

The Unmetered Connection Offer

Survey and Feedback

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1. Overview

As a DNO we are incentivised to set out our engagement and improvement plans against specified Relevant Market Segments (RMS), particularly those areas that Ofgem believe it is not demonstrated that there is adequate competition in the provision of connections services. One of the applicable RMS segments is Unmetered Connections.

Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE) is the incentive set by Ofgem specifically for the area of connections. The ICE Plan is created as part of the incentive has a range of initiatives in line with our connections strategy, using the input from our broad range of connection stakeholders through our ongoing programme of stakeholder engagement activities.

Our ICE Plan for 2020/21 was devised using stakeholder feedback obtained from the previous year.

Section 3 of the ICE plan details our incentives for this period.

This document focusses specifically on Action 16 of the ICE Plan covering unmetered connections.

This action is resultant from feedback received around the complexity of the current Unmetered Connection Offer.

Action Number & Subject	Initiative Stakeholder feedback	Initiative Outcome	Measure	Target Date (Q2;Q3;Q4;Q1)	Connections Area
16 Unmetered Connection Offers	Create simplified Connection Offers for unmetered connections.	Undertake a survey to ask for feedback on the unmetered connections offer process. We will document and publish the survey in order to identify any improvements which can be made and develop further actions for implementation in Q4 2020.	Publish survey results and further actions for implementation in December 2020.	Q2 June 2020	

2. Survey Invitation

In May 2020 we invited Customers who had applied for an unmetered connection within the previous 6 months to participate in a survey on the unmetered connections offer process.

An invite to participate in the survey was sent via email to 395 Customers.

The consultation period was 3 weeks.

3. The Survey

The survey consisted of 7 statements based around the Unmetered Connection Offer and the unmetered connections pages on the WPD website.

Participants were requested to rate each of the statements from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Where a rating fell below 3, participants could briefly outline their experience and identify any potential area for improvement or development.

At the end of the survey a free format area was provided to allow participants to identify any suggested improvements we could make to the Unmetered Connection Offer.

The full survey and responses can be found via the following link;
<https://www.westernpower.co.uk/downloads/131221>

4. Summary of Responses

Of the 395 invitations to participate in the survey, we received a response from 16 participants.

We initially asked participants which route they chose to apply for unmetered connections.

An application for an unmetered connection can be initiated by calling our Contact Centre, via our website or by completing an online application form.

The majority of respondents use the online application process to make initial contact and apply for an unmetered connection.

We then asked participants to score us on the following statements;

WPD's connection application process is easy to use

Average Score: 4

Respondents mostly agreed that our connection application process was easy to use.

I can find relevant information on the unmetered connections process easily on WPD's website

Average Score: 3.18

Some respondents stated they do not use the WPD website. Of those that do, feedback provided suggested the unmetered connections pages could be difficult to navigate and misleading.

The Connection Offer is formatted in a way that makes it clear and understandable

Average Score: 3.68

Respondents generally agreed that the Connection Offer was formatted in a way that made it clear and understandable.

The Connection Offer provides all of the information I require (How do they compare to other DNO's)

Average Score: 3.73

Respondents largely agreed that the Connection Offer provided all required information.

It is important that the Connection Offer provides costs for WPD to undertake all of the works but is convertible such that I can establish only the non-contestable costs if I were to employ an Independent Connections Provider

Average Score: 4

Respondents generally agreed that it was important to provide convertible quotes.

Connection Offers should reflect the level of scheme complexity, i.e. simple for single connections but more comprehensive for multiple connection/connections requiring works at high voltage (11,000)

Average Score: 4.37

Respondents largely agreed that it was important for unmetered Connection Offers to reflect the level of scheme complexity.

Please use the free format area to identify any improvements you feel we could make to an Unmetered Connection Offer for our consideration

The majority of feedback suggested respondents were happy with the current Unmetered Connection Offer.

Suggested improvements include;

- a simplified application process
- providing additional online guidance during the application process

5. Conclusion

Generally, the majority of feedback received was positive. Respondents were able to highlight areas in the Unmetered Connection Offer process that they felt required improvement.

Some respondents found it difficult to navigate around the website and complete the online application.

Respondents were in general agreement that the unmetered connection offer should be simplified for smaller schemes/connections and felt that the existing full dual offer was not necessarily the best solution for these schemes.

6. Moving Forward

Utilising feedback around the Unmetered Connection Offer itself we will;

- ✓ look to provide a simplified offer based on our SSQ type offers for smaller unmetered connections
- ✓ conduct a review of the unmetered connections pages available on our website
- ✓ make changes where necessary to provide additional clarity/guidance when it comes to an unmetered connection
- ✓ Conduct a review of the online application process
- ✓ Make changes to enhance the online application process

We are committed to improve the Unmetered Connection Offer and process and as a consequence we will include these as additional ICE actions in our 20/21 plan

If you have any comments or questions or would like the opportunity to provide further feedback please email us at wpdconnections@westernpower.co.uk