



2020 Stakeholder Engagement Report



2020 Stakeholder Engagement Report

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Who we are and what we do	3
3. Engage for better outcomes for all - Enhancing our engagement	4
4. Engage for better outcomes for all - Key learnings from 2020	8
5. Responding to COVID-19	10
6. Lead the island's electricity sector on sustainability and decarbonisation	12
Shaping our Electricity Future	12
Key enabler programmes to support Shaping our Electricity Future	12
Energy Policy and Thought Leadership	14
Sustainability	16
7. Operate, develop and enhance the all-island grid and market	17
Delivering grid infrastructure	17
Asset management	20
Operating the grid and market	21
8. Work with partners for positive change	23
Supporting and connecting our customers	23
Regulatory engagement	24
ESB Networks – Transmission Asset Owner	24
ESB Networks – Distribution System Operator	26
Academia	26
9. Appendix I: Grid Development Projects	27
East Meath to North Dublin (Capital Project 1021)	27
Kildare Meath (Capital Project 966)	29
North-Connacht 110 kV Project (Capital Project 0816)	30
Cross Shannon 400 kV Cable	31
Series Compensation on the Dunstown - Moneypoint 400kV line	31
Celtic Interconnector	32
CPo466 North South 400 kV Interconnector Project;	33
CPo866 Great Island - Kellis 220 kV line refurbishment.	34
CPo813 Trien Control Building and entrance improvements.	34
Lessons Learnt from our stakeholder engagements during 2020	35
10. Appendix II: Formal Engagements in 2020	36

1. Introduction

This document contains a review of EirGrid’s stakeholder engagement activity over 2020. We believe that working together with all stakeholders – customers and industry, the public and local communities – leads to better outcomes that reflect all views.

Our [Stakeholder Engagement Plan for 2020](#) set out our scheduled engagements for the year. It details the purpose of each engagement and the stakeholder groups we wanted to engage with. It then explained how to get involved and encouraged more stakeholders to engage with us. It also set out our approach to engagement including our engagement principles, how we identify stakeholders and how we work to involve them in key decisions.

The aim of this Stakeholder Engagement Report for 2020 is to assess the effectiveness of our engagement over 2020. Following an overview of how we are working to improve our engagement and learnings we have identified, we provide a summary of our engagement in 2020 under a number of topics that affect all electricity users – customers, industry or consumers. We also provide a more in depth look at several key areas of engagement during 2020. In the appendices we present engagement information for each of the Infrastructure Projects we planned to engage on in 2020, EirGrid consultations we undertook and fora and workshops we held in 2020.

As part of a broader review process, we are publishing this Report for consultation. We want to hear from you, our stakeholders, with your views of how we engaged in 2020. We welcome your constructive feedback so we can develop and refine our engagement in future. After we receive your feedback, we will consider and publish a consultation response document.



Engage for better outcomes for all

Our 2020-25 strategy is shaped by two factors; climate change and the transition of the electricity sector to low-carbon, renewable energy. This strategy was informed by extensive engagement with key stakeholders. This included industry fora, government departments, customers, as well as board members, management and staff from across EirGrid Group. In our strategy we commit to seeking innovative new ways to engage. Our aim is to achieve world-class standards and to deliver better results as a consequence. Achieving the scale of transformation in our strategy requires a significant increase in the scope and frequency of our stakeholder engagement. This journey began in 2020. This annual review of our engagement highlights what we have done so far and will help us to continue to improve in future years – which is essential for us to deliver our strategy.

We need to enhance our engagement with industry, so we can integrate more renewable generation and interconnection. Similarly, we need to engage with industry for system services to support successful operation of the grid as we integrate more renewable generation. We need to step up engagement with landowners and communities. This is to ensure we earn their informed consent to host the next generation of grid infrastructure. Finally, we need to continue to engage with the Government and regulator to ensure we meet the required targets as cost-effectively and efficiently as possible.

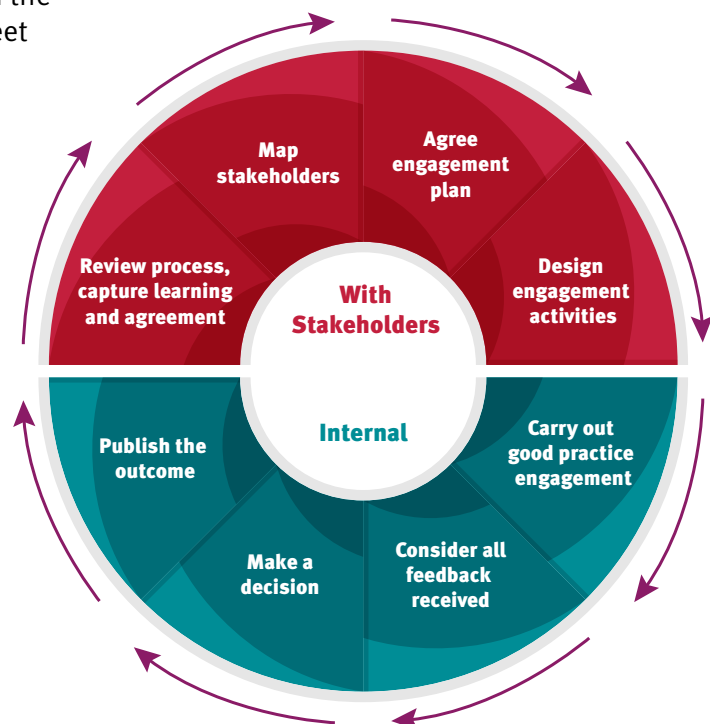
A summary of our engagement principles

Our key engagement principles are designed so we listen to our stakeholders and take their feedback into consideration to inform better outcomes in our decision making. We want to ensure that customers and stakeholders have their say and that we are listening.

In practice this means that we:

- involve stakeholders early in the process so they can influence plans;
- provide information in plain English that is accessible;
- provide enough time for people to contribute their views;
- offer clear opportunities for engagement and ways to influence the decision-making process;
- explain decisions that need to be taken and factors that influence those decisions; and
- communicate with everyone who has taken the time to engage with us and explain how feedback shaped our eventual decision or approach.

These principles form the basis for all engagement with industry, customers, communities and members of the public.



2. Who we are and what we do

Our role

EirGrid develops, manages and operates the transmission grid and electricity market in Ireland. The grid transports power from where it is generated to where it is needed. It brings power to industry and businesses that use large amounts of electricity. The grid also powers the distribution network: this supplies the electricity used every day in homes, businesses, schools, hospitals, and farms. We balance supply and demand every minute of the day, while also planning for Ireland's long-term electricity needs.

EirGrid also develops and operates interconnections with neighbouring grids, as well as enabling interconnections developed and operated by third parties. We implement government and EU policy in Ireland. We act independently and in the public interest. We are regulated as a monopoly service provider. We perform our services for the benefit of every electricity user, and to support the economy.

EirGrid is part of the EirGrid Group, which includes SONI – the Transmission System Operator for Northern Ireland. Our services also include the Single Electricity Market Operator (SEMO). This wholesale market for power runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This ensures electricity users always have reliable power at a competitive price. We do this in the most cost-effective way possible, in the interests of all electricity users.

The context in which we work

Delivering energy to consumers in Ireland requires us to operate within a complex environment. We actively engage with policy makers, industry and society at all levels, from local to European, in line with our strategy. However, we are also a regulated business, and our engagement takes place within a regulatory and statutory environment which we must have regard to. Our engagement strategy provides the principles and tools to ensure that, whether we are talking to our customers or local communities, we are clear about our regulatory and statutory obligations and our objectives.



3. Engage for better outcomes for all - Enhancing our engagement

During 2020, we continued to engage with our stakeholders to seek constructive feedback. We welcome the insights we have received through our consultations, surveys and other formal and informal channels, as well as the recommendations from the Networks Stakeholder Engagement Evaluation Panel. Over 2020, we have used these insights and recommendations as well as other areas we have identified to continue to enhance our engagement to support our vision of always engaging effectively.

Some of the key improvements from 2020 include:

Stakeholder engagement developments

- In 2020, we committed to consulting on and publish our annual Stakeholder Engagement Plan earlier to ensure we give our stakeholders time to respond with feedback to inform our final plan. In November 2020, we published our 2021 Stakeholder Engagement Plan for consultation providing a 6 week period for our stakeholders to provide feedback.
- In December 2020, we published our [“Engage with Us – A Guide for Customers and Industry Stakeholders”](#) document. This document summarises EirGrid’s engagement channels and points of contact for our customers and industry stakeholders. It was developed to provide clarity on how our customers and industry stakeholders can have their say and how these insights and feedback are used within EirGrid. In addition, the document contains information on governance and how feedback and insight provided to us is incorporated into decision-making and shared across the organisation to ensure better outcomes for all.

Enhancing awareness – Stepping Up

- Achieving the Irish Government’s target of at least 70% renewably generated electricity by 2030 will necessitate a number of grid infrastructure projects. To complete these in time will require a significant shift in public support and acceptance. For these reasons, EirGrid began preparations for its new awareness campaign in spring 2020, launching in October 2020.
- The purpose of this campaign was to increase public awareness of the need for action to address the climate crisis, as well as who EirGrid are and what we do. This campaign explained how our role puts EirGrid at the heart of Ireland’s climate action agenda. This key message was shown by research for the campaign to help raise awareness of EirGrid. We know this is critical to improve levels of trust and acceptance and enable delivery of key grid infrastructure.
- The *Stepping Up* campaign ran for 6 weeks across multiple channels including TV and radio, social and digital media and print advertising and furthered awareness by reaching:
 - 2.1 million individuals through television
 - 2.5 million individuals through radio
 - 1.7 million individuals through social media
 - 1.3 million individuals in ‘out of home’ media (including billboards and bus shelter ads)
- Following the campaign, polling indicated an increased understanding of EirGrid’s role in addressing the climate crisis and an increased understanding of who EirGrid is and what we do.

Enhancing our public engagement – our public engagement strategy for a cleaner energy future

- In early 2020, EirGrid established a programme delivery team to find ways to improve engagement around delivering grid infrastructure. This team conducted a comprehensive review, including assessing existing practices, looking at lessons learned from past projects, workshops with internal and external stakeholders including our National Advisory Committee, and a range of UK, EU and global best practice reviews.
- This work has resulted in the development of a new Public Engagement Strategy for EirGrid. This new strategy is in line with our commitment to ‘Engage for better outcomes for all’. It recognises the need to continually evolve our engagement with external stakeholders to support the delivery of infrastructure across Ireland on our path to achieving climate action targets.

Other key focus areas

- EirGrid’s governance around stakeholder engagement has been enhanced to ensure that the voices of our stakeholders and their insights and feedback are heard across the organisation. Our governance also supports the development and implementation of improvements including new tools and channels and enhancing how we measure success of our stakeholder engagement.
- Over 2020, we have implemented further steps to increase transparency, engagement and collaboration around dispatch down, transmission constraints and outages. These are supported by new process changes for a consistent approach to providing responses to individual customers on technically complex queries as well as enhanced engagement through different channels on these topics. This work has been recognised in the feedback received to our customer survey. Further information is available under *Operating the Grid and Market*.
- We were made aware through feedback received from customers and industry of the desire for further information on grid infrastructure project consultations. Notifications of consultations relating to grid infrastructure projects now issue to our wider mailing list to ensure awareness.



