

# Terms of reference for the Switching Technical Group

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version 2

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## Version control

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1.0	11 December 2017	Terms of reference created and approved.
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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document specifies the operational and governance matters for the Switching Technical Group (STG).
- 1.2 The Electricity Industry Participation Code 2010 sets out the process where an installation control point (ICP) identifier is transferred from one trader to another trader. This process largely became effective in October 2002, and has had various modifications since that time.

# 2 Purpose and objective of STG

- 2.1 The purpose of the STG is to provide advice to the Electricity Authority (Authority) on amendments that should be made to the switching process to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.
- 2.2 The STG should also promote awareness of the current switching protocols, and proposed amendments, within the industry.
- 2.3 The STG's objective is to review the current switching process and recommend a range of changes that could be made to improve the efficiency of the switching process as the industry evolves.
- 2.4 It is possible the STG will identify peripheral issues. Any such issues that do not work toward the STG's objective, and are outside the scope of the group, should be referred back to the Authority with a recommendation about further work required.
- 2.5 In performing its role, the STG must be mindful that its advice is consistent with the Authority's statutory objective as set out in section 15 of the Electricity Industry Act 2010.

# 3 Authority representative

- 3.1 There will be at least one member of staff as the Authority representative for the STG. The Authority representative is not a member of the STG.

# 4 Membership

- 4.1 The Authority will appoint a member of staff to be the chairperson of the STG.
- 4.2 The Authority will appoint between 10 and 20 members to the STG, including the chairperson. The Authority will aim to appoint industry representatives from retailers and metering equipment providers as members, and may appoint more or less members from each participant type.
- 4.3 The chairperson is a member of the STG. Accordingly, provisions in these terms of reference that apply to members also apply to the chairperson. However, provisions specific to the chairperson take precedence.

## Criteria for membership

- 4.4 The Authority may appoint members to the STG after considering nominees against the following criteria:
  - (a) an ability to contribute to a balance of knowledge and experience relevant to:
    - (i) the switching process
    - (ii) the reconciliation process

- (iii) methods of communication between participants
- (iv) methods of communication between participants and service providers
- (b) an ability to represent alternative views in a balanced manner
- (c) an ability to provide impartial, independent advice
- (d) a high level of integrity and credibility
- (e) an ability to contribute constructively to the STG's tasks.

## 5 Term of appointment

5.1 Appointment as a member to the STG is ordinarily for a term of six months.

5.2 Despite clause 5.1, the Authority may:

- (a) request that a member serve a term of more than six months
- (b) decide to appoint a member for a term of less than six months
- (c) decide to re-appoint members for further terms.

## 6 Functions and responsibilities

### Functions of the STG chairperson

6.1 The key functions of the STG chairperson include:

- (a) facilitating discussions between group members in a manner that will stimulate robust debate on issues and encourage effective contribution from members
- (b) guiding relevant and effective discussions while also ensuring genuine disagreements and conflicts are aired and, if possible, resolved
- (c) ensuring the minutes of each group meeting are correct
- (d) ensuring the views of the group are accurately represented to the Authority
- (e) approving and signing, on behalf of the group, any other communications with the Authority.

### Responsibility of STG members

6.2 A key role of the STG members is to use their collective knowledge and experience when considering the matters before them. The STG's advice to the Authority must be independent, considered, and supported by robust analysis. The advice must be of a high quality to enable the Authority to make well-informed decisions.

6.3 Accordingly members must:

- (a) comply with the requirements set out in these terms of reference
- (b) act in the interests of all stakeholders
- (c) prepare for meetings
- (d) openly share information within the STG
- (e) not promote or represent their own organisations interests over the interests of the STG or its objective

- (f) inform the chairperson of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that may affect their ability to perform their functions as a member of the group
  - (g) carry out the tasks that are assigned to the group arising from the agenda for each meeting.
- 6.4 If a member has any significant concerns, including (for example) in relation to the operation of the STG, these are to be raised with the chairperson in the first instance.

### **Attendance**

- 6.5 Members are not entitled to send an alternate in their place if they cannot attend a meeting.
- 6.6 Any member who misses two consecutive meetings is deemed to have resigned from the group from the date of the second missed meeting unless:
- (a) they have been given leave from the chairperson; or
  - (b) extenuating circumstances exist, as decided by the chairperson as the case may be.

### **Media relations**

- 6.7 Members have no media relations role and may not speak on behalf of the Authority or the STG in regard to matters on which the group has advised, or is advising, the Authority. The Authority is solely responsible for all media relations.

## **7 Procedures**

### **Approach to meetings**

- 7.1 The STG will meet on an as-required basis and by any means that enables effective investigation of the matters included in the scope of the group.
- 7.2 A meeting of the STG may be held by a quorum of its members. No business may be transacted at a meeting if:
- (a) there is no quorum
  - (b) the Authority representative is not present.
- 7.3 A quorum for a meeting of the STG comprises 50 per cent of the members.
- 7.4 The chairperson may invite non-members to attend an STG meeting. In those circumstances, the invited party may participate in discussions at the discretion of the chairperson, but is not a member of the STG and does not form part of the quorum.

### **Administration**

- 7.5 The Authority, in its capacity as the secretariat, will:
- (a) make appropriate arrangements for any meetings of the group
  - (b) give a minimum of 10 business days' notice of meetings to each member, including details as to the time and venue of meetings
  - (c) if possible, arrange for any relevant materials to be circulated to members at least five business days before the meeting, to enable members to properly consider them

- (d) ensure that minutes of meetings are circulated to STG members as soon as practicable after their confirmation.
- 7.6 Any emails sent by a member of the STG about any substantive aspects of the group's business should be copied to all the STG members (including the chairperson).

### **Confidentiality**

- 7.7 If information shared at meetings is specifically identified as confidential, the published minutes will record that information by an oblique reference.
- 7.8 Unless there is a specific reason to the contrary, reports going to, or produced by, the STG or its members will be treated as non-confidential.
- 7.9 All non-confidential reports will be published on the Authority's website.

## **8 Appointment**

### **Appointment of STG members**

- 8.1 The Authority will appoint members after calling for nominations and considering nominees against the relevant criteria.
- 8.2 The Authority must appoint members by written notice. The notice must state the date the appointment takes effect and the term of the appointment.

### **Appointment of STG chairperson**

- 8.3 The Authority will appoint the chairperson.
- 8.4 The Authority may appoint a member or someone else to be a standing or temporary deputy chairperson. The standing and temporary deputy chairperson may exercise all the functions and powers of the chairperson in relation to a matter if:
- (a) the chairperson is unavailable; or
  - (b) the chairperson has a conflict of interest relating to the matter.