

ESB NETWORKS REPORT ON STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN 2018

Submitted to the Commission for Regulation of Utilities 31st March 2019
(In accordance with PR4 Decision on Reporting and Incentives CER/18/087)



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INTRODUCTION

ESB Networks recognises that it has a key role to play in enabling the transition to a low-carbon future. Our network provides an electricity connection to over 2 million customers in homes, businesses and communities across the country. As the use of the network evolves, we understand the importance of keeping these customers at the centre of everything we do. Stakeholder engagement is essential to maintain the alignment of interests between our stakeholders and the way we plan and run the ESB Networks business.

We value our engagement with stakeholders on how the network can accommodate an increasing volume of renewable energy, an increasing number of electric vehicles and an increasing use of clean electricity to heat our homes and businesses. We appreciate the importance of listening to our stakeholders to hear their views, concerns and expectations so that we are better informed in our decision making and management of the network.

Last year, we published a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for 2018. This recognised our history of engaging with Irish customers for over 90 years and set out a systematic approach to ensuring an open and ongoing dialogue with all our stakeholders. We have used a range of channels, new technologies and digital options to ensure effective communication and quick and easy access to our services. We have engaged directly with customers and worked closely with representative organisations, regulators, policy makers, economic and social interest groups, academia and the wider energy industry so that we are in a position to meet our customers' needs today and also consider tomorrow's customers and their requirements as we plan our future network. We are committed to continuously improving our approach to engagement to deliver benefits to all our stakeholders and our business.

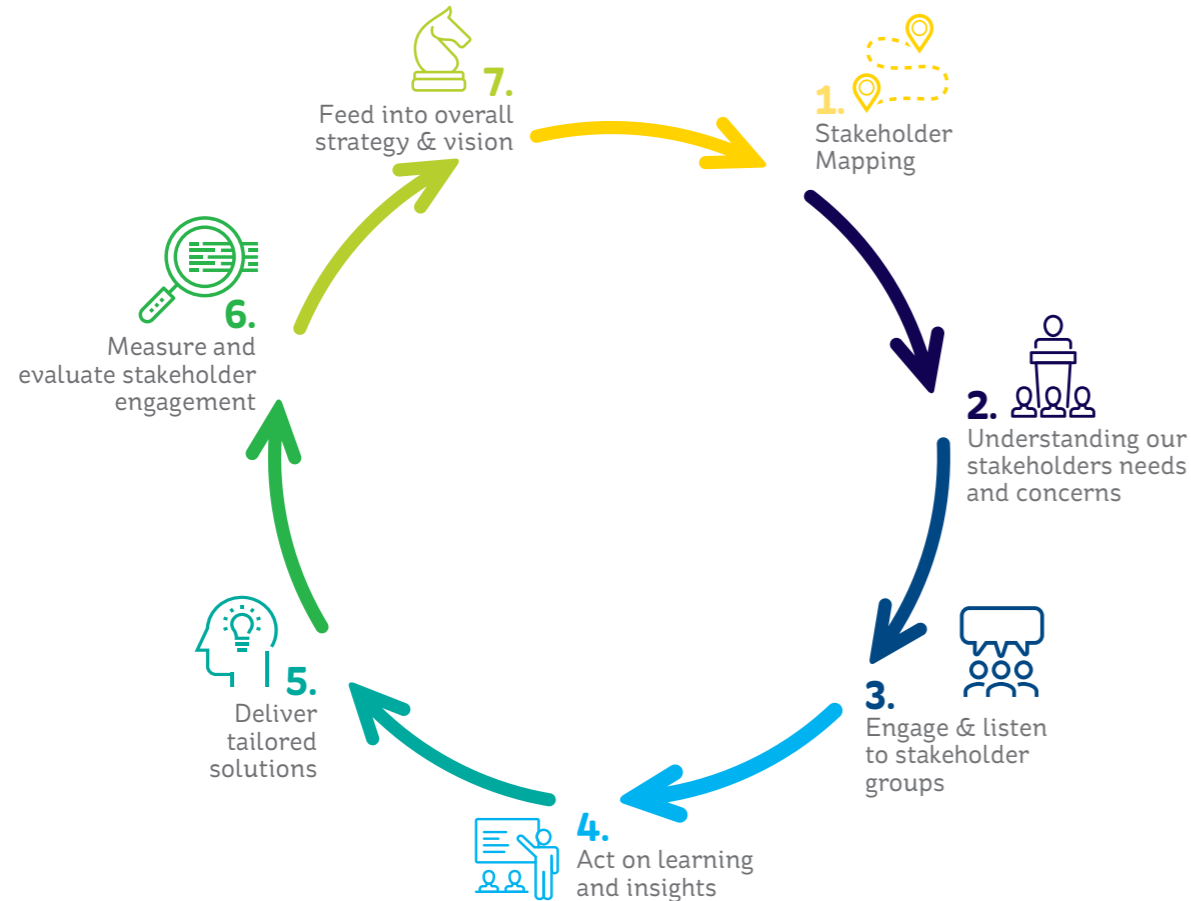


Paddy Hayes,
Managing Director,
ESB Networks

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2018

The safe operation of our network and the safety of our customers is a top priority. People at high risk (such as farmers, construction workers and children) continue to be a focus of our safety engagement activities. Our strategy set out our approach to a national public safety campaign across mainstream media channels; our partnership with the Irish Farmers Journal to focus on farmer safety; our engagement with primary school children through the delivery of over 100,000 hi-visibility vests; and our sponsorship of the Construction Industry Federation annual conference to highlight construction safety in relation to the electricity network.

Climate change is resulting in severe weather events and our strategy noted the importance of maintaining a high level of stakeholder engagement in the management of responses to such storm events. This includes communication and collaboration with emergency services, homes, farms, businesses and government agencies to ensure that power is safely restored with minimum disruption. Digital channels such as our PowerCheck App and social media are key to our effective engagement, together with the dedicated staff in our three call centres.



Our strategy noted the evolution of our approach to effectively engaging with all our stakeholders and customers. Our countrywide staff of more than 3,000 people engage with customers, communities and stakeholders on a daily basis. We want to build on this engagement by embedding a systematic and proactive engagement approach throughout our business. In our strategy we set out our cycle of engagement, involving a process of stakeholder mapping and understanding stakeholder needs by active engagement, leading to insights which can inform our business activities.

We have identified key stakeholders who are either impacted by our activities or who may have an influence on our business. These range across the full value chain from power generators to electricity retailers and the final consumers of electricity, whether these be small or large businesses or domestic customers. They also include organisations who provide governance and representation for customer groups.

Our stakeholder engagement strategy for 2018 set out a number of key priorities



Safety Communication Plan



Customer Service Improvement Plan



Public Consultations on Energy Future



Sharing Ideas and Insights with Stakeholders

OUR STRATEGY SET OUT FOUR KEY STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT THEMES;

1. PROJECT-DRIVEN ENGAGEMENT

This involves projects which have a large stakeholder engagement element. They include the Dingle community engagement project; the smart metering programme; safety in construction; new security and planning standards; new e-transport and e-heat LV design standards; and fair and cost-reflective tariffs.

3. CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

This involves activities designed to improve customer communications and improve the customer experience. This includes the use of digital channels such as our PowerCheck app; improvements to the new connections process and dealing with customer issues; and undertaking customer focus groups to gain insights into customer needs and expectations.

Each of these engagement themes maintained a strong focus on our key priorities for 2018 – customer safety; consultation on the future use of energy; excellence in customer service; and improving our business and the customer experience by sharing ideas and insights with all our stakeholders. The remainder of this report outlines the engagement strategy, implementation activities and the impact of our stakeholder engagement under each of the above themes.

MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Our engagement strategy was informed by the key drivers of our business, namely;

1. Connecting more renewable energy
2. Developing a network which enables the electrification of heat and transport
3. Ensuring the network is resilient, robust and capable of meeting demand growth

These drivers are fully aligned with the national plan to deal with climate change and support economic growth in Ireland. Our engagement strategy has also been developed by taking into account the needs of our stakeholders as identified by our ongoing engagements with them over previous years.

We have continued to ensure that the necessary organisational resources are in place to effectively implement our engagement strategy. This includes clear roles, with responsibility and accountability for stakeholder engagement plans and activities and reporting mechanisms to ensure ongoing monitoring and control. We are also reviewing best practice and relevant international standards (AA1000) to ensure continuous improvement of our engagement processes and procedures.

2. ENGAGEMENT WITH INDUSTRY

This involves hosting and participating in a range of industry events. This is critical to effective consultation on the energy future and to the sharing of ideas and insights. By working with policy makers, working groups and expert panels, we can provide insights and leadership to the sector.

4. ENGAGEMENT ON OUR 2021-2025 DEVELOPMENT PLANS (PR5)

We are preparing our plans for the next price control period. As decisions taken are critical to the energy future and national climate targets, stakeholder engagement is crucial. We have set out a systematic approach to gaining expert insights, reaching out to businesses and customers, to inform the development of our submission to the regulator.

PROJECT ENGAGEMENT

Engagement Strategy

SMART METER PROGRAMME

On behalf of CRU, ESB Networks will roll out the National Smart Metering Programme (NSMP) with a phased approach over the coming years.

This new technology will replace older meters and will bring benefits to Irish consumers, the economy and the environment.

The phased approach is designed to be consumer-led and enables us to learn and improve as we go.

As part of the roll out, we committed to engaging actively with all industry stakeholders to ensure decisions were taken in a timely, informed and collaborative manner.

In addition, we also committed to establishing a governance structure to support planning and tracking of deliverables.

Engagement Implementation

In support of the overall NSMP objectives ESBN has established and led a number of key forums and working groups. These groups ensure all programme stakeholders are aligned to the overall programme plan and able to work together as issues and risks emerge.



Engagement Benefits

Coordination and collaboration between industry stakeholders is essential given the materiality of the roll out programme in terms of its overall cost and potential impact on the consumer.

Roll out is also a critical milestone in the customer's journey to adopting new services and requires significant coordination between ESBN and Suppliers who are responsible for new customer services.

Coordination and collaboration therefore minimises the risk of issues not being considered while also providing Suppliers with sufficient time and information to plan their own resources, transitions and implementations of necessary changes to their systems.

Forums that have been both established and operational during 2018 are listed below:

SENIOR STEERING GROUP (SSG)

This group meets quarterly and comprises of ESBN, CRU, DCCAE, SEAI, GNI and Supply Companies. The group monitors progress, resolves escalated issues and oversees delivery of the customer awareness and engagement strategy.

The group also ensures that all industry stakeholders are aware of progress and have an input into the major decisions being made as the project progresses.

INDUSTRY LIAISON GROUP (ILG)

Chaired by ESBN, the ILG meets monthly and provides coordination at a programme level. It deals with key issues, taking a responsive and proactive approach.

For example, Suppliers raised a Discussion Request for the provision of "Daily Reads". ESBN worked with Suppliers to develop a range of technical options and established a consensus around an acceptable solution.

The ILG seeks to ensure that stakeholder programmes are aligned so that benefits will be realised promptly and costs minimised.

Issues are identified and resolved in a timely and consultative manner. Suppliers are aware of and have input into decisions regarding rollout that would have a financial and reputational impact on their businesses and processes.

EARLY ADOPTER WORKING GROUP

Early in 2018, ESBN engaged with Suppliers on the Early Adopter process. Feedback from Suppliers identified key themes which ESBN reflected upon before proposing a revised deployment approach focused on asset replacement. ESBN engaged with CRU, DCCAE, Suppliers and SEAI, and the revised deployment strategy was agreed. CRU then asked ESBN to establish and lead a Communications and Engagement workstream.

Open engagement, cooperation and coordination between Suppliers and ESBN led to an agreement to adopt a revised deployment strategy that de-risks the rollout programme and minimises potential for reputational/brand damage across industry, resulting in greater costs.

This group also identified the need for a coordinated industry customer awareness strategy which was subsequently agreed.



Engagement Strategy



Engagement Implementation

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT WORKING GROUP (CEWG)

ESBN engaged with all stakeholders over 14 bilateral meetings to develop a Communications & Engagement Strategy which was approved in Q4 2018.

A Communications and Engagement Working Group chaired by ESNB meets monthly to ensure ongoing coordination of customer-facing activities across industry stakeholders.

For example, BGE and SSE shared learnings from their GB Smart Metering programmes.

Engagement Benefits

The CEWG ensured collaboration so that the best possible communications and engagement strategy was developed.

This engagement resulted in activity plans and approaches that built on best practice from across industry, increasing effectiveness and efficiency of initiatives, whilst reducing risk and potential cost.

Supply Companies have visibility of the ESNB Networks customer journey which enables them to plan their own journeys.

MCR WORKING GROUP

To facilitate the detailed design and build phases of each industry participant's internal systems, ESNB led an eight-week programme of workshops with Suppliers in Q4 2018.

The workshops focused on developing the agreed Smart Market Change Requests (MCRs) needed to ensure Ireland's retail market systems are capable of delivering smart services to consumers in 2021.

To meet the overall programme timelines, technical requirements need to be agreed so that all parties can progress detailed design, build, test and commissioning activities. A number of amendments were made to the design following Supply Company inputs.

Agreement of the Smart MCRs provides all stakeholders with the time and certainty to proceed with their internal programmes, minimising risk and potential cost.

ONE-TO-ONE SESSIONS

The Smart Metering Programme issued an open invitation to Supply Companies to request 1-2-1 meetings to discuss any topic of interest to them.

This supports Supply Companies in establishing their own projects and helps to clarify uncertainty for them.

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS SAFETY

We have identified 4 main stakeholder groups that are at specific risk from electricity – the general public, children, farmers and construction workers.

Each group needs tailored communications. We have built good relationships with senior leadership in the construction industry, but we believe it is equally important to speak directly to the construction workers who are out on site. To this end, we have developed a series of social media videos, launched in Q2 2018, which speak directly to workers about the dangers of overhead wires and underground cables. We have also created a new training video as part of the Safe Pass course for all construction workers.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

- We partnered with the **Construction Industry Federation (CIF)** for **Safety Week to relaunch our 'Safety in Construction'** booklet which raised awareness of best practice around working with electricity.
- Specific engagements included;
- Partnership with CIF and GNI for Construction Safety Week.
 - Safety talks delivered to individual construction companies.
 - Engagement with the general public and targeted construction, farm, community and leisure groups through national TV, Radio and Social Media campaigns, including RTE Radio 1 Weather Sponsorship (over 1.6m listeners reached during this campaign).
 - Membership of the CIF-led Construction Safety Partnership Advisory Committee.