Measuring the effectiveness of our engagement and industry best practise

- **Awareness metrics:** EirGrid has a tracker survey that measures awareness of the public of the role EirGrid plays in addressing the climate crisis as well as an understanding of who we are and what we do. This also monitors key questions such as attitudes to new infrastructure. This allows us to engage more meaningfully with the public when communicating the need for our grid infrastructure projects.
- **Increased project engagement metrics:** We have stepped up the capture of metrics associated with our engagement on grid infrastructure projects and will continue to track these going forward.
- **Customer survey:** In January 2021, a survey was issued to our customers in 73 organisations to ask for their feedback on their experience of engaging with EirGrid during 2020.
 - There was a 43% response rate to our survey, with 77% of customers engaging with EirGrid at least monthly and 33% in contact with us at least weekly. 90% of customers rated their understanding of EirGrid in terms of its overall role and function as excellent or very good.
 - As an organisation, our customers were most satisfied with our credibility and technical competence, trustworthiness and the level of respect for EirGrid within the industry, each scoring over 80%. The lowest satisfaction ratings provided were for acknowledging mistakes at 59% and understanding the commercial realities and challenges facing customers at 62%.
- Overall, customers' satisfaction with EirGrid staff was 79%. They were most satisfied with our staff in terms of professionalism (84%) and technical/business expertise (80%), with the ability of staff to make decisions quickly rated lowest at 60%. 70% of customers were satisfied with how EirGrid handles communications. Presentation of high quality data and welcoming input and suggestions to inform decisions were rated most highly by customers. Flagging issues coming down the lines and implementing changes from learning are areas where customers satisfaction was just under 60%. Preferred channels of communication noted by those customers that responded are email, customer forums, events, workshops and seminars as well as personal contact via one-to-one meetings and phone calls.
- This survey has provided us with valuable information. As well as the positive feedback and high rates of satisfaction associated with much of our engagement, it has highlighted areas where improvements can be made in our engagement with our customers and industry stakeholders. We believe that this annual survey is an important step on our pathway to measure the effectiveness of our engagement and inform the key focus areas in 2021 and future years.

- **Industry Best Practice:** EirGrid continued to participate as a member of the Renewable Grid Initiative (RGI) in 2020, a collaboration of NGOs and TSOs from across Europe. This allows us to continue to learn from these organisations to identify and study best practice ideas for engagement in an evolving environment. In April, we were involved in discussions with the RGI, along with other TSOs, on how best to have engagement with COVID-19 restrictions in place, focusing in particular on grid infrastructure projects and engagement on the ground. In addition, over 2020 we continued to engage with other TSOs, industry partners and other relevant groups in Ireland, Europe and worldwide across a wide range of topics. These topics included integration of renewables, grid infrastructure and asset management, interconnection, innovation and research and system and market operations and development.
- **EirGrid's National Advisory Committee (NAC):** EirGrid recognises the need to obtain feedback on our work from a cross-section of Irish society and economy as this informs our approach to engagement going forward. The NAC, which met twice in 2020, is comprised of external stakeholders from national groups. The NAC advises EirGrid in relation to several areas that are critical to the development of the grid. In particular, the NAC guides us on the need to mitigate the potential impact of our work on individuals and local communities. In 2020, we discussed the development of our new Public Engagement Strategy and what role communities can and must play in developing energy infrastructure.



4. Engage for better outcomes for all - Key learnings from 2020

We learnt a great deal from our engagement over 2020 to better understand the needs and concerns of our stakeholders and we are committed to continuing to build on these learnings to enhance our engagement. As a result of the challenging environment presented by COVID-19 in 2020 we have changed and innovated our stakeholder engagement techniques. While the COVID-19 pandemic caused setbacks to some of our intended engagements, EirGrid remained committed to delivering on our stakeholder obligations. This intention was evident through our adaptations in how we engaged with our stakeholders and continued to learn as the year progressed.

Some of the key learnings this year are listed below and other learnings specific to particular topics or stakeholder groups are also captured throughout this report:

- **Engagement channels and tools:** The value of new tools and channels such as online meeting tools, webinars, mailouts and virtual open days used for engagement on grid infrastructure projects and in our interactions across our stakeholder groups was demonstrated over 2020 in enabling us to continue effective engagement. We gathered key learnings on how to further improve our use of available channels and tools through our initial trials of these. We sought and received feedback from customers and industry stakeholders on their preferred methods of engagement. We learned the importance of adapting and responding to the evolving needs and environment. We will continue to focus on new ways to enhance our tools and channels across all facets of our engagement in 2021 to continue to offer increased flexibility to our stakeholders.
- **Stakeholder representation:** During 2020, EirGrid continued to strive to enhance the representation of all stakeholders in its consultations and in the consultation responses that we sought through stakeholder mapping and notifications to broad spectrum of stakeholders. This resulted in responses to the consultations conducted during 2020 being from a diverse range of industries, customers and government agencies. This broad range of perspectives and feedback, in particular relating to local knowledge on grid infrastructure projects, has resulted in a more well-rounded and balanced approach to our project development and delivery.
- **Representative consultation responses:** We recognise and encourage consultation responses from groups and representative bodies, as this enhances the effectiveness of engagement for everyone and the representation of each response is considered in our decision making. However, we recognise that we need to acknowledge more clearly in our consultations responses and decisions that we are aware of and consider the representation of each response to consultations. This is being addressed through inclusion in internal guidelines.
- **Customer feedback:** During 2020, EirGrid focused on enhancing our proactive engagements with customers and industry stakeholders. Our customer clinics, informative email updates and consultation papers issued have resulted in valuable two-way communication with our stakeholders. This information informed the development of the 2020 Customer Survey which invited feedback from our customers. A number of learnings have been identified through this process and these are being considered in our steps to continue to enhance our stakeholder engagement. These key learnings include:

- Understanding the commercial pressures and challenges faced by customers and acknowledging mistakes are two areas where customers have indicated that we could improve. We welcome this feedback. Going forward we are committed to continuing to listen and to look for ways to address these areas. Accountability is a core value for EirGrid and we will continue to hold ourselves to high standards in our actions going forward.
- Existing and prospective large demand customers would like more certainty around the availability of firm capacity and connection policy. This is an area that EirGrid is continuing to work closely with the network owners, generators, regulators and the relevant government entities to identify the needs for the appropriate network and generation assets required. We are committed to continuing to provide regular updates to our demand customers going forward on data centre connection policy.
- While the usefulness of the SmartGrid dashboard on our website has a satisfaction rating of 75%, we also gathered very useful information on future improvements for the website such as an enhanced search function. These insights will be considered in our website development.
- Early engagement and connecting our customers continues to be an area of key focus for customers and while many had positive feedback on this area, we received useful insights on what further enhancements customers would like to see. This is an area we will continue to focus on as part of our Customer Journey initiative under PR5.
- **Six step framework engagement:** The role of consultation in infrastructure development is evolving and requires continual focus and development. Building on successes achieved through consultation is key to the evolution of consultation. These include, for example, nurturing community relationships and understanding community ambitions. We will be addressing this continued need for focus and development through the implementation of our Public Engagement strategy in 2021.
- **Awareness:** Our awareness campaign is designed to build trust and has had positive effects and key learnings for EirGrid. It was evident that clear, consistent messaging across multiple platforms was necessary to reach a diverse audience. The importance of social media was highlighted as the younger demographic had less awareness or understanding of EirGrid than older audiences who might have been more likely to consume traditional media such as newspapers, radio and television. These learnings will be used to further enhance the effectiveness of our engagement to raise awareness in the future to support delivery of grid infrastructure projects.
- **End to end delivery:** A key lesson learned for EirGrid was to look for ways we can enhance our end to end delivery in partnership with ESB Networks (ESBN). To address this, our PR5 programme provides a practical response built on our shared ambition to play our role in supporting the transition to a low carbon society and improving on PR4. The close working between EirGrid and ESBN has been key to the development of this programme and we are committed to continuing this work together going forward.

5. Responding to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic created an unprecedented and challenging backdrop to our stakeholder engagement from March 2020 onwards. In response, we quickly adapted to new ways of working to continue to engage effectively with our stakeholders during this time. As a result of this new challenge, we ensured that engagement with our customers and stakeholders was not compromised by using tools already available to us, including conference call facilities, phone and email and in parallel accelerating delivery of a robust online meeting platform to continue to engage with our customers and stakeholders throughout the year.

Since the start of the pandemic, we have been collaborating extensively with the Government, regulator, ESBN and Gas Networks Ireland to ensure a consistent industry response capability to the pandemic. This 'Party of 5' have met on a very regular basis since March 2020 and continue to work together to maintain full services over 2020, now and in the future. Such close engagement has strengthened the relationships between these organisations.

Operating the grid and market

Engaging with and responding to our customers and industry stakeholder needs has been a priority for EirGrid during the pandemic. From the early stages, we provided updates to all of our customers on the comprehensive programme of preparedness we were operating to, with proportionate measures for the COVID-19 outbreak to ensure availability of critical staff to operate the power system and market and reassurance that contingency plans for a more widespread outbreak are in place.

We responded quickly by putting in place regular calls with generators, including conventional and renewable generation and demand side units. Through these calls, EirGrid provided updates on system operations and from discussions at the 'Party of 5' meetings. These calls provide valuable two-way engagement with industry to discuss and resolve challenges being faced by both EirGrid and generators to provide continuous service as well as other relevant system operations information such as system trials and capacity margins. They also provide the opportunity for generators to share information with each other.

Updates were provided to customers on the impact of restrictions on delivery of the annual Transmission Outage Programme via emails and conference calls as well as through the regular publications on our website. We conducted a consultation on the mitigation of the impact of COVID-19 in the procurement of DS3 System Services to assist existing and prospective service providers seeking to contract for the provision of System Services to alleviate some of the difficulties being encountered as a result of COVID-19.

Business as usual

Across the organisation, we adapted quickly to the restrictions in place to ensure formal and informal engagement could continue with our stakeholders through the channels available with our new working arrangements. Consultations, working groups and regular engagements continued to take place and were adapted to reflect challenges being faced. We kept open lines of communication with our stakeholders to ensure we could continue to work together effectively during these times.

Delivering Infrastructure

The challenging public health context of the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on how EirGrid could engage over 2020 on delivering infrastructure. Our direct contact with communities, landowners and elected representatives were significantly affected. We could no longer safely hold open exhibition days, visit landowners or engage with the public in our mobile information unit. This was disappointing, as our liaison teams have achieved greater acceptance of grid projects in recent years.

However, this context gave us an opportunity to accelerate our innovation in the digital engagement space. As with every employer, the safety of our project stakeholders and staff became the immediate priority. But equally, it was also important to minimise the impact of the pandemic on the consultation experience and on our grid infrastructure projects' programmes.

In the first instance, we postponed all planned project consultation for the first half of 2020. We then used this time to build our capacity internally to prepare for virtual engagement. We investigated technical solutions, conscious of the need to stay accessible for stakeholders. We then trained our liaison, communication, engagement and project management teams. Finally, we trialled solutions including webinars, digital workshops, virtual exhibitions and micro-sites (these being project sites which allow for greater interaction for stakeholders, for example with the provision of interactive mapping).

This ensured that the appropriate level of information could reach all our project stakeholders in good time. And throughout the year, we diligently monitored and followed public health restrictions.

Lessons learned on engagement during COVID-19 in 2020

Over the course of 2020, as we adapted and responded to the restrictions in place, we reviewed our communication and engagement plans. This flexibility saw us put in place new channels of communication and in some cases extend consultation periods. On grid projects, we also created further project communications, extended consultations periods and considered new ways to reach stakeholders. EirGrid will use this flexibility and responsiveness to continue to improve our channels and tools for engagement going forward.



