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SQSS Code Review Panel – 29 July 2025

Date: 29/07/2025	Location: Microsoft Teams
Start: 13:00	End: 14:00

Participants

Attendee	Initials	Company
Jess Rivalland	JR	Chair
Karen Stanton-Hughes	KSH	Panel Technical Secretary
Alan Creighton	AC	Panel Member, Network Operator Representative
Antony Johnson	AJ	Observer
Bieshoy Awad	BA	Panel Member, NESO Representative
Claire Newton	CN	Panel Member, NESO Representative
Cornel Brozio	CB	Panel Member, SP Transmission Representative
Garth Graham	GG	Panel Member, Generator Representative
Le Fu	LF	Panel Member, NGET Representative
Mark Perry	MP	Panel Member, NGET Representative
Martin Brown	MB	Panel Member, OFTO Representative
Paul Drew	PD	Authority Representative
Roddy Wilson	RW	Panel Member, SHETL Transmission Representative
Roger Carter	RC	Panel Member, OFTO Representative

Observers/Presenters

Attendee	Initials	Company
Dozie Nnabuife	DN	NESO Presenter
Richard Mather	RM	NESO Presenter

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Apologies

Attendee	Initials	Company
Mike Lee	ML	Panel Member, OFTO representative

1. Introductions and Apologies

The Chair advised in the absence of Teri Puddefoot, that they would be supporting this Panel. Apologies were received from ML.

2. Minutes from previous meeting

The meeting minutes from the SQSS Panel held on 28 January, 06 March and 06 May were presented for approval at the Panel meeting on 29 July. A few minor amendments were corrected, and the Panel approved all the minutes.

3. Review of actions log

The SQSS Panel reviewed the open actions:

Action 40.8: Open. The Panel decided this would remain open as “pending” until the GC0117 solution is either approved or rejected by all parties. The Authority made a determination on 18 July, and returned it to the Workgroup requiring further analysis, including an updated Cost Benefit Analysis. Updates will be provided at future Panel meetings.

Action 42: Open. PD to check with Adam Gilham, within Ofgem, for confirmation. The Panel discussed updates relating to Governance arrangements, timelines, and Terms of Reference for the SQSS GSR Workgroups. Highlighting progress, pending decisions, and clarifications regarding consequential changes in planning data and Grid Code proposals. The Governance arrangements for SQSS have been overtaken by GSR033, with decisions on SQSS Governance and related licences completed earlier in the year. No new decisions or notifications have been reported since the last SQSS Panel meeting.

4. Authority Decisions

No Authority Decisions have been received on SQSS Modifications.

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5. New modifications

No new modifications have been raised.

6. In flight modification updates

GSR029: Review of Demand Connection Criteria to Align with EREC P2/7 timeline update

The timeline for GSR029 was revised to resume paused work. The Panel had no objections to the timeline.

GSR029: Review of Demand Connection Criteria to Align with EREC P2/7 Terms of Reference update

1. *Consider if there are consequential changes to other codes, such as the Grid Code in relation to planning data:*

The Panel considered that the existing Terms of Reference (ToR) already account for consequential changes to the Grid Code, including planning data, and proposals being developed under GC0139. A minor change was made as a clarification rather than an addition to the ToR. The Panel discussed including a baseline and any further proposals developed under GC0139 in the planning data references to ensure comprehensive consideration.

2. *Consider any versions of P2 that have been published or in development beyond P2/7 and EREC 130 and their implications on the proposal:*

The Panel agreed to refine the wording to specify consideration of the current version of P2 standards and those in development beyond P2/7, to avoid ambiguity about including outdated versions. Ensuring clarity, versions P2/7, P2/8, and the in-development P2/9, along with corresponding versions of ERAP 130, ensuring alignment with the most up-to-date standards.

GSR030: Offshore DC Connections

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The Proposer gave a brief update on the delay regarding GSR030. Due to the recent change in the chairmanship for this modification, the new Chair has been collaborating closely with the Proposer to update the Workgroup Consultation and legal text. Given the complexity and the extensive discussions held within the Workgroups for GSR030, it has been necessary to extend the number of Workgroup sessions prior to issuing the Workgroup Consultation to the industry.

7. **Workgroup Reports**

There were no Workgroup Reports raised.

8. **Draft Final Modification Reports**

There were no Draft Final Modification Reports raised.

