SEP Industry Working Group

Terms of Reference

Background and context

Strategic energy planning (SEP) considers energy needs at national and regional levels, and across different types of energy such as electricity, gas and hydrogen. This whole energy system approach also considers societal and environmental interests, as well as safeguarding system resilience and ensuring a low system cost. There are several connected plans and projects including:

- Gas and Whole Energy Network Development (GWEND)
- Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP)
- Centralised Strategic Network Plan (CSNP)
- Regional Energy Strategic Plans (RESPs)
- Net Zero Operability

Considerable and effective engagement is pivotal to ensuring that the plans we produce are robust and deliverable. Input from energy industry stakeholders is key to shaping and influencing our strategic energy plans.

The SEP Industry Working Group is being establishing as a core channel to support this, co-ordinating and aligning engagement across SEP. We have given careful consideration to membership, to ensure the representative bodies on the Group give a voice to a cross-section of the energy sector.

Purpose and scope

The purpose of the Industry Working Group is to co-ordinate and align engagement across SEP, provide consistent messaging and reduce duplication and stakeholder fatigue by:

- Creating a central engagement channel
- Providing a single, clear overview of all strategic energy plans in one place, and how they fit together
- Testing understanding, gather data, insights and feedback and ensure the outputs are deliverable
- Providing opportunities for stakeholders to challenge and review

- Signposting to project and programme specific updates, proposals and consultations
- Providing opportunities for networking amongst members
- Establishing subgroups to provide specific or technical input

Membership

Invited participants include senior representatives from key energy industry stakeholders such as Transmission Owners (TOs), Distribution Network Operators (DNOs and GDNs), developer representatives, Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and academics. We have taken an approach that, with the exception of network operators, members of this Group will be membership bodies to enable a fairer, wider representation across industry.

Sector	Organisations
Distribution Network Operators	Electricity North West
	National Grid Electricity Distribution
	Northern Powergrid
	SP Energy Networks Distribution
	SSEN Distribution
	UK Power Networks
Electricity Transmission Owners	National Grid Electricity Transmission
	SP Energy Networks Transmission
	SSEN Transmission
Gas Distribution Networks	Cadent
	Northern Gas Networks
	SGN
	Wales and West Utilities
Gas Transmission Owner	National Gas
Specialist	UK Energy Research Centre
	Strathclyde University
	Royal Academy of Engineering
Industry Associations	Association for Decentralised Energy
	BEAMA
	British Hydropower Associate
	British Ports Association
	Carbon Capture and Storage Association
	Energy Networks Association
	Energy UK
	European Subsea Cable Association
	Future Energy Networks
	Hydrogen Scotland
	Hydrogen UK
	Independent Networks Association

	Institute for Gas Engineers & Managers
	Nuclear Industry Association
	Offshore Energy UK
	Renewable Energy Association
	Renewable UK
	Renewable UK Cymru
	Regen
	Scottish Renewables
	Solar Energy UK
	Tech UK

Membership can be reviewed by the Chair and NESO and, if necessary, adjusted to ensure suitable representation from across energy industry stakeholders. Members may propose a delegate or substitute should they be unable to attend, but these should be at a level of expertise sufficient to engage with the Group in line with these terms of reference.

Chair

The Chair is David Willmot, Head of Electricity Network Design and Delivery. If the designated Chair is not available for part or all of a meeting, then a suitable representative will be provided by NESO. Guest speakers/participants may be invited to join the meetings if it is deemed appropriate to the discussion and/or the successful functioning of the Group and its outputs.

Participation

Members will be responsible for proactively identifying and raising issues to be addressed and providing stakeholder group specific input into discussions. Where a member represents a particular stakeholder group, we expect that they should attempt to reflect the views of as many stakeholders in their sector as possible. We would like members to:

- Make reasonable endeavours to attend all meetings. Where a member cannot attend it is expected that they send an appropriate deputy and inform the technical secretary of the change prior to the meeting.
- Consider and review all documentation circulated ahead of the meeting.
- Seek insights proactively and represent the broader views of their stakeholder group.
- Bring their expertise, insights and engage with new ideas.

The Group is established in good faith to hear the views of stakeholders, ensuring that all discussions are conducted with the utmost confidentiality and trust. Should that not be the case, where behaviour is contrary to the aims of the group, NESO reserves the right to withdraw the invitation to Group membership.

The Industry Working Group may from time to time set up sub-groups to further consider technical details in the strategic plans. Where this happens, these sub-groups will, amongst other

things, be provided with a clear brief from the Industry Working Group on scope; objectives; timeline and membership.

Feedback/Engagement

To ensure there are opportunities to provide quality feedback NESO will:

- Open up feedback windows to receive member's key insight and feedback following the discussions held at the group.
- Share summarised content with membership organisations and trade bodies, to share with their membership to garner views.

The advice provided will be collated and summarised where appropriate to be included in final documentation. Feedback may be used to inform the methodology/approach, options and final pathway for SEP. Views of this working Group will be taken into consideration, but members will not have the right to decision making for the SEP.

Confidentiality

NESO may share early insights, pre-publication material, or interim views relating to Britain's future energy system to support review and feedback. As strategic energy plans develop, these views may evolve. As a result, Group members may have access to information, data, or materials that are not in the public domain and are expected to treat such information appropriately.

Where information shared by NESO is clearly marked as 'Confidential', members must not copy, download or share this information outside of the Group. Confidential material will be made available only via NESO's SharePoint site. Any sharing of confidential information beyond the Group must be agreed in advance. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in exclusion from the Group.

NESO will also frequently share information labelled as 'Public'. Any material marked as 'Public' may be shared within members' wider organisations or with the groups they represent. To avoid confusion, information suitable for onward sharing will be provided via email as an attachment. Group members remain responsible for ensuring that information is shared in line with its classification. Where possible, NESO will endeavour to provide information that can be shared openly. Where this is not possible, an external or summarised version of the content will be provided for sharing with wider memberships.

Reporting

Meeting summaries and action points will be documented and distributed to all participants within one week after each meeting. This terms of reference and meeting summaries will be published on the NESO website to provide full transparency of the Group.

Representatives of the Industry Working Group will sit on the SSEP Expert Advisory Group and feed in views of the Group. If escalation is required, this will be made to the Expert Advisory Group and shared with NESO's SEP team. Any information to be shared between the governance and/or working groups must be agreed.

Secretariat

A secretariat team from NESO will be appointed to organise and co-ordinate the meetings, manage communication among participants, and handle documentation and reporting.

The Industry Working Group shall typically meet once every 6 – 8 weeks, or in line with key milestones. with meetings lasting up to 90 minutes. Meetings will ordinarily take place via Microsoft Teams and will be arranged by NESO. Members shall confirm notice of attendance or apologies of absence to the Technical Secretary no less than a week in advance.

Review and amendments

These Terms of Reference may be reviewed and amended as necessary by agreement among the participants to reflect changes in circumstances or priorities.

Privacy notice

As a member of the SEP Industry Working Group you agree to us holding contact information, including name, email and phone number. You have the right to ask us to delete any personal contact information we hold at any point.

For more information about how we collect, use and protect personal data, please see our Privacy Notice: neso.energy/privacy-notice