Transmission Workstream Minutes

Provision of Winter Information - Workshop 1

Wednesday 29 July 2009

Energy Networks Association, Dean Bradley House,

52 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Attendees

John Bradley (Chair)	JB	Joint Office
Lorna Dupont (Secretary)	LD	Joint Office
Andrew Pearce	AP	BP Gas
Charles Ruffell	CR	RWE npower
Chris Wright	CW	Centrica
Claire Leskevicius	CL	National Grid NTS
Claire Thorneywork	CT	National Grid NTS
Dylan King	DK	ConocoPhillips
Gary Dolphin	GD	National Grid NTS
Jeff Chandler	JC	Scottish & Southern Energy
Jenny Phillips	JP	National Grid NTS
Peter Parsons	PP	National Grid NTS
Richard Fairholme	RF	EON UK
Roger Golding	RG	Scotia Gas Networks

1. Introduction

JB welcomed attendees to the meeting.

2. Background – Review of Last Winter

Based on National Grid NTS' experience of last winter JP and PP gave presentations, reviewing the current winter data provision, the new safety monitor methodology, and a suggested model for improvements in the winter data provision.

JP stated that National Grid NTS was committed to changing the way the information was presented on its website and was seeking customer views on how presentation could be improved to make the data more useful. Following today's discussions it was hoped to present an improved model, taking account of any suggestions, at the next meeting and at the Ops Forum in September, with the intention of 'going live' on the website from the beginning of October.

JP explained that a spreadsheet model was currently used, and this could be used top derive graphs for publication on the website without involving any major system change. The build up to the Gas Balancing Alert (GBA) trigger in Winter 2008/09 was displayed on a graph, broken down by categories, together with an explanation of how a GBA position was reached. JP added that in the future, instead of a major reduction step when the whole of Short Range Storage was removed from the trigger level, smaller reductions would take place as each site was removed.

A run through was presented of the January/February 2009 Demand and GBA position, and JP observed that being 2 days away from calling an emergency situation was not a comfortable position to be in.

JP then exhibited examples of the information screens currently published in respect of Demand, Storage, Storage deliverability, assumptions of Non-Storage Supply, and the GBA Trigger and the Alerts. The information required was seen to be available in different places and at different levels, disparate, uncoordinated and not easily located/accessible.

3. New Safety Monitor Methodology and Demonstration of Models

In response to the winter experience, National Grid NTS had reviewed the Safety Monitors, and raised a Modification Proposal, and was now seeking to address the presentation of information on its website with a view to placing it in one easily accessible location. JB then asked for Shippers' views regarding the availability/accessibility of data during the winter events. AP responded that he had found the information difficult to get hold of, and had ended up waiting to see what happened with the figures – eventually determining there was no actual emergency and went home. Currently information retrieval was found to be difficult and cumbersome.

PP then presented on the new Safety Monitor Methodology, and outlined the background and their purpose, together with some assumptions made. Graphs and tables of information were displayed and enabled PP to run through the previous winter's events assuming 'Smart use of storage' and 'Non-Smart use of storage'. In response to a question from RF, PP explained that 'Smart use' meant minimising storage use by maximising use of not storage sources. PP modelled the effects on demand and storage over the last winter. It was suggested that a range would be useful, but another concern was that this might add too much complexity and uncertainty. The model went on to demonstrate the effects of using storage aggressively or smartly. PP pointed out that 20 January is considered to be the mid point of the winter, although cold spells could be experienced after this time, as they were in this previous winter.

PP then ran through a model put together for the coming winter (based on the same winter weather effects, but with slightly increased levels of demand, ie 10 – 15 meters higher), demonstrating smart use and aggressive use. On reaching the early part of January, the model indicated that there would be quite challenging conditions ahead and a continuation of difficult conditions would result in a GBA being issued by the beginning of February, with further challenges indicated. There was a brief discussion on the way that information was presented in the graphs using colours.

JP then gave a presentation on Safety Monitors and deliverability in respect of a 1-in-50 winter. She explained how Demand was made up, the pressures on demand during isolation, how supplies were to be met from various sources, and how a market response would be expected to be seen. She then demonstrated what happened when a Storage deliverability monitor was breached, and explained that a risk assessment was carried out taking into account various factors such as at what point in the winter, the predicted weather, etc before National Grid NTS would come to a decision on the best action to take and whether it was able to let the deliverability line reduce. She then asked what the market's response would be if it saw the deliverability line coming down.

