

Guidance for Independent Connection Providers (ICPs)

A high level guidance document for ICPs wishing to install assets for connection to WPDs Distribution System

Introduction

Western Power Distribution (WPD) is the company responsible for electricity distribution in the Midlands, South West and Wales. Our Business serves over 7.9 million customers and we employ over 6,500 members of staff to ensure the highest quality of service.

The purpose of this guidance document is to assist Independent Connection Providers (ICPs) wishing to undertake unmetered or metered connection works in (WPD's) licensed distribution areas. Our aim is to help both new and existing ICPs understand WPD's Competition in Connections (CiC) process and procedures. This guide provides information on key contacts, where to find more information and what agreements are available.



WPD complies with the Competition in Connections Code of Practice requirements by ensuring that:

- We reduce the extent to which competitors depend on us for essential services
- When we provide the services, we will do so on the same basis to both our competitors and our own connection business
- We operate to the Ofgem approved Code of Practice that sets out a common set of rules to enable competitors to access the market.

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Section 1 Process for a New ICP Entrant

Process

If you wish to provide contestable connection services you must be registered with Lloyd's Register EMEA under the National Electricity Registration Scheme (NERS) and hold appropriate accreditation to undertake the relevant work.

If you do not have Lloyd's accreditation you can still undertake contestable works but you will need to provide a letter from Lloyd's confirming you are in the process of obtaining partial accreditation. WPD will then allow you to progress in order to continue with the registration process.

Before you can operate in our area you shall have:

- appropriate Lloyd's scopes for the work that you intend to carry out
- signed the Framework Network Access and Adoption Agreement (FNA&AA)
- notified us the Distribution Safety Rules option(s) that you will be working in compliance with
- signed Extension of Contestability (EOC) agreement(s) if appropriate for the work that you intend to undertake

Framework Network Access and Adoption Agreement

The FNA & AA is a bilateral agreement between WPD and the ICP appointed to carry out the Contestable Work.

The FNA & AA sets out the terms and conditions that the ICP must comply with before any assets can be transferred to WPD and become part of the Distribution System.

The FNA & AA is an agreement that details:

- easements and consents
- information and documentation;
- design (where appropriate);
- construction and installation;
- commissioning and completion;
- insurances;
- Liabilities and warranties.

It is essential that all the FNA & AA is put in place before any of the Contestable Work is undertaken by the ICP. A copy of the FNA & AA is available to view [here](#).

Applying for an EOC

Once you have received a signed copy of the FNA & AA you may wish to sign additional agreements for you to undertake specialist activities such as:

Self-determination of a Point of Connection – under certain criteria you will be permitted to determine the point of connection to the existing Distribution System yourself. If you want to do this you will need to sign this agreement.

Self-Inspection – once you have a proven track record you will have an opportunity to self-inspect the assets that you install. To do this, you will need to have a warranty in place to indemnify WPD against asset failure for 10 years following the adoption of the asset.

Issue and Return of Keys - this agreement enables an ICP to gain access to WPD substations for the purpose of undertaking High Voltage Operational Activity.

Rent a Test Probe - is available for testing purposes where you wish to undertake some HV Operational work.

LV Cable Identification Service - this service is available from WPD to assist with the identification of LV cables.

Should you wish to undertake any specialist activities, full details are available on request.

Bilateral Connection Agreement (BCA)- where the new network assets are to be adopted by an Independent Distribution Network Operator (IDNO) the connection to our Distribution System will be covered under a Bilateral Connection Agreement. The BCA will set out the terms and conditions under which the IDNO network may remain connected to our Distribution System.

Distribution Safety Rules (DSR) Options

You will be required to state which of the Option(s) set out under the CiC Code of Practice you will be working in compliance with. Details are provided in Section 4 - Distribution Safety Rules Authorisations.

This information will be recorded by us and the Safety Team may request further information from you.

Where you make any changes to the declared Option status this shall be agreed between us in writing.

If you want to undertake contestable connection services in our distribution area please apply to:

WPD Connection Policy Team
Western Power Distribution
Pegasus Business Park
East Midlands Airport
DE74 2TU
wpdconnectionpolmids@westernpower.co.uk

Note: To enable us to provide you with a copy of the FNA & AA for signature, you must provide your full company details to the WPD.

Access to Technical Information

To help you plan your design we can provide you with access to technical information. You will be able to register for access to this information on the [WPD Tech info site](#). This site contains our Standard Techniques that you will be required to comply with. Compliance with the appropriate documents is essential if you want to connect your assets to our Distribution System.