6. Lead the island's electricity sector on sustainability and decarbonisation

Shaping our Electricity Future

EirGrid Group is working with its stakeholders to deliver at least 70% of Ireland and Northern Ireland's electricity from renewable sources by 2030. This includes accommodating 95% generation from renewable sources on the grid by 2030. To achieve this, the grid will need to be operated in a more dynamic and responsive way. This will require an end-to-end solution incorporating user experience, improvements to infrastructure, operational practices, and market design and operation.

From the engagement and work over 2020, we have developed a range of credible approaches and options to deliver at least 70% of electricity supply from renewable sources – *Shaping our Electricity Future*.

EirGrid and SONI will launch aligned public consultations on *Shaping Our Electricity Future 2030* in March 2021. In preparation for this consultation a number of stakeholder meetings and briefings took place in the second half of 2020 and into January and February in 2021. The purpose of these engagements were to brief a targeted group of stakeholders on the plans associated with the consultation and to take early feedback on assumptions and models used to inform the consultation material. Feedback received as part of the consultation will be used to revise these assumptions and models. The revised models will be used to produce the final '*Shaping Our Electricity Future 2030 Roadmap*' outlining steps for optimal delivery of the Renewable Ambition. The target date for publishing the final roadmap is autumn 2021.

Key enabler programmes to support Shaping our Electricity Future

Over 2020, engagement with stakeholders continued on the key enabler programmes that are supporting our work to deliver at least 70% of electricity supply from renewable sources by 2030.

- A number of consultations and publications took place over 2020. This was complimented by one to one engagement with individual customers and industry representative bodies through both formal and informal channels. The engagement associated with several of the significant consultations and publications that took place in 2020 are highlighted below and a full list of documentation is available [here](#).
- In July 2020, the Single Electricity Market Committee published the System Services Future Arrangements Scoping Paper (SEM-20-044). As well as formally responding to this scoping paper, EirGrid engaged in regular discussions with the regulators in Ireland and Northern Ireland on this topic. There was also extensive engagement with industry in 2020, with EirGrid facilitating several bilateral discussions with customers and industry stakeholders. Feedback from stakeholders indicated that this engagement has been effective for them, with several stakeholders seeking further engagement.

- We conducted a consultation on the DS3 System Services Protocol document for the Regulated Arrangements. The Protocol document specifies the performance monitoring methods utilised by the TSOs, as well as operational requirements that contracted Providing Units must abide by in the provision of services. A consultation paper was published in April 2020, which proposed a clarification on how the Fast Frequency Response service should be provided together with some minor changes to performance monitoring methods and other operational requirements. There were 19 respondents to the consultation. A recommendation paper was published in June 2020 and a revised Protocol was implemented effective 1 October 2020. The TSOs intend to conduct a consultation on the Protocol in 2021. An initial workshop was held in November 2020 at which we outlined some of our proposals and another workshop will be conducted as part of the consultation process in 2021.
- We conducted a consultation on the mitigation of the impact of COVID-19 in the procurement of DS3 System Services. The TSOs considered that it was reasonable to introduce limited changes to the procurement process to assist existing and prospective service providers seeking to contract for the provision of system services to alleviate some of the difficulties being encountered as a result of COVID-19. A consultation paper was published in August 2020. There were 18 respondents to the consultation. The decision to add an additional procurement gate, with contracts executing on 1 July 2021, was published in November 2020.
- We published a Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) approved implementation paper on Locational Scarcity Scalars for System Services for providers in the Dublin region in October 2020. This followed an industry consultation process conducted by EirGrid (as directed by CRU in CRU/19/128) in Summer 2020. The final CRU approved implementation paper considered carefully all of the responses received as part of the consultation process. Following consultation feedback, it was decided to apply locational scalars of equal value to the services eligible for locational scalars.
- As part of the FlexTech Initiative, in collaboration with ESNB and NIE Networks (NIEN), we published the FlexTech response to consultation in June 2020, setting out key priority areas of the initiative for the future. In addition, the stakeholder consultation feedback highlighted a range of areas of improvement, particularly in terms of structure, transparency and engagement which are informing our future engagements on the initiative.
- We also published a consultation in partnership with ESNB as part of the Hybrid Working Group to seek industry feedback on a proposed framework for multiple legal entities sharing connection points. In total, 14 responses were received from stakeholders. The TSO and DSO will publish a response to consultation in March 2021.
- In addition, in October 2020, we released a new tender for the Qualification Trial Process, which provides a platform for technology providers to demonstrate new and enhanced capability for delivery of system services.

In terms of the level of engagement with stakeholders on the FlexTech initiative, we acknowledge that this has not been as comprehensive as originally planned for 2020. This was due to competing priorities and the need to focus resources on other key areas of our business during these unprecedented and challenging times. The FlexTech initiative will be a key enabler of the energy transition to 2030 and our collective ability to achieve the 70% renewable electricity ambitions. In that regard, we recognise the need for EirGrid to ensure that the programme receives the necessary focus and prioritisation, and that engagement with stakeholders is transparent and meaningful.

Energy Policy and Thought Leadership

The Climate Action Plan (CAP), launched in 2019, contains approximately 200 actions to address climate change, including a 70% renewable energy target by 2030.

The Programme for Government: Our Shared Future, published in 2020, reaffirmed the commitment to at least 70% renewable electricity by 2030 and also outlined an increased ambition for climate reductions within the State in addition to a commitment to 5GW of offshore wind by 2030. The Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications is now in the process of developing the Climate Action Plan 2021 to incorporate this increased ambition. A decarbonised electricity system will be fundamental to the delivery of this ambition and EirGrid has engaged with the Minister and his Department and will continue to do so in the development of the CAP 2021.

As owners of 19 actions under the CAP 2019, EirGrid is dedicated to promoting and enabling initiatives and developments that influence and encourage advancements in energy policy and related thought leadership.

This approach has been ingrained in our group values and is demonstrated in the following 2020 achievements:

Offshore

We led the Offshore Grid Delivery Models Study to support the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) in their consultation on offshore grid delivery models. As part of this study, EirGrid sought input from both industry and stakeholders on their perspectives. This report was published in March 2020. EirGrid was directed by CRU in January 2020, to accept grid applications from the Phase 1 Projects. We are currently studying the grid reinforcements required by these applicants to connect to the transmissions system and will revert to the CRU with the output of those studies. We have actively engaged with developers of both Phase 1 Projects and beyond. This engagement has included:

- Phase 1 Projects Grid Studies Workshop in July 2020, as well as individual one to one meetings with the Phase 1 Projects.
- Presenting at the Irish Wind Energy Association (now Wind Energy Ireland) Annual Conference in September 2020.
- Phase 1 Projects Technical workshop in November 2020.
- Presenting at DECC Industry event in November 2020.
- Regular engagement throughout 2020 with both Phase 1 and non-Phase 1 Projects.
- EirGrid submissions to a number of consultations including EC Green Deal, EC Offshore Strategy and DECC consultation on grid delivery models.



This collaboration has provided different perspectives on the drivers for the grid delivery models. This engagement has provided insights and learnings from developers and TSOs on how offshore has been delivered in other jurisdictions, what has worked well and what hasn't. These insights inform what Ireland and EirGrid can do to support offshore development. It has also included ensuring insights from Phase 1 Project developers are considered in the development of the grid reinforcement studies.

RESS

RESS 1 is the first Renewable Electricity Support Scheme by the Government of Ireland and is a pivotal component of the CAP. It is an integral part of achieving Ireland's target of reaching 70% renewable electricity by 2030. RESS is also an enabler for community-led participation in renewable energy projects.

The development of the first RESS (RESS 1) auctions involved significant work and collaboration with DCCAE (now DECC) and CRU on the detailed design and terms and conditions for the scheme. It also included the development of agreed procedures, documentation processes and systems required for auction. In addition to this, the running of the auctions involved ongoing engagement with industry and the wider public during the qualification and auction phases.

This first RESS auction ran, as per the RESS 1 auction timetable, in July 2020, and the final auction results were published in September 2020.

- Six Q&A sessions were held during the qualification window (March and April 2020) – due to the ongoing pandemic these sessions were facilitated using conference call.
- Questions could be submitted up to 2 days before the session. All questions were addressed either during the next or in a subsequent call.
- Questions and answers were posted in our FAQ document on the EirGrid website for those unable to attend.

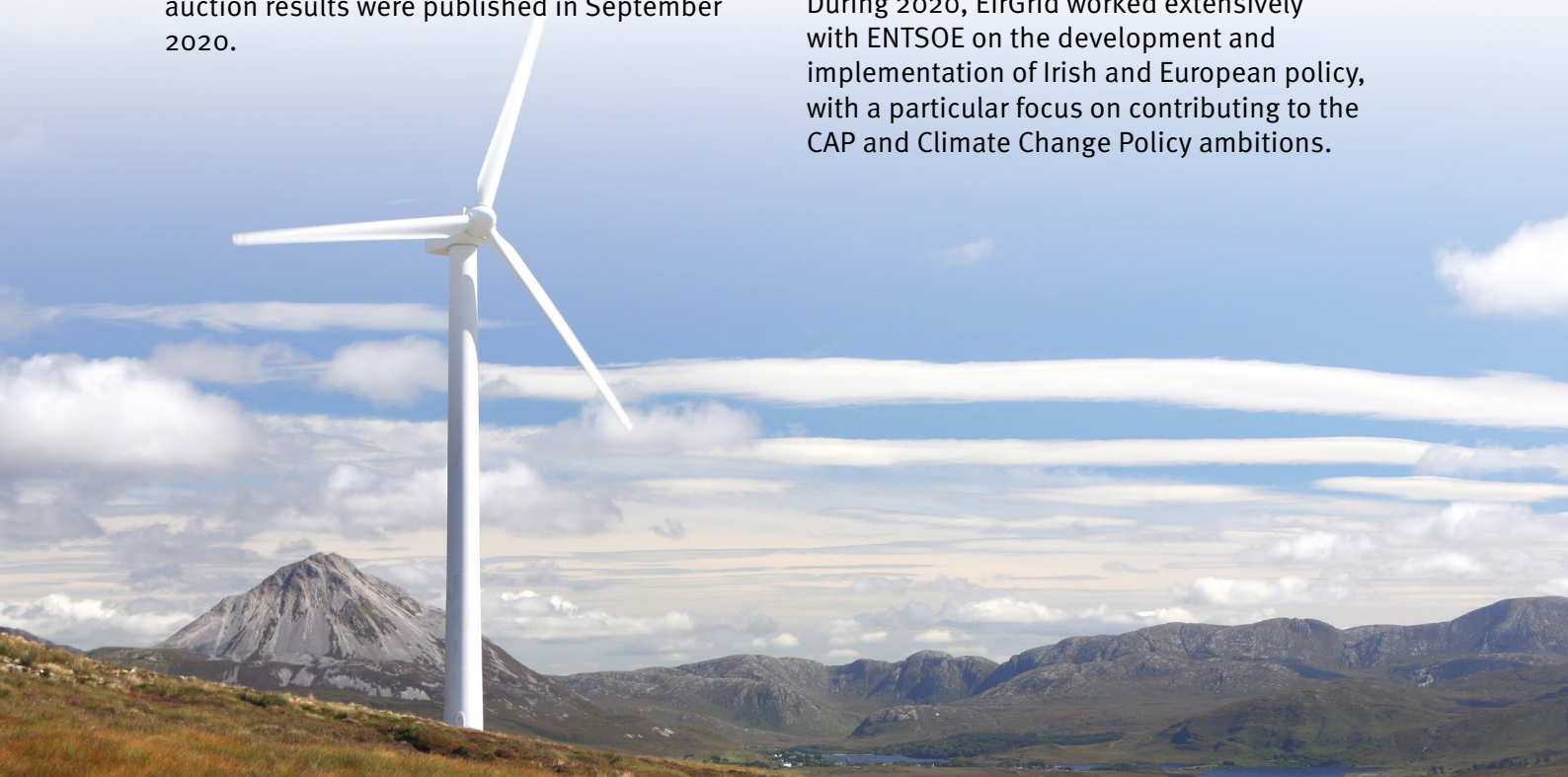
The Q&A sessions were very successful as participants could get clarity on the RESS 1 terms and conditions and become familiar with the qualification and auction processes and use of the online portal well in advance of deadlines. This success was recognised by Wind Energy Ireland and in a special mention in an industry publication.