The benefits to ESNB and our stakeholders included:

Raising awareness of the importance of working safely with electricity amongst firms in the construction industry. During this campaign, we were able to engage with every member of the Construction Industry Federation (approx. 20,000) and we also featured in the national press, thereby raising awareness at a broader national level.

Key outputs from this engagement, which improved safety in construction, included:

- New electricity video produced for use by SOLAS in Safe Pass training which reaches 90,000 workers.
- New construction safety videos produced for use in social media.
- Collaboration with H.S.A. to revise the Code of Practice for Avoiding Danger from Overhead Lines.

Engagement Strategy

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS SAFETY cdt...



Engagement Implementation

- We are a Member of the Energy Networks Association – Safety Managers Forum where our fellow DNO utility organisations from GB and Northern Ireland share learning.
- ESNB is a judge for Irish Building Magazine – Irish Construction Excellence Awards – and sponsors the Health & Safety Category award.

Engagement Benefits

- Targeted information direct-mailed to construction, scaffolding and D.I.Y. outlets in relation to risk activities.
- Established Joint Utility Forum with GNI, Irish Water and eir.

GENERAL PUBLIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN

Our Public Safety Strategy and Action Plan (2017 – 2020) sets out how we inform and engage with the public about the dangers of coming into close contact with our electricity infrastructure.



We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

Our engagement has included a major Media Campaign which covers radio, TV, social media and print advertising, and which focuses on promoting safety around electricity lines.

Specific engagements included:

- New Emergency Services safety video launched in collaboration with Local Authority Chief Fire Officers.
- Updates to the ESNB Networks Public Safety website.

We have also developed and deployed new technologies to improve our public safety-related activities and engagement. These have included a mobile app as part of our obligations under the public safety hazard programme, specifically the hazard inspection and follow up programs for LV Minipillars and MV Substations. The app features include; satellite map turn, by-turn directions, photo capture, and use of a cloud-based web portal. This new technology improves the overall management of the programme which improves our public safety engagement with customers.

The benefits to ESNB and our stakeholders included:

More public awareness of the safety hazards if you come into contact with electricity lines. 100% of stakeholders agreed that "are you sure it's safe" is a memorable message [IPOS- MRBI].

Other benefits were:

- Making public safety information available that is relevant, accessible and recognisable.
- Raising awareness consistently using both traditional and new media channels.
- Building relationships with key organisations to promote important public safety messages.
- Recognition of the important role of ESNB Networks in the promotion of electricity safety and our commitment to working in partnership to improve that safety.
- Many and regular opportunities to engage with the public to listen and improve the safety message in terms of relevance and impact.
- Development and revision of public safety Codes of Practice and Guidance documents.

FARMER SAFETY INITIATIVES



We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

Partnership with the **Irish Farmers Journal** across print and digital media, including emotive videos about the safety risks associated with working on farms.

Specific engagements included:

- Attendance at national farm events including Ploughing Championships and Tullamore Show.
- Address delivered to the National Farm Safety Conference in association with Farm Safety Partnership, H.S.A. Teagasc & FBD.
- Talks to Teagasc College students as part of the FBD 'Champions for Change' programme.

The benefits to ESNB and our stakeholders included:

Having the partnership with the Irish Farmers Journal (IFJ) allows ESNB Networks to quickly react and communicate with the farming community if there are any safety risks e.g. during hay-moving season, we identified a risk that farmers potentially hit electricity lines while moving hay. This would be fatal and we were quickly able to communicate these risks using the IFJ Partnership.

Video views for the **Stay Safe on Farm** videos were 427,138 - these were promoted on our social media channels and on the IFJ social channels.

Engagement Strategy

Engagement Implementation

Engagement Benefits

SCHOOL CHILDREN SAFETY INITIATIVES



We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

National Safety Challenge with Schools. **RSA Partnership**, where we issue hi-vis vests to children.

Specific engagements included;

- National 'Stay Safe-Stay Clear' Primary Schools Programme involving national poster and calendar competition.
- National Safety Challenge with secondary schools.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

The National Safety Challenge with Schools had 172 entries at 2nd Level across construction and farming.

880,000 hi-vis vests were delivered to children in schools across Ireland; this also gave our staff an opportunity to go into their local schools and explain to children about how to be safe around electricity.

DINGLE PROJECT

In April 2018 we launched The Dingle Project in Dingle, Co. Kerry.

This project will help us to understand how evolving technologies perform on the electricity network of the future and how, as a result, local communities can best benefit from these technologies.

Involving the Dingle community on this journey is important, as it gives us the opportunity to see what a typical Irish Community want to play in their energy future.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

Dingle Project Ambassadors Selection Process:
Dingle Community Engagement Group

(Dingle Board/North West Kerry Development (NWKD)/Marine and Renewable Energy Ireland (MaRIE))

Strategic Community Engagement Resource (Deirdre De Bhailís)

Community Events: Project Launch, Ambassador Launch Event

Press Releases

Media Interviews (Local & National TV/Press/Radio) – Project Launch/ Ambassador Launch

Social Media/Online – Twitter, Facebook, Website, West Kerry Live (WKL), Blog, Kerry Radio interviews, Press interviews – Kerry's Eye/Kerryman.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

- Kept community updated on project progress and built trust.
- Ambassadors influenced local community and helped ESBN be part of a community.
- Opened doors to community groups – GAA//Food Festival.
- Local Engagements will allow the community to build the solution with us, which increases the prospect of greater end-user adoption of the technologies.
- Increased Project Participants for trial (increased from 65 to 76).
- Allowed project team to get advice on appropriate community engagement approaches.
- Increased project awareness (National Press).
- Contribution to local community.



NEW SECURITY & PLANNING STANDARDS

A key Industry Engagement objective is to involve industry in the redesign of our planning standards.

The Distribution System Security and Planning Standards (DSSPS) are the rules we follow to plan and develop a secure and reliable distribution network in Ireland. Technological advancements and changes to the overall energy system have given rise to the need to fundamentally review the Planning Standards. Given the important role of this infrastructure in social and economic development in Ireland, we believe that it is critical for customers themselves to be involved and consulted.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

Constructive meetings were held with export generator, demand response, storage and flexibility service providers. We engaged with representatives from the following organisations at four key meetings:

1. Renewables Group (April):
 - Wind Groups (including Meitheal na Gaoithe and IWEA)
 - Solar Groups (including ISEA)
 - Bio Energy Groups (including IrBEA)
2. DRAI Group (July): Demand Response Group (including DRAI and companies active in the demand response markets)
3. Energy Storage Group (August): (including IWEA Storage and companies active in the energy storage market)
4. Energy Storage Group (November): (including IESA and companies active in the energy storage market)

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

Stakeholder views were discussed at the workshops. This informed the Terms of Reference for the project.

The DCRP represents a wide range of distribution system users. Presenting at this forum gave industry representatives an opportunity to share expectations, so that these could be accounted for in planning this project. The project intends to deliver the right balance of security and price considering new solutions available in distribution system management. It is vital that industry can voice what it considers the best balance.

