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Guidance Note – Registered Control Point Operations

In relation to the operational role of a Control Point for BMUs

NESO
National Energy System Operator

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This Note refers to sections CC/ECC6.5, CC/ECC7.9, OC7, BC1 and BC2 of the Grid Code.

Contents

Public

Introduction

As the National Energy System Operator, our role is to ensure that the GB electricity system is operated in a safe, secure, economic and clean manner. To enable NESO to continuously balance the GB electricity system and maintain system security, clear and direct communications with registered Balancing Mechanism Unit (BMU) Control Points is of vital importance. This includes when reacting to emerging system conditions that may require units to be taken off the system in an emergency. NESO must have complete confidence that registered BMU Control Points will take action as requested, and without delay.

This document outlines high-level operational expectations from NESO on the role of a registered BMU Control Point. It acts as a pre-cursor to any actions taken forwards from the recently closed Call for Input on Data Inaccuracies in the Balancing Mechanism regarding Control Points, available here. This guidance outlines expectations and responsibilities but does not outline any enforcement changes or market changes which will be separately consulted on.

While this guidance is relevant to all parties across the GB electricity system, it is important and of particular relevance to BM Participants, BMU Lead Parties, and BMU Control Points. It is paramount that these parties understand the role of a registered Control Point and their purpose, and to ensure that the Control Point appointed for registered BMUs can fulfil their obligations.

Definitions for the terminology used in this document can be found in the Grid Code. Any acronyms used are also defined in the glossary at the end of this document.

Guidance on the role of a registered Control Point.

A registered Control Point is expected to:

1. Be contactable by the NESO Control Room at all times. CC/ECC7.9 requires all Generators, DC Convertor Station owners and BM Participants to have a single Control Point that can receive and act on instructions pursuant to OC7 and BC2 at all times. There are some exceptions for certain plant types and sizes where compliance with BC2 is not required as specified in the Bilateral Agreement. In these cases, the Control Point needs only to be staffed between 08:00 – 18:00 each day, but in general this exemption only applies to Generators with Bilateral Embedded Licence Exemptible

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Large Generator Agreements (BELLAs) or those parties with sites that have limited Registered Capacities as detailed CC/ECC7.9.

2. Be the single point of contact for the NESO Control Room, who can take ownership and responsibility for the physical control of the BMU and any instructions issued by NESO. As above, CC/ECC7.9 requires a single Control Point which can receive and act on instructions pursuant to OC7 and BC2 at all times unless staffing is only required between 08:00 – 18:00 each day as detailed in 1. above.

3. Be familiar with the content of Grid Code BC1 for pre-gate requirements, including but not limited to BC1.4.1-BC1.4.5. This includes knowledge of what data should be submitted pre-gate closure, in what timeframes, and in what format; as well as an understanding of data revisions, validation rules, what happens if data is not submitted, or if there is a failure of communications.

4. Be familiar with the content of Grid Code BC2 for post-gate requirements, including but not limited to BC2.5, BC2.6, BC2.7, BC2.8, BC2.9.1.3, and BC2.11. This includes knowledge and capabilities to enable physical operation of BMUs, act on Bid-Offer Acceptances, provide Ancillary Services, and respond to Emergency Instructions or situations likely to result in a risk.

5. Have the ability to control the BMU or Generating Unit output (MW and MVAr) in line with the instructions issued by NESO, including synchronising and desynchronising of the unit. This is in accordance with BC2.5.2, BC2.5.3 and BC2.6.

6. Have the ability to update dynamic parameters, including BMU import and export limits without delay, in accordance with BC2.5.3.

7. Have the ability to accept and action telephone instructions issued by NESO without delay, in accordance with BC2.6.

8. Have the ability to accept and action any Emergency Instructions for the BMU without delay, in accordance with BC2.9. Examples of circumstances that may require the issue of Emergency Instructions are listed in BC2.9.1.2 and may include requests and actions that are critical to safety.

9. When Integral Equipment Tests (IET) and/or commissioning tests are being undertaken for BMUs and Generating Units, understand and act on requirements around PN, MIL and MEL submissions related to this testing, in accordance with BC2.5

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and OC7.5. Supplementary guidance on IET testing procedures and data requirements related to any testing is available on our website.

10. When it is a Control Point for a directly connected and Large Power Station, have Control Telephony which is mains resilient and has advanced facilities when compared to a public communications network, in accordance with CC/ECC.6.5.4.1. The Control Point for Generators (in respect of all Large and Directly Connected Power Stations) must be able to act on instructions at all times (noting there may be special exemptions for certain plant types were a relaxation is specified in the Bilateral Agreement). This obligation is fulfilled by Grid Code obligation CC/ECC.7.9 and the requirements of CC/ECC.6.5.1 - CC/ECC.6.5.5 with regard to telephony, and CC/ECC.6.5.8 which requires electronic data communication facilities. In summary CC/ECC.7.9 requires a staffed control point at all times (noting there may be special exemptions for certain plant types were a relaxation is specified in the Bilateral Agreement) and the facilities available at the Control Point including telephony and electronic data communication facilities are specified in the Grid Code and Bilateral Agreement. Further information regarding NESO Communication Standards is published on the NESO website - NESO Communication Standards.

While the points above provide an overview of guidance on the operational requirements of a registered BMU Control Point, they do not cover guidance or information related to the broader resilience of Control Points and the GB Electricity System.

Feedback & Correspondence

NESO will provide any updates regarding guidance, publications, or future actions around the operations of BMU Control Points through the Operational Transparency Forum, and via the NESO website. Any private correspondence required on the operational performance of BMU Control Points will be made via email and Microsoft Teams or telephone calls to individual BMUs.

Should any parties wish to provide feedback on the information in this Guidance Note, we ask that is it submitted via email to box.nc.customer@neso.energy

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Glossary

Acronym	Definition
BELLA	Bilateral Exemptible Large License-exempt Generator Agreement
BMU	Balancing Mechanism Unit
IET	Integral Equipment Test
MEL	Maximum Export Limit
MIL	Maximum Import Limit
PN	Physical Notification