant performance indicators
  - Developed a forward looking work plan to improve performance
  - Reported actual performance against indicators and work plan.

**WPD are establishing a Connections Customer Steering Group (CCSG) in 2013 to build a process for engagement prior to RIIO-ED1**

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## ICE and the Competition Test

- DNOs must demonstrate to Ofgem that competition is working well for customers, with no barriers imposed by the DNO in each market segment
- WPD has passed 12 segments to date
- A submission was made on 31st Oct for DG HV & EHV work in 4 WPD areas

Licence Area	Relevant Market Segment								
	Demand Connections				Distributed Generation		Unmetered Connections		
	LV work	HV work	HV & EHV work	EHV work & above	LV work	HV & EHV work	LA work	PFI work	Other work
WPD East Midlands	x	x	✓	✓	x	⌚	✓	✓	x
WPD West Midlands	x	x	✓	✓	x	⌚	✓	✓	x
WPD South Wales	x	x	x	x	x	⌚	✓	✓	x
WPD South West	x	x	x	x	x	⌚	✓	✓	x

WPD will apply the same stakeholder engagement strategy to all segments, regardless of whether ICE applies to them



## Purpose of today's meeting

- To give you a clear overview of WPD's connections services
- To agree the CCSG's objectives
- To capture your feedback, issues and priorities
- To start action planning to deliver improvements



## ICE Connection Customers Steering Group

- WPD have established a CCSG ahead of RIIO-ED1
- Meetings will take place 3 times a year
- The CCSG will be representative of all connections stakeholders and market segments, across WPD's 4 distribution areas
- It will be modelled on WPD's wider Customer Panel – the first in the industry
- We have identified key connections 'experts' and interested parties as panel members

## CCSG objectives

To:

- Identify the issues that most concern members
- Group these issues into common areas and prioritise
- Jointly develop a plan to deliver on those requirements
- Identify specific levels of service improvement achievable under each priority
- Identify a set of performance indicators
- Understand how we measure improvement against these indicators

## CCSG format

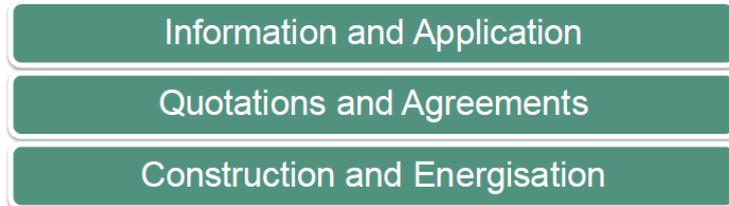
- Annual programme of workshops:

Timing	Proposal
November 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set the scene and agree terms of reference</li> <li>Understand and capture the key issues</li> </ul>
February 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RIO ED1 Workshops</li> <li>Present CCSG output to broader stakeholder for comment</li> </ul>
March 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present WPD's draft proposals</li> <li>Ask stakeholders for comments that will be used to refine our thinking</li> </ul>
June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present a review of progress against the Plan</li> <li>Present any additions or modifications which may have been identified</li> </ul>
October 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate progress and successes</li> <li>Reassess the key outstanding issues</li> <li>Agree actions and priorities for the following year (rolling programme)</li> </ul>

- Presentations from WPD staff and CCSG members
- Group discussions amongst representative panel of key connections 'experts' and interested parties

## The connections process

- Today's meeting will explore the 3 key stages of the connection service and capture your issues and priorities for action in each of the following areas:



### **My request of you:**

- Give us your open and honest views*
- Tell us where you want more detail/information*
- Tell us which topics you want to discuss further*

## Information and Application

Alison Sleightholm

## Information and Application

### Overview of WPD service

- Website provides information and guidance for customers, developers and connection providers seeking connection services
- Suite of application forms available to cater for needs of range of connection
- Contact Centre teams handle majority of enquiries
- Applications for connections processed by Records Teams in Bodmin, Ffynnon Menter and Tipton
- All applications processed and managed on WPD's CROWN system
- ICPs can submit online via CIRT system

## Information and Application

### Recent Developments

- We have redesigned our website and published extensive information including:
  - Connections charging statements
  - Requesting network location plans
  - New connections process
  - Quotation accuracy scheme
  - Legal permissions and consents
  - Smart metering
  - Supplies to multi-occupancy buildings
  - DG constraint maps
  - DG capacity maps resource added to website
- We have developed a website specifically for ICPs to provide detailed, technical information
- We have launched a new online application and tracking system for competitive connection enquiries - CIRT

Connections Customer Steering Group



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## Information and Application

### Recent Developments

- Customer engagement events
  - Full consultation on ED1 connection outputs including tailored workshop sessions
  - Expert review by WPD customer panel
  - Six connection surgeries have taken place and now implemented as a quarterly activity

Connections Customer Steering Group



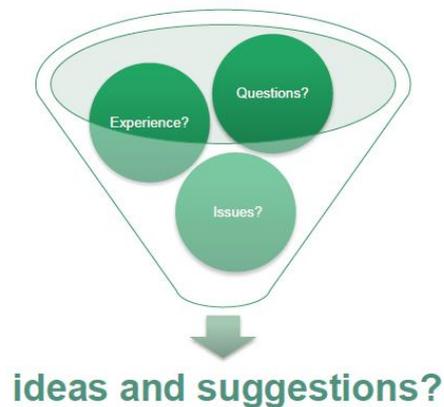
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## Information and Application