There was clarity for participants on how to use the portal and regular emails were sent to participants in relation to upcoming deadlines. Overall, this was successful, with no reports of any miscommunications or missed targets by participants.

The primary learning from RESS 1 was that engagement is key and will be a measure of success in future RESS auctions.

European engagements

During 2020, EirGrid worked extensively with ENTSOE on the development and implementation of Irish and European policy, with a particular focus on contributing to the CAP and Climate Change Policy ambitions.



Sustainability

Responsible Business

EirGrid's primary goal to lead the island's electricity sector on sustainability and decarbonisation places sustainability at its core. We also have an internal goal to embed sustainability across all areas of the business. Over the past year, we carried out a broad range of programmes and activities to support environmental and social sustainability.

As an external verification of our activities, EirGrid continues to hold the Business Working Responsibly Mark. The Business Working Responsibly Mark, awarded by Business in the Community Ireland and audited by the National Standards Authority of Ireland, is the leading independently audited standard for CSR and Sustainability certification in Ireland. The Mark provides a root to branch review of the organisation and assesses and certifies our corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability management system across five pillars: Governance, Workplace, Marketplace, Environment and Community.

Environmental - Lead the island's electricity sector on sustainability and decarbonisation

EirGrid repeated its support to the Friends of the Earth 'Hands up for Solar' campaign which provides an opportunity for schools across the country to compete to win solar panels for their school. This programme helps to reduce electricity costs for schools, increases renewable energy, and also educates students on the positive impact of clean energy on climate change.

EirGrid continued to co-chair the Business in the Community Ireland 'Low Carbon Economy' Leaders Group and to encourage more businesses to sign the Low Carbon pledge. The Low Carbon Pledge commits signatories to reducing their scope 1 (direct) and scope 2 (emissions from purchased electricity) greenhouse gas emissions intensity by 50% by 2030.

As a signatory of the pledge, in 2020, EirGrid reported a 22% reduction based on data for 2019 against 2018.

Corporate Social Responsibility

COVID-19 impacted and continues to impact communities across Ireland and Northern Ireland. In 2020, EirGrid Group made donations to both the Community Foundation of Ireland and the Community Foundation of Northern Ireland COVID-19 appeals set up to support those most affected by the pandemic. Removing barriers to education is a core focus of EirGrid Group's community investment strategy. EirGrid continued its work with Margaret Aylward Community College (MACC) through the Business in the Community Ireland 'Business Action on Education' suite of programmes. Through the partnership, EirGrid volunteers provide practical skills based support e.g. CV development, interview skills training, to MACC pupils. In 2019/2020, we expanded the partnership to include support to the academic staff also. EirGrid carried out two social media workshops for the teaching staff. In response to COVID-19, EirGrid provided financial support to the school to purchase health and hygiene products for the students. In 2020, the EirGrid/Margaret Aylward partnership was shortlisted in the volunteering category of the Chambers Ireland Sustainable Business Impact Awards.

In addition, EirGrid has supported the DCU Access Programme since 2017. The DCU Access Programme provides financial support to socio-economically disadvantaged students to enable them to pursue a college education.



7. Operate, develop and enhance the all-island grid and market

Delivering grid infrastructure

Asking landowners and local communities to accept new infrastructure has never been an easy task.

Our grid development projects will affect multiple communities and stakeholder groups over a number of years. We never take decisions requiring new infrastructure lightly, or without first investigating all alternative solutions. Where new infrastructure is essential, we need to inform and persuade landowners and communities. Incorporating public feedback is critical to the delivery of energy infrastructure. It allows EirGrid to make better and more informed decisions.

It is critical that we make consistent efforts to facilitate effective stakeholder participation in decision-making as these projects develop. This will allow us to answer queries, address concerns and build understanding and support for these projects. We will also learn how the project may affect host communities which will inform what we do to address this.

In our 2020 Stakeholder Engagement Plan, we outlined our intention to engage on nine projects:

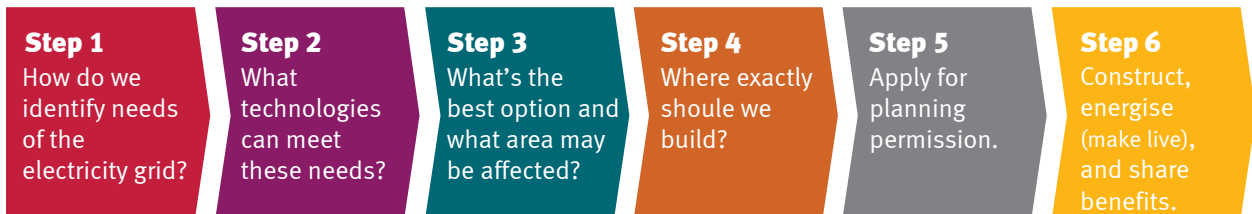
1. CP1021 East Meath to North Dublin Reinforcement;
2. CP966 Kildare - Meath Grid Upgrade;
3. CP0816 North Connacht 110 kV Project;
4. Cross Shannon 400 kV Cable;
5. CP0967, CP0968, CP0969 Series Compensation on the Dunstown - Moneypoint 400kV line at Moneypoint, Dunstown and Oldstreet;
6. Celtic Interconnector;
7. CP0466 North South 400 kV Interconnector Project;
8. CP0866 Great Island - Kellis 220kV OHL refurbishment; and
9. CP0813 Trien Control Building and entrance improvements.

An overview of our engagement approach, impact and lessons learned on our projects is set out below. Further information on the engagement on each specific project is provided in [Appendix I](#).



Engagement Approach

We use a consistent, six-step public engagement process to explore options and make decisions. This means we follow the same steps for every project. It ensures we are identifying stakeholders and giving them an opportunity to shape the proposals as early as possible. The decision-making tools we use and the amount of engagement we carry out at each step depends on the scale and complexity of each project.



The level of stakeholder engagement is dependent on the type of project, as technical projects such as the Cross-Shannon 400 kV cable and CPo813 Trien Control Building and entrance improvements have a limited number of impacted stakeholders. Large infrastructure projects such as CP966 Kildare – Meath Grid Upgrade, North Connacht, CP1029 and Celtic Interconnector involve a much wider range of stakeholders with larger numbers of landowners and communities affected by the development. Our approach to the engagement is tailored to suit the particular project.

As highlighted in [Responding to COVID-19](#), the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on how EirGrid could engage over 2020 on our projects, with all in person engagement with communities, landowners and elected representatives directly affected. In the first half of 2020, we postponed all planned project consultation and used this time to prepare for virtual engagement. We investigated technical solutions, trained our liaison, communication, engagement and project management teams and then trialled solutions including webinars, digital workshops, virtual exhibitions and micro-sites.

In the second half of 2020, our engagement recommenced on 6 of the 9 projects. Our virtual engagement was complimented by a bespoke media campaign for each project covering information and notifications provided via multiple channels. This included advertising in local and national press, letters to landowners and statutory bodies, emails to stakeholders, social media announcements and discussions on public radio with the approach refined for

each project. Stakeholders were invited to provide feedback in multiple formats including feedback forms online, email or letter. They could also engage directly with a dedicated Community Liaison Officer.

In addition to our engagement with all effected stakeholders as part of the six step process on specific grid development projects, throughout 2020 we also continued to engage with customers and industry around the delivery of grid infrastructure. This included updates on Associated Transmission Reinforcements as well as engagement through calls and webinars on specific regions and projects, such as North Connacht.

Impact of Engagement

- While our engagement across all projects was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the flexibility to adjust our engagement approach for when engagement could start again resulted in effective engagement across all projects where engagement took place.
- Our revised approaches ensured that the appropriate level of information could reach our project stakeholders in good time while we diligently monitored and followed public health restrictions.
- Of the 9 planned project engagements in 2020, we engaged on 6 in the second half of 2020 and used our revised approach effectively in these engagements.

Learnings

Learnings from individual infrastructure projects are reviewed and incorporated to improve our engagement on subsequent infrastructure projects to ensure the benefits of learnings identified are actualised in future engagement. A complete set of learnings from our grid development engagement over 2020 is included in [Appendix I](#) following the individual project updates.

The role of consultation in infrastructure development is evolving and requires continual focus and development. Building on successes achieved through consultation is key to the evolution of consultation. These include, for example, nurturing community relationships and understanding community ambitions. We will be addressing this continued need for focus and development through the implementation of our Public Engagement strategy in 2021.

Enhancing the representation of all stakeholders in our consultations remains a key focus for EirGrid over 2020. This broad range of perspectives and feedback, in particular relating to local knowledge on grid infrastructure projects, has resulted in a more well-rounded and balanced approach to our project development and delivery. This was particularly evident in the Celtic project and the associated site selection and development - more information in [Appendix I](#).

The consistent and proactive engagement and project communication resulted in a partnership approach which provided benefits to all. Engaging with our stakeholders during the consultation period allowed us to nurture our community relationships, contribute to the communities that we are working in and deliver on our strategic initiatives.

Public engagement strategy for a cleaner energy future

We are committed to continuous improvement. We will articulate our goal of transforming the power system for future generations in a compelling way. We will also continue to look for innovative new ways to engage. Our aim is to achieve world-class standards and to deliver better results as a consequence. Our goal is to deepen and broaden our consultation and to respond in meaningful and persuasive ways to fears and concerns.

To get the grid ready so at least 70% of Ireland's energy can come from renewable sources by 2030, EirGrid is working to make an evolutionary shift in how we engage with the public. When we are developing new grid infrastructure, our engagement principles are applied to form our six-step engagement process. It ensures we are identifying stakeholders and giving them an opportunity to shape the proposals as early as possible. If we don't engage successfully with the public and those affected by grid development plans, we won't achieve climate action targets.

As outlined in [Engage for better outcomes for all - Enhancing our engagement](#), over 2020 we have developed an informed and considered engagement strategy to ensure that community engagement and communication is part of our core competence. In doing so, we considered lessons learned from our own projects and similar work across the energy sector and drew on engagement with external stakeholders and best practise reviews. This engagement strategy complements and enables our well-established expertise in engineering. We are developing in-house skills, increasing our capacity and partnering with best practice providers across the industry. This engagement strategy will be published in Q1 2021.

Asset management

EirGrid, in our asset management and maintenance role, is responsible for setting maintenance policy and standards which is comprised of policies for maintenance, replacement and refurbishment of the assets forming part of the transmission system. The transmission system consists of over 7000 km of overhead line, 350 km of underground cable and over 170 substations containing transmission assets. EirGrid plans and manages the maintenance programme and ESBN, as Transmission Asset Owner (TAO), carries out the physical maintenance work. EirGrid in conjunction with ESBN as TAO is also responsible for assessing asset condition and making the decision to invest in either refurbishing or replacing assets. EirGrid and the TAO work closely to develop, maintain, and manage the transmission system and ensure that EirGrid can continue to operate the transmission system in a safe, secure, and reliable manner.

