



NETWORKS

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT 2023

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD	01
REPORT PURPOSE AND SUMMARY	02
SECTION 1: STRATEGY	07
· ESB NETWORKS - WHO WE ARE	08
· OUR NETWORKS FOR NET ZERO STRATEGY	09
· OUR STAKEHOLDERS	11
· OUR ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY	12
· HOW ENGAGEMENT IS EMBEDDED IN OUR OPERATIONS	18
· IMPROVING OUR ENGAGEMENT - LISTENING TO AND ACTING ON FEEDBACK	21
SECTION 2: IMPLEMENTATION	
Engagement Channels and Initiatives Delivered	26
· DELIVERING AGAINST OUR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PLAN 2023	27
· ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS 2023	36
SECTION 3: EFFECTIVENESS	
Engagement Metrics	44
· INTRODUCTION	45
· OUR ENGAGEMENT METRICS FRAMEWORK 2023	46
APPENDICES	
· APPENDIX 1: ESB NETWORKS CONSULTATIONS DELIVERED IN 2023	53
· APPENDIX 2: ESB NETWORKS PUBLICATIONS DELIVERED IN 2023	54
· APPENDIX 3: ESB NETWORKS PATHWAYS TO ENGAGEMENT (2023 EVENTS, MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS)	56



Foreword

Welcome to ESB Networks' Stakeholder Engagement Report for 2023, which describes the vast engagement we have had with our stakeholders over the past year. Its aim is to assess how we have delivered against our planned engagement strategy and activities for 2023 to deliver strong outcomes for our customers and stakeholders.

In January 2023, we launched in collaboration with our stakeholders, our [Networks for Net Zero Strategy](#) which outlines our commitment to futureproofing Ireland's electricity network and making the country's goal of net zero by 2050 a reality. This will require deploying innovative solutions today which are scalable to meet the electricity needs of the nation by 2040. The Networks for Net Zero Strategy will underpin an energy transition that will enable electricity customers to adopt new technologies, products, and services in the decades ahead, changing how they generate, store, and consume electricity.

We recognise that the transition to a net zero future will have a significant impact on our

customers' day-to-day lives and success will not be achieved without ongoing active customer and stakeholder participation, engagement, and support. In this report we look back at our stakeholder engagement performance in 2023, describing how it has helped inform our plans and delivered activities aimed at ensuring that the network is prepared to meet the changing needs of our customers and to achieving our vision for a clean electric future. We demonstrate how we are committed to continually improving our engagement performance, how engagement is integral to our day-to-day operations and is at the heart of everything we do at ESB Networks.

We are committed to being fully transparent with our approach to stakeholder engagement and so we want to hear from you, our stakeholders, with your views of how we engaged in 2023. We welcome your ongoing constructive feedback which will help us develop and refine our engagement now and into the future. Your comments may be submitted directly to <mailto:stakeholder@esbnetworks.ie>

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas Tarrant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nicholas Tarrant

Managing Director
ESB Networks

Report Purpose and Summary

The purpose of this report is to assess how ESB Networks has delivered against our engagement strategy and activities for 2023, to deliver strong outcomes for our customers and stakeholders.

Background

ESB Networks (as Distribution System Operator) and EirGrid (as Transmission System Operator) have an incentive with the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) for stakeholder engagement under the Price Review 5 Incentive and Reporting Framework. The objective of this incentive, as stated by the CRU, is to promote cultures within System Operators that put stakeholders (i.e., customers, generators, and local communities)

at the centre of what the network companies do. This is to ensure that the System Operators deliver high quality outcomes for energy customers and the wider public.

The incentive is evaluated on an annual basis by a CRU-appointed panel consisting of a range of electricity sector stakeholders – The NSEEP (Electricity Networks Stakeholder Engagement Evaluation Panel)

Following the Panel's consideration, a score is agreed by the Panel. This score will input into the calculation of the incentive allowance applied to the system operators as part of the annual allowed network revenues for the system operators.



In this report we describe the vast engagement we have had with our stakeholders over the past year, we demonstrate how we are committed to continually improving our engagement performance, how engagement is integral to our day-to-day operations and is at the heart of everything we do at ESB Networks.

In **SECTION 1** of this report, we describe our engagement strategy for 2023, which has been framed by our [Networks for Net Zero strategy](#) which we published in January 2023. Our strategy is based on our core role of having a safe and reliable network but also delivering the very ambitious targets as set out in the Government’s recently published Climate Action Plan.

We tailor our engagement approach to our broad stakeholder base which is constantly changing given the pace of change that is taking place across the energy sector. We continually review and improve our engagement methodology as we benchmark our systems and processes against international best-in-class practice in this field.

ESB Networks recognise that engagement is essential for the successful management of our business and as a strategic priority, it is led by the Senior Leadership team and is seen as a vital activity at every level of the organisation. Our staff testimonials on pages 19 and 20 demonstrate how engagement is now an essential part of everyone’s role and is at the heart of our operations.

We demonstrate how we are listening to our stakeholders and conclude Section 1 with a summary of how ESB Networks is responding to feedback received on our engagement performance from the CRU electricity Networks Engagement Evaluation Panel, NSEEP refer to report published in November 2023 ([Link here](#))

Some key improvements to our engagement strategy based on stakeholder feedback include:

We have improved our two-way communications through additional channels and **points of contact** with our customers and stakeholders. ESB Networks prominent presence at industry events allows our teams and subject matter experts to answer queries and provide the necessary support to a broad range of customers and industry stakeholders.

We have expanded our engagement metrics which are linked to the delivery of our Networks for Net Zero strategy, which outlines our commitment to futureproofing Ireland’s electricity network and making the country’s goal of net zero by 2050 a reality.

We consult and publish our engagement strategy and plans as per the CRU NSEE panel recommendations.

› [Link to](#) ESB Networks Stakeholder Engagement Strategy & Plan 2023

› [Link to](#) updated Plans for 2023 [Link to](#) ESB Networks Stakeholder Engagement Strategy & Plan 2024

We are improving our external consultation process by providing a schedule of ESB Networks led consultations as far in advance as possible to enable stakeholders to plan effectively. We stagger, where feasible, consultations timelines to facilitate feedback from stakeholders and are flexible with deadlines. We provide supporting webinars and explanatory videos to help stakeholders decide content relevance and to explain what feedback we are seeking in the consultation documentation.

The strong collaboration and ongoing partnership with EirGrid is detailed in our joint publication “DSO/TSO Multi-Year Plan 2024 – 2028” which was published in September 2023. This plan is based on the CRU approved pillars of reducing dispatch down, securing the future power system, facilitating new technology and whole of system solutions. A recent example of the benefits and outcomes of this EirGrid/ ESB Networks collaboration is the establishment of a [Joint Outage Transformation Programme \(JOTP\)](#) which sets out various interventions focussed on increasing outage availability and maximising their utilization and effectiveness.

We commenced a major 18-month upgrade project to **enhance ESB Networks website** and to address stakeholder feedback.



In **SECTION 2** of this report, we describe how we have implemented our engagement strategy throughout 2023. Our **Actions and Achievements Summary Table** summarises how we have delivered against our 2023 Stakeholder engagement plans. We have also provided some evidence of key external industry engagements and highlights from throughout the year.

Some examples of the key achievements from the implementation of our engagement include:

Through early engagement with developers of renewable generation projects, we offer a free initial assessment of potential grid connection options, allowing the customer to make a better-informed decision regarding participation in the Enduring Connection Policy ECP process.

Strong generator customer and stakeholder engagement has helped us identify potential locations of renewable hubs and create additional capacity to enable an increase in renewables connecting to the distribution network.

Developed a **New Connection Screening Service for Electric Vehicle recharging infrastructure developers** which is showing the scale of growth that is happening in this area and highlighting the need for electricity network reinforcements to accommodate the required future public EV recharging infrastructure.

Strong industry collaboration on the National Smart Metering Programme is ensuring clear, consistent, and adequate information is provided to customers to gain their trust, acceptance and buy in to the smart meter roll out programme.

Stakeholders & customers continue to inform the strategy & direction for the delivery of the National Network, Local Connections Programme. This ongoing collaboration is supporting the rollout of new products and services across the areas of security of supply products, 15-20% flexibility propositions and pilots.

We've enhanced our customer and stakeholder research and insights capability through independently led surveys and focus groups, which help us understand changing customer needs and drives continuous improvement across the organisation.

Enhanced collaboration and engagement on the **"Housing for all"** Government initiative drove an increase of approximately 5% in the total number of housing connections completed in 2023, versus 2022.

In **SECTION 3** of this report, **we describe the effectiveness of our engagement strategy in terms of how it helped support the delivery of our Networks for NetZero Strategy in 2023.**

We have developed our engagement metrics framework in response to feedback from our stakeholders who have asked for:

- a clear linkage to be made between our longer-term vision to 2030 and our annual stakeholder engagement plans, and
- the development and roll out of an enduring metrics framework for stakeholders.

Our Engagement Metrics Framework 2023 is presented in terms of our three strategic objectives, Decarbonised Electricity, Resilient Infrastructure, and Empowered Customers, and for each focus area it captures our 2023 high level engagement objectives, delivered engagements, and the effectiveness measured in terms of successful outcomes.

Some key examples of the effectiveness of our engagement in 2023 include;

3-way, EirGrid, Customer and ESB Networks engagement plus quarterly engagement with key renewable industry stakeholders, is ensuring processes are understood and developed to enable achievement of CAP deliverables. Delivered 16 utility scale renewable projects in 2023, **412 MW energised, (191 MW Wind, 221 MW Solar) plus an additional 105 MW of battery energy storage.**

Established a **EirGrid/ESB Networks Joint Outage Transformation Programme (JOTP)**, which sets out various interventions focussed on increasing outage availability and maximising their utilization and effectiveness.

Industry engagement enabled delivery of renewable hub substations pilots, with the objective of embedding into our 'Build Once for 2040' concept. **5 Renewable Hub locations approved as part of ECP2.3 Scope for additional sites in ECP2.4.** This will provide **greater certainty for customers** with regard to capacity and up-front costs which should lead to a lower project attrition rate.

Developed **Generator minimum Cost Calculator website** tool which is part of a suite of tools empowering customers to evaluate potential cost of generation connections.

We **refreshed the Capacity Heatmap online tool** at the end of Q2 2023 and again in Q4 2023. The capacity heatmap provides indication of available capacity for new demand and generation connections. It is part of a suite of tools that empowers customers to have a better understanding as to where to connect, enabling the easy identification of potential capacity in the vicinity of the customer site.

Published **Electricity Distribution Network Capacity Pathways Report** which sets out our analysis of the future distribution system capacity required and proposed pathways to deliver this by 2040. We are inviting stakeholders to engage with us, to share ideas, challenge us, and work with us to refine and improve these pathways so that we can plan the way forward together.

Successfully progressing the transition of the Mini and Small-Scale Generation connection processes from Pilot Phase to Enduring Process. Processing over 700 applications per week. By the end of 2023 a total of **570 customers** have successfully completed the installation of their generators, representing **300 MW connected.**

Developed a Connection Screening Service for Electric Vehicle recharging infrastructure. By end of 2023 we **completed pre-screening for 262 sites from 41 customers equating to 227 MVA capacity.**

Engagement via the **NNLC Advisory Council and call for inputs** have been effective in supporting the direction and approach for delivering system flexibility.

The **DMSO Community Toolkit** was published in December 2023. It contains resources created to support customers and communities in engaging with Flexible Demand.

Our "Beat the Peak" initiatives were commended across Europe for the contribution to peak demand reduction measures. Ireland was ranked as one of the first European countries to implement a success peak -shaving product.

Improved communications on customer connections journey through our **online portal services. 88% of new connection applications online, 61% customers affected by outages accessing PowerCheck.**

A significant milestone of 1.5 million smart meters installed across the country in November 2023. **96% customer satisfaction** with programme. We gained valuable customer acceptance and buy in to the Day & Night meter exchange through strong industry engagement and collaboration via the smart metering programme's Communications & Engagement Working Group.

To conclude, we hope that this report provides you with an overview of the vast engagement we have had with our many stakeholders throughout the course of 2023 and that it demonstrates the broad depth and reach of our engagement activity. Stakeholder engagement is embedded in our business as it continues to play a crucial role in supporting the delivery of our Networks for NetZero Strategy targets and ambitions.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our stakeholders for taking the time to continue to engage with us and providing valuable feedback on all our business activities throughout 2023. We look forward to working closely with all our customers and stakeholders as we deliver the electricity network for Ireland's clean, electric future and subsequent enduring benefits for current and future generations.

We are committed to being fully transparent with our approach to engagement and want to hear from you, our stakeholders, with your views of how we engaged in 2023. We welcome your constructive feedback so we can continue to develop and refine our engagement now and into the future.

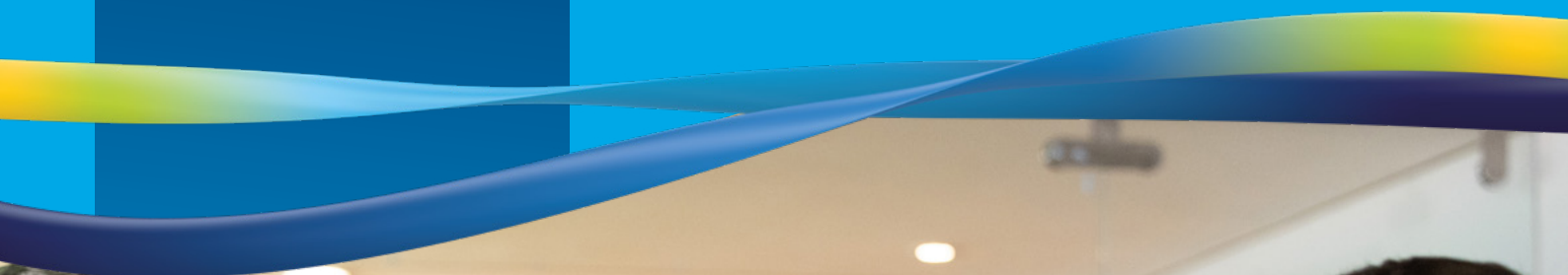
You can send your comments directly to stakeholder@esbnetworks.ie



SECTION

1

STRATEGY



ESB Networks – Who we are

ESB Networks provide the electricity infrastructure that transports electricity to all customers in Ireland through both the distribution and the transmission systems. We have served our customers for over 90 years and have provided the electrical infrastructure on which our society has developed.

ESB Networks work to meet the needs of all Irish electricity customers, providing universal affordable access to the electricity system. We deliver and manage the performance of a network of almost 157,000 km of overhead networks, 26,000 km of underground cables, over 800 high voltage substations, significant amounts of connected generation (including renewable generation connected to the distribution and transmission systems), and 2.4 million demand customers.

To support the delivery of a safe and reliable distribution system we undertake all the functions related to asset management, planning,

construction, maintenance, and operation of the high, medium, and low voltage distribution network. ESB Networks also build and maintain the high voltage transmission system.

We also deliver a range of services to the Republic of Ireland (RoI) Retail Electricity Market servicing over 2.4 million customers. We manage relationships with market participants and provide data in a timely and accurate fashion on a daily basis.

ESB Networks support the wider Irish market through the ring-fenced Meter Registration System Operator (MRSO) and Retail Market Design

Service (RMDS), and supports the wholesale Single Electricity Market through the provision of aggregated meter data.

ESB Networks place customer service at the centre of our operations, providing services to all electricity customers regardless of their supplier. Our staff and approved contractors throughout the country strive for excellence in all interactions with customers, while also supporting them in participating in the energy market and transitioning towards low carbon technologies.



Our Networks for Net Zero Strategy

Our Networks for Net Zero Strategy outlines ESB Networks’ role in facilitating the implementation of the Irish government’s Climate Action Plan 2023, with a view to achieving Ireland’s net zero target by 2050. The Strategy aims to develop a flexible and intelligent digital electricity network that will serve as a foundation for a clean electric future in Ireland by 2040.



