



Long Term Access Review: Consultation Response Summary

December 2021

Introduction

In September 2021, National Grid NTS published a consultation to provide the next step in the development of a 2030 access regime. This included seeking industry views on the 2030 scenario of anticipated physical and behavioral changes, and potential solution options for future NTS access regime which were previously discussed with the Gas Markets Plan (GMaP) industry workgroup and presented within the consultation document. The consultation period closed on 30th November 2021.

Responses

In total, five non-confidential responses were received. These were provided by: Energy UK, RWE, SSE, Interconnector, and a joint response from the four Gas Distribution Networks: Cadent, Wales and West Utilities, SGN and Northern Gas Networks. We also received one confidential response. We would like to thank all the stakeholders that responded for providing their views. All non-confidential responses have now been published on our website.

Conclusions

It was clear that responding industry stakeholders agree there is still a significant degree of uncertainty around future developments in the UK gas market, particularly in relation to the pathway to Net Zero. The transition to hydrogen, and the changes to the commercial, legislative, and regulatory environments that may come with it, are still unclear at this stage and these could have significant influence on the 2030 scenario. The views provided relating to future developments within the energy regime and the 2030 scenario will provide valuable insight as we identify early indicators in the coming months which will indicate the direction of travel and confirm whether the developments that we expect to see in the 2030 scenario are starting to materialise.

There was little agreement from respondents on preferred solution options or timescales for further development. Different solution options may be more suitable for different types of users and views on these options may change as policy becomes clearer in future years. Due to this range of views expressed on solution options and the general agreement that there is still too much uncertainty on how the gas industry will evolve in the coming years, it is difficult to identify a favored option (or options) at this stage. We therefore propose to continue the development of solution options by looking at specific topics that span all options. This work can then be used to help develop solution options further at the appropriate time.

Although there was no clear agreement on which solution options were preferred, the views on different solution options expressed within the responses have provided us with a deeper understanding of how certain solution options would be viewed by different stakeholders and the distinct advantages and disadvantages of each from stakeholder perspectives. This will be invaluable when we continue the further development of solution options in the future.

Next Steps

With the closure of UNC 0705R “NTS Capacity Access Review” and the resolution of short-term issues with the capacity access regime, work and engagement on the longer-term transformation will continue solely under the GMaP umbrella; this will ensure that we maintain a focus on future access arrangements and continue progression towards our end goal. Given there is still a significant level of uncertainty around future developments, over the coming months, the views presented in this consultation will contribute towards the identification of early indicators that we may see in the

coming years to indicate the direction of travel of the UK gas market. Additionally, the information provided will be used to feed the work on specific topics as mentioned above, and further development of preferred solution options at the appropriate time.

Contacts

If you wish to discuss any matter relating to the Long Term Access Review please contact box.gsoconsultations@nationalgrid.com.