- Over 2020, EirGrid and the TAO continued to work closely through the Maintenance Policy and Standards Committee and related workstreams, meeting regularly at senior management level as well as with subject matter experts. On a daily basis there is interaction by phone, email and meetings with many different teams and individuals within the TAO. These range from Station and Lines Supervisors and Outage Coordinators to the lines, cables and stations teams within ESBN Asset Management Department.
- Through our joint ESBN and EirGrid Stations Technical Groups, a significant benchmarking exercise and review of the existing transmission station maintenance activities was completed, which has resulted in changes made to these activities in 2020. These changes are based on improvements and updates identified from a benchmarking exercise completed with 6 other high performing TSOs and multiple Stations Technical Group meetings.

- Over 2020, there continued to be involvement with ENTSO-E and participation in a number of technical forums and workstreams where knowledge, new approaches and new developments are shared and discussed among TSOs.
- Engagement with customers on asset management activities including planned and forced maintenance and repairs.
- EirGrid also continued to participate in the DECC Electricity and Gas Networks Climate Change Adaptation Group along with other key partners and stakeholders, contributing to the [Statutory Electricity and Gas Networks Sector Climate Change Adaptation Plan](#) delivery. In accordance with the commitments and actions contained within the plan, EirGrid is continuing to undertake risk assessments and flood modelling at an asset specific level.

Due to COVID-19 there were new challenges with undertaking maintenance in 2020 which required substantial engagement with the TAO resulting in the development and implementation of an approach to ensure alignment with public health guidelines while allowing critical maintenance to proceed. Through the work with the TAO and benchmarking against other TSOs, improvements have been implemented to improve the quality, consistency and efficiency of the station maintenance activities, which will deliver value for money for the TUoS customer.

Transparency was provided to industry through subject matter expert information around equipment maintenance standards and equipment on the transmission system. The strong partnership approach between EirGrid and ESBN has been very positive particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on critical maintenance and we will continue to focus on this going forward.

We recognise the importance of continuing to engage with other TSOs where knowledge sharing is facilitated. Customers have welcomed increased engagement to share more knowledge on asset and operational related matters during 2020 which we will look to continue.

Operating the grid and market

To ensure safe, secure and reliable power and market system operation and development, we engage on a day to day basis and collaborate regularly with our customers, industry representative bodies and other key stakeholders. These include, but are not limited to, ESBN, Gas Networks Ireland, other system operators, government, regulators and the wider industry.

In 2020, we continued to engage and collaborate through a broad spectrum of methods including one to one engagements with specific customers and industry representative bodies, formal engagement processes and panels, industry fora, publications and workshops on a wide range of topics. Some topics of engagement are highlighted below. As noted in *Responding to COVID-19*, we also engaged extensively with our customers and industry stakeholders to provide up to date information, to collaborate on maintaining system security and to find solutions to challenges associated with the pandemic.

Outages

Our engagement on the 2020 Transmission Outage Programme and on generation outages continued throughout 2020 through the normal channels of one to one engagement with customers affected by outages as well as regular updates on our website. This was complimented by additional industry updates provided to explain the impact of COVID-19 and we worked closely with ESBN and our customers to minimise the effects. We issued an outage survey in September 2020, affording our demand and generation customers an opportunity to provide an overview on their planned maintenance activities throughout 2021. Gathering this information is very important and is beneficial for both EirGrid and our customers as it allows for more seamless planning of the Transmission Outage Programme for the year ahead and allows for outage efficiency to be maximised.

Testing and Grid Code compliance

2020 also saw significant engagement on generator testing and grid code compliance continue with our customers to support delivery of energy and system services. We engaged directly with our customers to support delivery and adjusted our approach to testing to ensure this could continue during COVID-19 restrictions. Over the year, there were 51 dispatch tests and 15 Operational Readiness Confirmations issued. Grid Code testing for wind farms took place on 49 days in the second half of the year and five batteries were connected to the transmission system.



Dispatch down

Dispatch down is a topic of keen interest to our customers and industry stakeholders and EirGrid continued to enhance our engagement around dispatch down over 2020. Regular meetings with industry were put in place in 2020 and continued throughout the year. In response to feedback received through this forum and from our customers, a number of improvements to EirGrid's dispatch down reports have been implemented and the frequency of these reports is increasing to monthly from the start of 2021.

At our Outturn Availability forum in February 2020, we presented on a range of topics relevant to our customers and industry, including transmission outages and the wind dispatch tool used in our control rooms to implement constraints and curtailment when necessary. We published information on the wind dispatch tool constraint groups and issued communications to our customers and industry on forced outages and other outages on the transmission system that may result in increased constraints during higher wind conditions. These were complimented by a number of webinars and calls were held with industry throughout 2020 to ensure the latest available information was regularly communicated and to provide updates on trials and new policies in place such as negative reserve. We have worked extensively across 2020 to improve our engagement around dispatch down, as well as engaging with individual customers to address technical queries on their individual sites and received significant positive feedback from our customers through our customer survey to reflect this. Dispatch down continues to be an area of focus going forward.

Engagement on EU Network Codes and Clean Energy Package

During 2020, EirGrid continued to engage on the implementation of EU Network Codes and the Clean Energy Package. This work involves significant collaboration between CRU, UR, ESBN, NIEN, SONI and EirGrid, with regular meetings throughout 2020, as well as detailed engagement on individual topics and items. There were also three Joint Implementation Group meetings, which involve the system operators and regulators across Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain, who collaborate on the implementation of EU Network Codes and relevant changes. This was complimented by engagement with customers and industry to provide updates, discuss and formally consult.

In 2020, there were consultations on Emergency Restoration proposals and the Electricity Balancing Guidelines and subsequently decisions were achieved on these consultations. In addition, we worked closely with the regulatory authorities to ensure a collaborative approach to programme management with shared project management tools and risks and a shared understanding of challenges and benefits of EU Network Code and CEP implementation.

A key learning from previous engagement on the implementation of the Network Codes was the importance of engaging frequently on detailed topics, including with the regulatory authorities' consultants to ensure alignment and common understanding. This has been addressed in recent engagement and will continue going forward.

8. Work with partners for positive change

Supporting and connecting our customers

In 2020, we continued to focus on delivering and enhancing our support to existing and prospective customers, as well as industry stakeholders, in relation to a wide spectrum of electricity industry issues. The publication of *Engage with Us – A Guide for Customers and Industry Stakeholders* provided further clarity for our customers and industry stakeholders. Our customer account managers, as each customer's primary point of contact within EirGrid, ensured continued support for their customers and addressed queries and issues as they arose throughout the year. This has been reflected in our customer survey responses, with customer account management satisfaction rated as 78%.

Early and consistent engagement with developers during the connection process is something EirGrid recognises as essential and is continuously working to improve. Throughout 2020, we hosted 52 customer clinics with potential customers to discuss future generation and demand connections with our subject matter experts in their consideration of future projects ahead of submission of connection applications.

In 2018, the CRU published a decision on Enduring Connection Policy – Stage 1 (ECP-1) with the principal objective of allowing projects which were 'shovel ready' to have an opportunity to connect to the network. The ECP-1 Programme was successfully delivered by EirGrid and ESNB (as the Distribution System Operator (DSO)) with all offers being issued by the System Operators by the May 2020 deadline.

In parallel, the development of the Enduring Connection Policy Stage 2 (ECP-2) was a major focus for EirGrid in 2020. ECP-2 now prioritises large renewable energy projects in line with the CRU strategic priority of delivering sustainable low-carbon solutions with well regulated networks.

EirGrid worked closely with both the CRU and DSO in developing and implementing ECP-2.1. TSO/DSO meetings took place every fortnight and engagements with CRU were also frequent, typically on a monthly basis. This collaborative process provided for cohesive and comprehensive inputs from the System Operators into CRU's [ECP consultation](#). It also enabled the joint publication of the [ECP-2 Ruleset](#) and the [Node Assignment Rules](#) by both SOs.

Throughout 2020, we also continued to engage with offshore generation projects (further information under [Energy Policy and Thought Leadership](#)) and demand customers. In July 2020, we published a consultation paper on the future of the Data Centre Connection Offer Process and Policy (DCCOPP) which provided stakeholders with an opportunity to provide feedback on a number of areas that are under consideration for the next iteration of the policy. As EirGrid is continuing to work closely with the network owners, generators, regulators and the relevant government entities to identify the needs for the appropriate network and generation assets required to ensure capacity and security of supply going forward, an updated DCCOPP has not yet been published. We are committed to continuing to provide regular updates to our demand customers going forward in this area and an updated policy is expected to be published in 2021.

Regulatory engagement

The CRU is Ireland's independent energy and water regulator. The CRU is responsible for the economic regulation of energy, protecting the interests of energy customers, ensuring security of energy supply and facilitating the provision of a low carbon future.

EirGrid's relationship with the CRU is key. EirGrid engaged with the CRU on a regular basis in 2020 regarding issues such as tariffing, market operation and development, transmission system operation, connection policy, security of supply, etc. The CRU published its Price Review 5 (PR5) Final Determination Paper in December 2020, setting out the CRU's decision on EirGrid's revenues for the 2021 to 2025 period. During 2020, EirGrid engaged intensively with the CRU regarding PR5. EirGrid also engaged with key stakeholders, to articulate our proposals with the aim of enhancing stakeholders' interpretation of same.

ESB Networks – Transmission Asset Owner

During 2020, EirGrid and ESBN engaged with CRU to agree the PR5 Capital Allowance for the next 5 years. The PR5 programme proposed by both organisations is the most ambitious programme of work to ever be undertaken on the transmission system. Our programme includes over 300 projects and represents a 24% increase in Capex allowance from PR4. The projects include system reinforcements and customer connections.

Taking feedback from the NSEE Panel last year, and following extensive engagement with our stakeholders, it was clear to us that we needed to do our part to support the government climate change plan and support economic development across the country while reinforcing and maintaining security of supply. This approach is closely aligned with the strategies of both companies. A key component of our success in this is the enhancement of our engagement with ESBN as TAO.

Delivery of the PR5 programme will see enhanced process improvements deployed by both EirGrid and ESBN to embed the step change in our end to end delivery.

Engagement approach

- ESBN and EirGrid have engaged effectively in 2020 including through regular management and executive level meetings as well as significant ongoing interaction on a day to day basis.
- During the year ESBN and EirGrid aligned organisation structures to improve end to end delivery.
- With Executive oversight a Process Improvements Working Group was implemented. The joint approach has been to focus on improvements that can mitigate the issues which impact delivery such as schedule and cost with a focus on internal process improvements.
- The Government restrictions introduced on public health grounds to keep us all safe from COVID-19 created a number of specific challenges with respect to developing the transmission system in 2020. To address these challenges both organisations met on a daily basis to manage and resolve issues and coordinate our outages to maximise the delivery of the programme. The key focus during this period for both EirGrid and ESBN was to ensure security of supply to critical infrastructure such as hospitals and care facilities and generators while also continuing to develop and maintain the transmission system.