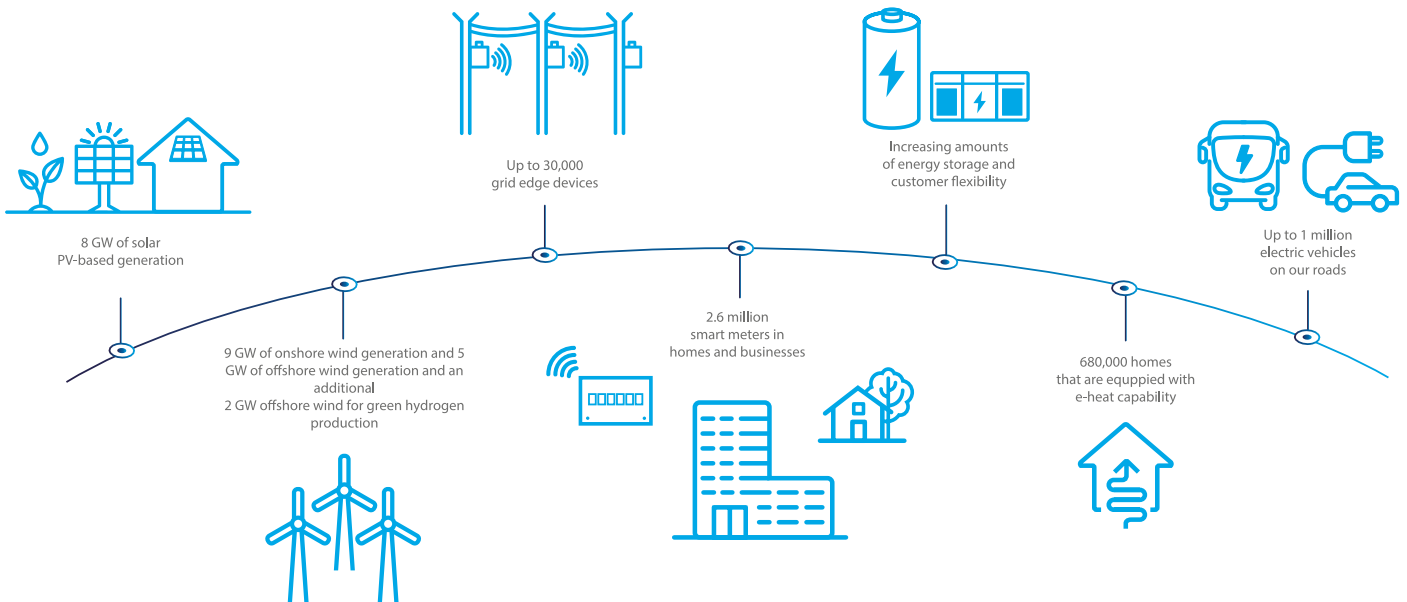
Our purpose at ESB Networks has always been to connect and distribute electricity - safely, securely, and affordably. Acknowledging the central role that electricity plays in climate action, our purpose has evolved to deliver a clean electric future through the

electrification of heat, transport, and industry, as well as connecting renewable generation at scale to the electricity network. This means delivering our role to help the targets for 2025 and 2030 as set out in the government’s Climate Action Plan.

Our Strategy sets out to deliver the targets defined in CAP23 for 2025 and 2030. It also sets out a clear objective to develop a digital electricity network that is flexible and smart, and will provide a foundation for a clean electric future

in Ireland by 2040. This means having a net zero-ready distribution network by 2040 to enable Ireland’s achievement of net zero no later than 2050. This will be an important milestone on the journey to Ireland being net zero no later than 2050. The work we do under our primary roles of Distribution System Operation (DSO), Distribution Asset Owner (DAO), and onshore Transmission Asset Owner (TAO) is essential and on the critical path to achieve this objective.

ESB Networks’ vision for our network by 2030 is seen below:

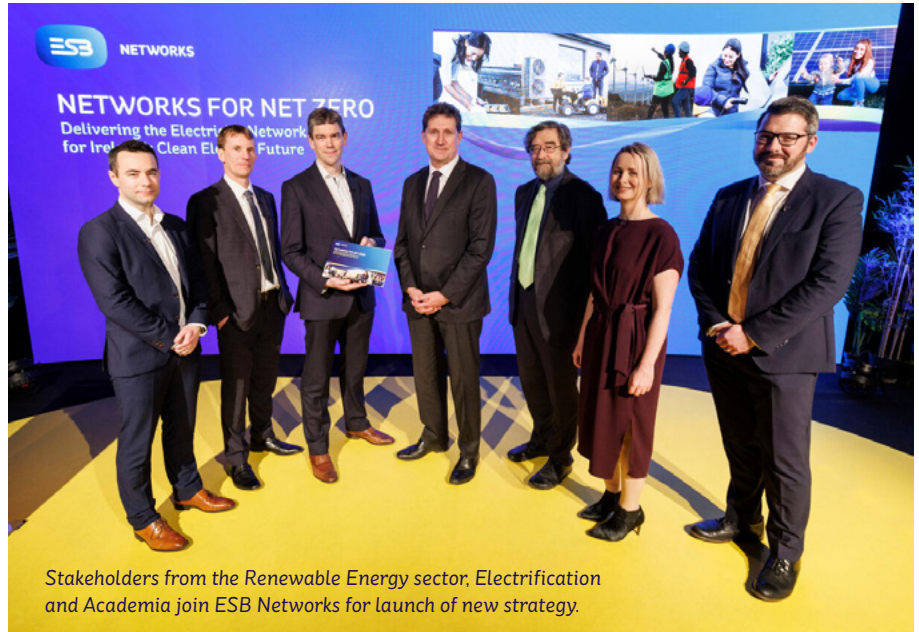


Delivering this is going to require a transformation of our network, our systems, and our approach. The sustainable social and economic development of communities,

businesses, Ireland’s climate action response, and transition to net zero are all dependent on ESB Networks delivering our purpose through to 2030 and beyond.

For our customers, electricity will continue to provide a safe, secure, and reliable energy source and it will also present new opportunities to take part in the energy transition through self-generation and storage, demand management, energy efficiency opportunities, and selling electricity by exporting back on to the electricity network. As customers engage with new opportunities, and as renewable energy connections increase, managing the network will become more complex.

We plan to introduce a 'Build Once for 2040' concept that will ensure that the distribution network and supporting services such as demand management are designed and developed to meet the anticipated needs of customers in 2040 and to deliver a clean electric future. This will eliminate the need for repeated, costly, and resource intensive interventions on the network. Essentially, where possible, we will deploy solutions today which



Stakeholders from the Renewable Energy sector, Electrification and Academia join ESB Networks for launch of new strategy.

are scalable to meet the needs of customers and stakeholders in 2040.

At ESB Networks, we understand that we have been entrusted with the responsibility to play a vital role in Ireland's energy future, and we know we cannot do this alone.

Through delivering our Networks for Net Zero Strategy in collaboration with all our stakeholders, we will ensure that the network is prepared to meet the changing and evolving needs of our customers in a clean electric future.

Our Values

Our vision is to enable the clean electric future together with our stakeholders and customers who will be at the heart of this transformation. The delivery of this is underpinned by Our Values of being Courageous, Caring, Driven, and Trusted.



Our Stakeholders

Our stakeholders are the individuals, groups of individuals, communities or organisations that affect, or could be affected by, our activities, products or services and associated performance. Given our central role in the electricity industry connecting over 2.5 million homes, farms, communities, and businesses around the country, we have a very broad range of stakeholders.

Since considerable changes are taking place within the energy sector at an unprecedented scale, we are fully aware that who we engage with and how is constantly changing. Therefore, while we undertake an annual mapping exercise of our stakeholders to identify new groups in consideration of changing priorities, the segmentation wheel below is

a working example of how we are looking to improve the granularity of our stakeholder mapping through further subgrouping and segmentation. This will enable us to be even more purpose driven in how we conduct our engagement activities, and help to ensure that we are driving inclusive engagement by not leaving any stakeholder group behind.



Our Engagement Methodology

Our approach to stakeholder engagement is informed by international best practice in this field. Our principles and methodology of engagement are guided by the AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard¹, which is used by many leading organisations and network operators. The following principles underpin all our activities when engaging with our customers and stakeholders.

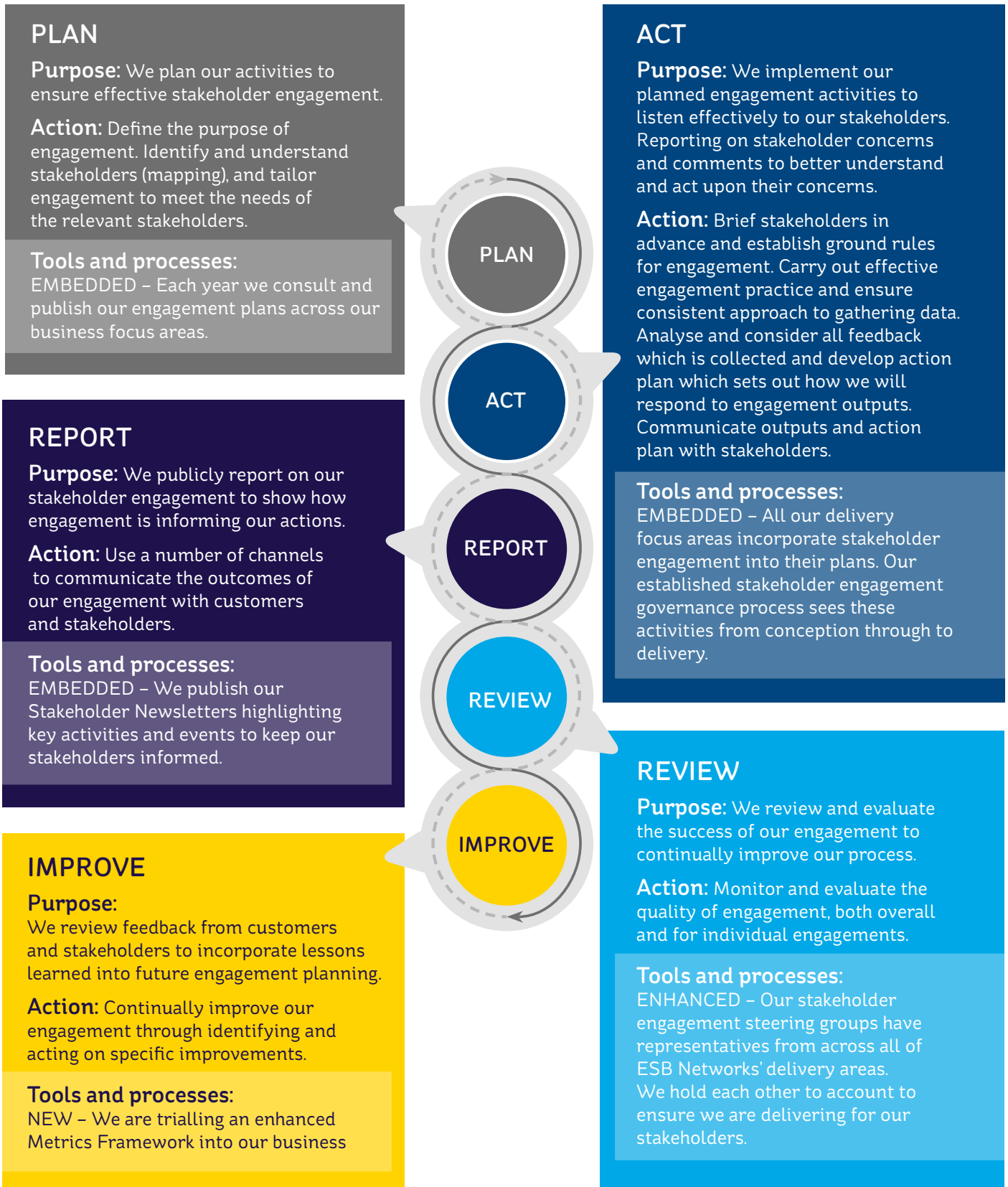
PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT



¹ AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard (2015) and AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Principles (2018)



We use a structured and systematic approach to engaging with our customers and stakeholders. This involves a cycle of planning, action, reporting, review, and improvement.



How We Identify Stakeholders

When we look to engage with customers and stakeholders on a topic and involve them in the decision-making process, we first need to assess who we should engage and why. It's important that we can justify and fully explain to our customers and stakeholders the need for the proposed initiative, and the benefits to them that will come as a result. We then look to ascertain which groups will either be most impacted or are likely to have the greatest interest in the proposed activity. For example, while customers will be directly impacted by the roll-out of smart meters, other key stakeholders such as electricity suppliers, housing associations, and charities are also likely to be identified as

key stakeholders as they will be directly or indirectly impacted by the rollout. We undertake an annual mapping exercise of our stakeholders to identify new groups considering changing priorities.

We also annually review and refresh our central database of individual stakeholders. Business engagement leads present annually on their topic-specific key stakeholders through our steering group governance mechanism, highlighting where there is strong coverage on subject matters and where there are gaps which need addressing to ensure fair representation of our engagement activities.

We recognise the considerable changes which are taking place

within the energy sector at an unprecedented scale and are fully aware that who we engage with and how is constantly changing. Recent global events have highlighted even more clearly the need to help customers in vulnerable circumstances. Our annual review of stakeholders, in combination with working with the relevant partners, will ensure that vulnerable groups' voices are heard and that they will not be left behind in the transition to a net zero future.

