

Public

Slow Reserve (positive) Linked Windows

December 2025

Email to: box.futureofbalancingservices@neso.energy



Slow Reserve Transition Plan

3M start up



Slow Reserve

Balancing Reserve



Fast Reserve



Short-term Operating Reserve
(STOR)



Super SEL



Slow reserve



Quick reserve



Project Update

11th December 2025

We can now share a further update on the go-live of the new Slow Reserve (SR) service, with full details of the requirement for linked SR windows (positive SR only) which will be in place for an initial transitional period as we embed the enduring SR service. Please refer to our [Slow Reserve Transition Plan](#) for full details.



Slow Reserve Revised Go-Live Date

- Slow Reserve has been rescheduled to go live on 31 March 2026, with the planned cessation of STOR at the same time.
- Initially scheduled to go-live in October 2025, it was determined that Slow Reserve entailed greater complexity in scheduling systems and processes than initially anticipated.
 - Adoption of the service into existing control room scheduling tools and processes
 - The increased complexity associated with flexible service windows
- Initial assessment suggested minimal changes to existing scheduling systems
- As detailed assessment and process testing progressed it was identified that the additional complexity could only be supported through enhancements to current scheduling systems and processes.

Scheduling challenges explained

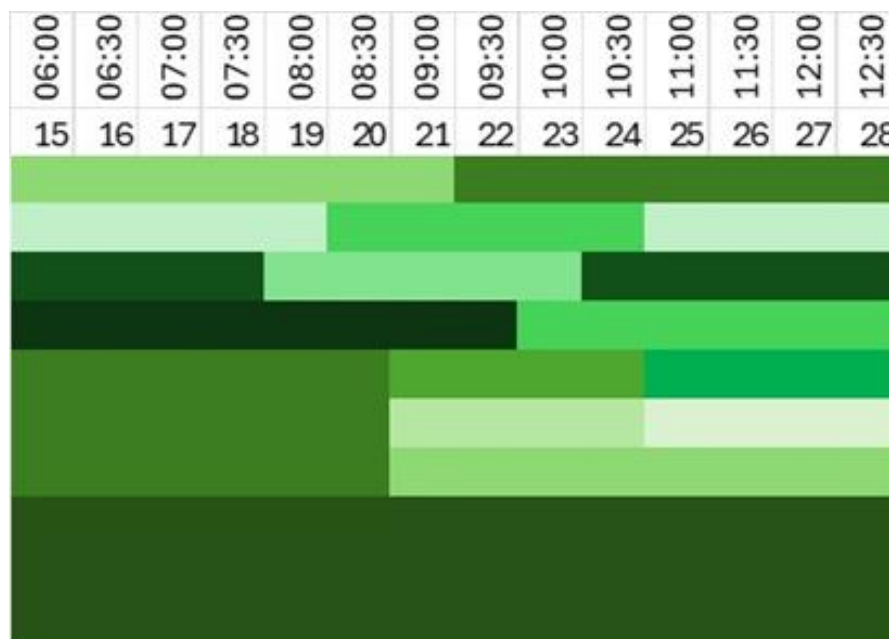
Slow Reserve has a more complex procurement design (than STOR) which means there are a significant number of SR units/MW that change between settlement periods as SR is procured nationally in 30 mins periods. Volumes procured behind constraints may fluctuate every 30 mins, which drive additional ENCC scheduling complexity.

STOR



Procured as a single contract block for the entire Operational Day

Slow Reserve



Procured in individual settlement periods (minimum of 4 contiguous)

Impact on SR

- To address the additional design complexities, system and process enhancements are required to be delivered and tested before service go-live. Pushing the date back into early 2026.
- With SR directly linked to the end of STOR, we need to ensure continued system security and reliability during the winter period as we develop and test the system and process enhancements for SR.
- For the initial go-live of SR NESO require a transitional period to test the system enhancements, processes, and resilience to manage the increased volume of contracts through the scheduling process.



Linked SR Windows

- During the transition period, NESO will be linking certain contiguous SR Windows for the **positive service (PSR)** through the procurement process.
- By linking Slow Reserve Windows for a transitional period, we can introduce and embed the service within the enhanced scheduling system and processes whilst monitoring and testing operational resilience of Slow Reserve before ending the transitional period.
- Outside the linked periods all other PSR Windows are unaffected.
- The Negative and Optional services are also unaffected.



