

Terms of reference for the Standing Data Formats Group

version 1.4

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Version control

| Version | Date amended | Comments |
|---------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.0 | 26 February 2010 | |
| 1.1 | 1 November 2010 | Updated for transition to the Electricity Authority |
| 1.2 | July 2012 | Amendment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• allow reappointment of a member for a term of up to two years• remove the requirement for an equal number of retailer and distributor representatives. |
| 1.3 | 3 February 2014 | Amendment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• remove reference to AMIWG• update reference to metering equipment providers• include references to the mandatory EIEPs• reflect current Authority style. |
| 1.4 | 2 October 2017 | Terms of reference reviewed and updated to correspond with the Authority's new terms of reference for advisory groups. |

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document specifies the operational and governance matters for the Standing Data Formats Group (SDFG).
- 1.2 The Electricity Authority (Authority) provides standardised information exchange formats to enable information to be exchanged reliably and at a low cost between:
 - (a) participants
 - (b) participants and consumers or third party providers.
- 1.3 In some cases, the use of those formats is mandatory, eg, where there are interfaces with the registry and reconciliation manager. In others cases, the use of those formats is voluntary, eg, interfaces between participants.
- 1.4 Mandatory interfaces are specified under the Electricity Industry Participation Code 2010. The details for mandatory interfaces are contained within market operation service provider functional specifications and specific Electricity Information Exchange Protocols (EIEPs). Currently EIEPs 1, 2, 3, 12, and 13 are mandatory.
- 1.5 Voluntary interfaces are contained in specific EIEPs. The use of some voluntary interfaces is enforced through contracts between retailers and distributors.

2 Purpose of role

- 2.1 The purpose of the SDFG is to provide advice to the Authority on new file formats, and any changes to file formats, required for the exchange of information between:
 - (a) participants and the market operation service providers
 - (b) participants and consumers
 - (c) participants and third party providers.
- 2.2 The SDFG should also promote awareness and use of the file format change review protocols within the industry.
- 2.3 It is possible the SDFG will identify peripheral issues. Any such issues that do not work toward the SDFG objective, and are outside the scope of the group, should be referred back to the Authority with a recommendation about further work required.
- 2.4 The intended objective from the SDFG is to develop and maintain (including updating) the file exchange formats to improve the efficiency of the information as the industry evolves.

3 Authority representative

- 3.1 There will be at least one member of staff as the Authority representative for the SDFG. The Authority representative is not a member.
- 3.2 The Authority representative's functions include facilitating discussion, providing any information as may be required by the SDFG, and providing secretariat services.

4 Membership

- 4.1 The Authority will appoint an independent chairperson of the SDFG.
- 4.2 The Authority will normally appoint between 9 and 13 members to the SDFG. The Authority will aim to appoint an equal number of industry representatives from retailers, distributors, and MEPs as members, but may appoint more or less members from each participant type.
- 4.3 The chairperson is a member. 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 SDFG 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) the EIEPs as they currently stand
 - (iv) methods of communication between participants
 - (v) methods of communication between participants and service providers
 - (vi) methods of communication between participants and consumers or third party 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 group's tasks.
- 4.5 To qualify as an independent chairperson, a nominee must meet the membership criteria specified in clause 4.4 and the following additional criteria:
- (a) the nominee must be, in the opinion of the Authority, demonstrably free of conflicts of interest
 - (b) the nominee must have the skills and experience necessary to carry out the responsibilities of the chairperson and to perform the functions set out in clauses 6.1 to 6.3.

5 Term of appointment

- 5.1 Appointment as a member to the SDFG is ordinarily for a term of three years.
- 5.2 Despite clause 5.1, the Authority may:
- (a) request that a member serve a term of more than three years
 - (b) decide to appoint a member for a term of less than three years
 - (c) decide to re-appoint members for further terms.

6 Functions and responsibilities

Functions of the SDFG chairperson

- 6.1 The key functions of the SDFG 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.
- 6.2 When making representations to the Authority on any aspect of the group's work and recommendations, the chairperson must take care to provide a balanced representation of the views held by the members of the group. In the normal course of events, the relevant Authority staff member will ensure the views of the SDFG are captured in papers to the Authority.
- 6.3 If the chairperson has any significant concerns, including (for example) in relation to the operation of the group, these are to be raised with the Authority's representative to the group in the first instance. If the chairperson's concern is in regard to the Authority representative or deems the concern significant enough to warrant raising it with the Authority Chief Executive, the chairperson may raise such concerns with the Chief Executive.

Responsibility of SDFG members

- 6.4 A key role of the SDFG members is to use their collective knowledge and experience when considering the matters before them. The group'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.
- 6.5 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 SDFG
 - (e) not promote or represent their own organisations interests over the interests of the SDFG or its objective
 - (f) inform the chairperson and the Authority's representative 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.

- 6.6 If a group member has any significant concerns, including (for example) in relation to the operation of the group, these are to be raised with the chairperson in the first instance.

Attendance

- 6.7 Members are not entitled to send an alternate in their place if they cannot attend a meeting.
- 6.8 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, in the case of the chairperson, from the Authority representative; or
 - (b) extenuating circumstances exist, as decided by the chairperson or Authority representative, as the case may be.

Media relations

- 6.9 Members have no media relations role and may not speak on behalf of the Authority or the SDFG 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 SDFG 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. A significant amount of SDFG business is conducted via electronic means.
- 7.2 A meeting of the SDFG 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 SDFG comprises 60 per cent of the members, which must include at least one member from each participant type of distributor, retailer, and MEP.
- 7.4 The Authority representative, in consultation with the chairperson, may invite non-members to attend an SDFG meeting. In those circumstances, the invited party may participate in discussions at the discretion of the Authority representative, but is not a member of the SDFG 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, in consultation with the chairperson
 - (b) give reasonable 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 non-confidential meeting materials are published on the Authority's website
 - (e) ensure that minutes of meetings are published on the Authority's website as soon as practicable after their confirmation.
- 7.6 Any emails sent by a member of the SDFG about any substantive aspects of the group's business should be copied to:
- (a) all the SDFG members (including the chairperson)
 - (b) the Authority representative.

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 SDFG 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 SDFG 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 SDFG chairperson (including a standing and temporary deputy chairperson)

- 8.3 The Authority may appoint the chairperson from existing SDFG members, or from outside the group. The Authority must appoint the chairperson by written notice to the relevant nominee, followed by written notice to the other members of the group.
- 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.