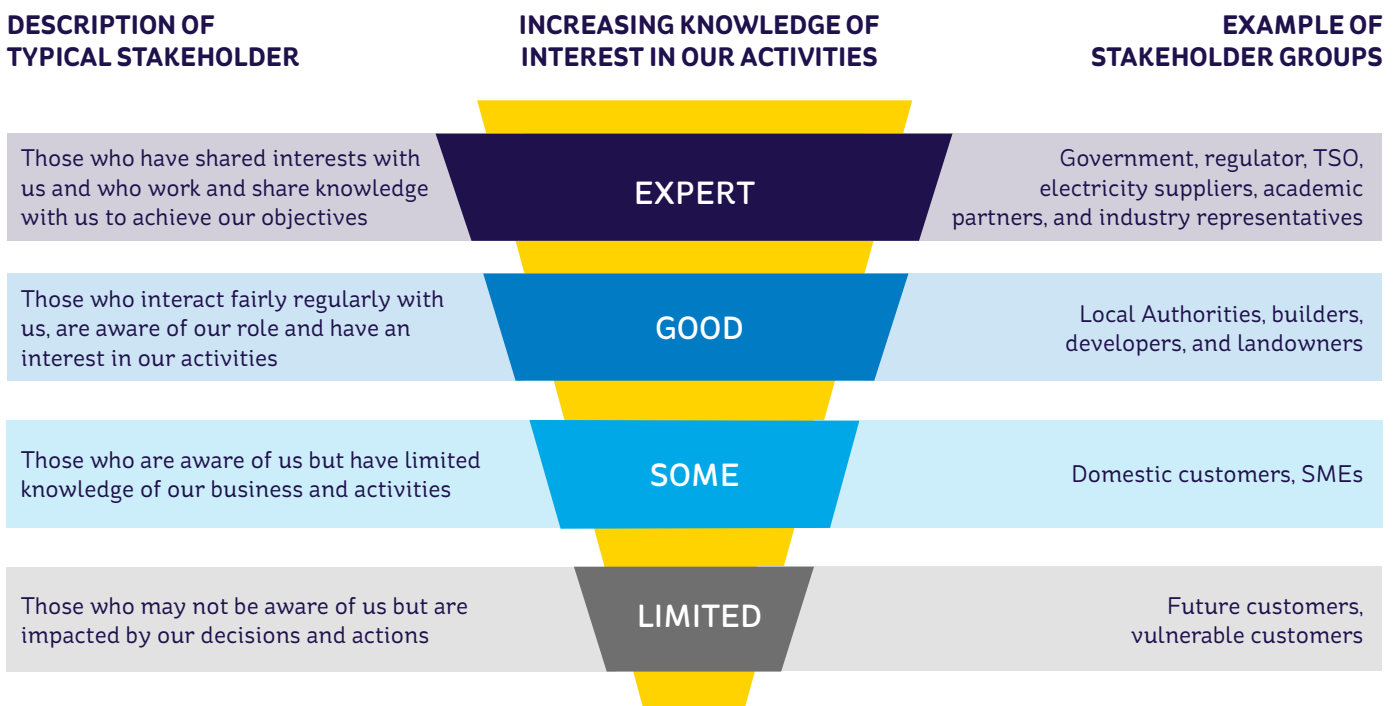


Tailoring Our Engagement

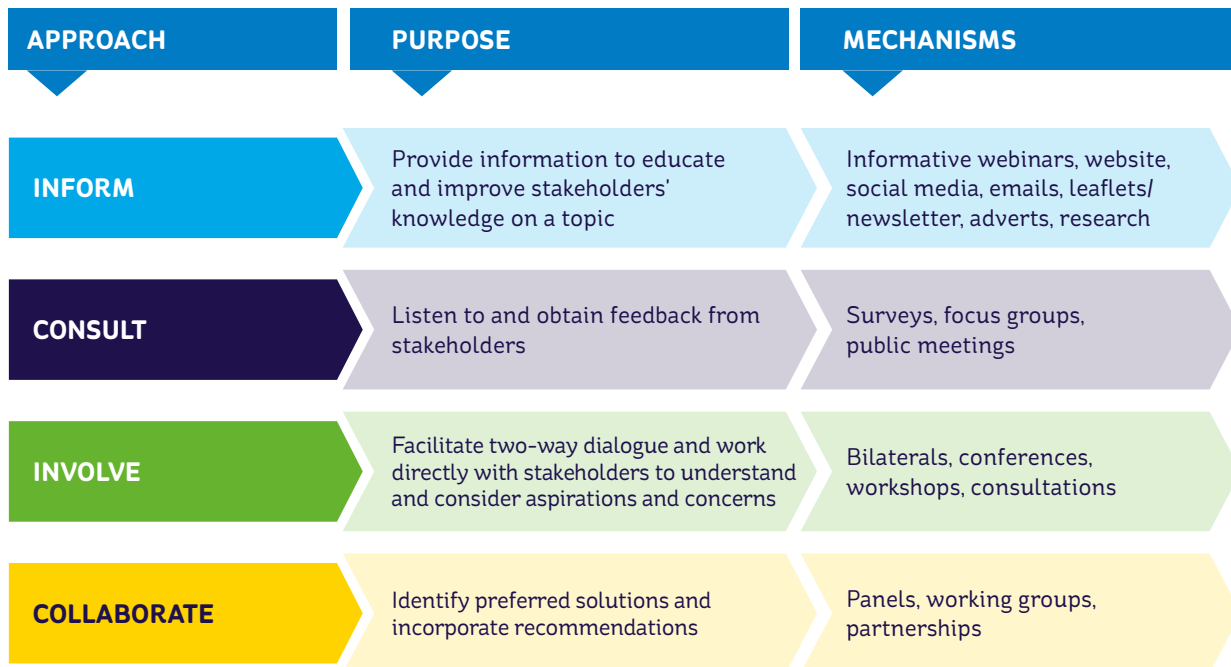
We assign a level of knowledge and interest to each stakeholder group across each of our strategic engagement areas. Awareness of knowledge levels of each stakeholder group allows us to better tailor engagement to specific stakeholder groups, such as the engagement method, and the appropriate use of technical language. This approach helps us to answer questions around how different customer and stakeholder groups could influence our decision-making and how best to involve them. Different levels of stakeholder engagement are appropriate, depending on the purpose, materiality, desired outcome, time-frame, resources, and level of interest. The level of engagement that is appropriate is

considered during the planning phase. This involves an assessment of the materiality of the subject matter of engagement, both for our stakeholders and our business, and includes an evaluation of potential impact and risk. Issues of major significance involving high levels of investment, impact, and risk will warrant greater levels of engagement. Where the issue has lower significance and less impact, the provision of information may be more appropriate. In each case, we will discuss our approach with our stakeholders. While we acknowledge that not all stakeholders can be experts on any one thing, or indeed all the topics of strategic engagement, we are committed to informing and educating our

customers and stakeholders to empower them to engage effectively with us on the topics that matter to them. For example, prior to consultations with stakeholders with limited knowledge on the subject matter at hand, we run supplementary webinars to support customers in the transition from being 'informed' by ESB Networks, to being 'involved' with engagement and fostering a two-way dialogue with them. Continued engagement with stakeholders allows them to have more knowledge of a topic of engagement, and therefore more of an impact on the decision-making process with time.



Here we set out each of the different approaches and associated mechanisms we use for engagement, based on the knowledge levels of the audience.



Why We Engage

For ESB Networks, engaging with our customers and stakeholders is crucial to how we shape the future of our business and the electricity network. It helps us develop new initiatives which benefit the

communities and industry we serve, as well as improving and enhancing existing ones. It shapes our business planning and strategic priorities and informs the decision-making process.

Engagement with wider industry accelerates innovation within the business and the energy sector through shared learnings and ideas.

SERVICES:

To enable customers and stakeholders to shape our existing and upcoming services

ACCOUNTABILITY ON DELIVERY:

For our customers and stakeholders to hold us to account on our promises and to drive continuous improvement

FUTURE PLANNING:

For our customers and stakeholders to support us in delivering in the long term



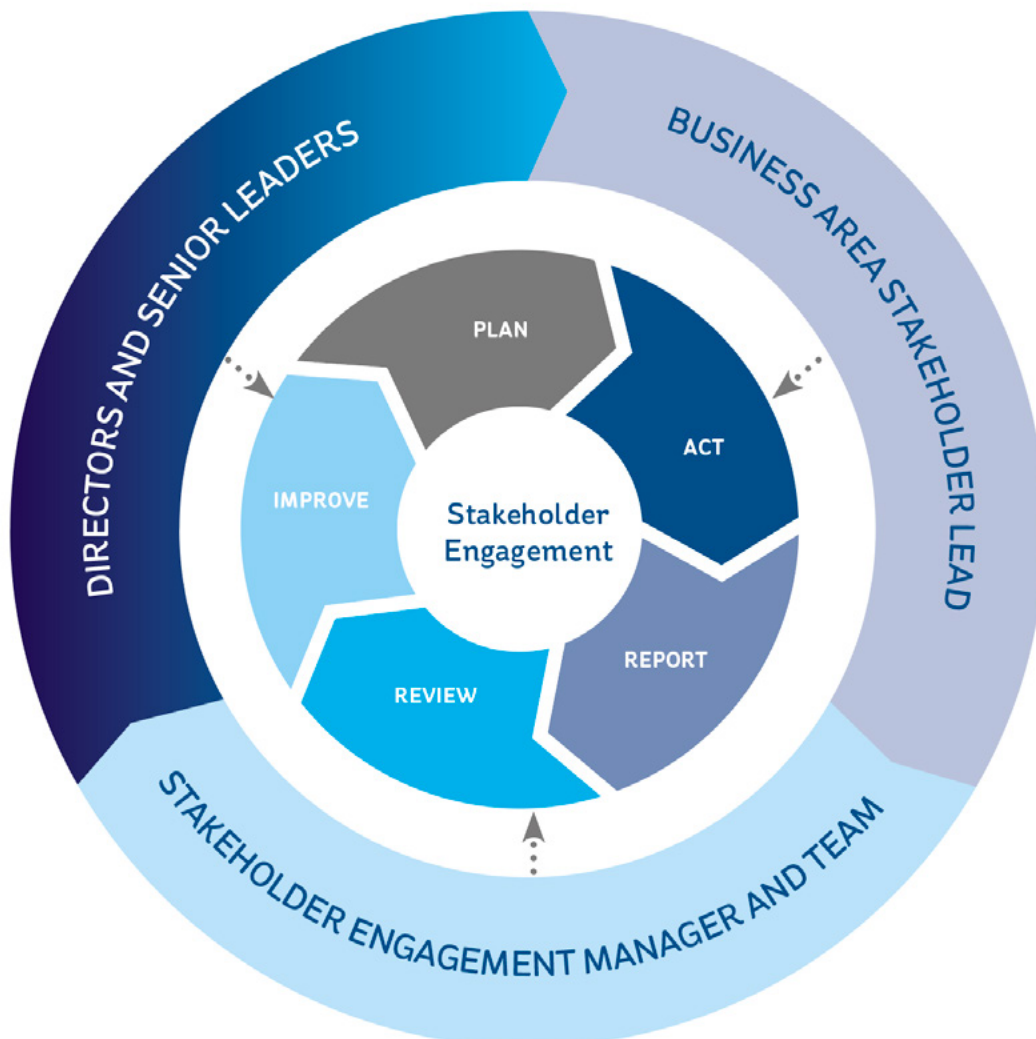
How engagement is embedded in our operations

We recognise that effective stakeholder engagement is essential for the successful management of our business. As a strategic priority, it is led by the Directors and the Senior Leadership team and is seen as a vital activity at every level of the organisation.

An internal stakeholder engagement steering group made up of stakeholder leads from across the business meets regularly to discuss planned engagement activities, review stakeholder feedback, and agree proposed improvements and adjustments based on recommendations. This group, which is led by the Stakeholder Engagement Team and chaired by the Managing

Director, provides overall direction to the stakeholder engagement strategy for ESB Networks. Stakeholder engagement forms a core element of our business processes and remains embedded in our business culture, and is seen as the role and responsibility of every employee within the organisation. Our strategically important delivery initiatives, such as our national smart metering

programme, the National Network, Local Connections programme, are shaping and informing how we undertake engagement across all our activities, from day-to-day service areas such-as maintaining the network and customer service through to our flagship innovation programmes to prepare the net zero network of the future.





Mark Madigan Strategic Engagement Manager

In Q4 2023, I was delighted to be appointed into the role of Strategic Engagement Manager for ESB Networks. ESB's purpose is to deliver a clean electric future and make Ireland's net zero goal a reality and I absolutely believe we must harness the knowledge, skill and ambition of all our stakeholders to make this ambition a reality. While positive engagement with stakeholders is managed systematically by our Stakeholder Steering group, it is also evident that stakeholder collaboration and engagement is embedded into business-as-usual practices across ESB Networks. I firmly believe that engagement is an ongoing iterative process, not just a one-off activity. I look forward to ongoing partnership and two-way dialogue with ESB Networks existing stakeholders while also building a positive relationship with new and emerging stakeholders.



Emma Silke Electrification Manager

The Electrification team is committed to leading on out on the electrification objectives we have defined in our Networks for Net Zero Strategy, as well as ensuring the delivery the objectives of ESB Networks' Electrification of Heat & Transport Strategy, which is a fundamental building block to our achievement of the ambitious wider business targets we have. We will continue to actively engage, enable and empower our customers to electrify. A recent example of how we have moved to deliver in this manner is the new Connection Screening service, launched so far for EV charging infrastructure developers. The purpose of Connection Screening is to support this customer group, who are moving to rapidly invest and develop the Irish market in response to decarbonisation of transport objectives, providing them with specific information relating to sites they may be considering for the development and deployment of public EV charging infrastructure. The value of this service is early-stage information on the likely availability of capacity in locations they are assessing, along with indicative costs. This allows developers to make more informed decisions about which site to take progress for development.

As the Electrification team, we will continue to drive both innovation and solution development, working with our stakeholders and customers to understand their evolving needs and to support a clean electric future together.



Mick Quirke Renewable Contracts Manager

The development of Renewable Hubs is essential in order to create substation capacity at the necessary pace and scale, and in areas where there is a pipeline of renewable projects. There was extensive Industry engagement which played a major part in the successful approval of the Renewable Hubs proposal by the CRU. Engagement and understanding our customers' needs is key to enable us to plan the development of the distribution network and ensure that network solutions deployed today are scalable to meet the needs of customers and stakeholders in a zero-carbon society. We are committed to continue to build on our extensive engagements through industry forums, customer clinics, customer meetings, consultations and webinars.



Ray Dorney Networks Planning

This year we enabled early engagement with renewable developers delivering 17 customer clinics covering 21 projects & 35 connection methods in advance of ECP2.4 window opening. The customer clinics were successful in that they allowed our customers get a free initial assessment of potential grid connection options, allowing the project to make the decision to participate in the Enduring Connection Policy ECP process or delay making an application until more capacity becomes available. This customer information will also help us identify potential locations of renewable hubs and create additional capacity to enable an increase in renewables connecting to the distribution network.



Katie Murray Community Energy Projects Liaison

Our goal is to develop an understanding of the key issues impacting community-led renewable energy projects and provide our customers with advice, tailored to their project. We take a personable, hands-on approach to engagement to make sure our customers feel heard and supported right throughout the Enduring Connection Policy (ECP) process. Collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders is crucial in delivering the best feedback and assistance possible for our customers.



Anne Marie Casey Environmental Assurance & Compliance Manager

Like many international utilities, ESB Networks install underground cables in urban locations where it is not feasible to construct overhead lines. Fluid filled cables were installed on ESB Networks distribution and transmission systems between 1950 and 1989. As part of our Networks for Net Zero Strategy ESB Networks plan to replace all fluid filled cables by 2035. These cables can leak, often as a result of age or third party damage. ESB Networks is committed to responding to each leak and ensuring that they are assessed by environmental specialists in accordance with relevant EPA guidance and remediated where necessary. Once notified leaks are fully assessed and closed out, these assessments along with other relevant information relating to Fluid Filled Cables are presented on our website to enable transparency in relation to their findings.



Carmel O'Connor Smart Metering

The rollout of smart meters has now reached a total of over 1.5 million smart meters installed nationwide. ESB Networks expanded the rollout in 2023 to include Day/Night meter upgrades and through strong industry engagement and collaboration via the smart metering programme's Communications & Engagement Working Group, we gained valuable customer acceptance and buy in to the meter exchange. As a result of this positive engagement, we are on track to complete this phase of the roll out within the agreed timeline.

Improving our Engagement - listening to and acting on feedback

We are committed to continuously improving our approach to engagement to deliver meaningful outcomes for all our customers, stakeholders, and our business.

The following summarises how ESB Networks, is responding to and acting upon key feedback received from our stakeholders, on our engagement performance.

The following feedback is referenced in the CRU Network System Operators Engagement Evaluation Panel, NSEEP report published November 2023. [\(Link here\)](#)

1



STAKEHOLDER SAID

DSO to provide stakeholders with clear points of contact, outlining roles and responsibilities.

WE DID

We provide dedicated pathways for various topics and areas of interest to our customers and stakeholders and dedicated points of contact (name, role & email) for further follow-up. We also provide Single Points of Contact for renewable projects connecting to the distribution network. We have also improved our physical face to face communications by supporting stakeholder industry events.

NEXT STEPS

We will continue to improve two-way communications with all our customers and stakeholders.

We will provide additional points of contact, through online platforms and physical face to face engagements.



2



STAKEHOLDER SAID

Following publication of the Close-out Reports by the CRU, the relevant Strategy should be consulted upon, finalized, and published by ESN by January each year.

WE DID

As required, we published our Strategy & Plan for 2023 for consultation with our stakeholders in December 2022. We updated our plans by republishing our list of panned consultations, publications, and events in May 2023.

NEXT STEPS

We will continue to publish our annual stakeholder reports in a timely manner and provide regular updates to the lists of panned consultations, publications and events on our Stakeholder Activities webpage.







