

# Qualification Trial Process (QTP)

Call for Information

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# Contents

<b>1. Background to QTP</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1. Introduction .....	4
1.2. Process to date.....	4
<b>2. QTP proposals</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Call for Information</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Questions for Stakeholders</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. Next Steps</b>	<b>6</b>

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# 1. Background to QTP

## 1.1. Introduction

The Qualification Trial Process (QTP) is a key activity under the Operations pillar of [EirGrid and SONI's Shaping Our Electricity Future Roadmap](#). The process contributes towards the transition of the power system from one powered by fossil fuels to renewables.

The purpose of the QTP has been to enable new technologies to prove their system service capabilities prior to their participation in the central procurement process for the DS3 System Services Regulated Arrangements. It has helped to support new technologies to qualify for system services and subsequently provide these services at scale. While each individual service provider needs to pre-qualify through the central procurement process for any system services they intend to provide, the QTP provides a process for proving the capability of a technology type to provide a service where there had been no proof of this before, thereby removing barriers to participation in the central procurement processes.

The QTP has also been used to trial communication protocols and performance monitoring improvements linked to system services provision. Furthermore, it has assisted the TSOs in development of new codes and standards for new technology classes and new processes and procedures for the commissioning and testing of new technologies.

The trials are run at small scale allowing the participants to demonstrate the provision of system services in small volumes. This demonstrates provision of services under real system operational conditions.

The outcomes of these trials help EirGrid and SONI to consider whether the ability of the technology to provide the system services within a service category is 'proven' (such as those on the "Proven Technology Types" list, the latest version of which is at the following [link](#)).

## 1.2. Process to date

The TSOs typically undertake the QTP procurement process on an annual basis. Responses to the Request for Proposal (RfP) are considered against the evaluation criteria to assess the capability of each tenderer to carry out the scope of requirements. Where a service provider has been successful in the procurement process, a trial commences and typically covers a 12 / 18-month period. During this period, update reports are published at key milestones of the trial and a full report is published when the trial has been completed.

The last successful trial under the QTP was conducted during 2019. The next RfP for the QTP was issued in 2020 but resulted in no tender responses being received by the TSOs. Following this, on 21 December 2021, the TSOs issued a Call for Information for stakeholder input. The TSOs' most recent RfP for the QTP was issued on 15 December 2023. EirGrid and SONI stakeholders were informed about the launch of the RfP (a mail was sent by the TSOs' communications teams to all stakeholders highlighting the links, dates and timeline for the complete process). However, once again, no tenders were received in response to the RfP.

Due to the lack of tenders received to the last two procurement processes, the TSOs have been reviewing the QTP scope and process.

## 2. QTP proposals

To help address this situation, the TSOs propose a limited change in the scope of the QTP. The TSOs propose to allow for the potential trialling of new / modified system services, such as those likely to be introduced as part of the Future Arrangements for System Services (FASS). The trial process would also continue to allow for existing connected technologies, which have not yet been proven through the QTP for provision of existing services, to contract and prove the capability for their technology class or subclass.

However, certain aspects of the scope of the QTP are not expected to change. In particular, it is intended that there will be no change in the budget. It will also remain a requirement that the potential service provider be connected to the grid at the time of tender submission. For those DS3 system services and service classes which are continuing under FASS, the QTP will not be repeated for already proven technologies.

## 3. Call for Information

The TSOs are issuing this Call for Information to gather feedback on the proposed change in scope for the QTP, and to gather insight and knowledge from stakeholders about the new technologies / services which could potentially participate in / be trialled as part of the QTP.

In order to deliver the 2030 renewable ambitions in Ireland and Northern Ireland, it will be necessary to accommodate unprecedented levels of variable non-synchronous renewable generation on the power system in real time whilst maintaining security of supply. This will require a significant evolution of power system operations, including the provision of system services from new and innovative resources, and improving the capability of the existing generation portfolio to provide system services. There remain technologies that cannot participate in the central procurement process for the DS3 System Services Regulated Arrangements, as they are not deemed to be proven from a service provision perspective, or they do not adhere to the current standards and compliance requirements as outlined within the System Services protocol document (the latest version of which is at the following [link](#)).

The TSOs consider that there are potential trials that could be undertaken covering areas such as existing services from new or yet unproven resource types (e.g. certain services from demand side resources, residential demand side resources and dispatchable consumption resources in general), and any new services being considered or intended to be introduced under the FASS arrangements.

We are working closely with the Distribution System Operators (DSOs) and maintain regular interaction to identify and support the integration of such innovative services. Any potential trial involving participation of distribution-connected parties in Ireland or

Northern Ireland would only be progressed with the approval of the relevant Distribution System Operator (ESB Networks in Ireland, NIE Networks in Northern Ireland).

As part of the next steps, to ensure that we can facilitate active participation by potential service providers, we are seeking stakeholder views on the current and new proposed QTP scope and processes, and suggestions regarding any technology / services that stakeholders would like the TSOs to consider.

If, based on the responses to this Call for Information, it appears that it is likely that there will be engagement with the QTP procurement process, the TSOs will develop and issue a RfP and follow the normal steps of the procurement process. If it appears that there will not be engagement with the QTP procurement process, the TSOs will engage with the Regulatory Authorities to discuss options for the most appropriate next steps.

In this context, in the following section we pose some questions.

## 4. Questions for Stakeholders

Q1. Do you have any comments on the current QTP process, and do you have feedback on the new proposed wider QTP scope? Are there any changes you would like to suggest which can enhance the effectiveness of the QTP?

Q2. Are there particular technology classes or services that you think the TSOs should focus on for our next trial?

## 5. Next Steps

We welcome feedback on the questions posed above. Responses should be submitted to [SOEF@Eirgrid.com](mailto:SOEF@Eirgrid.com) or [SOEF@soni.ltd.uk](mailto:SOEF@soni.ltd.uk) by 20 of June 2025. All responses will be treated as confidential and will not be shared publicly. However, they may be made available to the Regulatory Authorities (RAs) upon request.