Technical policy engineering documents

To facilitate competition in certain areas of new connection work a number of national framework documents have been developed:

For greenfield and brown field LV housing development installations

[Engineering recommendation G81 Part 1- Design and planning](#)
[Engineering recommendation G81 Part 2- Materials specifications](#)
Engineering recommendation G81 Part 3- Installation and records

For industrial and commercial connected loads up to and including 11kV:

[Engineering recommendation G81 Part 4- Design and planning](#)
[Engineering recommendation G81 Part 5- Materials specification](#)
[Engineering recommendation G81 Part 6- Installation and records](#)

Each of these are required by Ofgem to be supplemented with local appendices The WPD appendices must be read in conjunction with the national framework documents.

For greenfield and brown field LV housing development installations

[Engineering recommendation G81 Part 1- Design framework appendix](#)
[Engineering recommendation G81 Part 2- Materials framework appendix](#)
Engineering recommendation G81 Part 3- Installation and records framework appendix

For industrial and commercial connected loads up to and including 11kV:

[WPD G81 – 4 Design framework appendix](#)
[WPD G81 – 5 Materials framework appendix](#)
[WPD G81 – 6 Installation and records framework appendix](#)

Network plans and information

WPD DataPortal2

The WPD DataPortal2 service is an online facility with two main features:

A facility to download WPD asset data;

- EMU Online provides web browser based Geographic Information System (GIS) of our asset information and network records.
- To find out how to register for this facility please see the registration and help guide [here](#).

Section 2 Planning the Connections

Application Process

Before you can undertake any work will need to forward to us an application for connection.

You will need to decide if you wish WPD to undertake any design or point of connection work or have designs approved for you. Providing that you have the appropriate NERS Scopes you can undertake some or all of the design activity and approve it yourself. Further information is available on our [technical information site](#).

When you submit an application you will need to provide the required information clearly stating your requirements. We will provide you with a connection offer as soon as we can but also within the timescales set out under the under the Connections Guaranteed Standards of Performance. Further information is available [here](#).

CROWN Internet Routing & Tracking (CIRT) Application Process

We have an internet-based system for ICPs and IDNOs to submit applications online.

CIRT has been developed to allow ICPs and WPD to:

- Create and route connection enquiries;
- Enable tracking of individual schemes, stage by stage;
- Manage two-way activities;
- Upload and exchange documents;
- Manage inspection timetables.

You are able to register to use CIRT at a company, organisational unit and individual level. For further information on how to register please [click here](#).

If you are an existing CIRT user please [click here](#) to log in.

Where to Apply

Applications can be made as follows:

Send an email to the Records Team in Tipton: wpdnewsuppliesmids@westernpower.co.uk

Registering for CIRT and make an application via this system:
<https://www.westernpower.co.uk /Online-applications-CIRT.aspx>

Complete an on-line application via the WPD website:

<https://www.westernpower.co.uk/Connections/Apply/Online.aspx>

Network Design

An appropriately accredited ICP can design as well as install the new network assets. If you want to carry out the design of assets that we are to adopt, you must work to our specifications. The following information is available:

Part 1 - Design & Planning Framework Document + WPD's Framework Appendix

- The Design & Planning Framework Document outlines design requirements including: Voltage regulation;
- Maximum earth loop resistance; Cable ratings;
- HV/LV substation ratings

The design must be sent to us for approval before work commences unless you hold the appropriate NERS Scopes for self-design approval. We will approve or reject your design within the timescales set out under the Guaranteed Standards of Performance.

Point of Connection

Under certain criteria you are permitted to determine the Point of Connection (POC) to the existing Distribution System yourself. Click here to view a table giving details of POCs and down-stream designs that can be self- approved by you.

Section 3 Distribution Safety Rules Authorisations

Delivery options

In accordance with rules set out under the CiC Code of Practice, you have a choice as to how you work on our Distribution System. Authorisation means approval of individual ICPs or their contractors, and recognition of the competence of such persons, to carry out specified activities. We have highlighted the options available to you below.

LV Options Table

You will need to state if you wish to carry out live LV jointing and/ or HV operational work.

Where you intend to undertake this work you will also need to inform us under which Option you intend to work. Where you are intending to undertake LV connection works you shall provide written notice to Connection Policy stating which option is being complied with.

Competition in Connections Code of Practice	Option 1	Option 2
Description	ICP works to own DSRs procedures and Policy. ICP authorise their own Staff.	ICP works to WPD DSRs procedures and Policy. WPD authorise ICP Staff.