Impact of engagement

- The COVID-19 restrictions resulted in the number of outages granted during 2020 being reduced. However, the high level of engagement and support between EirGrid and ESN during the period succeeded in maximising our outages to delivering critical maintenance, grid development and customer connections during a very challenging time for our country. We also enhanced our level of engagement with our customers and stakeholders during this period to communicate the issues and seek their feedback.
- Over 2020, ESN and EirGrid invested significant time and resources aligning our organisations and increasing grid development and connection project agreement output to progress to construction in response to feedback from stakeholders. We are confident that this will lead to improved outcomes for our customers and stakeholders.
- Based on the improvements made during 2020, EirGrid and ESN have seen over 50% increase in the number of projects approved and scoped which are ready for construction. This step change in output forms a solid improvement over PR4 and sees both organisations well placed to continue these improvements during 2021 to 2025.
- PR5 sees the implementation of the Joint Incentives decision which focuses on clear metrics for end to end delivery with enhanced quarterly reporting and monitoring in addition to independent auditing of the output from both EirGrid & ESN.
- A key lesson learned for us was to look for ways we can enhance our end to end delivery. To address this, our PR5 programme was built based on our shared ambition to play our role in supporting our country as we transition to a low carbon society improving on PR4 and the PR5 programme provides a practical response.



ESB Networks – Distribution System Operator

ESBN, as DSO, operates the electricity distribution system in Ireland. The transition to a power system with 70% of its electricity met by renewable energy sources, with a significant portion of the new technologies connecting to the distribution system, will require a heightened level of collaboration with ESBN in its role as the DSO, to ensure that security of supply and customer needs continue to be met. We both have equally challenging goals to achieve climate action targets and key to achieving these is partnership and collaboration.

Engagement approach

- Regular engagement at management and executive level between the TSO and the DSO covering topics including operational policies, operational coordination, exchange of data and training.
- Over 2020 there has been significant collaboration focussing on agreeing governance arrangements and working on developing a joint work programme.
- Significant engagement on implementation of legislation and energy policy including EU Network Codes and Ireland’s Climate Action Plan 2019.
- Regular engagement on initiatives and programmes such as DS3 and FlexTech to address local and system challenges as the system becomes more diverse as we connect and implement a wider array of technologies.
- Collaboration of DSO and TSO to ensure security of supply is maintained and to address customer needs as required.

Impact of engagement

- A joint EirGrid/ESBN 2021 programme has been produced and the forward joint TSO/ DSO programme is being finalised for sign off by EirGrid and ESBN Executives. This provides a firm basis for continued working together.

Academia

EirGrid Group actively supports research projects and collaborates and partners with academia and research experts, both on the island of Ireland and internationally. The approach of EirGrid Group to engagement with academia includes supporting and steering research at third level institutions and engaging with research experts, supporting and partnering with indigenous projects and seeking opportunities to participate and lead international consortium-based projects.

EirGrid has a long tradition of supporting research in universities by hosting undergraduate students and supporting final year projects and by collaborating with masters and PhD level research. In addition, EirGrid routinely provides letters of support for senior researchers for their funding applications. EirGrid has a long-standing involvement with UCD, primarily with the Energy Institute. EirGrid is an Industry Partner in the Energy Institute Consortium and attends events, such as the joint UCD-ESRI webinar in 2020.

Additionally, over 2020 EirGrid continued to provide information and data upon request to PhD students and researchers. EirGrid also contributes to large research projects (such as MIGRATE, PROMOTION) and has representation on Advisory Committees for academia-led consortium projects and research groups (such as CREDENCE, MaREI, ESRI Energy Policy Research Centre). EirGrid also leads the EU-SysFlex Project, which has a large consortium of academic and industry partners.

9. Appendix I: Grid Development Projects

An overview of our consistent 6 step engagement approach for developing grid infrastructure projects is set out earlier in *Delivering Grid Infrastructure*, where we also provide information on our focus on future improvement.

In this Appendix, we set out further information on the grid development projects that were identified in the 2020 Stakeholder Engagement Plan. We outlined that we would engage on the following projects:

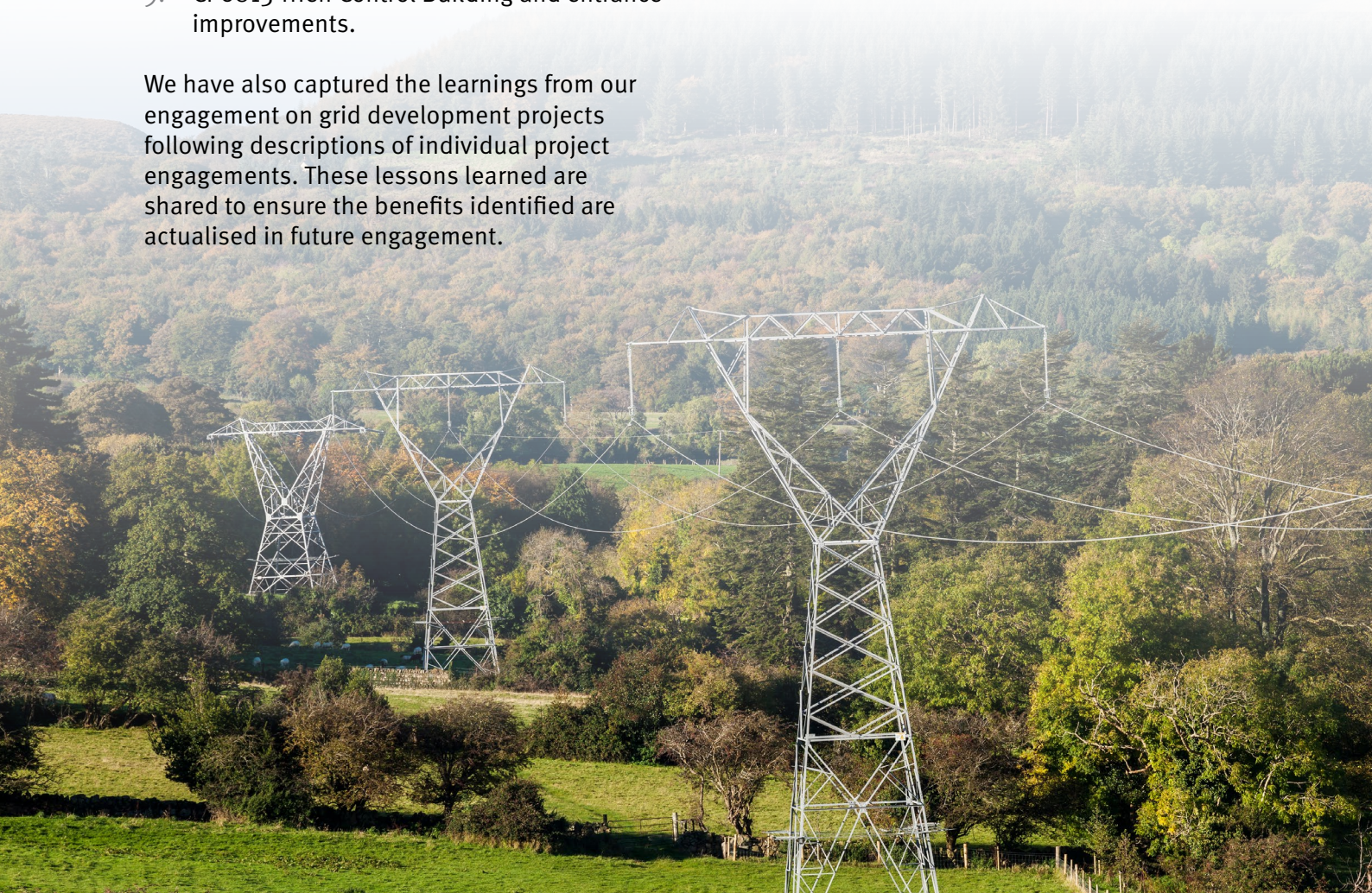
1. CP1021 East Meath to North Dublin Reinforcement;
2. CP966 Kildare - Meath Grid Upgrade;
3. CPo816 North Connacht 110 kV Project;
4. Cross Shannon 400 kV Cable;
5. CPo967, CPo968, CPo969 Series Compensation on the Dunstown - Moneypoint 400kV line at Moneypoint, Dunstown and Oldstreet;
6. Celtic Interconnector;
7. CPo466 North South 400 kV Interconnector Project;
8. CPo866 Great Island - Kellis 220kV OHL refurbishment; and
9. CPo813 Trien Control Building and entrance improvements.

We have also captured the learnings from our engagement on grid development projects following descriptions of individual project engagements. These lessons learned are shared to ensure the benefits identified are actualised in future engagement.

1. East Meath to North Dublin (Capital Project 1021)

Capital Project CP1021 is a proposed development to reinforce the network between East Meath and North Dublin. Reinforcement of this part of the network is needed to continue to ensure the security of the network feeding the east of Meath and the north of Dublin, between Woodland, Clonee, Corduff, Finglas and Belcamp substations. The project will help meet the growing demand for electricity in the east of the country due to the increased economic activity in recent years. It will also facilitate increasing amounts of renewable electricity that is generated by windfarms in the West and South and transported for use in the east of the country. The starting point for the reinforcements examined in this project will be from Woodland substation and the end point will be Corduff, Finglas or Belcamp substations.

The aim of stakeholder engagement in Step 2 is to transparently communicate our findings so far in the project to key stakeholders and receive feedback on chosen technologies and refined short list.



Engagement approach

The stakeholder engagement in Step 2 was divided into two phases, phase A and phase B, in order to ensure appropriate stakeholder feedback and inform our decision-making process.

- In phase A we identified and consulted with relevant key strategic stakeholders including the Government Departments, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities, Meath and Fingal County Council Chief Executives and Senior Executives, the IDA, Enterprise Ireland, the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly, and Meath and Fingal Chambers. This phase was completed between November 2019 and January 2020.
- In phase B, an 8-week consultation period commenced in October 2020 and finished in December 2020. The consultation period covered a broad range of stakeholder engagement with the general public, local communities, and their elected representatives, as well as re-engagement with the key stakeholders from phase A. All stakeholders had the opportunity to provide feedback in relation to the assessment carried out to date and the solutions to be brought forward for further consideration in Step 3.
- A virtual meeting with Ratoath Municipal District Councillors was held to introduce them to the project. All Ashbourne Councillors were contacted with information on the project. All Councillors in Howth-Malahide and Blanchardstown/Mulhuddart districts were contacted and introduced to the project along with all TDs & Senators in the Meath East, Dublin Fingal, and Dublin West Dáil constituencies.

- In addition to the Phase A and B engagement, a door to door letter drop to all residents within a 2 km radius of Woodland substation was conducted in early August 2020. The letter provided information on the status of the North South Interconnector project, CP966 Kildare Meath Grid Upgrade and provided an introduction to the project.

Impact of Engagement:

- Phase A engagement enabled us to understand the spatial and economic planning that is underway at local and regional authority level, as well as the potential requirements for future investments by large energy users in the area. It also allowed us to brief key stakeholders in the area, and to hear their view of the opportunities and challenges that exist for the project, as well as receive feedback on chosen technologies and the refined short list.
- In response to the 8 week consultation, a small number of responses were received, and these were mostly enquiring about the relationship between this project CP1021 and other on-going projects around Woodland substation such as CP0966 Kildare – Meath Grid Upgrade, and the North South Interconnector.
- Many stakeholders also welcomed the opportunity for early engagement.
- No additional technology options were either removed or added as a result of the consultation period.

2. Kildare Meath (Capital Project 966)

The Kildare-Meath Grid Upgrade will add or upgrade a high-capacity electricity connection between Dunstown substation in Kildare and Woodland substation in Meath. The upgrade will help to more effectively transfer power to the east of the country and distribute it within the electricity network in Meath, Kildare and surrounding counties. The project is essential to meet the Government of Ireland's Climate Action Plan target of at least 70% renewable energy generation by 2030 and this includes transporting electricity from offshore renewable sources. The project will also help meet the growing demand for electricity in the East.