Linked SR Windows – Procurement Rules

Linking of SR Windows is permitted under the SR Procurement Rules

- Section 7 *“Whenever, with respect to any Auction Product, NESO has a reasonable expectation of a requirement to Link two or more SR Windows, it shall give reasonable prior notice of that requirement to Registered Auction Participants by way of notification on the Designated Auction Platform and/or the Industry Information Website (“Linking Notice”)”*
- Section 9.7 *“where, for any Auction Product, an SR Window is Linked with one or more other SR Windows, then a Sell Order with respect to any of those SR Windows shall only be valid if it is comprised within a Flexible Group which includes each of those other SR Windows with which it is Linked”*



Linked SR Windows – Auction Rules

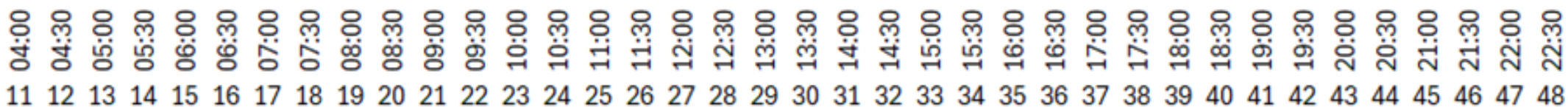
- For each Linked period providers must submit auction sell-orders of identical MW volume for all SR Windows in the linked period, in order to be a valid sell-order. These sell orders must be submitted as flexible groups.
- Invalid orders will be rejected at submission.
- Each linked period will be procured separately.
- No obligation for providers to submit sell-orders for all or more than one of the linked period in an Operational Day.



Linked SR Windows Timings

Following detailed assessment of the requirements, we have identified the following three consecutive, linked SR windows, which will cover all operational days during the transition period.

Morning (6:00 – 10:30) **Midday (10:30 – 15:00)** **Evening (15:00 – 21:00)**



Week day
Non-Weekday



The current committed STOR windows (morning and evening) no longer reflect the new operational requirement. To address this gap, a new midday window positioned between the morning and evening periods will be introduced. This also allows the morning and evening windows to be shorter in duration.

Energy Delivery Obligations

- SR Service Terms require that SR units must be capable of delivering energy (if instructed) continuously for the entire Contracted Service Period.
 - Where there are no linked SR Windows, the minimum obligation would be to be capable to provide continuous energy (if instructed) for the minimum 4 contiguous SR Windows (2 hours).
 - For Linked SR Windows, energy could be required continuously for several hours (up to 6 hours).



Temporary Relaxation of MUP

- To minimise the impact on market participants, we will be relaxing, for the **transition period only**, the obligation on energy delivery to align with a unit's MUP.
- We will not require any single continuous instruction to exceed the unit's MUP in a linked period.
- **Following a BOA or non-BM dispatch instruction for PSR, and when the unit is approaching their MUP, providers are required to;**
 - call NESO control room to agree a time for the BOA or non-BM Instruction to end, which must be aligned to their MUP (not less than 2 hours).
 - Units ramp back to their PN (baseline) in line with the issued BOA or non-BM Cease Instruction. Normal rules then apply for the recovery period and units should then ensure they are redeclare as available if still contracted for PSR.

Formal Linking Notice

- In advance of the first SR auction opening in March 2026 NESO will issue a Linking Notice (giving reasonable prior notice) to Registered Auction Participants on its Auction Platform and Website.
- The Linking Notice will set out:
 - full details of the individual linked periods and the associated SR Windows.
 - Confirmation of the relaxed energy delivery obligations and associated rules.

Duration of transition period

- The transition period will remain in place whilst we embed the new SR service and monitor all aspects of the enhanced scheduling and dispatch systems and processes.
- We expect the assessment phase may take at least 10 weeks to fully complete as we assess Control Room workload impacts and provider behaviour over a range of operational conditions.
- Provided there are no issues, we would expect to remove the Linking Notice no earlier than June 2026.
- We will give at least 2 weeks notice ahead of any change or cancellation of the Linking Notice.

Summary

- Slow Reserve go-live 31 March 2026 with an initial transition period during which we have an operational need for a period of linked windows.
- Only the firm positive service is affected.
- Providers must submit auction sell-orders of identical MW volume for all SR Windows in the linked period.
- These linked windows will be in place for a transitional period only.
- We have tried to make the linked windows no more onerous for market participants than the incumbent STOR service.
 - Individual windows are no longer than STOR
 - No obligation to bid in to all windows
 - Continuous energy obligation relaxed.

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