

## **Developing competition in connections services**

### **Enhancement, clarifications and changes to design & construction methodologies to be applied by National Grid**

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## **Introduction**

This document sets out National Grid Gas's decision based on our proposal published on 13 January 2006 to make modifications and enhancements to design criteria and standard source pressures available from our gas distribution network.

This document:

- Sets out the views of respondents to the consultation document.
- Identifies the changes that will be implemented from 3 July 2006 that will reduce the level of documentation submitted by Gas Transporters and Utility Infrastructure Providers to National Grid Gas.

## **Views of respondents to consultation**

### **Simplification of Design (Reference to National Grid document NP14)**

#### Standard Source Pressures and Minimum Supply Pressure (LP systems)

Respondents supported the utilisation of standard source pressures to extend this process to single meter points and for larger loads.

Network analysis for available mains pressure will continue to be provided for loads exceeding 900KWhr(85scmh) fed from low pressure mains >2" nominal diameter, and 1733KWhr(160scmh) for all other low pressure mains sizes.

No comments were received regarding the proposal to cap the minimum supply pressure to 26mb.

No comments were received on the removal the network analysis service for available parent mains pressure for all loads less than or equal to 900KWh/85scmh, that fall within the solid (blue) boundary in Table A2.

No comments were received on National Grid wishing to gain confirmation by the customer of the actual mains extension pressure drop utilised, once the customer confirms that the load is to be connected.

#### Standard Source Pressures and Minimum Supply Pressure (MP/IP systems)

Some respondents did not support the complexity of Table A3 and National Grid have simplified this. National Grid has maintained the existing pressure drop requirements already in place for Medium Pressure designs.

No comments were received regarding the removal of network analysis service for available parent mains pressure for all loads less than or equal to 900KWh/85scmh as show in Specification Table A2.

## Design Criteria

### MP Service Pressure Drop

As mentioned above, some respondents did not support Table A3 and this has been amended to simplify the approach for use in mains and/or service extensions. The pressure drop for Medium Pressure services has been maintained to current National Grid guidelines.

### Design tables and the specifications for the design of pipes

A number of editorial and technical comments were received from correspondents and the amendments have been reflected in the revised document. Specific issues have been highlighted below.

#### 1. Minimum Mains and Service Designs

The majority of respondents made no comment on National Grid's proposal to standardised on 63mm pipe being the minimum size for any new extensions to the system for a main and 32mm pipe being the minimum size for new services. Two respondents and views from the SBGI requested that National Grid accepts designs based on IGEM standards which may be more efficient for certain projects compared to the standardised tables.

National Grid response is that standardising on 32mm service pipe allows the pressure drop to be minimised on new services and therefore offers better utilisation of the pressures across the mains distribution network. It is National Grid's view that the cost of this change is minimal and for some it will minimise supply chain costs as 32mm will satisfy all domestic supplies (32.5 kWh) up to 63m in length and the capacity of a U6 meter (65 kWh) up to 30m in length. Further, this ensures equality of treatment between all Connection Service Providers.

Standardising on 63mm mains ensures the network can be maintained and / or repaired without temporarily isolating consumers during the works, which would be required for pipe diameters of 32mm. From a safety perspective National Grid believe this will ensure other utilities can identify our plant easily and is consistent with their own distinction between what pipe sizes would be considered as mains and / or services.

#### 2. Mains Connections

Where comments were received from respondents, these supported the standard connection methods for both PE and Metallic mains. This provides clarity of what is expected and avoids any design challenges if the UIP / GT is unclear what method would be suitable to connect to the National Grid system.

National Grid has decided that the specification titled 'Minimum fit for purpose requirements when connecting new mains and services to the below 7 bar Network' has been covered sufficiently within the design document and adds no further clarity and will not be publishing this document.

### 3. Equivalent lengths for standard service components

Respondents supported the tables of standard services components that should be considered when designing bespoke services.

#### **Simplification of Process**

##### Method Statement Removal

Respondents supported National Grid's proposal to remove the need for any Company registered under GIRS construction to provide a method statement at design stage for each individual job.

For mains that contain non-standard materials such as asbestos, PVC or to mains that have been relined then a request will be made for the Customer to submit the method statement at design stage to allow alternative designs or connection locations to be considered and avoid delays that could occur when the routine or non-routine operation is submitted to National Grid. In these instances the method statement would still remain part of the design authorisation.

#### **Service Termination Guidance**

Respondents supported the publication of the guidance document for:

- the termination positions for Emergency Control Valves; and
- the types of Emergency Control Valves to be fitted to National Grids gas transportation network.

A number of technical and editorial comments were received and have been reflected in the revised document.

#### **Implementation**

Following completion of the consultation, the following process changes will be implemented from Monday 3 July 2006. A briefing note will be issued by the 5 June 2006, including a copy of the changes to documentation.

- Removal of method statement submissions with design documentation\*
- Implementation of standard design tables and reduced submission documents for both UIPs and iGTs
- Implementation of the extended standard pressure tables, including extending this to single loads. In tern, this will increase the ability to use the National Grid 'Fast Track' process.
- Removal of Network Analysis service for specific pressures when load within blue boundary of table A2.
- Requirement for an iGT to provide the actual mains extension pressure drop utilised, once the iGT confirms that the load is to be connected.
- Implementation and compliance with T/SP/NP/14.

Note: \*Still a requirement to submit for mains that contain non-standard materials