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Wider Access and TERRE
Questions & answers

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Pre-qualification and Registration

1.	Where can I find an introduction to becoming a Virtual Lead Party (VLP) and registering Secondary Balancing Mechanism Units (SBMUs)?	From the Meeting docs link on the European Network Codes (ENC) page on our website (under the Codes tab), you can find slides and a Q&A document which were provided after a webinar on 15 January 2019.
2.	How long will the application process take?	Total application time will be up to five months. NGESO will have an initial eight weeks to confirm that the application has been submitted with all the correct data the first time.
		If the application is incomplete, then the applicant has four weeks longer to submit the additional information requested by NGESO. This will extend the process to six months in total.
		After the initial eight weeks, , NGESO will have up to a further three months to evaluate the application and confirm back to the party that the unit(s) meet the prequalification criteria.
3.	Is this the application process for accessing the Balancing Mechanism (BM) for all market participant units (BMUs), or is it just the process for Virtual Lead Parties (VLPs?)	The application process is the same for all BMUs and VLPs.
4.	When can VLPs start registering?	Qualification by VLPs under the Balancing & Settlement Code (BSC) has been open since 28 Feb 2019.
		Qualification for provision to the GB Balancing Mechanism will be live in December 2019.
		As new market participants, VLPs will also need to meet the requirements of the Connection and Use of System Code (CUSC). This will follow approval of modification CMP295 by Ofgem in the coming months.
5.	If a single asset from an aggregated portfolio BMU is re-registered in another BMU, could the application still take up to six months?	Yes. This is known as a post-approval change in the EU code Electricity Balancing Guideline (EBGL). The process and timescales are the same as for a new application. NGESO will approve the registration if it is complete.

6.	Do existing BMU assets need to register separately for participation in the Trans-European Replacement Reserve Exchange (TERRE)?	Existing BMUs will not need to re-register with Elexon. However, they will need to inform NGESO of their intention to participate in the TERRE market. They will need to log into the new pre-qualification system and opt in to participate in the Replacement Reserve (RR) market. This is similar to when an existing BMU signs a Framework Agreement for STOR, FFR etc., where they provide information about their unit(s) such as location, capacity and fuel type.
7.	When a BMU becomes a VLP, do they participate in either the GB BM or TERRE, or both?	When registering to become a VLP, there will be the option of participating in either the GB BM or TERRE, or in both markets. Where a VLP represents BMUs which produce more than 50 MW combined, the Grid Code (GC) requires that the VLP is an active participant in the BM once they have registered.

Communication and dispatch of instructions

8.	Will a VLP be able to hold an Energy Account instead of a Virtual Balancing Account, and what would the benefits be?	Under the BSC modification P344 arrangements, a party that is registered solely as a VLP will be allocated a Virtual Balancing Account. A party cannot hold an Energy Account and a Virtual Balancing Account at the same time – the Energy Account will supersede the latter. However, under the BSC, a party can have multiple roles. If a VLP wants to have an Energy Account, it can register an additional role, such as a Trading Party, through the BSC qualification process. Note that the trading party role has additional obligations and costs. For example, trading parties pay a higher base monthly fee. They also contribute to cost recovery for Elexon, the BSC Company (BSCCo), through Funding Share calculation.
9.	Will VLPs and Secondary BMUs use Electronic Data Transfer (EDT) and Electronic Logging & Dispatch (EDL)?	Yes, VLPs will need to use EDT/EDL. However, smaller individual BMUs will be able to participate using the new Wider Access API.

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Your API development

10.	How does a Market Participant obtain security credentials?	They need to request their Client ID and Client Secret from the WiderAccessAPI mailbox once they are ready to store them securely. A trusted third party CA (Certificate Authority) should provide services to distribute the Public Key and generate the Private Key. National Grid does not recommend a specific CA. Market Participants should satisfy themselves that their chosen CA has sufficient controls to administer grant/revoke/renew processes in line with industry standards for SHA256-RSA-2048. Market Participant are responsible for keeping certificates secure.
11.	Is the Market Participant (MP) responsible for storing their Client ID and Client Secret?	Yes. GESO will also store the MP's Client ID and Client Secret in the Credential Store Framework (CSF) Key for Oracle. This contains the encrypted username and passwords to be used by the services. This is an Oracle industry standard system process. It resides in the Oracle Web Service Manager security framework.
12.	Does NGESO have a recommendation on storage of Client ID and Client Secret?	Yes. NGESO recommends the same level of security as that used in the Oracle framework. Market Participants should store their Client ID and Secret on a credential store or in a vault. The APIs will need to retrieve the information from this store or vault in run time, and should only be retrieved then. These credentials should never be stored outside of a store or vault. Neither should they be included in, for example, the application code or configuration file.
13.	How can a token be obtained in order to consume the APIs?	A token can be obtained sending a POST request to the Identity Provider which includes the Client ID and Client Secret. The process is described by the OAuth 2 authorisation protocol. A detailed description of the process has been included in the APIs specification, in the 'OAuth 2 Tokens' section.
14.	Will an annual penetration test be necessary?	NGESO recommends that Market Participants (MPs) conduct annual penetration testing, and satisfy themselves that their API is secure and compliant with Cyber Essentials. NGESO can also provide a form for conducting a self-assessment. The MP can use this to confirm to NGSO how they have done this.
15.	Will data validation still stand for Electronic Data Transfer (EDT) and Electronic Dispatch & Logging (EDL)?	Yes. The same business validation is still used in the Balancing Mechanism (BM). The same Data and Communications document is applicable to traditional lease lines and to the WA API. Only the means of communication is changing. The API has security and light format validation of incoming messages.

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16.	What is the testing certification process?	The certification part within the Prequalification and Registration process covers the process of integrating, testing and certifying of the user's plant and apparatus to be used for EDT and EDL, and to provide operational metering.
		Market Participants (MPs) self-certify to confirm that they meet the minimum technical parameters to participate in the electricity market. They then build the capability according to the specifications shared by NGESO. They then test their build with NGESO to prove that they are successfully integrated.
		Active BMUs can Bid and Offer volumes and prices to NGESO. Under the Grid Code, BM Units (BMUs) registered with NGESO must submit an accurate indication of its intended level of generation, in the form of a Physical Notification (PN) submitted via EDT.
		NGESO uses EDL to communicate acceptances to BMUs. EDL is also used by BMUs to submit short-term changes to Maximum Export Limit (MEL) and Maximum Import Limit (MIL), and for real-time dynamic parameter submissions.
17.	What is the timescale for the testing certification process?	Before go-live, there is a window until September 2019 where participants need to connect and test their APIs in order to go live as soon as NGESO does.