



EirGrid Remote Control of Generation Stations Practice

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1 INTRODUCTION

The secure and safe operation of the Transmission System is linked to the safe and secure operation of the each User's Plant connected to the Transmission System.

It is essential for both its own safety and that of the Transmission system, that the unit can be suitably controlled at all times, in accordance with the conditions and obligations as stated in the Grid Code Section OC7.2.4. Historically, this control has been provided locally, however, there are instances where control can be applied remotely.

The purpose of this document is to define what requirements must be met in order for the use of remote control of generation units to be considered.

2 REQUIREMENTS FOR REMOTE CONTROL OF GENERATION STATIONS

The requirements for the remote control of a generation station fall into five categories:

1. Staffing levels, including during system incidents or emergencies.
2. The control of the generation unit.
3. The operation of generation unit.
4. Maintenance of the plant.
5. The appropriateness of a particular station being controlled remotely.

Each of these requirements is examined in further detail below:

1. Staffing levels

Minimum staffing levels at the User's Plant must be agreed with the TSO in advance of the plant moving to remote control. These minimum staffing conditions must be met under normal operating conditions.

However, in the event of a system incident or emergency, the User's plant must be staffed within a specified time period as agreed with the TSO.

For example, in the case where the User's plant is a generation station with Blackstart capability, the generation station must be staffed within 30 minutes of a system emergency being declared, unless otherwise agreed with the TSO.

2. The Control of the User's Plant

The TSO may require the User to provide evidence that their plant is controllable at all times. Of particular concern are the communications between the remote control facility and the plant. Hence, the TSO may request confirmation that:

- a. There is no single point of failure between the remote control facility and the User's plant.

- b. In the case of a failure of the remote control centre, an alternative control centre must be provided, either locally or in another remote location within a specified time period, as agreed with the TSO.

3. The Operation of the User's Plant

The User's plant must remain compliant with its obligations under the Grid Code or / and any derogations as approved by the CER, regardless of the location of the plant's control facility. Similarly, if the User's plant is contracted to provide any specific ancillary services, the provision of these services must not be affected by the location of the plant's control facility. If placing the User's plant under the control of a remote control facility prevents the plant from meeting any of these obligations, the User must inform the TSO as soon as is practicable possible.

In such circumstances, the TSO reserves the right to request the return of the plant to local control. The User's Plant must remain under local control, until the appropriate corrective action is taken to ensure that the plant meets all of its Grid Code obligations or by agreement with the TSO.

4. Maintenance of plant

It is essential that the User's Plant is suitably maintained at all times. The remote control of a User's plant does not detract from this need. Hence, it is vital that the necessary maintenance checks are carried out on a suitable basis.

Whilst the maintenance of the plant is the responsibility of the User, the TSO may request, from time to time, evidence from the user that such checks are being carried out and that any works identified during these checks is being completed within a reasonable timeframe.

5. The appropriateness of a User's Plant being controlled remotely.

When considering the remote control of a generation station or generation unit, the TSO must take several additional factors into consideration before agreeing to the remote control of any User's Plant on the Transmission System. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- a) The complexity and size of the plant;
- b) If the User's Plant is of particular strategic importance to the Transmission system;
- c) The past operational history of the plant, including the reliability of the plant and the frequency of use of the plant.

All of the above criteria must meet with the TSO's satisfaction before the TSO can agree to the remote control of any User's Plant.