It was clear that there could be certain dilemmas, such as whether to declare a SM breach or a GDE. In each case a considered assessment would be made in order to reach an appropriate decision/course of action.

RG asked a question relating to Mod 0090 and whether there would be faster escalation through stages of an emergency. JB referred to the Distribution Workstream held on 23 July when the effect of Mod 0090 on interruption and contact details was presented by National Grid Distribution.

(http://www.gasgovernance.com/Code/Workstreams/DistributionWorkstream/2009/)

JP then asked, given the information is already available, how can it be presented in such a way that adds value? She would be concerned if the information could not be interpreted by Shippers without having been to a workshop first. CW responded that it would good to have lots of explanatory notes attached/linked to the screens, perhaps as 'pop ups', to aid comprehension. JB referred to P70s and whether an improved presentation of data would alert Shippers to the need for issuing these so they were protected when interrupted. JC questioned the need for colour coding of information

which could reach such a steady indication of red, depending on the tolerances, that it might be 'crying wolf' when this was not necessary.

PP suggested that as an alternative a different graph might be produced to show non-storage supply sitting below the storage level.

CW commented that often staff changes occurred from winter to winter, or perhaps a night shift might be on duty, and that the information shown needed to be very easy to pick up and understand what it was telling the reader, as this was information relating to what were uncommon events. RG commented that the middle graph did not convey much meaning in his view, but the others did. JC found the bottom left hand figures to be the most useful. It needed to be clear 5 days out what trigger the market was responding to.

GD responded that the graphs, etc, could be reworked and enhanced to give more information. RG suggested that a tolerance bar would be a useful addition so that a reader could make a decision whether to ignore or act. The basis of the tolerance would need to be considered so that it would not show as 'red' all the time. It was pointed out that the use of 'smart' may be confusing; it needed to be clear what the assumptions were. JB commented that if you do not have smart use of storage it will overstate the problem and credibility will go. AP added that making a 'non-Smart' assumption could spook the market. JP pointed out that National Grid NTS was passing on information rather than interpreting it; GD suggested a button that should tell the reader what the chart was trying to show and what the underlying assumptions were. AP added that it would be nice to have the information historically updated if possible; actual usage and demand as an update would be really good to have. JP responded that updates were presented to industry at the Ops forum.

4. Summarise outcome of Workshop 1

JB then summarised the view of the meeting as being reasonably satisfied with the data presented; the middle graph required a degree of expansion, and something more could be done to indicate and differentiate more clearly the levels/degrees of certainty between the pictures at D+1 and D+5.

JP said that National Grid NTS would provide updated screen prints and model, with a couple of options, at the next meeting. CW pointed out that parties are not familiar with such rare events or the use of associated screens and may want to take action to assist but do not know how to. He requested that a link be provided from the appropriate screen(s) to the GBA information, where a reader could find out about GBAs (what is it, what does it mean, the different stages, what sort of response is expected, ie is it time for the market to consider issuing P70s, etc) so that parties can take appropriate decisions/actions. This was noted by National Grid NTS.

As the information on the 4 graphs would be rather difficult to access successfully assuming they would be condensed and presented all together on one page, JC suggested that one option may be to provide functionality so as to be able to click on the appropriate graph to expand it to a full window for ease of viewing. Another option may be to provide improved viewing access via a scroll function.

In response to a remark from JB regarding the number of active notifications made last year, JP stated that every month an assessment was carried out and an ANS notification sent out if the change to the trigger levels, no matter how small, warranted this. In the future there may be more frequent notifications, because the changes may be smaller.

RF requested that the graphs be made available for consideration in advance of the next meeting so that Shippers had the opportunity to discuss internally before providing more feedback if appropriate.

Action PWI/001: Following suggested amendments make the graphs available in advance of the next meeting.

5. Next Steps/ Diary Planning

Workshop 2 has been scheduled for Wednesday 19 August 2009 and will be held at the Energy Networks Association, Dean Bradley House, 52 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 2AF starting at 10:00am.

Details of future meetings may be found on the Joint Office website at: www.gasgovernance.com/Diary.

Action Log – UNC Transmission Workstream

Provision of Winter Information – Workshop 1: 29 July 2009

Action Ref	Meeting Date(s)	Minute Ref	Action	Owner	Status Update
PWI 001	29/07/09	4.0	Following suggested amendments, make the graphs available in advance of the next meeting.	National Grid NTS (JP/PP)	

JP = Jenny Phillips; PP = Peter Parsons.