HV Options Table

For HV Operational work you will need to nominate which DSR Code of Practice Option you will be complying with when working on our Distribution System from the following table.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Description	ICP works to own DSRs procedures and Policy. ICP authorise their own Staff (only available with option 3).	ICP works to WPD DSRs procedures and Policy. WPD authorise ICP Staff.	WPD transfers control of a specific part of the distribution system to ICP control. Only available with Option 1	ICP authorised SAP Switches to WPD DSRs procedures and Policy. Work on 'Defined System' under ICP DSRs procedures and Policy.

You will need to provide a detailed Safety Management System (SMS) to the Safety Team prior to the start of any Operational activity as stated in ST: OS7H available via our technical information site.

When providing the SMS to the Safety Team, you will need to confirm which of the Options, 1, 2, 3 or 4 you are intending to work in compliance with. For clarity, and to prevent any confusion, you can only work to the declared Option.

If you are intending to work to Option 2 there will be a charge made for the examination officer's time and any administration undertaken to provide the appropriate authorisations. Further details can be obtained from the Safety Team.

Charging for DSR services

To ensure that WPD meet the requirements of the CIC Code of Practice where an ICP elects to work to WPD DSRs a service has been made available for ICP staff to be authorised under Option 2 at HV or LV.

WPD have provided an additional Option for ICP's to undertake HV operational activity on the WPD existing network under Option 4.

Where WPD are requested by an ICP to provide DSR services for Option 2 or Option 4 WPD will recover all its reasonable costs for the provision of the services.

WPD shall recover any costs incurred for carrying out Safety Management System office based checks. This will include any costs for travelling to an ICP's office. Where site audits are required travelling costs will also be chargeable including the time taken to carry out the audit and the necessary clerical functions for the recording of information in the WPD Crown system.

There will be a requirement for refresher site audits and for the ICP staff to complete Computer Based Tests (CBT) to maintain their Authorisations.

Additional charges will apply for any refresher audits and the administration of the process.

A table has been provided detailing the various requirements that will need to be met depending on the Option selected. The table does NOT include costs for attending a WPD training course. Where further training is required by ICP staff following an assessment with a WPD examining officer a request for training school courses can be obtained from the Training Team www.westernpower.co.uk/training

Any activity subject to a charge shall be charged at the appropriate rate as provided at the time such activity is undertaken.

An example of costs and typical time spent for each activity are detailed below:

Full Option 2 validation, authorisation and field check = £3,503.90 plus VAT (Based on 37HRS of WPD's competent person, at the relevant Grade)

Annual authorisation CBTs and field check = £1,231.10 plus VAT (Based on 13HRS of WPD's competent person, at the relevant Grade)

Whilst WPD has provided details of typical durations for activities, these have been provided in good faith and are not limits on the amount of time that an activity may take or the resulting charges.

The actual charges for each activity will be calculated based upon the time taken for WPD to carry out each task. For Further information on costing please don't hesitate to contact us.

CiC Option	Staff Involved	Typical Duration (Hours)
Option 1		
SMS Check	Operational Safety Advisor	16 – 40
Operational Site Checks (Per Stage)	Appropriate Authorised SAP or Examining Officer or Operational Safety Advisor	4 - 8
Operational Site Check (Random)	Appropriate Authorised SAP or Examining Officer or Operational Safety Advisor	4 - 8
Differences identified checked against DSR.	Operational Safety Advisor	2
Option 2		
Desk top gap analysis	Appropriate Examining Officer	2
Initial interview	Appropriate Examining Officer	2
Produce training requirements	Appropriate Examining Officer	2
Produce experience requirements	Appropriate Examining Officer	2
Check of non WPD training is equivalent to WPD training	Safety & Training Manager	2
CBT	Appropriate Examining Officer	2
Authorisation interview	Appropriate Examining Officer	4
Switching field test	Appropriate Authorised SAP or Examining Officer or Operational Safety Advisor	4 - 8
Certificate preparation	Appropriate Examining Officer	1
IO check and issue of authorisation certificate	Issuing Officer	2
Annual Field check	Appropriate Authorised SAP or Examining Officer or Operational Safety Advisor	4 - 8
Annual CBT	Appropriate Examining Officer	2

Option 4		
SMS Check	Operational Safety Advisor	16 – 40
WPD Operational Briefing & Test	Appropriate Examining Officer	
Operational Site Check	Appropriate Authorised SAP or Examining Officer or Operational Safety Advisor	5 x 4/8 (Minimum)
Deficiency resolution	DM & SM	3
General		
Admin & Records	Safety Assistant	

Section 4 Making the Connection

Building the Down Stream Asset

Once the connection has been designed and approved it can then be constructed. Any part of the connection to be adopted by us will need to be made available for inspection therefore a build out programme must be prepared and sent to us, one week prior to the work commencing and an update provided whenever there are any material changes to the programme.

