

Discussion Paper Special Actions Communications

1. Introduction

Grid Code, BC1.7.1 allows for National Grid to agree Special Actions with Generators, Network Operators and Externally Interconnected System Operators. Typically, a Special Action tends to be an agreed post-fault action of generation drops at a particular power station, and this agreement is confirmed by an exchange of faxes.

Also within the Grid Code, in section OC2.4.1.3.5, there are requirements for National Grid to issue information to Generators and other parties about aspects of the outage programme that affect them. This is interpreted to include Special Actions, since these are often used to manage the network during outage conditions. In addition, BC1.7.3 suggests that National Grid will issue a list of agreed Special Actions to relevant users at the day-ahead stage. These notifications about Special Actions are provided partly by email and partly by fax.

The purpose of this discussion is to address the use of faxes within the Special Actions process. It is believed that within the industry generally there is keenness to move away from the use of faxes and National Grid is proposing that emails would provide a more efficient way of working for all concerned.

Grid Code General Condition G.6.1 confirms that electronic mail is an acceptable form of written communication, and National Grid's external BPS Auditors (PWC) has given its view that email is an acceptable medium for confirming the initial agreement of Special Actions.

Indications from some Generators suggest that a wider discussion to improve understanding of the Special Actions process may be beneficial. For this reason it is planned that a presentation will be given at the next (February 2010) Operational Forum. The intention therefore at this GRPC meeting, is simply to look at the matter of replacing faxes with emails.

2. Proposal

It is proposed that when Special Actions are initially agreed, usually verbally, confirmation will be via a form sent and returned by email.

It is further proposed that the information sent out in accordance with OC2.4.1.3.5, at seven weeks ahead, one week ahead and day-ahead, will also be via email, together with confirmations back from the relevant parties.

Assuming that this proposal is accepted, National Grid will contact relevant parties to confirm with them the most appropriate email address(es) to use, and move to the new arrangements as soon as possible.