3

STAKEHOLDER SAID

The DSO's Stakeholder Engagement report should better demonstrate the planned cooperation and partnership of the System Operators to deliver the projected changes to the power system and the "whole of system approach" to deliver the 2030 targets and beyond for renewables and emissions, and to address system constraints

WE DID

The corporation and partnership of the System Operators is detailed in our DSO/TSO Multi-Year Plan 2024 - 2028, which details the key tasks and milestones that ESN and EirGrid continue to collaborate on under the following pillars: reducing dispatch down, secure future power system, facilitating new technology and whole of system solutions.

The system operators have also worked together in coordination as part of the winter 2023 energy crisis as part of the "beat the peak" pilots. We have worked together to securely plan and deliver our roles as system operators to protect against system alerts.

NEXT STEPS

Both system operators continue to work in partnership holding monthly decision-making forums in the form of a Management Liaison Board. Discussion Board meetings are also being held on a quarterly basis by project sponsors of both ESB Networks and EirGrid.

ESB Networks is collaborating with EirGrid to increase outage availability and maximise their utilization and effectiveness. Our Joint Outage Transformation Programme (JOTP) which is now under way, sets out the various interventions focussed on increasing outage availability and maximising their utilization and effectiveness.



4

STAKEHOLDER SAID

DSO should improve public consultations. Stakeholders struggle to provide responses



WE DID

We recognise that conflicting regulatory requirements may lead to multiple consultations running in parallel. We endeavor to stagger, where feasible, consultations that are within our control and we are flexible with deadlines to facilitate stakeholder response. We are providing supporting webinars and explanatory videos to further support our stakeholders decisions regarding relevance to their business needs.

NEXT STEPS

We are receiving very positive feedback from stakeholders on supports being provided for our consultations. We will also continue to offer bilateral meetings with interested stakeholders requesting further discussion.



5



STAKEHOLDER SAID

Language and accessibility should be improved across all publications i.e., multiple Panel Members have noted issues accessing the Newsletter formatting needs to be consistent.

WE DID

All documents uploaded to our website are required to be made fully accessible in terms of language & design. Newsletters are now published on our website on our dedicated stakeholder page.

NEXT STEPS

We are reviewing how to improve website accessibility for our stakeholders and have commenced a major 18-month project to upgrade the ESB Networks website.



6



STAKEHOLDER SAID

In conjunction with the TSO, provide a schedule of all upcoming consultations as far in advance as possible to enable stakeholders to plan effectively, as recommended last year.

WE DID

We publish as part of our forward-looking Annual Strategy & Plans, a list of all upcoming consultations that we ESB Networks lead out on.

NEXT STEPS

As we are operating in a dynamic/fast moving and fully regulated environment our requirements to consult are ever growing. We therefore provide mid-year updates to our list of consultations on our website.



7



STAKEHOLDER SAID

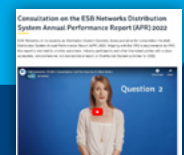
Further to point 6, a summary sheet in very simplified accessible language could be introduced, allowing Stakeholders to decipher which consultation is relevant to them.

WE DID

We endeavor to provide a simple explanatory introduction in all our consultation documentation. We have also recently commenced providing explanatory webinars, videos and linked in posts to help support our stakeholders decide the relevance of consultation to their business needs.

NEXT STEPS

We are receiving very positive feedback on supports being provided for our consultations and also offering bilateral meetings with interested stakeholders to discuss further.



8

STAKEHOLDER SAID

A central consultation website area for Stakeholders should be created, implementing a subscription service and collating together the consultation, decision and related documents for each consultation.

WE DID

We agree that there is a need for a centralised area to manage consultations as the level of industry consultation is growing. We are actively working on a long-term solution for this.

NEXT STEPS

A major 18-month project to upgrade the ESB Networks website commenced in Q4 2023. It is due to complete in early 2025 and in the meantime, we are working on some short-term fixes to this problem such as streamlining our publications library and improving the search functionality on our website.



9

STAKEHOLDER SAID

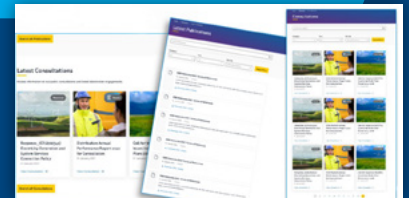
Close out the “one-stop-shop” for consultations on the ESNB website. This should include more specific processes and actions to close the feedback loop with stakeholders on a more regular, specific, and timely basis to show the impact their input has had to ESNB’s plan and activities and explain why other input was not incorporated by ESNB. This was recommended last year but has not been sufficiently addressed.

WE DID

A “one-stop-shop” for consultations on the ESNB website will help clarify how we process and action feedback. A central one stop shop, where we can publish all consultative documentation such as the original consultation, the feedback, and then the response and determination will allow us to close the feedback loop with stakeholders on a more regular, specific, and timely basis.

NEXT STEPS

Our current website doesn’t support this feature, so we are considering this as part of our website upgrade project which kicked off in Q4 2023 and is due to complete Q1 2025.



10

STAKEHOLDER SAID

The DSO should continue the development and roll out of an enduring metrics framework for stakeholders. This could include the broadening out of the stakeholder metrics framework for the NSMP to include Supplier satisfaction with meter functionality and data access in line with direction by the CRU.

WE DID

We have developed our Metrics Framework in response to feedback from our stakeholders who have asked for a clear linkage to be made between our longer-term vision to 2030 and our annual stakeholder engagement plans and the development and roll out of an enduring metrics framework for stakeholders.

NEXT STEPS

We have linked our engagement targets to delivery of our Networks for NetZero Strategy targets. Refer Section 3 - Engagement Metrics Framework 2023



11



STAKEHOLDER SAID

The provision of evidence of Stakeholder feedback being considered across differing teams, and clarity on how the outcomes of the independent surveys undertaken have fed into the strategies.

WE DID

We have been actively demonstrating how feedback is taken on board in our annual engagement reports. We have demonstrated how the Roll out of Customer Clinics, heatmap updates, the new generator cost calculator tool and webinars were direct outcomes of our independent survey. We also show examples of where we could not take on board feedback and why.

NEXT STEPS

We have conducted further surveys and customer lessons learned focus working groups.

We are actively reviewing our key customer journeys, the pain points, and identifying initiatives to improve our processes, systems, roles and responsibilities and communications.

12



STAKEHOLDER SAID

ESBN should provide a summary sheet outlining what actions and achievements have been made against the items outlined in their respective plans to aid the review process and avoid the requirement to search through the entire report to see what activity occurred against the intended actions outlined in ESNB's plan.

WE DID

We appreciate that our annual engagement reports can be quite lengthy and comprehensive as we do want to demonstrate each year the broad depth and reach of our engagement. In previous reports we have provided a number of various types of summaries as shown on this slide. We have summarised our initiatives and shown how we deliver against our stakeholders' priorities.

NEXT STEPS

In this report we have provided a simple Actions and Achievements summary sheet in addition to our 2023 Engagement Metrics Framework. We have also included a Report Purpose & Summary which will help our readers navigate the document more easily and point to the information needed to adequately assess our engagement performance for 2023.



SECTION

2

IMPLEMENTATION Engagement Channels and Initiatives Delivered



Delivering against our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and Plan 2023

In this section we describe how we have delivered against our strategy and plans for 2023 taking into consideration both feedback and delivered actions and outcomes for our stakeholders and business alike.



In December 2022 we published for consultation with our stakeholders 'ESB Networks Stakeholder Engagement Strategy & Plan for 2023. This plan gave a high-level overview of our key areas of engagement focus and, in the appendix, we provided details of key planned engagement initiatives for 2023.

We keep our plans under continual review, to ensure they reflect any required changes throughout the year. In May 2023 we updated the lists of all our planned engagement activities, anticipated for the remainder of the year.

We have also listed these engagement channels as delivered in our appendices.

Appendix 1:

ESB Networks led Consultations delivered in 2023

Appendix 2:

ESB Networks Publications delivered in 2023

Appendix 3:

ESB Networks pathways to Engagement in 2023



The following tables provide a summary of the various engagements we have undertaken in 2023, targeting our customers and stakeholders across the various focus areas that we set out in our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy & Plan for 2023.

AREA	ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<p>NETWORK RESILIENCE</p>  <p>It's vital that we continue to actively engage to ensure continued support and cooperation with the development of our electricity network which is vital for the social and economic development of the country.</p>	<p>Worked collaboratively with the Transmission System Operator, EirGrid throughout 2023 to address the key areas where transformation is needed.</p> <p>Significant engagement to develop a TSO-DSO operating model and its associated high-level design.</p> <p>ESB Networks collaborated extensively with EirGrid throughout 2023 to increase outage availability and maximise their utilization and effectiveness.</p> <p>The system operators have also worked together in coordination as part of the winter 2023 energy crisis as part of the "beat the peak" pilots.</p> <p>Security of Supply Programme of engagement led by the CRU and DECC.</p> <p>In response to the substantial gap in electricity generation for winter peak periods we launched a series of pilots in Winter 2022/2023. The objective of these pilots was to test and learn solutions to mitigate against this challenge, with a view to scaling these initiatives in the subsequent winter periods.</p> <p>We launched three "Beat the Peak Domestic" and two "Beat the Peak Commercial" products and Conservation Voltage Reduction (CVR) which aims to reduce peak electricity demand by supplying the same amount of energy to customers in a longer timeframe.</p> <p>Throughout the execution of the Domestic product "Is This a Good Time? Pilot" a suite of participant research was conducted – general surveys, participant surveys, focus groups, behavioural testing, in pilot tests & direct customer engagement and feedback.</p> <p>Throughout the execution of the commercial products, we held 12 webinars over 10 weeks to support recruitment into the product. We were tracking the customer journey for registered participants and those who didn't sign up to understand commercial customer barriers to participate. We held 4 bilateral and lessoned learned series with key stakeholder across suppliers, demand response industry and large energy users.</p>	<p>The corporation and partnership of the System Operators is detailed in our "DSO/TSO Multi-Year Plan 2024 – 2028," which details the key tasks and milestones that ESBN and EirGrid continue to collaborate on under the following pillars: reducing dispatch down, secure future power system, facilitating new technology and whole of system solutions.</p> <p>Our Joint TSO/DSO Outage Transformation Programme (JOTP) which is now under way, sets out the various interventions focussed on increasing outage availability and maximising their utilization and effectiveness.</p> <p>ESB Networks and EirGrid have successfully worked together to securely plan and deliver our roles as system operators to protect against system alerts.</p> <p>The pilots drove positive impact in customers 'feeling in control' & encouraged efforts to conserve electricity. Awareness of peak hours and the impact of wind have improved during campaign. High Net Promoter Score +30 with 78% scoring the Pilot 7+ and 52% scoring it 9-10.</p> <p>Our "Beat the Peak" initiatives were commended across Europe for the contribution to peak demand reduction measures. Ireland was ranked as one of the first European countries to implement a success peak -shaving product (Is This a Good Time? Pilot) (more here)</p> <p>The pilots generated a comprehensive insight report which has been shared & presented to key stakeholders including but not limited to CRU, SEAI, EirGrid, IBEC, ACER, Energy Suppliers.</p> <p>We have a 92% engagement rate with participants of energy events in the Is This a Good Time? domestic demand side flexibility.</p> <p>The introduction of the Green Energy Messaging system (GEM's) tool to support customers in knowing when there is surplus renewables on the networks was based on understanding the customer barriers to participating in demand side flexibility.</p> <p>Conservation Voltage Reduction (CVR) There was an initial roll-out to 43 transformers in 11 Planner groups, achieving an estimated 8,073 MWh energy savings.</p>

AREA	ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<p>NETWORK RESILIENCE</p>  <p>Engagement and collaboration with all key stakeholders, including our communities, landowners, farmers, and the public, will be key as we maintain the existing network and build out new electrical infrastructure to support the delivery of safer and more resilient network.</p>	<p>Q1: ESB Networks Distribution Outage Programme (DOP) Bilateral meetings and email notifications</p> <p>5th April 2023: Webinar on 'Post Energisation Communications for DSO Connected IPPs' which was well received by the industry. This was followed up with a similar webinar hosted for the renewables energy industry represented by Wind Energy Ireland on April 28th, 2023.</p>	<p>Provided customised outage programme information for 2024 to each HV connected customer.</p> <p>Work ongoing to maximise the alignment of customer, distribution and transmission outages, to the maximum extent practically possible.</p>
	<p>Q1: System Security meetings and webinars with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large Energy Users (who provide Voluntary Demand Reduction (VDR) and Mandatory Demand Curtailment (MDC) services and with customers to whom security of supply is deemed critical. 	<p>This engagement ensured supply was maintained to our critical infrastructure customers such as HSE (hospital's etc.) during system alerts.</p>
	<p>Quarterly meetings of the Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP) Which discusses the set of rules that specifies the technical aspects and relationships between the DSO and all other users.</p>	<p>The Distribution Code is kept under review and updated as required through the Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP) which is coordinated by ESB Networks as the DSO.</p>
	<p>Q3: Consulted on ESB Networks: Distribution Annual Performance Report 2022 & ESB Networks & EirGrid's joint TSO/TAO Investment Planning and Delivery Report 2022 & Performance Report 2022</p>	<p>Sought stakeholder feedback on DSO/TSO/TAO Investment planning, delivery and network performance.</p>
	<p>Engagement with externally led consultations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Action Plan 2024 System Services Connection Policy Call for Evidence Incentivising Time of Use Tariffs, Energy Demand Strategy Large Energy Users Connection Policy Proximity Limits for Renewable Energy Communities Smart Meter Data Access Code Decision: Private Wires Clean Export Guarantee EV National Enroute Network Plan Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios Electricity Storage Framework Policy Cybersecurity Strategy Mid Term review 	<p>ESB Networks issued formal responses to 15 externally led stakeholder consultations in 2023. Submitted a comprehensive response to DECC, CRU & EirGrid led consultations providing a constructive basis for further engagement with all stakeholders going forward.</p>
	<p>'Electricity Distribution Network Capacity Pathways, Consultation Report' launched in December 2023 link here. Distribution network capacity plays a critical role in enabling and empowering all our customers to decarbonise their energy consumption as we deliver the electricity network for Ireland's clean electric future.</p>	<p>Stakeholder feedback will be used to guide the pathways; we explore to add distribution network capacity to the electricity system. We also continue to engage with EirGrid as they review feedback on their consultation 'Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios'. This ongoing close coordination of the Distribution System Operation (DSO) and Transmission System Operator (TSO) activities remain vital to securing a net zero ready electricity network.</p>