Our stakeholder engagement will ensure transparency in developing our new standards, and that stakeholders are both aware of our proposals and given the opportunity to engage and contribute feedback throughout the project. It is intended that the value

Engagement Strategy

Engagement Implementation

Engagement Benefits

NEW SECURITY & PLANNING STANDARDS ctd...



Updates have been provided via the Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP) quarterly meetings. Updates have also been provided at other events such as;

- Data Centre Conference (November)
- ISEA conference (November)
- Quarterly meetings with IWEA
- CRU-chaired Generator Connections Liaisons Group which includes industry system operators.

We published Terms of Reference, Engagement Plan, Project Timeline and sought feedback. In all, 13 stakeholder engagement meetings were held during 2018 and 100 stakeholders attended.

of stakeholder engagement will be recognised by all, and that the learning from this will be used to continue to build stronger working relationships with stakeholders that will help shape future business plans.

It is anticipated that by engaging with stakeholders, a revised copy of the Planning Standards will be achieved that has evolved to meet the current and future changes in the electricity industry and that the new standards facilitate the aims of our Innovation Strategy and balance the needs of all stakeholders.

NEW EV AND E-HEAT READY LV DESIGN STANDARDS

Our customer communications need to ensure new services are easily accessible. As customers adopt new technologies, we need to make it easy to connect and use them. In 2018, introduced new planning standards and customer service policies for electric vehicles, air source heat pumps and domestic photovoltaic. These technologies challenge our design assumptions, so we need new designs and services for them.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

The new EV and E-HEAT ready design standards were presented to industry representatives at the Distribution Code Review Panel a number of times during 2018. At these engagements, the design standards team also provided details about where more background information could be found online, based on pilot work ESBN performed during 2011–2015.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

These stakeholders' investment decisions will depend on a variety of matters such as the likely future uptake of EVs and E-HEAT in Ireland. This engagement gives them an opportunity to consider what ESBN is doing to support these new technologies, and to challenge ESBN as to what more and what new techniques could be used. This is a valuable means of testing ESBN's proposals in a wider forum.

FAIR AND COST-REFLECTIVE TARIFFS AND CHARGES

As the ways that customers use electricity change, including electrification of heat and transport, micro-generation and smart meters, we need to ensure this is reflected in the way we charge our customers. This project will ensure that our pricing structures are protecting and balancing the interests of all customers fairly.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

Stakeholder engagement during the 'Tariffs and Connection Charges' project included:

- Significant engagement in the early stages of this project.
- Engaged with and briefed TSO.
- Engaged with industry: meetings, presentations, and conferences.
- Regular internal steering group meetings and workshops.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

ESBN gained a deep understanding of the issues affecting our stakeholders and customers, so that these can be considered as the project moves forward.

Early engagement and ongoing interaction with CRU is very important, as policy decisions will ultimately be made by CRU.

Engagement Strategy

Engagement Implementation

Engagement Benefits

ENGAGEMENT ON DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM WITH DISTRIBUTION CODE REVIEW PANEL



We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

In 2018, we engaged industry in a number of key distribution system developments in the **Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP)**, a forum to give network users a say in the rules governing the operation of and connection to the distribution system. ESBN encouraged teams across our business to use it as a forum for engagement.

There we also held DCRP briefings on the following projects and topics:

- LV Design Standards Review
- EV Summary Report
- Planning Standards Review
- Enduring Connection Policy and DS3
- Interface Conditions Governing Connection to Distribution System

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

The key benefit of this engagement was to give network users a voice regarding the ongoing development of rules and procedures related to the operation of and connection to the distribution system.

To ensure that the content presented and discussed at these sessions met business and stakeholder expectations, DCRP members were asked what they would like to hear about, and ESBN provided tailored content accordingly. This tailoring of content to user requirements helped ensure that the meetings met user expectations and contributed to positive outcomes.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ON THE H2020 EUROPEAN PROJECT 'SUCCESS'

ESB Networks participated in the H2020 European Project 'SUCCESS'. The theme was "Securing our national critical infrastructure, particularly focused on mitigating the threat of Cyber Security in the electricity grid".

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

The project involved engagement with EU utilities and telecommunication companies. The final project close-out was hosted in Ireland with a range of key stakeholders invited to attend including CRU, ComReg, Vodafone, Three, Government Departments and academics from across Europe.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

The opportunity to collaborate with partners, stakeholders and industry experts to overcome challenges such as cyber security, which is becoming a critical issue for the network and customers.

NEW TECHNOLOGY ENABLING BETTER ENGAGEMENT WITH PARTNER UTILITIES DURING MAJOR STORM RESPONSE

ESB Networks staff collaborate with and receive support from staff from UK utilities in restoring power to customers in the aftermath of major storms. New technologies have been developed and are used to ensure seamless working with teams unaccustomed to our network environment, to ensure the safe restoration of power.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

The following apps were deployed to ESB Networks staff and staff from UK utilities who assisted us in restoring power to customers in the aftermath of major storms:

- MySiteFinder – find and go to assets and facilitate isolation of network.
- MyDepots – find and go to depots and view key safety information.
- MyMPRNs – find and go to customers.
- MyJSSP – site safety risk assessment with multimedia and collaboration.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

This new technology has enabled safer engagement with our UK partner utilities in the restoration of power to our customers in a safe and timely manner.

The deployment of smart devices also improved communication between field and control staff (e.g. smart devices to Facetime, email, SMS, take and send photographs), also increasing the level of safety in restoring power to customers.

ENGAGEMENT WITH EXTRA LARGE ENERGY CUSTOMERS



We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

Regular meetings and workshops were held between ESBN and these customers at an operational, management and senior management level across the organisation.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

All parties gained a better understanding of each other's challenges. Working through these together enabled efficient delivery of key infrastructure projects.

ENGAGEMENT WITH SYSTEM OPERATORS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows;

Our Commercial Section held a workshop with NIE to share best practice.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included;

Opportunity to exchange experience and provide a better service to our customers.

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement Strategy

Engagement Implementation

Engagement Benefits

DINGLE PROJECT LAUNCH

In order to engage with the local community in Dingle about our new project, we have reached out to local residents, businesses and community groups.

We want to understand their expectations of a low-carbon future and how ESB Networks can play a part in that.

We engaged with our stakeholders regarding the **launch of the Dingle project** as follows:

- **Conferences:** EirGrid Conference
- **Industry Events:** Sustainable Energy Association of Ireland (SEAI) Energy Show/Citizens Leading The Energy & Climate Transition Tipperary Energy Agency/Power Summit/National Standards Association of Ireland
- **Academic Relationships:** Marine and Renewable Energy Ireland (MaRIE)/ Kerry Educational Training Board (ETB)
- **Workshop Participation:** Marine and Renewable Energy Ireland (MaRIE) Workshop: "How do we Engage Communities in Climate Action."

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

- Helped build relationships with industry leaders – e.g. Tipperary Energy Agency / UCC
- Helped influence policy - National Dialogue on Climate Action - participation in National Engagement Workshop.
- Helped position ESBN as thought leaders in innovation – Power Summit Jan 2018.
- Promoted creation of jobs – working with Kerry Educational Training Board to design "Energy Coach" course with recognised qualification.

