

Customer ramp rate studies

Value Case Study



Customer and commercial

Project: NIA_NGGT0042 Ramp Rate Study System
PEA cost: £58k
Duration: 6 months
Supplier: Oxford Computer Consultants
PEA benefits: £124k
Benefits realised: £60k

Key benefits:

100%

ramp rate studies completed in-house rather than outsourced

saving over...

£60K

25%

time saved per study

Background

When an NGGT customer requests a new connection to the network, we may need a ramp rate study to determine the consequences of bringing it online. New connections to the network can ramp up or down more quickly than the system can handle, leading to abnormal operating conditions and adverse impacts on the safety and security of the NTS. With a ramp rate study, we can model the proposed situation and determine if a particular ramp rate can be safely accommodated by the system.

The initial process relied on complicated and time-consuming interaction between Simone (the network simulation software package), Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and Access tools and sometimes third-party consultants. All ramp rate studies are funded by the customer. Those carried out internally by NGGT took three months on average to complete and cost £25k to £35k. Studies outsourced to a third-party consultant due to limited internal resources typically took longer to complete and cost £30k to £40k.

What's new?

This project set out to provide a lower-cost service to the customer, improve the level of service provided and improve customer satisfaction.

The project team developed a new methodology for assessing proposed customer ramp rates, incorporating intelligent software algorithms, new methods of analysis and the development of in-house capacity and expertise.

To facilitate wider application of the tool, the developers used open source code. They developed user guides and technical documentation to increase accessibility and encourage uptake of the tool.

The benefits

Implementation of the tool has resulted in a faster turnaround of a ramp rate study for the customer, cutting the average completion time of a ramp rate study from nine weeks to just seven – 25% quicker and saving £10k per study. This has had a significant impact on the cost to customers. Greater efficiencies have been achieved by applying the methodology to six new studies. All studies are now completed in-house, reducing reliance on third-party consultancies and avoiding the higher costs to customers associated with outsourcing.