AREA	ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<p>SAFETY & THE ENVIRONMENT</p>  <p>We have a societal role to play in protecting the safety, health and welfare of our employees, contractors, customers, members of the public and the environment.</p>	<p>Safety Construction Safety Partnership Advisory Committee quarterly meetings January, April, July 2023.</p>	<p>Promoted best practice of electricity safety in construction.</p>
	<p>Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee & Coillte quarterly engagement meetings. January, March, May, June, July 2023.</p> <p>The initiative, which continues the longstanding history of both organisations working closely together, was rolled out to all forestry contractors working on Coillte sites across the country to enhance the safety of personnel working near overhead and underground powerlines. The programme represented a new and innovative approach, easily accessible to contractors, which was developed by both organisations.</p>	<p>Promoted best practice of electricity safety in farming.</p> <p>ESB Networks has collaborated with Coillte to produce a new electrical safety e-learning module for forestry contractors.</p> <p>ESB Networks and Coillte completed a partnership to collaborate on a new electrical safety learning module for forestry contractors. The e-learning module covered the key risks and controls to be followed in forestry settings where electricity infrastructure is nearby.</p>
	<p>October/November: Construction Safety Week.</p> <p>Shared safety best practice and learnings across construction utility forums.</p> <p>Delivered a webinar on avoiding dangers from electricity which went to out to a wide range of stakeholders.</p> <p>ESB Networks were represented at the annual Construction Industry Federation (CIF).</p>	<p>Produced an electrical safety presentation and associated pack which covered construction electrical safety hazards and risks applicable to overhead and underground networks. This engagement served to raise awareness across a wide range of construction stakeholders.</p> <p>Through direct face to face engagement at industry conferences we can offer safety support and guidance to construction organisations and their contractors.</p>
	<p>Local Authorities plus Office of Public Works (OPW)</p> <p>Delivered safety talks to multiple local bodies during 2023 on key electrical safety hazards when conducting all types of local authority work programmes.</p>	<p>Proactively raising awareness of electrical safety risks and considerations of seasonal activities such as hedge cutting, road resurfacing works, and waterway dredging.</p>
	<p>Emergency Service / First Responders</p> <p>Delivered a presentation at the Senior Fire Officer Conference September 2023. This awareness included briefings for the national fire officer development program.</p> <p>Briefed An Garda Síochána Safety Reps as part of electrical safety awareness initiative in November 2023.</p>	<p>Raising awareness associated with the hazard of electricity when responding to emergency scenarios.</p>
	<p>Fluid Filled Cables replacement.</p> <p>As part of our Networks for Net Zero Strategy ESB Networks plans to replace all legacy fluid filled cables (installed between 1950 & 1989) by 2035. These cables can leak, often as a result of age or third-party damage. The majority of ESB Networks' fluid filled cables are in Dublin city. In an initiative to minimise disruption to citizens, ESB Networks engages with other utilities and local authorities to identify optimum solutions which will reduce the impact of these essential works.</p> <p>To ensure transparency, relevant information relating to fluid filled cables, associated leaks and environmental assessments are presented on our website. (Link here)</p>	<p>This engagement is successfully enabling ESB Networks to deliver a number of key collaborative projects involving advance ducting installation, Some examples include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance ducting installation along the Royal Canal Greenway which is facilitating a future 220kV future fluid filled cable replacement. • Advance ducting installation for Dublin Port Company (Precinct Road). • Advance ducting installation along the Dodder Greenway.
	<p>Q2 2023: Published ESB Networks Environmental Performance Report 2022.</p>	<p>Provided a status update of ESN's environmental performance for 2022, in accordance with the requirements of our DSO and TAO licences.</p>

AREA	ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<p>CONNECTING RENEWABLES</p>  <p>Our commitment to supporting climate action through renewable electricity requires extensive engagement and collaboration with the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), the Transmission System Operator (EirGrid), industry and government departments to ensure we deliver on our renewable connection targets</p>	<p>Enduring Connection Policy ECP Customer Engagement. As part of the ECP2.3 connection offer process, ESB Networks carried out over 80 customer engagement meetings between phase 1 and phase 2 connection method meetings.</p>	<p>Customer engagement meetings give customers an overview of the connection methods studied and the option to optimise their project to avoid network reinforcements. As part of the connection offer process, projects are scoped under the lean process which gives more certainty on cost and shortens the overall time to connect.</p>
	<p>Weekly engagement with small scale generation customer representatives to share learnings.</p>	<p>Further enhancing connections process for all small-scale generation based on customer/ stakeholder feedback.</p>
	<p>Strategic level quarterly meetings with renewable energy industry representative bodies, on a range of topics including.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enduring Connection Policy Updates • Energisation of projects • Pipeline Projects • Optimising Outage Utilisation. 	<p>Collaborating with industry to inform and improve our renewable connection performance delivery. For example, through collaboration we have introduced an interim second stage payment option for generation customers to enable early ordering of long lead time materials. We have adopted a hard stance on connection agreement long stop dates and terminating contracted network capacity to enable shovel ready projects proceed.</p>
	<p>Renewable Hubs industry engagement ESB Networks identified 'Renewable Hubs' in its "Networks for Net Zero" strategy as an initiative with strong potential to be one of the key enablers for connecting renewable projects at the pace and scale required for Ireland to meet its decarbonisation targets.</p> <p>April/May/June 2023: ESB Networks along with EirGrid engaged with CRU, and industry stakeholders to develop a joint proposal to commence a pilot of "Renewable Hubs".</p>	<p>Received positive decision from the CRU on Renewable Hubs proposal which will enable advance build of network capacity in areas where there is a pipeline of renewable projects and includes per MVA charging for capacity utilized.</p> <p>Five locations identified as part of ECP2.3 with scope for additional sites in ECP2.4.</p> <p>The 'build once' concept of Renewable Hubs will minimise future design, procurement, outages and construction works. Renewable Hubs may also provide local capacity for smaller scale generation, such as microgeneration, mini-generation, and community-led energy projects and may also cater for increased loads due to the electrification of heat, transport, and industry.</p>
	<p>July 2023: Customer Webinars August 2023: Customer Clinics</p> <p>In 2023 we enabled early engagement with renewable developers delivering 17 customer clinics covering 21 projects & 35 connection methods in advance of ECP2.4 window opening. We also ran an information webinar which included a session on how to use the new "Minimum Cost Calculator website tool" for Generator Connections. This new tool gives a detailed breakdown of costs before customer makes application.</p>	<p>The customer clinics were successful in that they allowed our customers get a free initial assessment of potential grid connection options, allowing the project to make the decision to participate in the Enduring Connection Policy ECP process or delay making an application until more capacity becomes available. This customer information will also help us identify potential locations of renewable hubs and create additional capacity to enable an increase in renewables connecting to the distribution network.</p>
	<p>Teams from across ESB Networks engage with stakeholders at a series of high-profile renewable energy conferences (Energy Storage Summit, Wind Energy Trade Show, Irish Solar Energy Annual Conference, and the Irish Wind Farmers Association Annual Conference, EV Summit 2023).</p>	<p>We have improved physical face to face communications this year, by ensuring we are present at our stakeholders' events to answer questions and provide necessary support. We have had ESB Networks engagement initiatives and stands at a huge range of conferences, trade shows and events throughout the year all represented by various subject Matter experts from across ESB Networks.</p>

AREA	ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<p>INNOVATION & ELECTRIFICATION</p>  <p>A key enabler of our strategy is to continuously innovate towards a sustainable low carbon energy future for our customers.</p> <p>We will enable and empower our customers to electrify through extensive engagement and collaboration with government and policy makers, industry, electricity supply companies, customers, and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>February 2023: Annual Innovation Consultation to share information and garner feedback on ESB Networks' innovation strategy, projects and activities. Link here</p>	<p>Our annual innovation consultation is an important opportunity for us to ask our stakeholders for their views on our innovation activities and areas of focus. To ensure full transparency and close the feedback loop we published ESB Networks response to feedback received on the Innovation Consultation Link here</p>
	<p>May 2023: "Free Electrons Utilities workshop" Teams from ESB Networks hosted a productive workshop with some of the international electricity network operators, including China Light & Power, Hydro Québec and EDP, considering issues of mutual interest such as network resilience and delivering capacity improvements using new technologies, all focusing on the delivery of a clean electric future.</p>	<p>The workshop was a remarkable success and a useful opportunity to engage with other DSOs, share challenges, and benchmark ESB Networks' innovative solutions against theirs, while building lasting associations and connections. A number of specific solutions in use in other jurisdictions.</p>
	<p>April 2023, ESB Network's Electrification Strategy Manager, Dan Catanase, presented a keynote and engaged with stakeholders on the 'Electrification of Heat' at the recent Institute of Refrigeration National Conference which focused on E-Heat, Decarbonisation and Net Zero.</p>	<p>Positive engagement to understand this emergent sector with their evolving needs as they transition to decarbonizing their industrial loads.</p>
	<p>Extensive engagement to develop a New Connection Screening Service for Electric Vehicle recharging infrastructure developers. In total 262 site screening requests received to the end of 2023. All responses issued to customers.</p>	<p>The process is highlighting a need for electricity network reinforcements to be able to accommodate the required future public EV recharging infrastructure and is also showing the scale of growth that is happening in this area.</p>
	<p>Electrification of Transport Senior management from ESB Networks initiated a series of strategic engagements with key customers, specifically Dublin Bus and Bus Eireann. These discussions were aimed at understanding and addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by these transport providers as they transition to electric fleets.</p> <p>March 2023: A customer webinar was organised through ZEVI for Charge Point Operators to introduce the connection screening process for public charging infrastructure and provide clarifications on the process.</p>	<p>The dialogue with Dublin Bus and Bus Eireann yielded significant insights into the critical importance of network reliability for the success of their electrification efforts. ESB Networks recognised the urgent need for a reliable electricity supply tailored to the specific recharging requirements of electric buses. These requirements are particularly challenging due to the stringent timeframes within which the recharging solutions need to be implemented to ensure operational efficiency and continuity for the bus services.</p>
	<p>A working group was stood up in 2023 to explore the feasibility, impact, and potential benefits of "Timed Connections" (connection arrangements where connection capacity is subject to restrictions within specific time periods).</p> <p>Engaged with UK DNO's to gain valuable best practice insights into their "Timed Connection" projects to understand potential implementation strategies and commercial policy considerations.</p> <p>Engaged with a broad range of industry experts and stakeholders from various sectors via our cross-industry Innovation Stakeholder Panel.</p> <p>Our Innovation webinar in November 2023 provided invaluable feedback in understanding how "Timed Connections" could be adapted and applied across different sectors, ensuring the programme's broader applicability and impact.</p> <p>Engaged with the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) to discuss benefits and feasibility of a Timed Connections Pilot and to align proposals with regulatory standards and expectations.</p>	<p>ESB Networks prepared an expression of interest (EOI) for a Timed Connections pilot. (a time constrained demand connection and that it would be an interim solution until necessary network reinforcement works can be completed to provide the customer with their contracted MIC on a 24-hour basis).</p> <p>The extensive engagement with industry and stakeholders both in Ireland and in other jurisdictions has provided a comprehensive understanding of best practice, potential challenges, and effective solutions of "Timed Connections".</p> <p>We gained invaluable feedback and suggestions, contributing significantly to the refinement of the project's scope and a greater understanding of how the proposed solutions could be adapted and applied across different sectors, ensuring the programme's broader applicability and impact.</p> <p>Engagement has been instrumental in ensuring that the pilot programme is both feasible and effective in addressing the specific needs of customers and the broader goals of network reliability and efficiency.</p>

AREA	ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<p>THE NATIONAL SMART METERING PROGRAMME</p>  <p>The upgrade to smart meters will bring many benefits to customers, the environment, and the economy, and is a key enabler of the Government's Climate Action Plan, specifically regarding microgeneration and the electrification of heat and transport.</p>	<p>One-to-one engagement sessions with industry participants to support the further rollout of the programme. Monthly Industry engagement via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry Liaison Group (ILG) • Communications and Engagement Working Group (CEWG) and the • Smart meter technical working group. <p>ESB Networks extended the rollout in 2023 to include Day/Night meter upgrades. To support these new meter types, ESB Networks developed a customer communications programme in collaboration with the CRU and electricity suppliers. Customer messaging was agreed, and incorporated in customer letters, FAQs online and social media content, which informed Day/Night customers that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the upgrade is a like-for-like exchange (i.e., there is NO change to the customer's existing electricity tariff) • the new meter facilitates access to enhanced smart meter benefits, including access to usage data via Online Account • access to smart services (e.g. time of use tariffs) <p>Customer engagement (area by area in advance of local deployment). Each customer whose meter is scheduled for an exchange receives two letters in advance. We respond to individual customer enquiries via letters and information booklets. We also continued our Quarterly Smart Metering customer awareness surveys as well as monthly satisfaction trackers.</p> <p>Public and stakeholder awareness targeted media campaigns were supported by updates on our website. A suite of advertorials uploaded on website to mark the programme's progress, such as, key installation milestones, the introduction of the Online Account and the commencement of Day/Night meter upgrades. Briefings on programme provided to national and local elected representatives and other key stakeholders.</p>	<p>Maintained successful working relationships and engagement with all regulatory authorities and market participants (DECC, CRU, SEAI & suppliers) to support the programme's progress and to ensure industry alignment on comms.</p> <p>The industry engagement and collaboration took place over several months through the smart metering programme's Communications and Engagement Working Group (CEWG). The focus of the engagement was to ensure that stakeholders were collectively providing customers with clear, consistent, and adequate information so as to gain their acceptance and buy in of the meter exchange. A critical factor in our communications was to ensure that customers understood that the meter exchange was only a technology upgrade, a like-for-like exchange, without any change to their existing tariff arrangements. However, the new meter/technology does enable customers to have more informed discussions with their suppliers about a wider range of tariff options.) This approach has led to positive customer engagement and take up of the upgraded Day/Night meter. As a result, we are on track to complete this phase of the roll out within the agreed timeline.</p> <p>The rollout of smart meters has continued during 2023, reaching a significant milestone of 1.5 million smart meters installed across the country in November 2023. This includes 100,000 new homes also connected to the electricity network.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction with the programme continues to remain high at 96%.</p> <p>Creating awareness of the programme and its benefits to encourage take up. Key stakeholders are aware and understand and support the programme role out and implementation plans.</p>

AREA	ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<p>THE NATIONAL NETWORK, LOCAL CONNECTIONS PROGRAMME</p>  <p>When the National Network, Local Connections programme was stood up we acknowledged that to deliver an inclusive network to support the people of Ireland it would require a whole of energy industry approach. We published a consultation framework to underpin this ambition Link here</p>	<p>Throughout the delivery of pilots and propositions we ensured stakeholder representation on the programme via our Advisory Council and by identifying and engaging with key stakeholders to support the design of propositions.</p> <p>In 2023 we collaborated & presented at 18 conferences, hosted 18 webinars, delivered 5 roundtables, collaborated via 71 bi-lateral stakeholder meetings. Three external Advisory Council meetings in 2023, all meeting presentations and minutes are published for transparency.</p> <p>We published four Calls for Input to consultations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scenarios for 15-20% Flexible System Demand as part of CRU's National Energy Demand Strategy. 2. Behind The Meter Distributed Energy Resources Architecture and associated round table held in December 2023 3. Flexibility Multi-year Delivery Plans Call for Input on DSO PR5 Incentives Multi-Year Plans 2024-2028 (esbnetworks.ie) <p>To facilitate the collection of feedback and enhance engagement, we created a dedicated webpage which included an overview of each of the 5 strategic proposals which required stakeholder input and included a short video to help guide stakeholders in responding to the consultation. Link Here Approximately 100 points of stakeholder feedback were analysed and responded to.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Demand Flexibility Product Proposal <p>Flexible Access to the Distribution System for Renewable Generation</p> <p>We engaged to deliver a pilot providing flexible access to capacity on the distribution system for renewable generators.</p> <p>Partnered with TSO to support 11 EirGrid Energy Citizen Roadshows</p> <p>Throughout 2023 ESB Networks' NNLCP and Smart Metering teams were delighted to attend EirGrid Group's Energy Citizens' Roadshow across the country. We attended along with partners Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).</p>	<p>We continue to realise and appreciate the contribution and external insights that stakeholders & customers make to inform the strategy & direction for the delivery of the National Network, Local Connections Programme. This ongoing collaboration is supporting the rollout of new products & services across the areas of security of supply products, 15-20% flexibility propositions & pilots.</p> <p>It was acknowledged over the course of the year that there were areas not represented on the council, in particular in energy storage and supplier representation so this has been actioned.</p> <p>Engagement in 2023 also identified the need for an industry blueprint for the developments needed to drive and enable flexible demand and smart energy services across all relevant markets over the coming decade. The purpose of the blueprint will be to set out a long-term view of the products and services which will be available to customers in the retail market, flexibility markets and potentially pre-market domains. Phased versions of the blueprint (for 2024-2026, 2026-2028, 2028-2030 and 2030-2033) will provide a roadmap against which progress can be measured.</p> <p>In response to feedback, we are also proposing to provide line of sight to the market on an ongoing basis into the future of the locations, volumes and types of flexibility needed through the publication of a "Flexibility Needs Statement".</p> <p>There will also be a core focus in our Blueprint on the relationship between and product transitions between flexibility market and retail market development.</p> <p>This flexible access pilot has enabled 4 flexible connection offers to be made facilitating 34.35MW of firm capacity and 5.45MW of flexible capacity. The first of these connections is estimated to be made in August 2024.</p> <p>The events informed local communities of plans to future-proof the electricity network, as well as providing information on microgeneration, home energy upgrades retrofitting grants, and how to use smart meter data to enable better energy use.</p> <p>February: Naas & Maynooth (158 attendees) May: Meath & Mayo (174 attendees) June: Cork (39 attendees) September: Galway (148 attendees) October: Kilkenny & Laois (80 attendees) November: Monaghan & Cavan (248 attendees)</p>