CHAMBERS IRELAND BREAKFAST BRIEFINGS

Chambers Ireland is the country's largest business organisation, with a network of Chambers in every major town and region in Ireland. Throughout 2017 and 2018 we partnered with them to run Breakfast Briefings around the country. These events gave us an opportunity to meet with local business owners and interest groups, and to discuss what we are doing or can do to support economic growth locally.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

During 2018, we engaged with the following local Chambers around the country:

- Carlow
- Sligo
- Fingal
- Galway
- Wexford
- Dundalk
- Waterford
- Dun Laoghaire
- Shannon
- Cavan
- Kilkenny

This involved engagement with over 250 business customers and included extensive mainstream and digital media coverage to extend the briefings more broadly within the regions.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

- ESBN gained an understanding of customer issues:
 - Reliability – outage concerns.
 - Capacity – capability of local network to accommodate potential new large businesses.
 - Desire for local EV charge points
 - Microgeneration – interest by local companies and farms.
 - Broadband – roll-out of NBP.
 - New connections – concerns about time for new connections.
- Customers gained an understanding of ESBN plans and business.

CONFERENCES & EVENTS

As well as hosting our own events, we will participate in a number of industry events. This allows us engage with our peers, and to meet with specific interest groups, including construction and farming.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

We presented at key industry events:

- National Power Summit
- SEAI Energy Show
- Ireland's Power
- National Ploughing Championships
- CIF National Conference
- Data Centre conference
- Meitheal na Gaoithe / IWFA conference
- IWEA conference
- ISEA conference
- EirGrid conference
- Building Stds & Regulations Summit
- Tullamore Show
- Farm Safety Week (launch of farm safety videos in assoc. with IFJ)
- National Safety Conference



The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

- Enabled us to meet key stakeholder groups and hear their views (e.g. on the renewables Enduring Connection Policy).
- Enabled us to keep up to date with renewable industry developments and meet and interact with renewable developers and consultants.
- It also enabled us to show leadership and provide insights on the role that the electricity network can play in enabling a low-carbon future for Ireland.

Engagement fed into innovation projects which are now underway, including two trials in hybrid RES connections and grid scale flexibility as a DSO service (as an alternative to network reinforcement).

Engagement Strategy

Engagement Implementation

Engagement Benefits

CONFERENCES & EVENTS ctd...



- National Fire Officers conferences (launched Fire Services Safety training video)
- EPRI PDU and EPRI P200 workshops on planning standards.

ESBN delivered a tutorial on TSO-DSO coordination at the CIGRE International Symposium. The >300 person audience included Irish and international experts, innovators, manufacturers, and academics.

ESBN engaged on emerging issues related to the electricity system at these events:

- ENA Asset Performance Conference
- Citizens Leading The Energy & Climate Transition Conference
- Web Summit 2018
- ENA Innovation Forum
- European Commission Citizens Energy Forum

Helped build awareness of our business: Brand awareness: 71% score for stakeholders agreeing that ESB Networks is 'customer focussed' - measured by IPOS-MRBI. Social Media following increased to 42,000 organic followers.

We raised awareness of public safety in construction and farming sectors.

The benefits of this engagement were:

- Delivered critically important electricity safety information.
- Supported and contextualised other public safety initiative.
- Demonstrated visible commitment for the broader safety initiatives in farming and construction.

Participation in broader forums such as CIGRE, ENA and Citizens forums helped ESBN to develop new perspectives, contributing to ESBN's development of PR5 plans.

WORKING GROUPS & EXPERT PANELS

We have a duty to help shape and deliver a low-carbon future for Ireland. Our staff – managers and leaders in particular – must share their insight and perspectives, by contributing to task forces and leadership panels in Ireland and abroad. Working groups we participate in and lead include:

- Eurelectric (European electricity industry association) – DSO and Market Facilitation Committee, Working Group Technology, Working Group Business Models and Customers.
- EPRI (Electric Power Research Institute) – Power Delivery Unit of the significant US-based utility research institute.
- EAI (Electricity Association of Ireland) – Networks Committee of Ireland's national electricity association.
- CIGRE – various technical working groups, task forces and committees of the major international power systems engineering association.
- ACER / ENTSO-E European Stakeholder Committees.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

- Quarterly IWEA & ESBN /EirGrid meetings
- IWEA & ISEA workshops and communications meetings
- EirGrid customer workshops
- Acting Chair of Eurelectric's Business Models and Customers Working Group. We invited experts leading customer-centric DSO projects in Europe to speak at meetings and workshops.
- Task Force Leader for Operational Planning in CIGRE's TSO-DSO Operational Coordination Working Group. We led development of a best-practice guide to TSO-DSO planning and system operation.
- ESBN participated in EY's DSO Role Study as DSO experts.
- ESBN participated in the development of Accenture's 2018 Value of Flexibility report, as DSO experts.
- ESBN contributed to a Eurelectric study on a regulatory framework for local energy communities.
- ESBN contributed data for a European Commission DSO statistics repository.
- ESBN contributed to the CEER Network Performance Benchmarking study.
- Contributed to ENSTO-E working groups on Storage and Mixed Customers Sites (Hybrids).
- Contributed to Eurelectric – Generation 'G-Charge' working group.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

Maintains involvement with industry changes and developments, and provides a sounding board for policy direction and changes. Enables us to present on delivery programme updates against national targets (e.g. REFIT).

- Knowledge sharing.
- Shaping policy on new technologies.
- Apply learnings to Ireland, for benefit of all electricity system customers.

Benefits from Eurelectric:

Eurelectric deliverables added to its work programme in line with Irish electricity customers' interests included;

- Survey on DSO products/services.
- Monitoring report of DSOs' use of flexibility services on introduction of the Clean Energy Package.
- Value of the Grid report, identifying investment needs in European distribution systems to support the energy transition, and seeking legislative and regulatory support.
- MV/LV Capacity Report, mapping EU capacity-crunches and identifying network capacity as a key enabler for decarbonisation of heat and transport.

Benefits from CIGRE:

Ireland is pioneering TSO-DSO system operation initiatives aiming to enable distribution-connected demand and generate participation in system

Engagement Strategy

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Engagement Benefits

WORKING GROUPS & EXPERT PANELS ctd...



WORKING WITH POLICY MAKERS

We work closely with public authorities and government departments. By discussing trends and expectations, we can deliver the right energy infrastructure to support Irish social and economic development:



We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

- Bi-Monthly DCCAE meetings with CRU & EirGrid
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities
- Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment
- Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government
- Quarterly engagements with the Irish Home Builders Association/CIF
- Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
- National Standards Authority of Ireland
- Industrial Development Authority

Regarding the EU Clean Energy Package, ESBN engaged with DCCAE throughout 2018 to share the information and insights available to it as DCCAE participated in the Clean Energy Package development in Europe.

The ECP (Enduring Connection Policy) for generator connections was approved in 2018. ESBN had significant engagement with many stakeholders on ECP, including;

- CRU
- Industry (directly)
- Industry (via Liaison Group)
- TSO

Facilitated Generation Liaison Group meetings with CRU, EirGrid and industry.

services at transmission and distribution level. Through CIGRE we shared in the knowledge and experience that other countries have gained, for example as they manage solar or other challenges which have not yet arisen in Ireland. We also feed Irish customers' needs and expectations into the European electricity policy landscape.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

Ensures that we share knowledge and insights to benefit network development and customers/stakeholders.

