



NETWORKS

STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2020



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INTRODUCTION

This plan sets out the focus of our stakeholder engagement activities for 2020, which covers the remainder of our fourth price control period (referred to as PR4).

This plan is a companion document to the Strategic Stakeholder Engagement Framework, which is published separately. The framework sets out our systematic approach to ensuring an open and ongoing dialogue with all our stakeholders. The framework identifies our stakeholders and the principles that guide our engagement, together with our engagement methodology and our governance and control processes. The framework also identifies the current focus areas for our stakeholder engagement, guided by our strategy and the needs of our customers and stakeholders.

This plan sets out the purpose of our engagement and the focus of our engagement activities under each of these areas for 2020. This plan is a live document and while it is updated formally on an annual basis, it will be regularly reviewed and updated based on our engagement activities and the feedback we receive from our customers and stakeholders.



Paddy Hayes,
Managing Director,
ESB Networks

SCOPE OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Our Strategic Stakeholder Engagement Framework sets out the current focus areas for our stakeholder engagement activities. These activities are fully aligned with our business strategy and our pivotal role in securing a low-carbon society in Ireland.

In ESB Networks we are committed to achieving the transition to a secure and affordable low-carbon future based on renewable electricity and the use of that clean electricity to decarbonise transport and heat. Our strategy is consistent with this vision, calling out key pillars of connecting and facilitating more renewable generation; maintaining the health, efficiency and reliability of the network; enabling the wholesale electrification of heat and transport; and delivering the increasing expectations of the customers and communities we serve, supported by excellent people, by the highest standards of health, safety and environmental performance, and by a financially strong and capable business. We understand the importance of innovation and optimising the use of non-wire solutions, while recognising that increasing renewables and wholesale electrification are likely to require significant investments in our physical network as well as our systems, services and market solutions.

We understand that delivering on our strategy and vision will require effective engagement and ongoing sharing, cooperation and collaboration with government, regulators, technology providers, generators, suppliers, industry groups, innovators, customers, service providers, communities, network system operators, and many other stakeholders in a changing industry landscape.

AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT

Price Review 5	Our business plan for the period 2021 - 2025
Smart Metering	National meter replacement programme
Safety and Environment	Ensuring the safety of all who interact with our network and caring for the environment
Innovation	Our innovation projects to enable a low-carbon future
Connecting Renewables	Connecting more renewable energy sources to the network
Enabling Electrification	Enabling the electrification of transport and heat
Customer Experience	Satisfying the expectations of all our customers, including fuel-poor and vulnerable customers
Resilience and Growth	Developing a robust network which supports economic development and growth
Capability Development	Ensuring the resources are in place to deliver and manage the future network
Industry Leadership	Informing and engaging on regulation and policy development and providing thought leadership in the sector



AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT

The focus of our stakeholder engagement is guided by a number of aims:

- Continuing to provide a safe, reliable and affordable electricity service to all customers, including fuel-poor and vulnerable customers
- Ensuring that the customer remains central to our business and continuing to improve the overall customer experience
- Ensuring that engagement on 'business-as-usual' activities remains a key part of our overall stakeholder engagement process
- Continuing to maintain and develop the electricity network in order to ensure that it is robust, resilient and capable of dealing with increasingly difficult weather conditions in the face of climate change
- Supporting the connection of increased amounts of low carbon energy generation, such as wind and solar energy and localised domestic and community-based energy schemes, to address the need to reduce carbon emissions and meet national targets
- Continuing to ensure that the electricity network supports economic growth, including the connection of new homes, businesses and large energy users
- Planning and developing a smarter and more digitally connected network to enable new modes of network operation which are needed to support new energy usage patterns essential to a low-carbon society, such as increased use of electric vehicles, electrification of heating and customer participation in energy markets

We understand the strategic importance of engaging with our customers and stakeholders on the above issues to ensure that their needs are fully understood, their priorities are recognised and they are aware of the drivers of electricity network development and operation into the future. We will continue to engage nationally, regionally and locally with customers and stakeholder groups, including local community groups, to deliver on these objectives.