AREA	ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<p>CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE</p>  <p>As a critical service provider of electricity, we're driven to deliver a best-in-class service to all our 2.5 million customers, nationwide. Digital is a key enabler, helping to streamline customer journeys, grow our suite of self-serve digital platforms and make every interaction as simple and as convenient as possible for our customers.</p>	<p>Commenced our customer transformation programme to embrace the use of digital technology and online contact channels to improve customer choice and service performance. 5 Workstreams</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Customer Improvement Plans 2. CX Digital Transformation 3. Customer Field Force Management 4. Embedding Customer Centricity 5. New Brand Positioning 	<p>We've enhanced our customer research and insights capability to understand changing customer needs and to drive continuous improvements across the organisation.</p> <p>Improved communications on customer connections journey.</p> <p>Defined a Customer Framework, Promise and 8 key principles.</p> <p>Commenced a major 18-month upgrade project to enhance ESB Networks website and to address a number of customer and stakeholder pain points.</p>
	<p>Engagement with Housing related Stakeholders</p> <p>ESB Networks is supporting the "Housing for All" Government Initiative which plans to ensure 300,000 new social, affordable, cost rental and private homes are built by 2030.</p>	<p>Ensuring the timely cost-efficient connection of new housing developments through enhanced communication and engagement with all relevant stakeholders including DECC, CRU and front-line construction organisations.</p> <p>Approximately 5% increase in the total number of housing connections completed in 2023, versus 2022.</p>
	<p>Completed key stakeholder/customer group independent research:</p> <p>Completed the 'Market Participant Survey 2023' by independently surveying all Suppliers in the Rol Retail Energy Market to understand how Retail Market Services (RMS) can better deliver our service with the market.</p> <p>Completed the 'Renewable Energy Industry Survey 2023' to explore the industry's, wants expectations and experience of our services as the Distribution System Operator (DSO). The survey also explored specific aspects related to the customer experience of their generator connection project lifecycle (from the initial application for connection to the distribution network, to project delivery and ongoing engagement on day-to-day operational issues).</p>	<p>The output of the surveys is to identify overall improvements needed which will drive our 2024 strategy and engagement planning process which will bring additional focus to our performance and value to your organisation. The 'Market Participant Survey 2023'. Highlights of the survey results include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% satisfaction with ESB Network's planning of market changes. • 100% satisfaction with ESB Network's implementation of market changes • 90% satisfaction with our interaction with Suppliers • 80% satisfaction with ESB Network's operational delivery <p>'Renewable Energy Industry Survey 2023' Highlights of the survey results include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45% of those surveyed are satisfied with their relationship with ESB Networks over the past 18-24 months, this is stable since 2021. • 75 % believe ESB Networks has adapted and improved its engagement with my organisation over the last 18-24 months. • 50% Satisfaction with the DSO ECP application process

Engagement Highlights 2023

We have increased our engagement activities more than ever before, recognising the importance of stakeholders' contributions to the successful delivery of our business planning and ensuring it aligns with the needs of our customers and stakeholders in an ever-changing landscape.

Here we provide a selection of engagement stories from 2023 to demonstrate the broad range and vast reach of our engagement activity across the country.

JAN

2023

Stakeholders participate at the 'Networks for Net Zero' Strategy launch

In January 2023 ESB Networks launched its 'Networks for Net Zero' Strategy which outlines its commitment to futureproofing Ireland's electricity network and making the country's goal of net zero by 2050 a reality. Our strategy acknowledges that in the decade ahead, all electricity customers will adopt new technologies, products and services changing how they generate, store, and consume electricity. This will require deploying innovative solutions today which are scalable to meet the electricity needs of the nation by 2040.

Nicholas Tarrant, Managing Director, ESB Networks was joined by Minister Eamon Ryan, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and Transport, along with Professor John FitzGerald, Adjunct Professor, Trinity College Dublin, Aoife O'Grady, Head of Zero Emission Vehicles, (ZEV), Department of Transport, Conall Bolger, Chief Executive Officer, Irish Solar Energy Association (ISEA), Noel Cunniffe, Chief Executive Officer, Wind Energy Ireland (WEI), Joe

As part our 'Networks for Net Zero' strategy launch, our stakeholder panel discussed the opportunities and challenges of futureproofing Ireland's electricity network and making the country's goal of net zero by 2050 a reality.



FEB
2023

ESB Networks engage with industry to share ideas, provide feedback on our innovation activities, and on how we can collaborate further to deliver the electricity network to support a clean electric future together.

We listen to and work with our partners and stakeholders to develop innovative solutions to ensure the network is smart, flexible, resilient, safe and adaptive to support our customers adopting low carbon technologies and deliver the connection of renewable generation at scale. In support of the Government's Climate Action Plan, we have developed our innovation strategy and portfolio of innovation projects across our 3 innovation pillars of future customer, climate action and network resilience. Our annual innovation consultation is an important opportunity for us to ask our stakeholders for their views on our innovation activities and areas of focus.



FEB
2023

DSO/TSO collaborate to support 11 EirGrid Energy Citizen Roadshows

Throughout 2023 ESB Networks' National Network, Local Connections Programme and Smart Metering Team were delighted to attend EirGrid Group's Energy Citizens' Roadshow across the country. The events aim to inform local communities of plans to future-proof the electricity network, as well as providing information on microgeneration, smart metering, home energy upgrades and retrofitting grants. We attended along with partners Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).



MAR

2023

Our stakeholder newsletter received a design refresh in line with our Networks for Net Zero strategy.

Our newsletter provides our stakeholders with key strategic updates from across our business. It captures project delivery highlights and key milestones from our large-scale programmes of work such as our National Networks Local Connections and Smart Metering Roll-out Programmes.

The newsletter issues quarterly to our strategic stakeholders and is growing from strength to strength. In response to feedback we have also commenced sharing our newsletter on our website [LINK to Our Stakeholder Newsletter on website.](#)



APR

2023

'Electrification of Heat' discussed with stakeholders at the Institute of Refrigeration's National Conference centering around E-Heat: Decarbonisation and Net Zero.

ESB Network's Electrification Strategy Manager, Dan Catanase, presented a keynote and engaged with stakeholders on the 'Electrification of Heat' at the recent Institute of Refrigeration National Conference which focused on E-Heat, Decarbonisation and Net Zero. ESB Networks will work to put in place solutions for our customers to enable the electrification of heat and transport and empower our customers to live low carbon lives in Ireland's clean electric future.

Electricity is essential for sustainable, social, and economic development and renewable electricity and electrification are cornerstones of Ireland's Climate Action Plan. As we acknowledge the central role that electricity plays in climate action, ESB Networks' purpose has evolved to deliver a clean electric future by connecting high levels of renewable generation so that clean energy can drive the carbon out of heat, transport, and our economy.



MAY

2023

ESB Networks hosted this year's ENA Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Management Conference in partnership with the Energy Networks Association (ENA) and wider utility industry.

ESB Networks hosted this year's ENA Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Management Conference in partnership with the Energy Networks Association (ENA) and wider utility industry, in Croke Park. ESB Networks is committed to creating and embedding a positive, proactive, and engaging organisational culture where Safety, Health and the Environment is at the centre of everything we do. The core theme of this year's conference was 'Organisational Culture in the Utility Sector' with the event focusing on how to develop and grow those aspects of Safety, Health, and Environment culture needed to support the industry's pursuit of continuous improvement and its wider Net Zero ambitions. The attendees, which included industry & business leaders, culture transformation experts, and SHE professionals, all contributed to several thought-provoking sessions with plenty of takeaways for all.



MAY

2023

May 2023: Free Electrons Utilities hosted by Innovation team.

ESB Networks welcomed start-up companies from all over the world to Dublin, in partnership with 6 other utilities for the Free Electron Program bootcamp week. Free Electrons is the world's largest open innovation program focused on bringing disruptive energy innovations to life.

Teams from ESB Networks hosted a productive workshop with some of the international electricity network operators, including China Light & Power, Hydro Québec and EDP, considering issues of mutual interest such as network resilience and delivering capacity improvements using new technologies, all focusing on the delivery of a clean electric future.

The workshop was a remarkable success and a useful opportunity to engage with other DSOs, share challenges, and benchmark ESB Networks' innovative solutions against theirs, while building lasting networks and connections.



JUN

2023

ESB Networks in partnership with EirGrid host a workshop to collaborate with wider industry stakeholders on a joint proposal to commence a pilot of “Renewable Hubs”.

ESB Networks identified ‘Renewable Hubs’ in its “Networks for Net Zero” strategy as an initiative with strong potential to be one of the key enablers for connecting renewable projects at the pace and scale required for Ireland to meet its decarbonisation targets.

There was extensive Industry engagement which played a major part in the successful approval of the Renewable Hubs proposal by the CRU. In June 2023 ESB Networks in partnership with EirGrid hosted a workshop to collaborate with wider industry stakeholders to develop the proposal. Through this collaboration we were able to identify the optimum hub locations based on the pipeline of renewable projects provided by industry representatives.

The ‘build once’ concept of Renewable Hubs will minimise future design, procurement, outages and construction works. Renewable Hubs may also provide local capacity for smaller scale generation, such as microgeneration, mini-generation, and community-led energy projects and may also cater for increased loads due to the electrification of heat, transport, and industry.



Renewable Hubs will be advance-build electricity infrastructure, located in areas where there is a known pipeline of renewable projects supporting increased levels of wind, solar, and batteries.

JULY

2023

To celebrate the launch of our new Networks for Net Zero Strategy our Managing Director, Nicholas Tarrant was interviewed by Energy Ireland about ESB Networks central role in the energy transition.

Energy Ireland publishes the annual Renewable Energy Magazine, which is produced in association with Eolas and agendaNi magazines and circulated extensively to key stakeholders and decision-makers in the renewable, and broader energy and policy sectors, north and south. To celebrate the launch of our new Networks for Net Zero Strategy our Managing Director, Nicholas Tarrant was interviewed at the ESB Networks Control Room in Leopardstown by Editor David Whelan about our central role in the energy transition.

Nicholas discussed how the new Networks for Net Zero strategy sets out ESB Networks' role in enabling the delivery of CAP23 and supports the decarbonisation of electricity by 2040, key to the achievement of Ireland's net zero ambition no later than 2050.



AUG

2023

ESB Networks had a fantastic day at the Bonniconlon Agricultural Show near Ballina in Co Mayo.

Once again, we attended the Bonniconlon annual agricultural show to spread our Public Safety Message under the main theme of "Electrical safety in Agriculture". Our local safety team were on hand throughout the day (August Bank Holiday 7th August) to advise and answer any questions and meeting and greeting our customers and stakeholders. We were delighted to have the support of the following teams at this year's show; ESB Networks Smart Metering team, Microgeneration connections team, Fleet & Equipment and representatives from the ESB National Training Centre.



SEP

2023

Senior representatives from ESB Networks participated in the Energy Transition Summit and discussed the roll out of Networks for Net Zero Strategy.

Teams from ESB Networks participated at the Energy Transition Summit 2023 in Croke Park. Representatives from the National Network, Local Connections Programme, Smart Metering, Electrification, Innovation and Renewables teams engaged with stakeholders and attendees about upcoming projects as part of our Networks for Net Zero Strategy. In addition, Joe Duignan, Regulation & Commercial Manager at ESB Networks joined a panel on 'Scaling up on Renewables' and discussed our commitment to deliver the electricity network of the future with host Ivan Yates. Dr. Ellen Diskin, National Network, Local Connections Programme Manager at ESB Networks delivered a keynote on empowering customers on the journey to net zero.



OCT

2023

Teams from across ESB Networks engage with stakeholders at a series of high-profile renewable energy conferences (Energy Storage Summit, Wind Energy Trade Show, Irish Solar Energy Annual Conference, and the Irish Wind Farmers Association Annual Conference, EV Summit 2023).

Engaging with our stakeholders is a key component of our ongoing programme of work. We have improved physical face to face communications this year, by ensuring we are present at our stakeholders' events to answer questions and provide necessary support. We have had ESB Networks engagement initiatives and stands at a huge range of conferences, trade shows and events throughout the year all represented by various subject Matter experts from across ESB Networks.

An engagement process of capturing all interactions at our stand saw us feedback key themes to internal audiences through post event debriefs. The overall response on the ground was positive, and many conversations were had with stakeholders and industry representatives on the transition to net zero powered by clean energy.



NOV

2023

Contractor Partners Conference

Teams from ESB Networks met in person with our key partners from across the electricity construction industry to strengthen our partnerships and roadmap how we will collaborate to provide resilient infrastructure to allow for a reliable low carbon electricity system of the future. We were also joined by Conor McEvoy from the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) which was a valuable addition to the conversations on the day. Strengthening our partnerships is of key strategic significance as we continue to safely deliver ESB Networks' ambitious work programmes on our collective path towards achieving Net Zero.



NOV

2023

ESB Networks' crews travelled to France recently to assist their French counterparts with electricity restoration efforts.

High winds associated with the storm caused over 1.2m homes to lose electricity on the night of Wednesday, 1 November. Tens of thousands of electricity customers, predominantly in the regions of Brittany and Normandy, were still without power up until Saturday, November 4th.

There is longstanding cooperation in place with electricity network operators in Ireland, the UK and France in providing such support.

Mutual support is important after major storms and assisting other companies is an important part of our culture.



SECTION

3

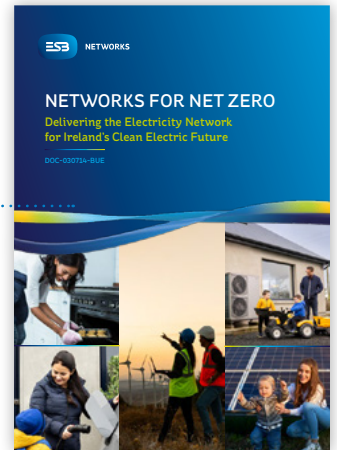
EFFECTIVENESS Engagement Metrics



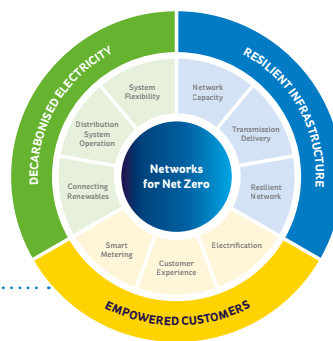
Introduction

The focus of our engagement in 2023 was to support the delivery of our Networks for Net Zero Strategy, which is framed by the government's Climate Action Plan.

Our Networks for Net Zero Strategy outlines ESB Networks' role in facilitating the implementation of the Irish government's Climate Action Plan 2023, with a view to achieving Ireland's net zero target by 2050. The Strategy aims to develop a flexible and intelligent digital electricity network that will serve as a foundation for a clean electric future in Ireland by 2040.



We have identified three strategic objectives, which are core to delivery of our strategy and upon which we are focussing our engagement efforts, responsive to the needs of government, the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities, and our customers at a time of huge change in our industry.



