

Call for nominations – Network Connections Technical Group

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Electricity Authority (Authority) is calling for nominations for ordinary members of the Network Connections Technical Group (NCTG).

2. Introduction and background

The Network Connections Technical Group

- 2.1. The Authority released its short-term workplan for the distribution sector in October 2023. Two of the nine projects focus on improving the efficiency of network connections:

- Address the non-price barriers to the efficient connection of large capacity load.
- Address the barriers to the efficient prioritisation of large-scale distributed generation.

The NCTG is an ad-hoc technical group to assist the Authority with delivering the projects above.

Membership criteria

- 2.2. The Authority will appoint members to the NCTG based on their level of knowledge and experience of network connections. The NCTG will collectively have detailed knowledge and experience of, for example:
 - (a) the non-price enablers and barriers to network connections in New Zealand, and ways that the connection process might be made more efficient
 - (b) distributor application processes for large capacity load and distributed generation
 - (c) the role of Transpower in network connections, and Transpower's systems (eg, prioritisation) that might be beneficial for distribution networks
 - (d) the steps that distributors and access seekers must complete for a network connection to occur (eg, project assessment, financing, land access, consents, engineering studies, plant purchase, capital works)
 - (e) the Code, including Part 6 *Connection of distributed generation*
 - (f) distributor provisions that may influence network connections (eg, congestion policies, connection & operation standards).
- 2.3. The Authority will consider a nominee's ability to consider the long-term interests of consumers, provide impartial advice, and contribute effectively to the NCTG's tasks.
- 2.4. The Authority is not expecting an individual member of the NCTG to have all the requisite knowledge and experience required of the technical group in aggregate.
- 2.5. A senior member of the Authority's staff will chair the NCTG.

Term of appointment

- 2.6. The Authority intends to appoint members of the NCTG for a period of 2 years. This aligns with the Authority's expectation of the timeframe for the group to complete its work.
- 2.7. The Authority will appoint members by written notice to the relevant nominee. The notice will state the date the appointment takes effect and the term of the appointment.

- 2.8. The Authority will appoint members after calling for nominations and considering nominees against the membership criteria set out in clause 2.1.

Remuneration

- 2.9. Should a member of the NCTG be financially disadvantaged by their participation in the NCTG, the Authority will remunerate them and reimburse their actual and reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out their office as a member.
- 2.10. Any such remuneration will be determined by the Minister of Energy and Resources for Energy in accordance with the Government's fees framework for the remuneration of such bodies. Fees are to reflect an element of public service and community commitment, the personal contribution and recognition of the intangible benefits to the member, balanced by:
- (a) the complexity of the functions and the expertise required
 - (b) recruitment and retention issues
 - (c) the extent to which an individual member needs to insure against personal liability
 - (d) the potential risk to reputation
 - (e) the degree to which the role is in the public eye
 - (f) affordability and
 - (g) the period since the fees were last reviewed.
- 2.11. The first NCTG meeting will be face-to-face. Members will have the option to connect virtually to the second and subsequent meetings.

3. Terms of reference

- 3.1. The terms of reference for the NCTG are on our NCTG webpage.

4. Nominations process

- 4.1. Any organisation or individual can make nominations. Nominations are to be in writing and should include:
- (a) a brief summary of the relevant expertise and experience of the person being nominated
 - (b) contact details for both the person being nominated, and for the individual or organisation making the nomination and
 - (c) evidence that the person being nominated agrees to the nomination (e.g. an e mail from the nominee, agreeing to be nominated).
- 4.2. Nominations should be e-mailed to distribution.feedback@ea.govt.nz with 'Nomination for Network Connections Technical Group' in the subject and must be received by the Authority by 5.00 pm 19 February 2024.
- 4.3. The Authority intends to appoint the members of the NCTG by 23 February 2024. The first meeting of the NCTG is anticipated to take place by early March 2024.