

Public

Ref: FOI/25/037

National Energy System Operator
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InformationRights@neso.energy

11 July 2025

Dear requester

Request for Information

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 22 May 2025. Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused by the delay to our response and to thank you for your patience in this matter.

Request

You asked:

I am writing to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The focus of this request relates specifically to matters involving the Scottish Borders region.

1. *Since NESO was formally established on 1 October 2024, how many meetings have taken place between NESO representatives and members of the Scottish Government (including ministers, special advisers, and senior civil servants) that included discussion of renewable energy infrastructure, planning, or grid connection projects within the Scottish Borders local authority area?*
2. *Of these meetings, how many included discussion of:*
 - *Renewable energy applications or project scoping in the Scottish Borders?*
 - *Grid connection reform and queue management affecting developments in the Borders?*
 - *Planning and infrastructure challenges specific to the Scottish Borders?*

3. *Please provide any agendas, briefing notes, minutes, or correspondence (including emails, letters, or internal memos) from meetings between NESO and the Scottish Government that referred to renewable energy projects or transmission issues in the Scottish Borders.*
4. *Please confirm whether any of the meetings involved discussion of specific renewable energy projects, sites, or developers located in the Scottish Borders. If so, please list the project names, developers, or associated grid connection applications referenced.*
5. *Please provide copies of any documents or reports that NESO has shared with the Scottish Government which reference:*
 - *Renewable energy planning or infrastructure issues in the Scottish Borders*
 - *Transmission queue access for projects in the region*
 - *Criteria affecting grid capacity or connection offers in the Borders area*
6. *Has NESO consulted or coordinated with the Scottish Government regarding the implementation of TMO4+ queue management reforms (or related transmission access reforms) specifically in the context of renewable developments in the Scottish Borders?*
7. *Please provide any formal responses, comments, or submissions made by the Scottish Government to NESO on consultations or technical working groups that reference renewable energy projects or connection reform in the Scottish Borders since October 2024.*

Our response

We have published information relating to the connections reform process, including information about our consultations here: [Connections Reform design documents and methodologies | National Energy System Operator](#).

NESO employees have met with the Scottish Government but our searches have not located any discussions which are specifically related to connections projects in the Scottish Borders. We have contacted managers and members of the Executive Leadership Team who were most likely to have been involved in any such discussions and they have confirmed that their discussions with the Scottish Government do not fall within the scope of your request, e.g. discussions about connections reforms processes more generally.

We have also checked for records on our CRM system. We have records of 87 meetings with the Scottish Government since 1 October 2024. None of these records contain the word “borders” in the meeting title or the CRM notes relating to that meeting. Additionally, we have 5 records of meetings with the Scottish Borders Council. The titles of the meetings are all thematic, rather than geographic in nature. Whilst staff are expected to add records to the CRM when they engage with customers and external stakeholders, we cannot guarantee that all meetings are recorded in the CRM and would need to contact NESO attendees of the meetings that are recorded to confirm whether there was discussion specifically related to the Scottish Borders region and/or to projects in that region.

We estimate that extending the searches beyond those members of staff we have already contacted individually would exceed the FOI appropriate cost limit at Section 12 of the FOIA. This cost limit is set at £450 which equates to 18 hours of staff time at a standard rate of £25 per hour.

Advice and assistance

Where we refuse a request based on the cost limit, we always endeavour to advise requesters on possible ways of refining their request in such a way as to make it fall within the appropriate cost limit. We have not focused on any one of your questions for further searches and we try to avoid steering requesters in a particular direction as we cannot assume which parts of a request are most important to a requester. We hope that explaining how we have searched so far is helpful to your understanding. We can also provide some suggestions. You might wish to refine this request to focus on specific projects in a particular geographic area, or limit your request to specific themes such as queue management.

Next steps

Do please let us know if you would like to submit a new, revised request. You can also ask us to review our response above. 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. 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)