The programme should be forwarded to the WPD Planner who is managing the design enquiry.

LV Connection Process

If you are intending to make a connection directly to our existing Distribution System you will be required to make an application to the Records Team based in Tipton one week prior to the work commencing, this is referred to as the Live Jointing Notice of Connection (LJNC).

The notice required will vary depending on the work. If the work requires the disconnection of metered connections this should be sent two weeks prior to the disconnection taking place and is referred to as the Live Jointing Disconnection Notification Certificate (LJDNC).

When the work has been completed a plan showing the works undertaken must be submitted to our Records Team together with the LJCC or the LJDCC, as appropriate. Further guidance is available in ST: NC2L on our Tech Info website.

Low Voltage Disconnections

The following table provides details of the apparatus that can be disconnected from the existing WPD low voltage network as part of a new connection scheme. The new offering will be open to accredited ICP's for twelve months on a trial basis.

LV Disconnection Table	
Description	Point of Disconnection
Single LV Service	Public Highway
Multiple LV services	Public Highway
Single LV Pole Termination	Public Highway or Development Land
LV Mains Cable	Public Highway
LV Mains Pole Termination	Public Highway or Development Land

Low Voltage disconnections that are not permitted

The following disconnections will remain excluded at this time:

- Low voltage service or mains cable on a high voltage pole;
- Low voltage service on a telecommunications pole;
- Low voltage service or mains cable in third party land;
- Low voltage mains cable feeder pillar disconnection;
- Low Voltage split phase networks.

Process

The following process shall be followed where an ICP is intending to undertake an LV disconnection:

- 1) Prior to making an application ensure that any meter has been removed;
- 2) Agree in writing the extent of disconnection works with the Site Responsible Person;
- 3) Provide two weeks' notice to WPD for the required data flows to be communicated to the supplier;
- 4) Provided that there are no objections from the supplier or there is network or operational issues to the proposed work, WPD Network Services Team will give consent for the works to be undertaken;
- 5) Carry out the disconnection(s) within the prescribed timescales;
- 6) Provide a completion certificate to WPD detailing where the work has been undertaken with an appropriate cable record within the prescribed timescales;
- 7) Ensure that a formal written confirmation of disconnection is provided to the Site Responsible Person.

Further guidance is available in WPD's Standard Technique: NC2L which is available to view in the TechInfo website.

HV Connection Process

If you are intending to make a connection to our existing HV Distribution System, arrangements will need to be made with the WPD technician who has been allocated to manage your scheme. We will do this via a formal Planning and Facilitation meeting that records the shutdown requirements with your SAP and the WPD Technician prior to the work taking place.

A separate notice must be sent to our Records Team 20 working days prior to the connection being made and is referred to as the High Voltage Notice of Connection (HVNC). When the connection is complete a High Voltage Completion Certificate (HVCC) must be completed and sent to the Records Team together with a record showing the works undertaken.

New Entrant Additional Guidance

Additional guidance is available from our Records Team based in Tipton for those ICPs who will require access to our existing Distribution System. Our guidance provides useful advice on the documentation that will need to be completed by you in order to notify us of the work that you will be undertaking.

Section 5 Inspecting the Adoptable Asset

All adoptable assets are subject to inspections. The frequency of inspections will depend on the volume of work and performance of the ICP.

We will make a charge for all re- inspections we carry out. Further information is available in section 7 of the WPD Statement of Charges for Connection [here](#).

All ICPs are initially allocated to Inspection Level 1. This is the highest inspection level. Provided that the work is completed in compliance with WPD policy the inspection level is gradually reduced to Inspection level 3.

If you attain Inspection Level 3 you will have the opportunity to carry out self-inspections. If you want to take this opportunity you will first need to sign up to an Extension of Contestability agreement. As we will carry out minimal inspections of the assets to be adopted you will be required to guarantee those works for 10 years.

Further details of the self-inspection regime can be accessed ST: NC2M available via the Tech Info web site or alternatively you may contact Connection Policy: wpdconnectionpolmids@westernpower.co.uk for further information.

Inspection Report

We will send an individual electronic report to you each month detailing the inspection level for each activity of work that you have undertaken in the previous month. This report will contain details on the number of inspections undertaken and any failures that have been notified during the month.

Section 6 WPD Services

We provide additional services to ICP's to enable connections to be made to our Distribution System.

Issue and Return of Keys

This is available to ICP's who are undertaking HV operational work and require access to WPD substations. Arrangements are made for the collection of keys at the Planning and Facilitation meeting.

Rent a Test Probe

This is available to ICP's who are undertaking operational work and are unable to obtain Test Prods for older switchgear. A hire service has been made available for this specialist item.