In this section, we describe the effectiveness of our engagement strategy in terms of how it helped support the delivery of our Networks for Net Zero Strategy in 2023.

We have developed our engagement metrics framework in response to feedback from our stakeholders who have asked for:

- a clear linkage to be made between our longer-term vision to 2030 and our annual stakeholder engagement plans, and
- the development and roll out of an enduring metrics framework for stakeholders.

Our engagement framework is presented in terms of our three strategic objectives: **Decarbonised Electricity**, **Resilient Infrastructure**, and **Empowered Customers**, and for each focus area it captures our 2023 high level engagement objectives, delivered engagements, and the effectiveness measured in terms of successful outcomes.





OUR ENGAGEMENT METRICS FRAMEWORK 2023 DECARBONISED ELECTRICITY

FOCUS AREA: CONNECTING RENEWABLES

OUR NET ZERO TARGETS 2023	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	DELIVERED ENGAGEMENTS	SUCCESS OUTCOME /METRIC
<p>Develop a policy proposal to launch renewable hub substations pilots with the objective of embedding into our 'Build Once for 2040' concept.</p>	<p>Increase certainty for industry on the availability of network capacity when developing renewable projects. Once a Renewable Hub is developed, subsequent customers will be able to connect faster utilising the available capacity.</p>	<p>Renewable Hub Workshops held in April - June. ESB Networks along with EirGrid engaged with CRU, and industry stakeholders to develop a proposal. Received positive decision from CRU on Renewable Hubs proposal which will enable advance build of network capacity in areas where pipeline of renewable projects and includes per MVA charging for capacity utilized.</p>	<p>Positive decision from CRU in November on Renewable Hubs proposal; 5 Renewable Hub locations approved as part of ECP2.3 (Butlerstown, Trien, Mullingar, Ennis, Killeel). Scope for additional sites in ECP2.4.</p>
<p>Progress the transition of Mini/SSG pilots to Business as Usual</p>	<p>Engage with customers, CRU, DECC and other stakeholder to successfully progress the transition of the Mini & Small-Scale Generation connection processes from Pilot Phase to Enduring Process.</p>	<p>ESB Networks is supporting the connection of renewable energy across the electricity transmission network and at all voltages on the distribution network. As of the end of 2023 over 79,000 Microgeneration connections have been registered by ESB Networks. We are now processing over 700 per week.</p>	<p>Successfully transitioning Mini & Small-Scale Generation connection processes from Pilot Phase to Enduring Process. By the end of 2023 a total of 570 customers have successfully completed the installation of their generators and in total we have received over 2,000 applications, representing over 76 MW of generator connections, most of which will be completing their installations in 2024.</p>
<p>Continue to connect renewable generation customers to our networks in a safe, timely, and cost-effective manner to meet the 2030 CAP23 renewable targets and any revised targets for 2025.</p>	<p>Actively engage with Customers and Stakeholders to ensure processes are understood and developed to enable achievement of CAP deliverables</p>	<p>Continued 3-way, EirGrid, Customer and ESB Networks meetings and quarterly engagement with key industry bodies, WEI, ISEA, ESI to ensure processes are understood and developed to enable achievement of CAP deliverables.</p> <p>Pilots run under>NNLCP to deliver Flexible Access to the Distribution System for Renewable Generation has enabled 4 flexible connection offers to be made in 2023 facilitating 34.35 MW of firm capacity and 5.45 MW of flexible capacity. The first of these connections is estimated to be made in August 2024.</p>	<p>2023 Delivered Renewables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 412 MW Energised • 16 Projects delivered • 191 MW Wind • 221 MW Solar • 105 MW of battery energy storage (2 additional projects) <p>Developed and published on ESB Networks' website Generator minimum Cost Calculator. The calculator is part of a suite of tools that empowers customers to have a better understanding as to what would be the minimum cost for the generation project they wish to develop on their site.</p>



OUR ENGAGEMENT METRICS FRAMEWORK 2023 DECARBONISED ELECTRICITY

FOCUS AREA: DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM OPERATION

OUR NET ZERO TARGETS 2023	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	DELIVERED ENGAGEMENTS	SUCCESS OUTCOME /METRIC
<p>Coordinate with the TSO and the wholesale market in a new TSO/DSO operating model.</p>	<p>The Joint System Operator Programme (JSOP) was established to ensure that the system operators are working together in a collaborative and effective manner to jointly address electricity system needs and deliver whole system solutions.</p>	<p>Significant work has been delivered by EirGrid and ESB Networks to jointly develop a TSO-DSO operating model high-level design. Wider industry engagement on this operating model will commence in 2024. The system operators have also worked together in coordination as part of the winter 2023 energy crisis as part of the “beat the peak” pilots. We also have worked together to securely plan and deliver our roles as system operators to protect against system alert.</p>	<p>In August 2023, ESB Networks and EirGrid published a joint Call for Input on the DSO/TSO Multiyear Plan 2024 – 2028. The purpose of the Call for Input was to give stakeholders an opportunity to provide input and feedback on planned activities. 19 points of stakeholder feedback were received, responded to and published in the DSO/TSO Multiyear Plan 2024 – 2028.</p>

FOCUS AREA: SYSTEM FLEXIBILITY

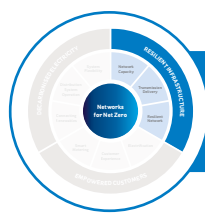
OUR NET ZERO TARGETS 2023	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	DELIVERED ENGAGEMENTS	SUCCESS OUTCOME /METRIC
<p>Commence Nationwide Rollout of local flexibility markets with early adopters.</p>	<p>Collaborate with key stakeholders on our approach going forward on delivering system flexibility and seek stakeholder input shape the developments needed to drive and enable flexible demand and smart energy services across all relevant markets over the coming decade.</p>	<p>Three Advisory Council Sessions were delivered in 2023 with key industry stakeholders and representative bodies (refer Advisory Council here).</p> <p>Four Calls for Input to consultations delivered:</p> <p>June 2023: Scenarios for 15-20% Flexible System Demand by 2025</p> <p>July 2023: Behind The Meter Distributed Energy Resources Architecture and associated round table held in December 2023</p> <p>August 2023: Flexibility Multi-year Delivery Plans Call for Input on DSO PR5 Incentives Multi-Year Plans 2024-2028</p> <p>December 2023: Demand Flexibility Product Proposal</p>	<p>The Advisory Council and call for inputs have been effective in supporting the direction and approach for delivering system flexibility. Engagement has also identified the need for an industry blueprint for the developments needed to drive and enable flexible demand and smart energy services across all relevant markets over the coming decade. In response to feedback, we are also proposing to provide line of sight to the market on an ongoing basis into the future of the locations, volumes and types of flexibility needed through the publication of a “Flexibility Needs Statement”.</p>



OUR ENGAGEMENT METRICS FRAMEWORK 2023 DECARBONISED ELECTRICITY

FOCUS AREA: SYSTEM FLEXIBILITY

OUR NET ZERO TARGETS 2023	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	DELIVERED ENGAGEMENTS	SUCCESS OUTCOME /METRIC
<p>Introduce Community and local energy dashboards.</p>	<p>Develop a publicly available community toolkit resource to support communities in understanding the role of wind and sun in fueling their community, and to support customers in understanding on how 'flexible their county is.</p>	<p>The DSO Community Toolkit is a Climate Action Target with a roadmap to deliver different capability in 2024/2025. In 2023 we worked in partnership with SEAI to created something useful for some of the 300+ Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC's) and we are continuing this engagement over 2023/2024 by hosting bilateral with some of these SEC's.</p>	<p>The DMSO Community Toolkit was published in December 2023. It contains resources created to support customers and communities in engaging with Flexible Demand.</p> <p>It provides 26 counties with tools to compare and contrast their renewable energy journey with other communities. There is more to come in this space over the coming year.</p>
<p>Launch Beat the Peak Carbon Reduction product suite, initially targeting domestic customer, large energy users and storage investors.</p>	<p>Deliver products and services and customer experiences which make it easy for customers to participate in markets for flexibility and use data and digital technology to ensure a personalised customer journey.</p> <p>Track customer experience and feedback to inform and build on how we would lead the public conversation in the area of flexible demand, how we would optimize customer behaviour and engagement in relation to flexible demand and how we would facilitate flexibility through the alignment with other industry initiatives.</p>	<p>We launched three "Beat the Peak Domestic" and two "Beat the Peak Commercial" products in 2023.</p> <p>Domestic Products:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Is this a good time? Pilot Is This a Good Time? Interim and Is This a Good Time? Carbon product. 	<p>"Beat the Peak Domestic" products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18,500 customers in Pilot • 88% signed up for energy events • 24,107 reported behavioural changes • 20% uplift in participants feeling in control of electricity consumption while wider population showed no change • 23% increase of customer awareness of peak times • 18% increase in the role of weather /wind in renewable generation • Successfully onboarded 10,000 customer in Interim/Carbon product • Built a Green Energy Messaging system (GEM's) tool to support customers in knowing when there is surplus renewables on the network
	<p>Support recruitment into the product.</p> <p>Track the customer journey for registered participants and those who didn't sign up to understand commercial customer barriers to participate.</p>	<p>Commercial Products:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Beat the Peak Pledged Beat the Peak Commercial Active <p>Other Pilots & General Engagement</p> <p>The Flexible Connections pilot is exploring the use of flexible connections to connect renewable generators involved in the government's Renewable Energy Support Scheme (RESS-1) at a quicker rate. 4 connection offers made under ECP 2.1.</p>	<p>"Beat the Peak Domestic" products</p> <p>Feedback has helped us address the perceived barriers to product adoption and has informed the direction of the current commercial product being offered - Beat the Peak Business.</p>



OUR ENGAGEMENT METRICS FRAMEWORK 2023 RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

FOCUS AREA: NETWORK CAPACITY

OUR NET ZERO TARGETS 2023	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	DELIVERED ENGAGEMENTS	SUCCESS OUTCOME /METRIC
<p>Bi-annual updates for network capacity map</p> <p>Publish Electricity Distribution Network Capacity Pathways Report</p> <p>Advanced Metering Infrastructure to underpin demand reduction and flexibility services</p>	<p>To provide stakeholders and customers with better information, insight and transparency</p>	<p>We refreshed the Capacity Heatmap online tool at the end of Q2 2023 and again in Q4 2023.</p> <p>The capacity heatmap provides indication of available capacity for new demand and generation connections. It is part of a suite of tools that empowers customers to have a better understanding as to where to connect, enabling the easy identification of potential capacity in the vicinity of the customer site.</p> <p>December 2023: Electricity Distribution Network Capacity Pathways Report was published for consultation with a closing date was February 2024. A supporting stakeholder webinar was delivered in January 2024 to allow for clarifications/questions.</p>	<p>This refresh is part of a bi-annual commitment to update the capacity map with the next update due at the end of Q1 2024 to improve experience and transparency of insights for our customers.</p> <p>16 stakeholder responses were received from various stakeholders and the summary of responses will be published in Q2 2024.</p>

FOCUS AREA: TRANSMISSION DELIVERY

OUR NET ZERO TARGETS 2023	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	DELIVERED ENGAGEMENTS	SUCCESS OUTCOME /METRIC
<p>Develop 'Build Once for 2040' concept.</p>	<p>Assess the shape and cost of the future electricity network, to frame the need for change in a low-carbon future – this is designed to frame the debate about what should be delivered through longer-term ambitious tariff reform to facilitate a low-carbon future.</p>	<p>Future Networks: Strategic Partnerships – Local Authorities / Housing for Ireland / Electrification / Large customers for Critical Infrastructure (land / technical boundaries / temporary solutions.)</p>	<p>As part of 'Build Once for 2040' concept, a growth rate tool was developed that allows specific growth rates to be calculated for each planner group and for a range of different scenarios based on assumptions input. The results obtained using this tool for three different scenarios was published in Electricity Distribution Network Capacity Pathways Report. More detailed data was shared with EirGrid to allow for coordinated DSO-TSO planning.</p>
<p>Deliver The Transmission Development Plan and the pipeline of projects in collaboration with EirGrid.</p>	<p>Work with EirGrid to both maximise availability of transmission outages and utilize available outage time effectively.</p>	<p>EirGrid and ESNB Outage Co-Ordination team</p> <p>ESBN/ EirGrid workshop in May where ESNB's outage co-ordination team worked with their EirGrid counterparts to come up with actions to improve how we work together in co-ordinating work and outages on the TSO system.</p>	<p>Our Joint TSO/DSO Outage Transformation Programme (JOTP) which is now under way, sets out the various interventions focussed on increasing outage availability and maximising their utilization and effectiveness.</p>



OUR ENGAGEMENT METRICS FRAMEWORK 2023 EMPOWERED CUSTOMERS

FOCUS AREA: ELECTRIFICATION

OUR NET ZERO TARGETS 2023	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	DELIVERED ENGAGEMENTS	SUCCESS OUTCOME /METRIC
<p>Streamline the connection process for low carbon technologies.</p> <p>Develop a connection screening service for electric vehicle recharging infrastructure.</p>	<p>The purpose of this screening service is to support our customers with specific information relating to sites they may be considering for the development of public EV recharging infrastructure.</p>	<p>March 2023: A customer webinar was organised through ZEVI for Charge Point Operators to introduce the connection screening process for public charging infrastructure and provide clarifications on the process.</p> <p>Initiated a series of strategic engagements with key transport customers, to understand and address the unique needs and challenges faced by transport providers as they transition to electric fleets.</p>	<p>By end of 2023 received 262 sites for screening from 41 customers equating to 227 MVA capacity. Completed screening for all sites.</p> <p>Engagement is highlighting a need for electricity network reinforcements to be able to accommodate the required future public EV recharging infrastructure and is also showing the scale of growth that is happening in this area.</p>
<p>Develop current recharging infrastructure capacity map.</p>	<p>Engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure a single source of information available on EV charging charging infrastructure.</p>	<p>Engaging with ZEVI & TII in developing the EV charging infrastructure map showing all EV Charger categories and locations on one single map.</p>	<p>This will enable reporting on the implementation of the Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR).</p>
<p>Develop a Low Carbon Technology register</p>	<p>Enable enhanced customer safety, low voltage network visibility and optimized investment in developing the distribution network.</p>	<p>Continuous engagement with ZEVI & TII in defining the scope of collaboration.</p> <p>Engaged with other UK DNOs to understand what the best solution for ESB Networks could be based on lesson learned from other utilities.</p>	<p>In progress finalizing the project definition.</p>

FOCUS AREA: CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

OUR NET ZERO TARGETS 2023	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	DELIVERED ENGAGEMENTS	SUCCESS OUTCOME /METRIC
<p>Grow digital services on our customer portal to improve customer experience (Digital with a Human Touch) by 2024</p>	<p>Streamline connections, services, and outage customer journeys, empower customers with information and tips to manage their energy consumption via marketing – online portal, Beat the Peak, Smart Meter Services, etc.</p> <p>Support our customers on their journey to net zero through awareness campaigns and participation in pilots and low-carbon schemes.</p>	<p>Framework for Customer Excellence Programme to embed customer centricity across ESB Networks created with a Customer Promise and Principles developed embodying our new brand expression aligning with ESNB values and behaviours.</p> <p>Developed a comprehensive Customer Improvement Programme for implementation in 2024.</p> <p>Customer centric brand expression was developed “Energising your Everything”. Development and launch of the Online Account ‘Power in your Hands’ campaign.</p>	<p>High adoption of self-serve digital services –</p> <p>61% customers affected by outages accessing PowerCheck,</p> <p>88% of new connection applications online.</p>