9. **Implementation updates**

There were no implementation updates for Panel.

10. **Governance**

There were no further updates for Panel.

11. **SAR (System Access Reform) Transmission Acceleration**

The Panel received a presentation from NESO on the soft launch for SAR (System Access Reform) Transmission Acceleration. The Panel and presenters discussed the proposed updates and operational adjustments related to the transmission system's planning, risk assessment, and outage management processes. The dialogue would involve multiple stakeholders addressing timelines, regulatory roles, flexibility in operational limits, and coordination between different entities to enhance system reliability and efficiency over an 18-month programme.

Introduction and Programme Overview

The transmission acceleration report introduces new initiatives aiming to improve end-to-end processes in transmission outage planning and system access. The programme is in a soft launch phase, expected to run

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fully from September 2025 over 18 months. Stakeholder engagement is emphasised to refine future proposals and address challenges with increasing system connections and operational complexities.

Timeline and Implementation Considerations

The discussions raised concerns regarding the timing of proposed modifications, particularly regarding the SQSS changes, which may only be approved by Autumn, leaving limited winters for implementation before 2030. Clarification was given by NESO presenters, that while some updates will miss the upcoming Winter cycle, other risk review processes will continue, and many actions are designed to span a full year rather than focusing solely on winter months.

Role of Ofgem and Derogation Process

Discussions focused on clarifying Ofgem's role in the new processes replacing the traditional derogation mechanism. Stakeholders would seek reassurance that agreements on risk assessments and operational mitigations would be transparent and involve Ofgem's oversight to maintain robustness. The proposed process aims to remove the time consuming derogation steps by enabling asset owners and connected users to agree on operating limits without requiring individual Ofgem approvals each time, while keeping Ofgem informed for record keeping and oversight purposes.

Flexibility in Operating Limits and Economic Justification

Discussions covered the potential for increased operational flexibility, such as allowing assets to operate at higher voltage levels within agreed enhanced capabilities. While Appendix G offers economic justification guidance for over- or under-investment, it does not permit operation beyond standards without derogations. Therefore, any deviation from standards would require a formal derogation, ensuring legal and regulatory compliance.

Improving Derogation Timelines

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This would require stakeholders' acknowledgement that the current derogation process can be lengthy, sometimes up to 18 months, which motivates the search for alternative approaches. Suggestions may include establishing KPIs to expedite derogation decisions, potentially reducing the need for process changes by making existing mechanisms more efficient.

Outage Planning and Resource Allocation

The Panel discussed the allocation of outage weeks for works driven by Transmission Owners (TOs) or Distribution Network Operators (DNOs). Reviews are underway to optimise resource allocation, including possibilities for extended working hours or shifts, subject to constraints like noise regulations. This is part of the broader transmission acceleration and end-to-end review efforts to maximise outage efficiency.

Risk Assessment and Consistency Across Regions

The main goal is to align standards between England & Wales and Scotland to ensure consistent treatment of demand groups affected by outages. The approach includes assessing material risks to consumers and balancing operational flexibility with system safety. Precedents from thermal overload management provide confidence in handling voltage limits without unacceptable risks.

Governance and Code Review

A risk assessment process is expected to be embedded within the System Operator-Transmission Owner Code (STC) and supported by the Grid Code, ensuring formal governance and compliance. The proposals will undergo thorough Panel reviews to gather feedback and steer development appropriately.

Additional Updates and Considerations

Ongoing updates on related projects, such as Month 7 testing from the UK perspective, will be communicated regularly. The timeline for some Cost Benefit Analyse (CBA) and decisions remains uncertain, necessitating continued coordination among code governance bodies and stakeholders.

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12. Actions:

Action 43: DN/RM To update the System Access Reform slides and documentation and share with stakeholders for further dissemination. Upcoming deadlines and meetings are scheduled for early and late September to advance modification proposals and review interactions with related codes. Continuous engagement with the Panels and regulator will support the programme's progression.

Action 44: AP To review the interaction of OFTO regulations covered by the Grid Code regarding GSR030 and discuss with the Proposer.

Action 45: JR To share public version of slides for SAR (System Access Reform) Transmission Acceleration to the Panel.

The next SQSS Panel meeting will be held on (23 September 2025) at (13:00 to 15:00) via Microsoft Teams.

New Modification Proposals to be submitted by (02 September 2025).

SQSS Code Review Panel Papers Day is (09 September 2025).