Engagement with DCCAE on national targets and programme progress against REFIT deadline. Enables inputs and presentations on delivery programme for policy direction (e.g. standard charges).

Regarding the development of the EU Clean Energy Package, the Irish electricity system is in certain ways quite different from that on mainland Europe, so ESBN shared technical insights with DCCAE so that the decisions it helped develop in Europe do not disadvantage Irish electricity users inadvertently.

Regarding the Enduring Connection Policy (ECP);

- ESBN supported CRU in developing and delivering ECP in the interests of all stakeholders.
- ECP is now in place and gives priority to 'shovel-ready' projects.
- This aligns with our goal to connect more renewable generation.

The Generation Liaison Group is a key engagement vehicle and allows a partnership approach to the development of new policy and the successful implementation of existing policies. Given the critical housing situation, we engaged in extensive work on new house connections data which we provided to CSO and the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT TO SUPPORT A SMARTER GRID

Over the course of 2017 and 2018, ESB Networks engaged with the Communications Regulator (ComReg) for access to a dedicated radio spectrum for Smart Grid.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

Through formal consultations, we demonstrated to ComReg that Smart Grid can bring many benefits. ComReg has now committed to reserving radio spectrum for a Smart Grid network. ESB Networks can compete for the remaining radio spectrum.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

Access to a dedicated spectrum enables a resilient and cyber-secure network to deliver on telecoms requirements. It also facilitates delivery of our strategy, as well as enabling integration of renewables and decarbonisation.

Engagement Strategy

Engagement Implementation

Engagement Benefits

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE TRANSMISSION SYSTEM OPERATOR (TSO), EIRGRID

EirGrid, as the TSO, is a key stakeholder for ESB Networks. Through close working arrangements we strive to develop processes by which both organisations can work in collaboration to meet customer, industry and regulatory needs. Developments driven by climate change and the clean energy package have created a more dynamic operating environment with more demands on network infrastructure, thus requiring more innovation, collaboration and change for ESBN and EirGrid in working together to meet strategic national interests and customer needs.



We engaged with EirGrid as follows: During 2018, we created a new dedicated organisational role "TAO-TSO Interface". The role supports agreed processes between ESBN and EirGrid to allow both parties to discharge their license duties.

In preparation for PR5, we engaged in joint forecasting workshops with EirGrid, developing joint proposals to deliver effective whole-system solutions, and to ensure that EirGrid's transmission system development proposals are backed up by sound deliverability plans and initiatives produced by ESBN.

We have engaged in regular meetings on 'Access Planning' to review connection agreements for DSO HV reinforcements. Such engagement has led to improved clarity and justification for the reinforcement of the DSO system, enabling timely approval of these developments.

In the area of network code development, we engaged with EirGrid as follows;

- Joint Consultation on Network Codes
- Presentation to All Island EUNC Forums

The benefits to ESBN, EirGrid and our wider stakeholders included:

Through strong engagement with EirGrid on an ongoing basis, we ensure that the needs of all customers and stakeholders are taken into consideration in the planning, management, operation and future development of the electricity network in Ireland.

Engagement on 'Access Planning' has facilitated timely Connection Agreements from TSO, enabling major HV station projects to progress and these then facilitated the connection of large new businesses and enhanced security of supply for the broader customer base by adding new capacity to the DSO system.

Our engagement with EirGrid on TSO-DSO Co-Operation at major industry events at home and abroad (such as CIGRE) has enhanced our reputations in the sector and has helped disseminate best practices developed in Ireland in managing an increasing penetration of renewable energy sources in electricity grids.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT TO SUPPORT IMPROVED ASSET MANAGEMENT

Continuous improvement and development of our Asset Management strategy and practices requires constant engagement with key industry stakeholders.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows;

- Presented ESBN vision to develop an Asset Health Index to Conference on Substation Safety, attended by delivery stakeholders including IPPs, Contractors, OEMs, and Suppliers
- In addition to Cigre, participated in International CEATI forum to resolve key Asset Management challenges
- Key member of European Utility Group
- Engagement with CRU to provide update on Asset Health Index

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included;

Engagement with a broad spectrum of stakeholders with knowledge and experience of asset management best practice enables ESB Networks to stay abreast of the latest developments, methodologies and strategies for improving asset management and asset performance. This will enable the delivery of a more robust and resilient network for the benefit of all customers and stakeholders.

ENGAGEMENT WITH EA TECHNOLOGY PARTIAL DISCHARGE FORUM

ESBN Asset Management Staff are members of EA Technology's Partial Discharge Forum.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows;

This is a cutting edge industry-led panel that seeks to develop best practice in Partial Discharge measurement and industry understanding. Asset Management staff actively share their knowledge with the forum, while receiving the latest technical information from other utilities.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included;

Utility-to-utility knowledge sharing can help ESBN ensure that latest technologies are deployed in the most technically and financially efficient manner, with ultimate safety, resilience and cost benefits for the customer.

ENGAGEMENT WITH INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS IRELAND

Improving Asset Management of MV Substations in urban locations.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

ESBN Asset Management held two meetings with the Institute of Architects Ireland. The meetings were called to discuss the design requirements of MV substations in urban locations.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

The Institute of Architects gained a full understanding of ESB's requirements for MV Urban substations. This ensures smoother customer interactions during the planning and construction phases of MV substation projects.

Engagement Strategy

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Engagement Benefits

ENGAGEMENT WITH ENGINEERS IRELAND TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGINEERING CAPABILITY IN IRELAND

ESB Networks has engaged with Engineers Ireland on a number of initiatives aimed at developing and improving engineering capability and encouraging young people to take up engineering as a career choice. This is critical to ensuring an ongoing talent pool of suitably qualified people to develop and manage the network for future generations.



We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

ESBN staff engage with Engineers Ireland on issues such as future engineering talent, CPD, advancing membership, development of engineering graduates, participation in working groups, and support for conferences. We also actively support the Engineers Ireland STEPS programmes including Engineers Week and Engineering Your Future through providing staff to promote engineering in schools.

ESBN staff have visited national and secondary schools across Ireland as part of Engineers Ireland's STEPS campaign. This is an outreach programme that promotes interest and awareness in engineering as a future career to school students.

In conjunction with Engineers Ireland, we run a programme called Engineering Your Future. Transition Year students come into our business for a week and learn about what we do and possible engineering-related career paths.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

By encouraging school children to consider a career in engineering, ESBN is helping to ensure a talent pipeline for its future workforce and ensuring an ongoing capability to develop and maintain an electricity network for future generations.

Through our involvement with STEPS and the Engineering Your Future programme, we help students understand the engineering opportunities in our business. Students also spend a day in ESBN's National Training Centre, where they are given an overview of the life of a Network Technician and the Apprenticeship programme, thereby helping us to promote these career paths. In total, we hosted 44 students during the last Transition Year period.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT TO SUPPORT THE "APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME"

Stakeholder engagement to support the development of high-quality apprenticeships within ESB Networks is an essential component to developing the ongoing organisational capability to support the network of the future.