The Step 3 phase of public consultation on this project was due in the summer of 2020. Its strategic importance led to trials of new ways to deliver a safe yet wide-reaching consultation.

Engagement approach

- On this project, we could not carry out face-to-face engagement to assess levels of awareness and understanding due to COVID-19 restrictions.
 - This prompted us to adapt and to run a “recap” campaign on the project. This aimed to persuade the public about the need for the project and to inform them of the constraints that shaped our options.
 - In July 2020, we started a 10-week campaign. This saw 50,000 leaflets distributed to homes and businesses and the creation of a new standalone website. This website included a suite of interactive maps that allowed visitors to use their Eircode to explore local constraints.
 - We also partnered with local authorities, Public Participation Networks (PPNs), Chambers of Commerce and Library Services. This ensured project information was widely available.
- Clear and informative content was supported by a persuasive and engaging advertising campaign. This was the first time we had run a fully realised advertising campaign - on newspaper, radio, billboards and digital channels - for a local project. The campaign - ‘Upgrading Lines, Upgrading Lives’ - used emotive messaging to persuade locals of the need for and benefits of the project.
 - The awareness-raising phase was then followed by a 10-week consultation period on the process followed and the options evaluated in the Emerging Best Performing Options report. To increase accessibility and avoid a digital divide, we worked closely with NALA, the National Adult Literacy Agency. We also created a freepost address for respondents, offered a call back service and sent a questionnaire to all homes in the project area.

Impact of Engagement

This engagement and consultation provided valuable insight into views and opinions about the proposals and will influence our approach to consultation in next step of this project. Through the consultation, we identified both support and concerns for all five options, the consultation process and the study area and this included feedback across a broad range of issues. The feedback indicated little opposition to any of the options at this point and identified no new information that would influence the multi-criteria assessment.

3. North-Connacht 110 kV Project (Capital Project 0816)

The North Connacht 110 kV Project is a 110 kV transmission circuit linking the substations at Moy in Co. Mayo and Tonroe in Co. Roscommon, with many landowners and communities possibly impacted. The North-Connacht 110 kV project will be either an overhead or an underground cable. There will also be 32km of upgrade works on the existing 110 kV line from Tonroe to Flagford (Carrick-on-Shannon).

The Step 4 consultation aimed to identify the best performing technology option and route corridor.

Engagement approach

- This project was due to start key Stage 4 consultations in 2020 when the pandemic intervened. We pivoted to new forms of engagement, starting with a postal survey. This survey asked respondents how they wanted to engage with us and receive information on the project.
- We also used leaflet distribution and created an online questionnaire to gather feedback. And while our mobile information unit could not be staffed or host visitors, we used it as a mobile billboard across the project area.
- This project also pioneered EirGrid's use of a virtual open day. The online format allowed stakeholders to see information typically seen on project open days. Site visitors entered a virtual "room" displaying project information posters. They could then walk through the room and get more detail by interacting with each poster. The virtual exhibition space also allowed for stakeholders to register for webinars and submit their views –all in one place. This model was adopted by leading developers on high-profile projects across a range of sectors in Ireland this year.

Impact of Engagement

- In total, the North Connacht consultation reached a wide audience and received 654 responses. Responses to the consultation were submitted via an online form, by email and by post. The consultation received 488 online responses, 35 hardcopy responses and 131 letters and emails. This includes three petitions that were submitted to this consultation, which received a total of 1,464 signatures, with each individual petition being treated as one response but recognised as representing the views of signatories to the information presented in the petition. The dedicated campaign website saw 5200 users with over 7000 sessions with an average time on the site of 1 min 39 seconds.
- The consultation was extended following requests from public representatives who fed back that some constituents required more time due to COVID-19 restrictions. We extended the consultation from 16 November 2020 by a further month to 11 December 2020 to ensure all parties, irrespective of access to the internet, were afforded ample time to access project information and respond with any questions or concerns they may have.
- We combined digital innovation with a 'back to basics' engagement approach to provide another round of comprehensive engagement. We hosted 2 additional webinars and further meetings with local groups, flexible telephone clinics extending outside of office hours, a third postal mail shot to the 41,000 homes and businesses across the study area and additional newspaper and radio ads. All engagement activity was supported by project information in hard copy format, which was sent out on request to the public.

4. Cross Shannon 400 kV Cable

The Cross Shannon 400 kV Cable Project is a submarine cable that will link the electricity substation at Kilpaddoge in North Kerry to the Moneypoint generating station in Clare. There are large amounts of renewable electricity generation being connected to the electricity grid in the south and west of Ireland. During times of high wind, the Cross Shannon Cable Project will facilitate the flow of this power to the east of the country.

Engagement Approach

- Engagement in 2020 included meeting with the planning authorities and the local landowners in the area who would be impacted by the works. Typically engagement would be face to face with the landowners, however we modified our engagement approach to align with COVID-19 restrictions.

Engagement Impact

- These engagements were completed successfully and no 3rd party appeals were received following submission of the planning application in August 2020.
- Prior engagement with all affected parties throughout the planning phase, including information days in 2019 to local communities meant that all feedback had been gathered and addressed, and resulted in no appeals from anyone in the locality. This early proactive engagement will be used across all projects going forward.

5. Series Compensation on the Dunstown - Moneypoint 400kV line

Capital Projects CP0967, CP0968, CP0969 as associated with series compensation on the Dunstown - Moneypoint 400kV line at Moneypoint, Dunstown and Oldstreet respectively. These are innovation projects and the devices will be connected to the existing 400 kV circuits to increase power flows. These projects are part of the Regional Solution which replaced GridLink.

As there were further extensive studies required for these projects during 2020 there was no external engagement completed on these projects apart from with prospective manufacturers of the equipment.



6. Celtic Interconnector

The Celtic Interconnector is a proposed electrical link which will enable the movement of electricity between Ireland and France. The European Commission has designated the Celtic Interconnector as a Project of Common Interest (PCI). The Celtic Interconnector will deliver a number of benefits including enhanced security of supply, downward pressure on electricity costs and help facilitate Ireland's transition to a low carbon energy future.

Engagement Approach

- The Celtic Interconnector project began 2020 with the close out of the Step 4 consultation on three converter station sites on the 02 February. This consultation received over 1000 responses and feedback was received on all three sites. In May we published the consultation report along with a project update answering concerns raised in the consultation and indicating what our next steps would be.
- We had indicated at the start of the consultation that work to determine a suitable location within Site 1 would continue. By May, while work had progressed it had been established that more focused site investigations should be carried out. We committed to pursuing these site assessments and investigations. Feedback was also received on the cable route and we committed to continue to work to refine the proposed route. It was estimated that this work would be completed towards the end of 2020.
- COVID-19 also posed challenges to consulting and engaging with stakeholders and completing on work required to inform assessments. This was overcome in a number of ways. In July we held online public webinars to ensure continued communication with stakeholders.
- In November 2020, Step 4 of our 6 Step Grid Development process was closed and the Step 4b Consultant Development Options report was published. The final project options had been identified and these were that the interconnector power cables will reach landfall in Ireland at Claycastle Beach in Youghal, Cork. From there they will travel underground to the converter station at Ballyadam and then on to the substation at Knockraha, also by way of underground cables.
- EirGrid also announced that an enhanced community benefit scheme will be established for the Celtic Interconnector project and that we will work with the affected communities on this.
- These announcements were made by letter, email and online, communicated directly to community and stakeholder groups and supported by online meetings and webinars.
- Achieving the Renewables Grid Initiative (RGI) Communication & Engagement award for the Stakeholder consultation around the Celtic Interconnector was a particular highlight for the project. The award highlighted the early engagement and holistic approach that included 3D modelling and dedicated liaison officers.

Impact of Engagement

- Continuation of communication and relationship building;
- Dissemination of project information;
- Increased awareness of the project;
- Identification of common concerns and themes held by the public;
- Identification of local community representative groups;
- Increased engagement with particular stakeholders and stakeholder groups;
- Incorporation of publicly held concerns and themes into decision making process; and
- Demonstration of the role of consultation in project decision making.

7. CP0466 North South 400 kV Interconnector Project;

The project is a cross border overhead line between the Ireland and Northern Ireland Transmission systems to enhance security of supply, reduce market constraints and facilitate the integration of renewables. The project will consist of 138 km of single circuit 400kV overhead line running from Woodland substation in Co. Meath through counties Cavan, Monaghan, Armagh and joining the Northern Ireland Transmission system at a new substation at Turleenan near the Moy in Co. Tyrone.

Engagement approach

- EirGrid and SONI continue to engage with landowners and communities through the use of Agricultural Liaison Officers and a communications team that regularly liaises with political and business stakeholders. A project website is also available with project updates to members of the public and a Community Update brochure was also issued.

Impact of Engagement

- The project was recently granted planning approval in September 2020 in Northern Ireland and a number of landowners have agreed to offers of compensation for an easement to facilitate construction of the overhead line despite the restrictions on direct face to face engagement through COVID-19.
- Despite reaching agreement with landowners on easement offers through the use of phone and written correspondence, we would have expected the level and expediency of final agreements being reached to be higher through face to face dialogue had this been possible.



8. CPo866 Great Island - Kellis 220 kV line refurbishment.

This project still requires planning consent. In 2020 it was planned that our Agricultural Liaison Officer (ALO) would engage with all the landowners on the route to provide background on the project and talk through access requirements, the next steps (environmental survey and planning submission) and construction timelines. However, with the COVID-19 restrictions, all the engagement was suspended and has been rescheduled to start in 2021.

9. CPo813 Trien Control Building and entrance improvements.

This capital project CPo813 is to extend the control building in Trien 110 kV station and make improvements to the entrance. The stakeholder engagement is limited to the local resident whose home is adjacent to the site. The outstanding entrance works are required to address the resident's concerns. As an interim measure ESNB have installed security cameras and lighting.

The ALO will engage with the adjacent resident following Eirgrid internal approval to proceed to planning with the final planning drawings. As such, there was limited external engagement in 2020. ESNB have been engaging with the homeowner for a number of years. The ALO and ESNB will be first point of contact for the adjacent resident as the project progresses to planning permission.



Lessons Learnt from our stakeholder engagements during 2020

Consistent across our projects is the engagement with stakeholders, communities and landowners throughout the project development process.

Whilst this has been a difficult year for all, we have continued our project engagements and outline below some of the learnings over this period.

- The use of digital methods of engagement has been widely accepted by communities and has become an accepted approach to enable community participation and to provide project updates during the project development cycle.
- The use of traditional media, such as newspaper and radio advertisements, together with printed information brochures and update letters remains important to help us reach and inform those in communities where our projects are located.
- The use of digital media has allowed us to gain a better understanding of how people engage on projects and to consider our approach for future project consultations.
- We have seen that some engagements are much more difficult when they are not conducted face to face. For example landowner engagement often requires a visit to a landholding to meet with and discuss a project with the landowner. Digital engagement methods are much less effective for these meetings.
- Communities often need to get together to discuss and better understand our proposals. Their ability to do this has been significantly impacted by COVID-19. We increased the consultation timelines on projects in recognition of this difficulty and is something that we will consider for future consultation periods.
- Communities are keen to engage with us on projects as has been evidenced by the feedback we have received from on-line questionnaires, virtual open day exhibitions and webinars. Some of the digital methods used are easier to access than others. Some webinar platforms for example provide a better experience than others. We need to be mindful of this and ensure we tailor our approach to reduce technical barriers as far as possible.
- 2020 has shown us that stakeholders are open to new forms of engagement and there is an onus on us to continue to innovate in this area. We will be trialling new engagement methods over the coming months, for example with the introduction of deliberative assemblies to seek greater participation and collaboration on our projects and programmes.
- Consistent, proactive engagement and communication is valuable to communities to provide transparency and address concerns.

