

Black Start

Frequently Asked Questions

April 2016

National Grid is often asked questions by interested parties about the provision of Black Start service. This Frequently Asked Questions sheet aims to provide answers to the most commonly asked questions about this service to inform any interested party and to help potential providers to source the relevant documents.

1. What is Black Start?

Black Start is the procedure to recover from a total or partial shutdown of the National Electricity Transmission system which has caused an extensive loss of supplies. This entails isolated power stations being started individually and gradually being reconnected to other power stations and substations in order to restore the interconnected system. A full description of when Black Start is required is available in Grid Code OC9.

2. How does National Grid determine its Black Start requirements?

National Grid is required under its Transmission License to publish a statement in relation to how it determines the level of Black Start required. This statement can be found on our website.

National Grid is constantly reviewing and updating its Black Start requirements in light of future changes to generation and is interested in discussing potential services with potential new providers and assessing this against our requirements.

3. How do I know what the requirement for Black Start is?

National Grid does not currently publish its specific requirements for Black Start. National Grid encourages any potential providers to discuss the service with National Grid in order for this to be assessed against the existing Black Start coverage and potential requirements for additional service provision. The future requirement for system restoration services is reviewed in the System Operability Framework published by National Grid.

4. How does National Grid procure Black Start Services?

Black Start is not a tendered service. National Grid procures Black Start services on a bi-lateral basis with providers. National Grid is required under its License to publish a statement in relation to how it economically and efficiently procures the level of Black Start required. This statement can be found on our website.

5. Who can provide a Black Start Service?

National Grid will consider the provision of a Black Start service from any provider that can meet the Technical requirements of the service. The Technical requirements are detailed in the Black Start Service Description on our website. Potential Providers are encouraged to read this document and contact National Grid to discuss any potential Black Start service they may be able to offer.

6. Is anything changing in future with the provision of Black Start?

In future the generation mix providing services to National Grid is likely to look very different from today as more conventional coal plant closes. These closures will mean that new Black Start service providers may be required to ensure adequate levels of Black Start service provision into the future. National Grid is also investigating alternative approaches to future system restoration. Two reports commissioned by National Grid reviewing alternative approaches can be found on the ENA website (link below).

7. How is the Black Start service paid for?

Payments for Black start are made through an Availability Payment. Where the Black Start service is made Available by a service provider National Grid will pay on a £ per Settlement Period basis. In addition National Grid may choose to make capital contributions towards providers' costs for installation or refurbishment of assets if this is felt to be an economic solution. Other payments may also be applicable for testing purposes to ensure that providers are not exposed to costs as a result of Black Start tests. More details can be found in the Black Start Service Description on our website

8. What should I do if I am interested in providing this service?

National Grid is always interested in hearing from potential providers of the black start service. If you are interested in providing a Black Start Service to National Grid you should read the information on our website in the first instance to consider if you can meet the technical requirements required of Black Start. If you believe that this is technically possible then please contact National Grid to discuss this further using the contact information below.

9. Where can I get further information?

For further information on the Black Start service please view our webpage and documents using the links below.

Links to Further information

[Black Start Service Webpage](#)

Provides a Black Start summary and home to the Black Start documentation

[Black Start Service Description](#)

Provides a Summary of the Black Start Service including Technical Requirements and a contractual overview

[Special Condition AA5J Black Start Statement](#)

A Statement on how National Grid economically and efficiently procures for the Black Start service

[Grid Code OC9](#)

Grid Code OC9 gives details of when the Black Start service is required and relevant obligations

[System Operability Framework](#)

A report on National Grids forecast future operability requirements

[Alternative Approaches Reports](#)

Reports looking at alternative approaches to system restoration

Or contact the Contract Services team via your Account Manager or

Tel: 01926 654611.

Email: commercial.operation@nationalgrid.com