We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

- In 2018, we hired 72 new apprentices into our 4-year apprenticeship programme. We engaged with stakeholders to promote craft apprenticeships as a career option through the following working groups and events;
- Our Training Centre hosted the Teachers' Union of Ireland and other key apprenticeship stakeholders. TUI's 'Pathways to Apprenticeship' group promotes apprenticeships as a career choice.
- Our apprenticeship social media campaign targeted parents, teachers and career guidance counsellors (over 65,000 views of our apprenticeship campaign video).
- We engaged with SOLAS by providing apprentices and staff to give talks. For example, one of our Network Technicians spoke at an Oireachtas Committee on Business at the behest of SOLAS.
- ESB Networks is one of the main sponsors of 'Ireland Skills Live' which is an initiative to support the Government's strategy on skills and apprenticeships. This is in addition to the many events at which we have an active presence, such as Higher Options, Schools Summit, and Institute of Guidance Counsellors conference.
- We attended the European Commission sponsored European Alliance for Apprenticeship (EAfA) meeting in Rome. Hosted by Enel, the event brought together individuals and groups from all over Europe who share a commitment to the growth and development of the Apprentice Sector.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

ESB Networks won the "European Alliance for Apprenticeships – Large Companies Award" in 2018. TUI and the Irish Career Guidance Counsellors Association also endorsed the ESB apprenticeship programme.

We undertook a number of initiatives to increase the uptake of apprenticeships by women;

- We hosted 14 secondary school girls over 2 days to give them an insight into craft apprenticeships.
- We used social media engagement to target female candidates.

As a result of our engagement on the apprenticeship programme, we have a strong pipeline of newly qualified Network Technicians to meet the business's resourcing and skills requirements.

Our electrical apprenticeship has a very strong reputation and we typically average 5,500 applicants for the programme. In 2018, we hosted a careers event for the unsuccessful candidates to provide an opportunity to meet other apprentice employers. This came as a result of our participation in the Apprenticeship Council.

We had a four-fold increase in female applicants from 2016 to 2017, and in 2018 we had our largest ever intake of female apprentices, with twelve female apprentices.

Engagement Strategy

Engagement Implementation

Engagement Benefits

ENGAGEMENT WITH ACADEMIA ON INNOVATION

We engage with a broad range of academia to further our innovation strategy and to ensure that the latest thinking is incorporated in our vision of the future network. We are either collaborating on projects, on advisory boards, on steering committees or on working groups with the following:

- UCC's Centre of Marine and Renewable Energy (MaREI)
- International Energy Research Centre (IERC)
- Energy Institute, UCD
- ETIP SNET (European Technology and Innovation Platform – Smart Network for Energy Transition) WG1 Reliable, economic and efficient smart grid system
- Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)
- CIGRE
- EU Commission Working Group on "Grid System of the Future"
- Irish Cyber Security advisory group
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)
- Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)
- European Committee for Electrical Standardization (Cenelec)
- DCCAE Climate Adaptation Committee for Gas and Electricity
- DCCAE Working Group 1 Electrification of Transport
- Working Group 3 Building Regulations Part L (Electrification), Department of Environment

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows;

- During the course of 2018, ESB Networks has engaged extensively with Academia across all areas of our innovation strategy:
- To fully appreciate the values and choices of our Customers out to 2050, we have been working with UCD and UCC MaREI conducting socio-demographic models and customer engagement campaigns within the Dingle Project.
 - To understand the digital services and platforms of the future energy system, we have been working with TU Dublin and WIT.
 - To understand the future tools and services which we could use for reliability on our networks, we are working with UL on Autonomous Drone Technologies.
 - To understand the capabilities, services and roles of Customer sited DER, we are working with UCD in the energy institute lab and RESERVE project.
 - To fully appreciate the role of the community and future needs of Islands, we are working with NUIG within the REACT H2020 project.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included;

This intensive engagement ensures that ESB Networks is aware of the latest technologies and thinking in a range of relevant disciplines, and also ensures that our leading experts share their insights and experience with academic leaders and researchers.



CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Engagement Strategy

Engagement Implementation

Engagement Benefits

POWERCHECK APP

Over a short space of time, our PowerCheck app has become a key source of information for customers when they lose power. We are committed to delivering a new and improved version of the app for 2018/2019.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:
We are reviewing options for PowerCheck to enhance the user experience. We are engaging with our customers through focus groups and research to develop meaningful insights that will be integrated into the final product.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:
Enhanced customer experience and a portal from which we aim to build other applications. Awareness of PowerCheck increased to 45% in 2018 – as measured by IPOS-MRBI.

STAKEHOLDER AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT DURING EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

We have a well-developed strategy of engaging with key stakeholders and customers to enable power to be restored in a timely and safe manner during extreme weather events. This includes a comprehensive communications strategy to ensure customers are kept informed of developments throughout these periods.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:
Over the past few years, Ireland has experienced a number of severe weather conditions (e.g. Storms Darwin, Ophelia and Emma), where up to .5m customers have been left without supply – some for up to 10 days. Stakeholder engagement activities are critical to ensure safe and timely restoration of power to customers;

- We work closely with the Government Task Force to manage extreme events (including all emergency services).
- For severe events, we enhance our call centre capability using a Volunteer Call Centre, resourced by staff from across our business.
- For red level warnings, our customer communications and media management have a four-tier structured customer engagement process (Pre Storm 4 days before storm; During Storm 1-2 days during storm; Post Storm; Return to Business as Usual). This process includes a structured approach to the use of national and local media, digital and social media plans to keep customers fully informed.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:
In 2018, a number of major storms, Eleanor (January), Emma (March - snow), Hector (June), Ali (September) and Callum (October) had a serious impact on the network and our customers. The arrival of Storm Ali in particular, at a time when most trees were still in leaf, resulted in significant levels of network damage from falling timber and required an enormous restoration response from ESB Networks crews.
Stakeholder engagement, including a structured process for customer communication, has been critical to our response to these severe weather events.

Storms resulted in the most impact on customers during which ESB Networks activated additional call centres to effectively manage the volume of customer calls, which rose to 65,000 during Storm Ali. Throughout the storms, ESB Networks experienced peaks in social media attention with 4.4 million views on Twitter and 720,000 hits to PowerCheck. TV, radio campaigns and media interviews were also used to communicate and engage with customers in a timely and proactive manner.

As a result, we delivered an excellent customer focussed response to restoring power to over 650,000 of our customers following FI major storms in 2018.



Engagement Strategy

Engagement Implementation

Engagement Benefits

REVISED CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS PROCESS

We have a dedicated resource in place to deal with complaints quickly, helpfully and sympathetically. We are revising our process for managing customer complaints in 2018, to ensure that customers' needs are a priority.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows;

- A database for CRU Complaints has been created in SharePoint.
- We hold regular meetings with CRU to discuss cases.
- We provide training for CRU on ESBN policies and procedures.

Monthly "Key Renewable Projects" and Risk profile report to our senior team.

Our Regulation & Commercial teams engaged with IPP customers to quickly resolve issues and worked with CRU in the determination of disputes when they arose.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included;

Working closely with stakeholders allows issues to be resolved quickly and with mutually beneficial solutions;

- The complaints database allows us to run reports on complaints to see if any trends are appearing.
- We have a direct contact within CRU which enables us to resolve/discuss complaints in a timely manner.
- CRU has a better understanding of the processes within ESBN.
- Maintains focus of programme delivery ahead of 2019 REFIT and 2020 Target deadlines.