### Planned Developments

- To maintain our leading performance and deliver for our customers, WPD continually looks for improvements to implement to improve customer service when seeking a connection:
  - Online connections applications
  - Online DG constraint analysis tool for Lincolnshire Low Carbon Hub
  - Improve information on technical information website

## Information and Application Feedback Session



# Quotations and Agreements

Nigel Turvey



## Quotations and Agreements

### Overview of WPD service

- Quotations produced by localised Network Service Teams up to 33kV and by 4 Primary System Design Teams in Bristol, Cardiff, Tipton and Castle Donington
- Planners are responsible for a section of the network and therefore have valuable local knowledge when discussing and designing connections for customers
- Unmetered connections can be self-quoted by LA's from fixed prices or quoted by Planners where required

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## Quotations and Agreements

### Recent Developments

- Detailed breakdown of charges in connection offers improving transparency
- 2 day contact – internal standard implemented to contact customer to discuss connection after application
- Innovative offers - “smart” solutions where capacity is constrained
  - Developed 3 initial variants of innovative connection
- Bilateral Network Access & Adoption Agreement for CiC live LV jointing and HV trial for metered and unmetered connections work
- Novation and direct agreement templates developed to reduce timescales for completion

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## Quotations and Agreements

### Recent Developments

- Internal standards applied to wayleaves and consents process to ensure consistency and improve turnaround
- IDNO legal process agreed to improve service in this area

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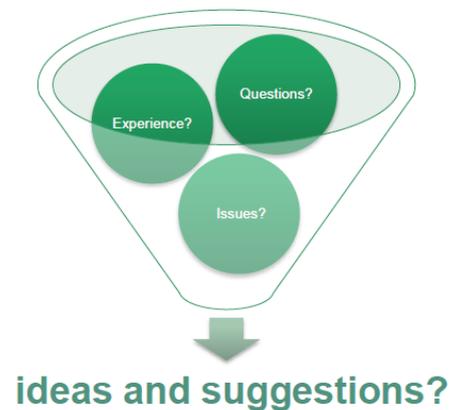
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## Quotations and Agreements

### Planned Developments

- New bilateral agreement for CiC adoption process and network access
- Dual option offer letter for DG EHV schemes – ability to accept either WPD whole works option or CiC option
- New connection agreements being developed for innovative connection offers where connections can be curtailed

## Quotations and Agreements Feedback Session



## Construction and Connection

Phil Davies



## Construction and Connection

### Overview of WPD service

- WPD operates a geographically organised Network Service Team based approach where each team is responsible for the delivery of network activities including connections
- Structure allows coordinated approach to all activities to ensure most efficient delivery for customers
- These Network Service teams handle all competitive and non-competitive connection enquiries up to 11kV for unmetered, metered demand and generation schemes
- 33kV and above connections are managed and delivered by Major Projects in each region

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## Construction and Connection

### WPD Processes

- Focus on customer service and communication – teams remain in contact with customer / connection provider throughout scheme ensuring potential issues are avoided before they arise.
- Local Teams building relationships and delivering Customer needs
- Skilled and experienced staff available to deliver New Connections
- Outages and shutdowns for connections planned by Network Service Teams – improves ownership and efficiency minimising impact of shutdowns on our customers

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## Construction and Connection

### Recent Developments

- ICPs now able to carry out live LV jointing on the existing WPD network under their own Safety Rules – removes requirement for WPD Authorisation for ICP staff
- HV Trial underway for ICPs to joint to existing HV network and carry out switching operations - will require close working with Network Service Teams and ICP as safety of staff, contractors and customers has to remain our number one priority

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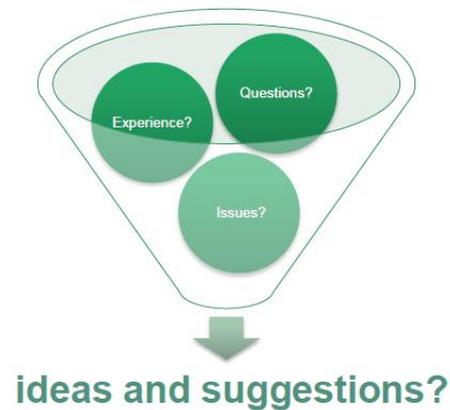
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## Construction and Connection

### Planned Developments

- Continued focus on improving delivery timescales
- Improved communications with customers
- Improvements to ICP inspection and monitoring process to combine existing regime with live LV and HV jointing regime moving to pay as you go and improving transparency.

## Construction and Connection



## Review and Summary

- Review of feedback received today
  - Any further feedback or questions please contact  
Richard Allcock  
rallcock@westernpower.co.uk  
T: 01332 827503  
M: 07843002177
- Prioritisation of issues and ideas
- Date of next meeting

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## Way Forward

- WPD & Green Issues will collate feedback from today's session and issue to panel for agreement
- WPD to produce a Performance Improvement Plan based on the CCSG outputs
- WPD to issue the Plan to the CCSG Panel prior to the February workshop for discussion and agreement at the workshop

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