

Amended treatment of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) with respect to Distribution System constraints

Distribution Networks Operators and other industry stakeholders have been working to resolve challenges associated with the connection of battery energy storage systems (BESS) to distribution networks. This briefing outlines the changes that are being introduced from 30th September 2023.

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What is changing?

- Applications for the connection of battery energy storage systems to UK Power Networks distribution network received from 30th September 2023 will receive a connection offer based on providing a capacity only when the distribution system is in a normal (intact) running condition. Under normal (intact) running conditions, the battery energy storage system capacity can be accepted onto the network, but should the local distribution network develop a fault or a planned outage be in progress, the capacity available to the storage system may be curtailed or reduced until the network returns to normal operating status. There will not be a curtailment limit nor will compensation for such curtailment be paid.

What is not changing?

- Treatment for other types of electricity storage – these changes apply only to battery storage systems.
- Where transmission system constraints exist, the treatment of storage with respect to the transmission system is not being revised at this point – wider industry discussions are on-going. Therefore, transmission constraints for the time being will drive the same impact on delivery timescales as they do today.
- Customers won't see a change in the application process; the storage connection will retain access to the distribution network as described above, with non-compensatory curtailment when planned or unplanned outages exist on the local distribution system.

What is in scope?

- If capacity is not available on the distribution network in an intact state, reinforcement of the distribution system may be required and a curtailable connection offered. This will include a curtailment limit and compensation for exceeding this level of curtailment until the reinforcement is completed. From this point, the storage asset will be able to access the distribution capacity requested when the distribution system is in a normal running condition and as described above, the storage asset may be curtailed, without compensation.
- Applications including battery electric storage only.

What is not in scope?

- Applicants for schemes prior to 30th September 2023 as well as asset owners operating already-connected storage assets.
- This change does not apply to transmission system constraints.
- All connections applications not incorporating battery electric storage assets.