OUR ENGAGEMENT METRICS FRAMEWORK 2023 EMPOWERED CUSTOMERS

FOCUS AREA: SMART METERING

OUR NET ZERO TARGETS 2023	ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	DELIVERED ENGAGEMENTS	SUCCESS OUTCOME /METRIC
<p>Substantially complete the rollout of 2.4 million smart meters by 2024</p>	<p>Maintain trust in ESB Networks and customer acceptance of the meter exchange programme.</p> <p>Support the further national rollout of standard smart meters, as well as implement targeted communications to support the commencement of the Day/Night meter upgrade programme.</p> <p>Agree consistent messaging for Day/Night meter exchange so that customers aware that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the upgrade is a like-for-like exchange (i.e., there is NO change to the customer's existing electricity tariff) the new meter facilitates access to enhanced smart meter benefits, including access to usage data via Online Account access to smart services (e.g. time of use tariffs) 	<p>Maintained successful working relationships and engagement with all regulatory authorities and market participants (DECC, CRU, SEAI & suppliers) to support the programme's progress and to ensure industry alignment on communications and messaging.</p> <p>Provided briefings to national and local elected representatives and other stakeholders, as well as provided information stands at events, e.g., the EirGrid Energy Citizens Roadshows across the country.</p> <p>Monthly Industry engagement via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry Liaison Group (ILG) Communications and Engagement Working Group (CEWG) and the Smart meter technical working group. <p>ESB Networks extended the rollout in 2023 to include Day/Night meter upgrades. To support these new meter types, ESB Networks developed a customer communications programme in collaboration with the CRU and electricity suppliers. Customer messaging was agreed, and incorporated in customer letters, FAQs online and social media content.</p>	<p>A significant milestone of 1.5 million smart meters installed across the country in November 2023. This includes 100,000 new homes also connected to the electricity network.</p> <p>Communications and Engagement Working Group (CEWG). engagement ensured provision of clear, consistent, and adequate information which gained customer acceptance and buy in of the meter exchange. On target to complete this phase of the roll out.</p>
	<p>Customer engagement (area by area in advance of local deployment).</p> <p>Each customer whose meter is scheduled for an exchange receives two letters in advance. We respond to individual customer enquiries via letters and information booklets.</p>	<p>Continued our Quarterly Smart Metering customer awareness surveys as well as monthly satisfaction trackers.</p> <p>Evolved our messaging to inform customers as to how they can make more use of their smart meter data by signing up to ESB Networks Online Account (Energy Consumption Option).</p> <p>The Online Account gives customers direct access, regardless of their supplier, to detailed information about their electricity usage.</p> <p>This information can help customers to make informed choices on their consumption and to inform their discussions with electricity suppliers about appropriate tariffs. In addition, this information can help customers reduce their carbon footprint.</p>	<p>96% Customer satisfaction with programme</p> <p>To date, almost 290,000 customers are availing of a smart meter service or tariff.</p> <p>Over 12m remote readings have been processed, ensuring smart meter customers will likely never have another estimated electricity bill.</p>

APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1: CONSULTATIONS

ESB Networks public consultations delivered in 2023

CONSULTATION	OBJECTIVE	MECHANISMS	TIMING
ESB Networks Stakeholder Engagement Strategy & Plan 2023	Seek feedback on ESB Networks' proposed engagement strategy and plan for 2023 such that it is fully informed and shaped by both our business and stakeholders needs	ESB Networks Consultation	Q4 2022 - Q1 2023
Annual Innovation Consultation	Consultation to share information and garner feedback on ESB Networks' innovation strategy, projects and activities	ESB Networks Consultation	Q1 2023
National Network, Local Connections Programme	• Multi Year Plan to 2025	ESB Networks Consultation	Q1 2023
	• Multi Year DSO/TSO working Plan 2022-2026	ESB Networks/EirGrid Consultation	Q1 2023
Flexibility Multi-year plan 2024 onwards	Annual Consultation requesting feedback on delivery of progress against approved plan	National Network, Local Connections Consultation	Q2 2023
15-20% Flexible System Demand Strategy	Public Consultation on strategy to address 15-20% Flexible System Demand targets	National Network, Local Connections Consultation	Q2 2023
Joint TSO and TAO Investment Planning and Delivery Report 2022	Seek stakeholder feedback on TSO and TAO Electricity Transmission Performance Report 2020	ESB Networks/EirGrid Consultation	Q3 2023
Joint TSO and TAO Electricity Transmission Performance Report 2022	Seek Stakeholder feedback on TSO and TAO Investment Planning and Delivery Report 2020	ESB Networks/EirGrid Consultation	Q3 2023
Key Stakeholder Surveys	Provide a professional independent analysis and understanding of the baseline of stakeholder satisfaction among key stakeholders and use the learnings of survey to inform decisions on prioritising improvements in ESB Networks services	Independent research through various online surveys	Q3 & Q4 2023
Smart Metering Programme Surveys	Track customer satisfaction with the meter installation process	Customer sentiment surveys throughout the year	Quarterly
Post Energisation Communications protocol	To engage with generator customers to develop a post energisation communications protocol	ESB Networks Consultation	Q4 2023
ESB Networks Distribution Networks Capacity Pathways Report	To seek feedback on the electricity demand network capacity requirement ESB Networks are predicting on the distribution system, to deliver on the targets set in the government's Climate Action Plan 2023.	ESB Networks Consultation	Q4 2023 - Q1 2024

APPENDIX 2:

PUBLICATIONS

Reports/information booklets/data sharing on ESB Networks website during 2023

PUBLICATION	OBJECTIVE	MECHANISMS	TIMING
ESB Networks Strategy 2030	To outline in detail the actions that we will take between now and 2030 to deliver on the clean electric future together	Publication on ESB Networks' website	Q1 2023
Stakeholder Newsletter	To provide regular updates and overview of engagement activities/ opportunities between ESB Networks and stakeholders	Quarterly newsletter emailed to relevant stakeholders and link on ESB Networks website to subscribe	Quarterly
Innovation Consultation Response Paper	To provide ESB Networks response to feedback received on the Innovation Consultation	Publication on ESB Networks' website	Q1 2023
18 Month Innovation Programme	To share our rolling 18 Month Innovation Programme that aligns with ESB Networks strategic objectives and our commitment to the Climate Action Plan targets	Bi-Annual Publication on ESB Networks' Website	Q2 & Q4 2023
Innovation Project Reports	Share learnings and benefits from our Innovation projects through the publication project progress and Close-Out reports	Publication on ESB Networks' Website	Ongoing
ESB Networks Environmental Performance Report 2022	To provide the CRU with a status update of ESN's environmental performance for 2022, in accordance with the requirements of its DSO and TAO licences	Publication on ESB Networks' website	Q2 2023
National Network, Local Connections Programme	Response to feedback on Multi Year Flexibility Plan 2024 onwards	Publication of revised Multi-year plan on ESB Networks Website	Q2 2023
	Response to Feedback Local Network Visibility Multi Year Plan to 2025	Publication of revised Multi-year plan on ESB Networks Website	Q2 2023
	Response to Feedback on Multi Year DSO/TSO working Plan 2022-2026	Response to Feedback on Multi Year DSO/TSO working Plan 2022-2026	Q3 2023
Joint TSO and TAO Investment Planning and Delivery Final Report 2022	Final CRU Approval on TSO and TAO Investment Planning and Delivery 2022	Publication on ESB Networks' website	Q3 2023
Joint TSO and TAO Electricity Transmission Performance Final Report 2022	Final CRU Approval on TSO and TAO Electricity Transmission Performance Report 2022	Publication on ESB Networks' website	Q3 2023

APPENDIX 2:

PUBLICATIONS (CONTINUED)

Reports/information booklets/data sharing on ESB Networks website during 2023

PUBLICATION	OBJECTIVE	MECHANISMS	TIMING
Smart Metering Programme Advertorials	To mark the installation of 1 million smart meters in Ireland and to create awareness of the programme and its benefits	Video uploaded on ESB Networks' website	Ongoing
Public Safety Strategy	Inform and educate the public about safe behaviours in relation to the electricity distribution network	Publication on ESB Networks' website	Ongoing
Heat Map of available Capacity	Provide an indication of available network capacity for new demand and generation customers	Interactive map on ESB Networks' website	Ongoing
Community-led renewable energy projects guide	Increase customer knowledge of the connection process, CRU policies and to highlight the lower barrier to entry for community-led projects	Ongoing Publication on ESB Networks' website	Ongoing
Publishing of Contestable Specifications for the Renewable Industry	Sharing of technical knowledge with renewable customers to advance industry's understanding of ESB Networks key construction requirements for renewable customer connections	Publications on ESB Networks' website	Ongoing

APPENDIX 3: PATHWAYS TO ENGAGEMENT

ESB Networks meetings, forums, working groups, events and webinars in 2023

PATHWAY	OBJECTIVE	MECHANISMS	TIMING
ESB Networks Business Strategy to 2030 - launch event and mix of focussed engagement events with various stakeholder groups	Provide high level engagement opportunity on ESB Networks' business strategy and plans to 2030	Physical/hybrid events dependent on public health restrictions. More details to be provided in January 2023	Ongoing
ESB Networks Distribution Outage Programme (DOP)	Provide customised outage programme information for 2022 to each HV connected customer	Bilateral meetings and email notification	Q1 2023
Critical Customer System Security Engagement	Ongoing engagement with critical infrastructure customers to whom security of supply is deemed critical	Meetings/webinars	Q1 2023
System Security Engagement with Large Energy Users	Ongoing engagement with those customers who provide Voluntary Demand Reduction (VDR) and Mandatory Demand Curtailment (MDC) services	Meetings/webinars	Q1 2023
Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP)	The Distribution Code is the set of rules that specifies the technical aspects and relationships between the DSO and all other users. The Distribution Code is kept under review and updated as required through the Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP). The DCRP meets quarterly and is chaired and coordinated by ESB Networks as the DSO	Quarterly meetings	Q1 – Q4 2023
Innovation Panel	Provide a platform to enable open discussion and feedback with stakeholders from across all industry sectors on our innovation strategy, projects and activities	Bi-annual meeting	Q2 & Q4 2023
Innovation Spring and Autumn conference/webinar	Sharing of information on our innovation activities and the dissemination of project learnings and outcomes	Physical/hybrid conference dependent on public health restrictions	Q2 & Q4 2023
Renewables Hubs Policy and Pilot development	To review and propose modifications to connection policy to optimise the grid connection of renewable projects through the piloting of "renewable hubs" (areas of the network where there are clusters of renewable projects)	Mix of webinars, workshops, and pilots	Q2-Q4 2023

APPENDIX 3:

PATHWAYS TO ENGAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

ESB Networks meetings, forums, working groups, events and webinars in 2023

PATHWAY	OBJECTIVE	MECHANISMS	TIMING
Screening Process for connection of EV Charging Infrastructure Developers	To develop a screening process is to enable our customers to electrify, more specifically to enable the EV Charging Infrastructure Developers to make informed decisions regarding the development of public charging infrastructure	Webinar in conjunction with ZEVI	Q1 2023
Smart Metering Programme	Industry engagement: > Industry Liaison Group (ILG) > Communications & Engagement Working Group (CEWG).	Conference calls	Monthly meetings
	Working groups: > Smart meter technical working group > One-to-one engagement sessions with industry participants to support Phase 2 of the programme.	Ongoing meetings	Q1-Q4 2023
	Customer engagement: > Direct communication – customers whose meters are scheduled for an exchange receive two letters in advance. Responding to individual customer enquiries.	Letters, information booklet, written responses	Area by area in advance of local deployment
	Public awareness and stakeholder engagement: > Awareness campaign via targeted media campaigns supported by updates on our website. > Briefings to national and local elected representatives and other stakeholders.	Multi-channel approach programme briefings	Q1-Q4 2023
Customer Experience Focus Groups	To test various customer experience initiatives and advertising campaigns	Workshops	Q1 – Q4 2023
Construction Safety Partnership Advisory Committee	Promote best practice of electricity safety in construction	Quarterly meetings	January, April, July
Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee	Promote best practice of electricity safety in farming	Quarterly meetings	January, March, May, June, July
Safety Joint Utility Forum	Share safety best practice and learnings across utilities	Bi-annual meeting	Monthly
Retail Market Services - Industry Governance Group	Represent ESB Networks at the IGG in conjunction with our SMART project colleagues	Meetings/conference calls	Monthly Ad hoc
Community – led Renewables Energy Liaison Panel	Point of contact for informing on initiatives being provided by ESB Networks to assist community-led renewable energy projects in relation to the connection to the distribution network	Website guides, FAQ dedicated email, plus, engagement with Industry and CRU through separate planned Forums	Ongoing

APPENDIX 3:

PATHWAYS TO ENGAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

ESB Networks meetings, forums, working groups, events and webinars in 2023

PATHWAY	OBJECTIVE	MECHANISMS	TIMING
Enduring Connection Policy Industry Body Updates	Present progress to date on Enduring Connection Policy and application window openings	Webinar and ongoing engagement	Q3 2023
Lean Connections Project Engagement	Engagement with key stakeholder groups on the development of the Lean Connections Project	Bilateral meetings, workshops and webinars	Ongoing
Strategic level quarterly meetings with renewable energy industry representative bodies	Knowledge sharing high level engagement opportunity on ESB Networks' business strategy and plans and gain renewable industry insights and feedback	Meeting	Q1 - Q4 2023
National Network, Local Connections Programme - Advisory Council	Industry engagement: Following from feedback from the National Network, Local Connections Programme Consultation in Q4/2022 an external Advisory Council has been initiated to ensure that stakeholders have early and ongoing transparency of programme developments and an opportunity to shape the direction of the programme	Meeting	Q2 - Q4 2023
National Network, Local Connections Programme - Market Design	Flexibility Service Offering: to establish if the market design products being considered by the programme are fit for use by stakeholders across the segments. These meetings gave insight and informed the direction the marker services will take	1:1 Meetings	Q1 2023
National Network, Local Connections Programme - Bilateral	Bilaterals with stakeholders who requested more engagement with the programme have been initiated	Bilateral meetings	Ongoing
National Network, Local Connections Programme - Partnership	Partnership with SEAI on the SEAI National Energy Research Development and Demonstration (RD&D) Funding Programme	Partnership	Q2 2023
	EirGrid Citizens Energy Roadshow. 12 completed in 2022. NN,LC commit to presenting at all roadshows in 2023	Partnership	Q2 2023
National Network, Local Connections Programme - Piloting	Piloting engagement across the 6 pilots will happen over the course of 2023 via a suite of activity from officially procurement notification to local community engagement	Mix	Q1 - Q4 2023
	Pilot 3b: Official Procurement and Recruitment	Official Procurement	Q1 2023
	Pilot 4: 1:1 meetings with all Projects that satisfy the criteria for pilot 4	Meetings	Q1 2023
	Pilot 6: Work with Pilot 6 Pledge partners on case studies	Meetings	Q1 2023

APPENDIX 3:

PATHWAYS TO ENGAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

ESB Networks meetings, forums, working groups, events and webinars in 2023

PATHWAY	OBJECTIVE	MECHANISMS	TIMING
National Network, Local Connections Programme - Governance	Host 4 Advisory Council Meetings	Stakeholder Meetings	Q1 - Q4 2023
National Network, Local Connections Flexibility Multi-year plan 2024 onwards	Annual Consultation requesting feedback on delivery of progress against approved plan	Roundtable sessions mid consultation to address any queries regarding the plan	Q2 2023
National Network, Local Connections 15-20% Flexible System Demand Strategy	Public Consultation on strategy to address 15-20% Flexible System Demand targets	Cross Industry sessions to align NN,LC strategy with other stakeholders involved in CAP '23 deliverables	Q2 2023
Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland (ZEVI) Board and working Groups	ESB Networks is a key board member of ZEVI which is now the one-stop shop for expertise, support and funding to support the electrification of transport in Ireland	Mix of meetings/conference calls/working groups	Ongoing
Generator Customer Connection Clinics	Give customers an opportunity to discuss potential connection options and high level costs before making an application for connection to the distribution network	Customer meetings	Q4 2023



NETWORKS