NEW CONNECTIONS PROCESS

From our Customer Satisfaction Surveys we have learned that getting new connections can be a particularly frustrating issue, especially for builders and developers. Through survey feedback and focus groups we know that the main frustration for these customers is the lack of communications and feedback on the status of their new connection. In 2017 and into 2018 we are running a pilot in 2 divisional areas, Cork and Arklow, to address these concerns. Some of the improvements we are introducing include proactively calling customers with updates, and providing weekly design reports and daily payment reports. To roll out these initiatives nationwide, our staff will need training and support, to ensure we can eventually deliver the same high standards of customer service across all divisions.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

Due to increased customer satisfaction scores for communication during the process of a new connection in the pilot areas, we are continuing with this initiative. We are planning to roll out proactive contacts to all Planner Groups this year. Weekly Performance Reports will also be extended to all Regions as an aid to manage resources and workload. Additional resources are required to facilitate this rollout.

Work is well progressed to deliver online New Connection Application forms for Domestic, Commercial and Developments by Q4/2019. Domestic and small Commercial customers will also be able to track the progress of their connection online. We have recently carried out usability testing with focus groups and are incorporating their feedback into the product design.

In relation to the connection of renewable generation – we have regular engagement with IWEA, ISEA, Meitheal na Gaoithe, IRBEA, Irish Bioenergy Association. A key focus of this engagement is to improve the timeline for connecting new renewable generation.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

This initiative is addressing feedback from our customers seeking to be kept informed on the progress of their connection. Customers will receive contacts on the progress of their connection by our New Connections Team. Customers can also opt to do this online and track their connection when we go live with this project by the end of the year.

Overall, this is a very good example of stakeholder engagement leading to changes in business processes and work management for the benefit of the customer and the business.

In relation to the connection of renewable generation – we are engaging with industry representatives on the 'Renewables Connection End to End Process' being undertaken by Simpler Consultants (IBM Group company). This is as a direct result of our ongoing engagement with renewable generators on the timeline and approach to the connection process

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT FOR MULTI-SITE CUSTOMERS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANIES

Providing a single point of contact for customers to help them with queries and resolve any issues around new connections, increased capacity, meters and other issues.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

We set up a database of these customers and created a single point of contact within ESBN for the customer. ESBN staff can also refer to CRM with queries.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

- The customer feels they are getting a specialised 'one to one' service.
- Better understanding of customer needs.
- Enhanced customer service.

ENGAGEMENT WITH IPP AND DEMAND CUSTOMERS DURING THE CONNECTION PROCESS

We recognised that intensive engagement is needed to facilitate timely connection of generation and demand customers.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

ESBN Commercial Section has constant day-to-day interactions with both IPP and demand customers (e.g. customer meetings, phone calls, email) during the connection process.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

This intensive engagement supports generation and demand customers in the connection process. This ensures that connections are progressed as efficiently as possible.

Engagement Strategy

Engagement Implementation

Engagement Benefits

CUSTOMER FOCUS GROUPS

In 2013 we launched our "Customer Service Improvement Plan (2013-2017)". In 2018 we plan to improve on this plan. We are undertaking a series of customer research focus groups, and conducting in-depth senior stakeholder interviews. By listening, we will get a better understanding of what our customers expect and want. We are also holding staff focus groups throughout the year to ensure that we understand what our front line staff perceive as excellent customer service and what barriers or obstacles there may be.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

New Connections Project: We have engaged with a cross section of the public via focus groups to get their feedback and to inform the design process for the New Connections Web Portal.

CX Programme – We engaged with our staff who interact with customers to get an insight into customer pain points - to date we have engaged with the Customer Care Team and Scheduling Team in Cork, staff working with Large Energy Users, Area Managers, Network Technicians, CO's and COO's across the business – circa 500 people have been consulted and engaged.

We also used 'Social Media Listening' to gain insights into customer pain points.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

Real insights (from our staff, from customers, and from social media) have been gained into the customer pain points so that it can inform the CX Programme and how we are going to adapt our business and processes to benefit our customers.



GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF NETWORK CAPACITY TO SUPPORT THE CONNECTION OF MORE RENEWABLES

Engaging with stakeholders and customer groups to facilitate the ability to connect an increasing level of renewable generation to the network and support customer choice and flexibility.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

Through constant engagement with our customers and stakeholders (including IWEA and ISEA) and to support our goal of connecting more renewable generation, we have identified a need to provide customers with a clear picture of available network capacity in terms of connecting new renewable generation. As a result of the feedback from this engagement activity we have initiated a project to develop and make available a Network Capacity Map. This will enable our customers to have a better understanding of where best to connect and will also support the effective development of the network. We have also published more capacity data on our website to provide more information to our customers.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

This engagement has led to new initiatives within our business to support customers who are planning new renewable generation projects and will facilitate our strategic business goal of connecting more renewable energy sources to the network.

Our engagement has also led to a project investigating the options around providing more granularity of information for DSU's.

ENGAGEMENT WITH RENEWABLE GENERATORS TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF OUTAGES DURING NEW GENERATOR CONNECTIONS

We recognised through ongoing engagement with generation customers that outages associated with the connection of new renewable energy projects were impacting existing generators.

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

We engaged with stakeholders in 2018 to better understand their needs and concerns in relation to outages associated with the connection of new generation.

This led to a change in policy in early 2019 that will be reported on in greater detail in the 2019 report.

The benefits to ESBN and our stakeholders included:

The engagement and stakeholder feedback in 2018 led to a change in policy in 2019 that will reduce the effects of outages on existing generation customers where possible.

PR5 ENGAGEMENT

Engagement Strategy

PR5 involves our plan for the next 'price control' period 2021-2025, and will set out our investments and planned spending in that period.

We set out in our PR5 stakeholder engagement plan a 3-phased approach to engagement activities:

Phase 1 will involve bi-lateral meetings with key sector-related organisations and representative groups; Phase 2 involves a broader country-wide engagement to include businesses and the wider customer base; Phase 3 involves a feedback engagement with those consulted to explain how we have taken the various insights and preferences on board in our PR5 plan.

Engagement Implementation

We engaged with our stakeholders as follows:

Much work was done during 2018 to prepare for our stakeholder engagement. This involved developing the 3-phased plan for engaging with all relevant stakeholders.

We created a 'Strategic Engagement' role to lead stakeholder engagement activity, including the engagement activity for PR5.

In preparation for the Phase 1 bi-lateral meetings, the stakeholder master list for ESNB was reviewed and updated, and responsibilities assigned within the business for the Phase 1 meetings.

Engagement Benefits

The benefits to ESNB and our stakeholders included:

This preparatory work for stakeholder engagement was invaluable in terms of defining the organisation for engagement, outlining the target stakeholder list, defining clear roles and responsibilities for the Phase 1 bi-lateral meetings and agreeing an approach to the Phase 2 engagement events with leading representative bodies.

Engagement with Chambers Ireland and the local government Regional Assemblies helped to develop the approach to arranging regional engagement events during Phase 2, with both bodies offering to support ESNB in this engagement process.

