

Large Scale Disconnections initiated by Local Authorities

Guidance Document

As part of the Deputy Prime Minister's Sustainable Communities Plan the Market Renewal Pathfinders programme has been established. The purpose of the programme is to regenerate areas of low housing demand and housing market failure. Due to the nature of the pathfinders programme large volumes of clearance and demolition will be undertaken and large-scale disconnections will be required.

Current documented processes require all disconnections to be initiated and driven by the Supplier, therefore in order for Local Authorities (working in partnership with the pathfinders programme) to initiate the required works they will have to identify and contact the current supplier. However, due to the volume of sites (and possibly Suppliers) involved, to date this process has been extremely time consuming.

If the Local Authorities are forced to identify every affected Supplier before initiating disconnections, work carried out by the Pathfinders programme will be considerably delayed. It was therefore agreed a new process for large-scale disconnections in which the local authority are able to initiate the process should be documented. The detailed industry process has been produced in the form of an MRA Working Practice. This document gives high-level overview of the process.

The Process

It is envisaged that Distribution Businesses will treat each Large Scale Disconnection as an individual project, therefore in order to aid the process a nominated project manager will be responsible for communicating with the Local Authority.

The Local Authority will first compile a programme of disconnections works. They will then contact the relevant Distribution Business ¹and liaise with them in order to agree the programme, including anticipated timescales. The two parties will agree where responsibility lies for ensuring that properties are unoccupied. The Distribution Business will then schedule the works, disconnect power to the premises and notify the relevant Suppliers and other industry parties.

The key to ensuring that the process works is close liaison between the parties involved. Local Authorities must work closely with the Distribution Business, who must in turn keep Suppliers informed of any changes.

¹ A guide to Distribution areas can be found on the Energy Network Association internet site at: www.energynetworks.org