

Public

Ref: FOI/25/124

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 July 2025. We would like to apologise again for the delay in responding to your request. As explained, the Information Rights team did not receive your request until 24 September 2025. We have taken steps to ensure that this doesn't happen again.

Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Request

You asked us:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am requesting the following information regarding *the NESO Evidence Submission Portal launched in July 2025*:

- *Total cost incurred in the development, preparation, and launch of the portal.*
- *Duration of the project, including key build and preparation milestones.*
- *Names of any third-party companies involved in its design, development, or delivery, and the nature of their roles.*

This request is made in the public interest, given the national importance of the Connections Reform programme and the role of this portal in enabling it.

Our response

1. Total cost incurred in the development, preparation, and launch of the portal.

We confirm that we do not hold information in scope of question 1.

Our Connections Reform evidence portal that opened for submissions on 8 July 2025 was part of a wider Connections Portal project, to redesign and transform the Connections journey and account management for all customers.

Your request is specifically for information about the 'evidence submission portal launched in July 2025'. Under both FOIA and EIR legislation, we are required to respond based on the wording of your request. We do not hold the total cost requested in question 1, for the following reasons:

- We hold information on the costs reported by our Data, Digital and Technology (DD&T) directorate, but not for the other directorates/teams involved in the project, such as our Connections Team.
- In addition, the costs reported by our DD&T directorate are for development of the overall Connections Portal architecture, and it's not possible to isolate costs incurred solely in relation to the Connections Reform evidence portal from these.

2. Duration of the project, including key build and preparation milestones.

We published our third Business Plan (BP3) in January 2025 as part of the RIIO-2 price control.

The [NESO RIIO-2 Business Plan 3 Digital, Data, and Technology Annex](#) includes a roadmap (Figure 23) and milestones for the Connections Platform (Table 70). The functionality for users to submit evidence to support reformed assessment criteria has a milestone date of Q1 FY26.

We publish regular reports on how we are performing under RIIO-2: [How we're performing under RIIO-2 | National Energy System Operator](#). The [Quarterly \(Q1\) Incentives June 2025 Report Business Plan 3 \(2025-26\)](#) includes a summary of progress on Connections Reform and the technical issues with the Connections Reform evidence portal during the quarter.

NESO has regularly published information on the ongoing updates to the Portal throughout the evidence submission window: [Connections Reform Portal Updates | National Energy System Operator](#).

3. *Names of any third-party companies involved in its design, development, or delivery, and the nature of their roles.*

Company	Role
Accenture	Programme Management support
Cap Gemini	Salesforce application development and maintenance
TCS	Testing
Contractors provided through an agency (Pontoon)	Product Management and testing

This concludes our response to your request.

Further information

NESO is delivering a [transformational change](#) to the way that the grid connections process operates. A key part of this reform is the introduction of the new Gate 2 to Whole Queue (G2TWQ) process, which ensures that only projects meeting specific readiness and Strategic Alignment Criteria progress through the reformed queue. This will mean that following the re-ordering process we will deliver a more orderly and predictable queue with less speculative projects.

Following the closure of the submission window on 26 August 2025, NESO will begin re-ordering the current connections queue. Currently the queue stands at 738GW, more than four times the clean generation capacity required by 2030, with particularly more battery and solar projects than are needed. Helping unlock connections which will support economic growth to enable new industrial development and serve the modern technology needs of the future. Information on Connections Reform is available here: [Connections Reform | 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)