

Public

Ref: FOI/25/087

National Energy System Operator

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2 September 2025

Dear requester

Request for Information

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 4 August 2025. Your request has been considered under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) because we have determined that information on the decommissioning of the gas system, if held, would be likely to meet the definition of 'environmental information' provided by Regulation 2(1)(c) of the EIR.

Request

You asked us:

How much of the current gas system (transmission and distribution) today is expected to still be in operation for moving gases in:

- a) 2040*
- b) 2050*
- c) 2060*

I'll accept answers in '%' or distance. If you do not have quantitative answers, I'd accept qualitative answers (as opposed to the suggestion no data is held; 'expecting over X% or Xmiles' would be a type of qualitative answer). You're welcome to flip the question and answer how much is expected to be decommissioned. Where possible please split transmission and distribution.

Our response

At the date of your request NESO has not forecast how much of the gas network may 'still be in operation for moving gases' (or decommissioned), and we therefore confirm that we do not hold information in scope of your request.

Regulation 12(4)(a) of the EIR states “A public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that it does not hold that information when an applicant’s request is received.” All EIR exceptions are subject to public interest test (PIT); however, the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) recognises that it is not possible to carry out a meaningful PIT where information is not held.

This concludes our response to your request.

Advice and assistance

The Department for Energy and Net Zero (DESNZ) set up the National Energy System Operator (NESO) in September 2024. NESO was granted an electricity system operator licence and gas system planner licence that started from 1 October 2024. We are responsible for operating and planning the electricity transmission system and the strategic planning of the gas system.

Further information on NESO’s Strategic Planning role can be found here: [Strategic Planning | National Energy System Operator](#).

NESO published the [Gas Network Capability Needs Report \(GNCNR\)](#) in December 2024, the first publication under our gas licence obligations. It presents NESO’s first independent view of Great Britain’s (GB) gas transmission system (the National Transmission System (NTS), owned by National Gas Transmission (NGT)) – capability to meet current and future network requirements.

The findings within the GNCNR will be used by NGT to propose network reinforcement options in the Strategic Planning Options Proposal (SPOP). NESO will then evaluate any proposed reinforcement options and create a [Gas Options Advice \(GOA\) document](#).

NESO’s vision is to provide an independent, coordinated, and longer-term approach to wider network planning in Great Britain to help meet the government’s net zero ambitions. The [Centralised Strategic Network Plan](#) will serve as a network blueprint for the country, mapping demand and optimal locations for onshore and offshore transmission infrastructure to support a decarbonised energy grid. You may be interested in the Gas Planning webinar and slides available on this page: [Strategic energy planning \(SEP\) publications, consultations and updates | National Energy System Operator](#).

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with our handling of your request, 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. You can find our procedure here: [Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations | National Energy System Operator](#). The ICO’s website also provides guidance on the internal review process: [What to do if you are dissatisfied with the response | ICO](#).

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)