LV Cable Identification Service

We offer this service to prevent unnecessary excavations having to be made to identify a specific LV cable. It should be noted that the service is subject to specific network configurations and it is not possible to apply it in all circumstances.

Section 7 WPD Contact Details

Connection Policy wpdconnectionpolmids@westernpower.co.uk

WPD Safety wpdsafetyhelpline@westernpower.co.uk

Technical Policy wpdpolicyteam@westernpower.co.uk

Records Team wpdnewsuppliesmids@westernpower.co.uk

Mapping Team

Mapping Team (South West) wpdmappingqaswest@westernpower.co.uk

Mapping Team (Wales) wpdmappingqaswales@westernpower.co.uk

Mapping Team West Midlands:

- Birmingham
- Tipton
- Gloucester
- Worcester
- Hereford/Ludlow

wpdmidlandsmcqadm1@westernpower.co.uk

Mapping Team East Midlands:

- South Lincolnshire
- North Lincolnshire
- Leicester & Kettering
- Coventry & Warwickshire
- Northamptonshire & Milton Keynes

wpdmidsmcqadm2@westernpower.co.uk

Mapping Team North Midlands:

- Stoke
- Telford
- Chesterfield & Mansfield
- Nottingham
- Derby

wpdmidsmcqadm3@westernpower.co.uk

Glossary of Common Terms

Accreditation	Means holding the relevant accreditation under the National Electricity Registration Scheme operated by Lloyd's Register and "Accredited" shall be construed accordingly
Adoption	Means the transfer by the Connection Provider to WPD of the property in and responsibility for the Contestable Assets with full title guarantee and the expression "Adopt" shall be construed accordingly
Contestable Connection Works	Means the Associated Contestable Works and Final Connection Contestable Works to be carried out by the Connection Provider on the Distribution System
Connection Offer	Means the relevant written connection offer from WPD to the Customer relating to the Contestable Connection Works as set out in each Site Specific Agreement.
Contestable Design	Means the electrical design and the physical layout of the Contestable Assets.
CP's Consents	Means all consents, licences, Planning Permissions, approvals, wayleaves, easements, rights over or interests in land of any kind which the Connection Provider shall obtain and is not a WPD's Consent as may be required for the carrying out, completion and subsequent use of the Contestable Connection Works or any applicable WPD's Works.
Customer	Means the third party who commissions the Contestable Connection Works set out in the relevant Connection Offer to be carried out by the Connection Provider.
Extension of Contestability Agreement	Means an extension of contestability agreement between the Connection Provider and WPD
Framework Network Access and Adoption Agreement	Means this framework agreement including the Schedules and any other documents incorporated into it.
High Voltage	Means voltages above 1000 volts but lower than 22kV.
HVCC	Means a High Voltage Connection Certificate issued by the Connection Provider to WPD in accordance with the relevant Standard Technique(s).

HVNC	Means a High Voltage Notice of Connection issued by the Connection Provider to WPD in accordance with the relevant Standard Technique(s).
LJCC	Means a Live Jointing Certificate of Connection issued by the Connection Provider to WPD in accordance with the relevant Standard Technique(s).
LJNC	Means a Live Jointing Notice of Connection issued by the Connection Provider to WPD in accordance with the relevant Standard Technique(s).
LJDNC	Means Live Jointing Disconnection Notification Certificate issued by the Connection Provider to WPD in accordance with the relevant Standard Technique (s)
LJDCC	Means a Live Jointing Dis-Connection Certificate issued by the Connection Provider to WPD in accordance with the relevant Standard Technique(s).
Low Voltage	Means voltages less than 1kV
Non-Contestable Design	Means the electrical design, physical layout of WPD's Works and Point of Connection information provided by WPD to allow the Connection Provider to complete the Contestable Design.
Point of Connection	Means the point of connection between the existing Distribution System and the Associated Contestable Connection Works.
Programme	Means the programme of work detailing the key milestones provided by the Connection Provider allowing the co-ordination of the Contestable Connection Works and WPD's Works as applicable as may be amended from time to time by agreement between WPD and the Connection Provider.
Records	Means such drawings, details, specifications and other documentation in a format and to an accuracy specified by WPD to record the position, depth, location and details of all plant and equipment comprised in the Contestable Connection Works, and WPD's Works as applicable.

Standard Techniques	Means the WPD standard techniques published on the WPD Technical Information Site applicable to the Contestable Connection Works (as may be amended or updated from time to time.)
WPD Technical Information Site	Means the website www.westernpowertechinfo.co.uk where WPD publish Standard Techniques.