10. Appendix 2

Table 1: Consultations

Topic	Audience	Objective	When	Outcome	Effectiveness
Strategic Incentives 2020 Proposals Consultation	All	Seek feedback on EirGrid's proposed strategic incentive proposals for calendar year 2020	09-Mar-20	EirGrid published the 2020 Strategic Incentives for consultation	4 responses were received, feedback from which was incorporated into the final strategic incentives for 2020 as published on the CRU's website
DS3 System Protocol Document	All	Provide an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on the proposals to amend the DS3 System Services Protocol document	08-Apr-20	DS3 System Services Protocol Recommendations Paper & DS3 SS Protocol V3.0 were published on the EirGrid website	19 responses were received. Feedback received was considered in the development of the recommendations paper and final protocol
Proposed 2020/21 Other System Charges	CRU & UR, SEM Market Participants	Consultation on Proposed 2020/21 Other System Charges	08-Apr-20	SEM Committee Decision published on 27 July 2020	9 responses received. Explaining the responsibilities of the TSO in relation to ISEM Scheduling and Dispatch has helped inform Stakeholders in relation to the need for many of the Other System Charges
Public Consultation on EU Network Code Regulation (EU) 2017/2196 Emergency Response	EirGrid, ESBN and public	Required by the code during the development of System Restoration Plan (SRP), System Defence Plan (SDP), Terms and conditions of SDP and SRP and Market Suspension Rules	08-Jul-20	Decision was achieved on consultation	No responses were received to this consultation
Guidelines on Electricity Balancing consultation	EirGrid, ESBN and public	Required as part of the implementation of the Guidelines on Electricity Balancing	08-Jul-20	Decision was achieved on consultation	3 responses were received
Balancing Market Principles Statement (BMPS)	Relevant stakeholder group	Consultation with industry on proposed revisions to the BMPS – a guide to the scheduling and dispatch process	23-Jul-20	Final BMPS (V4.0) was published on the EirGrid website	6 responses were received from stakeholders and these were considered in the final BMPS

Topic	Audience	Objective	When	Outcome	Effectiveness
Proposed Calendar Year 2021 Generator Unit Under Test (GUUT) Tariffs	CRU & UR, SEM Market Participants	Publish proposed changes to GUUT Tariffs for 2021 for comment	01-Sep-20	Decision published by SEM Committee on 15 Oct 2020. Approved Testing Tariffs published on EirGrid website	2 responses were received and these were considered in the recommendation drafting
Hybrid Multiple Legal Entities	All	Consulting on framework for Multiple Legal Entities for Hybrid technologies	03-Sep-20	Consultation report has been drafted and will be published in Q1 2021	12 responses were received in response to this consultation. Consultation response due to be published shortly
Mitigation of COVID-19 Impact in Procurement of DS3 System Services	All	Consult on the introduction of limited changes to the procurement process to assist existing and prospective service providers seeking to contract for the provision of System Services to alleviate some of the difficulties being encountered as a result of COVID-19	03-Sep-20	Decision published 27 November 2020	18 responses were received from stakeholders. These responses were considered in the final decision
2021 Stakeholder Engagement Plan	All	Ask for feedback on the proposed Stakeholder Engagement Plan 2021	18-Nov-20	Final 2021 Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Consultation report are being developed for publication on EirGrid's website in Q1 2021	6 responses were received from stakeholders on our Stakeholder Engagement Plan for 2021. These responses are being addressed in our consultation report and used to inform the 2021 and future annual Stakeholder Engagement Plans
Data Centre Connection Offer Process and Policy (DCCOPP) Consultation	All	Ask for feedback on revised Data Centre Connection Policy	17/7/2020	EirGrid is continuing to work closely with the network owners, generators, regulators and the relevant government entities to inform Data Centre Connection Policy. A revised DCCOPP has not yet been published	11 responses to this consultation were received from stakeholders which have provided valuable insights into ongoing work in this area

Topic	Audience	Objective	When	Outcome	Effectiveness
Proposed 2020/21 Transmission Loss Adjustment Factors (TLAF)	All market registered generators	Publish Proposed 2020/21 TLAFs for comment	17/7/2020	Approved TLAFs were published on the EirGrid website	1 comment received
2020 Stakeholder Engagement Plan	All	Ask for feedback on the proposed Stakeholder Engagement Plan 2020	19/02/2020	Final 2020 Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Consultation report were published on EirGrid's website	7 responses were received from stakeholders on our Stakeholder Engagement Plan for 2020 and this feedback was incorporated into the consultation report and used to inform the 2020 and future annual Stakeholder Engagement Plans
Transmission Development Plan 2019 - 2028 (Consultation hosted by CRU)	All	Ask for feedback on proposal which will input to the Final TDP 2019. The final version will be published on the EirGrid website subsequent to completion of the consultation process and CRU approval	25/2/2020	TDP 2019 - 2028 Consultation Report was published on EirGrid website	5 responses were received from stakeholders on the draft TDP 2019-2028 and these were welcomed and responded to in the consultation report
Proposed 2020/21 Generator Transmission Use of System (GTUoS) Tariffs	Generators	Publish Proposed 2020/21 GTUoS tariffs for comment	27/7/2020	Approved GTUoS Tariffs published	2 comments received. This publication for comment was extended due to communication issue when originally published
2019 Stakeholder Engagement Report	All	Ask for feedback on our Stakeholder Engagement in 2019	29/3/2020	Consultation report was submitted to Network Stakeholder Engagement Evaluation (NSEE) Panel and subsequently published on our website & CRU website with the NSEE Panel Report	7 responses were received from stakeholders on our Stakeholder Engagement report for 2019. This feedback was incorporated into the Consultation Report submitted to the NSEE panel

Topic	Audience	Objective	When	Outcome	Effectiveness
Joint TSO & TAO Investment Planning and Delivery Report 2019	All	Ask for Stakeholder feedback on TSO & TAO Investment Planning and Delivery Report 2019	Q3 2020	Consultation complete with stakeholder feedback gathered	Effective engagement with stakeholders, and approval and publication of the report by CRU
Joint TSO & TAO Electricity Transmission Performance Report 2019	All	Ask for Stakeholder feedback on TSO & TAO Electricity Transmission Performance Report 2019	Q3 2020	Consultation complete with stakeholder feedback gathered	Effective engagement with stakeholders, and approval and publication of the report by CRU

Table 2: Industry Fora and Working Groups

Working Groups					
Topic	Audience	When	How	Why	Outputs
Working Group on Framework for Offshore Electricity Grid	DCCAE, CRU, ESBN, EirGrid	Monthly	Monthly meetings chaired by DCCAE	Review of Options for Offshore Grid Models per Climate Action Plan	Offshore models reviewed and updated
Customer Clinics - Pre-Connection Application Information and Support	Customers looking to connect to the Transmission System	Monthly. 52 individual Customer Clinics meetings in 2020	EirGrid Industry Forum	Clinic days with bilateral meetings to support future customers	Engagement with customers to provide support ahead of application for grid connection
RESS Information Evening	Relevant stakeholder group	02/04/2020	EirGrid Industry Forum	RESS Information Evening to inform Industry about RESS 1 Auctions	RESS 1 potential customers informed about the auction process
Data Centre Conference call	Data Centre Customers	15/06/2020	EirGrid Industry Forum	Updates provided on Covid-19, applications, Connection Planning and Policy. Q&A	Information sharing on data centre applications, connections and policy
DS3 Engagements	DS3 Customers	23 June & 30 November 2020	Overview of the procurement process, the tender pack and technical questionnaire, and the testing and signalling processes for the Regulated Arrangements Volume Uncapped	23 June 2020 - DS3 System Services Volume Uncapped Gate 3 Bidders' Conference. 30 November 2020 - DS3 System Services Volume Uncapped Gate 4 Bidders' Webinar	DS3 Customers engaged and communicated with to support them in procurement process
Regional Roll out of Group Strategy	Local authorities, Chamber of Commerce and Public Participation Networks	Throughout Q2 - Q4	EirGrid Stakeholder Forum	To inform stakeholders of the EirGrid Group strategy and to engage on key upcoming developments and the Climate Action Plan	Stakeholders informed of the new group strategy

Working Groups					
Topic	Audience	When	How	Why	Outputs
Blackstart Emergency Communications Plan Exercise	DCCAE, ESB Networks, Gas Networks Ireland, CRU	03/07/2020	EirGrid Stakeholder Forum	To enhance emergency preparedness, training of stakeholders. Identification of improvements	Blackstart preparedness improved and increased
Grid Implementation Plan 2017-2022 - Monitoring under Strategic Environmental Assessment Advisory Group	EPA and GIP 2017-2022 SEA Advisory Group (EPA, IFI, NPWS, Heritage Council, DHPCLG)	Throughout Q3 20	EirGrid Advisory Group	Ask for Stakeholder feedback on the Grid Implementation Plan 2017 - 2022	Stakeholder feedback gathered
EU-SysFlex Advisory Board Meeting	EU-SysFlex Advisory Board Meeting	09/06/2020	EirGrid Industry Forum	Pan-European coordination to determine solutions for integration of RES	Successful participation
EU-SysFlex General Assembly	EU-SysFlex General Assembly	30/10/2020	EirGrid Industry Forum	EU-SysFlex is a Horizon 2020-funded project which addresses challenges of the European Union to deliver at least 50% of its electricity consumption from renewable sources of electricity by identifying and demonstrating new types of system and flexibility services	Successful participation
Grid Code Review Panel Meetings	Industry	02 July 2020 & 03 November 2020	EirGrid Advisory Group	Ongoing review of Grid Code development	The panel reports and meeting details are available on EirGrid website
NCER Network Code for Emergency Response and Restoration (EU) 2017/219, European Technical Working Group	All EU TSOs	03/07/2020	EirGrid Industry Forum	The Emergency & Restoration Code fixes the processes that the transmission system operators must follow when they face an incident on their grid. The highest standards and practice in dealing with emergency situations will thus apply in all Europe	The outputs are available here: https://www.entsoe.eu/network_codes/er/

Working Groups					
Topic	Audience	When	How	Why	Outputs
Workshop on Offshore Function Specifications	Consultation respondents	04-Nov	Eirgrid Conference Call	Offshore Functional Specifications published	To understand and discuss feedback received through 2019 consultation
Availability Forum	Generation Customers, ESNB	25-Feb-20	EirGrid Industry Forum	Present Outturn Availability reports. Provide updates on transmission outages, wind dispatch tool and dispatch down	Information provided to industry and opportunity for questions and answers
Engagement with Industry Representative Bodies	Industry Representative Bodies	Varying frequency	EirGrid Meetings, Webinars and Conference calls	To continue to engage and enhance our industry engagements	Provide industry engagement to build mutual understanding and provide a channel for feedback
Dispatch down engagement	Wind industry	Quarterly, more regularly at times	EirGrid Webinars and Conference calls	To engage and enhance our industry engagements	Develop, understand and collaborate on dispatch down related topics



The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin D04 FW28 • Telephone: 01 677 1700 • www.eirgrid.com