This plan outlines the purpose of engagement in each of these areas, together with the focus of our engagement activities for 2020, which represents the remainder of the PR4 price control period.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2020

The focus and purpose of our engagement activity for 2020 (the remainder of the PR4 price control period) is outlined in this section.

Our engagement activities are aligned with our business strategy and support our key role in securing a low-carbon society in Ireland.

As described in the Stakeholder Engagement Framework, we will use a variety of engagement methods to implement our stakeholder engagement activities, including meetings, workshops, seminars, surgeries, presentations at industry events, surveys, documentation and online and social media.

Our approach to the governance and control of our engagement activity is also presented in the Stakeholder Engagement Framework.

PRICE REVIEW 5 (PR5)



Focus and Purpose

Ensure that our plans for the period 2021 – 2025 are informed by the needs and concerns of our customers and stakeholders.

Engagement Activities

- Engage bi-laterally with strategic stakeholders and customers
- Conduct focus groups with residential and SME customer groups
- Meet with regional business groups through Chambers Ireland
- Conduct quantitative survey with residential customers
- Consult with fuel-poor and vulnerable customers
- Provide feedback on engagement to customers and stakeholders

Measurement and Outcomes

- Bi-lateral meetings with strategic stakeholders and customers
- Focus groups for residential (urban, rural, vulnerable and fuel-poor) and SME customers
- Regional workshops organised through Chambers Ireland
- Quantitative survey of residential customers
- Feedback on engagement process

SMART METERING PROGRAMME



Focus and Purpose

Ensure that our customers and stakeholders are fully aware of the national meter replacement programme and that their views are reflected in our plans.

Engagement Activities

- Benchmark research and surveys
- Stakeholder mapping and engagement
- Prepare communications collateral
- Public engagement and advertising
- Easily accessible online information
- Geo-targeted social media information flows
- Media outreach programme
- Prepare customer support line

Measurement and Outcomes

- Baseline survey
- Delivery of focused engagement in each roll-out region (community and public awareness)
- Communications campaign rolled out on local radio, press and online
- Campaign awareness and customer satisfaction measured pre/during/post campaign by Red C
- Quarterly public sentiment survey
- Quarterly customer satisfaction survey

SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT



Focus and Purpose

Ensure the safety of all who interact with our network and care for the environment.

Engagement Activities

Safety

- Engage with the farming community, the construction industry, the general public and schoolchildren to highlight safety relating to ESB Networks electricity lines and associated infrastructure, and to promote a safety awareness culture
- Maintain awareness >80% for media campaign
- Maintain awareness >30% for school safety programme
- Generate farming and construction content pieces for use in press and online
- Continue to deliver engaging safety content through social media channels (weekly posts dedicated to safety messaging)

Environment

- Proactive engagement with relevant authorities on reporting, assessing and closing environmental incidents
- Establish environmental incident reporting protocol with the relevant authorities
- Publish environmental information available on fluid filled cables on ESB Networks website.

Measurement and Outcomes

Safety

- Engagements and events on farm safety (Teagasc/FBD Champions for Change, IFA Farm Safety Week, Irish Farmers Journal Tullamore Show, Department of Agriculture, National Farm Safety Conference, National Ploughing Championships and Farm Safety Advisory Partnership)
- Engagements and events on construction safety (LGMA bi-annual meetings, HSA Inspectors bi-annual seminars, Joint Utility Forum meetings, Emergency Services engagements, CIF Safety Week, Construction Safety Advisory Committee)
- Public safety media campaigns (TV and Radio)
- Engagements with Waterways Ireland and Irish Aviation Authority
- Children's safety campaigns (Primary and Secondary schools)
- Surveys of public recognition of media safety campaign messaging

Environment

- Environmental reporting protocol in place
- Series of meetings and engagements scheduled throughout the year with relevant authorities
- Proactive engagements take place to respond to and address environmental incidents
- Establish transparency framework for environmental performance
- Consistent environmental incident reporting established and available on central register

INNOVATION STRATEGY



Focus and Purpose

Involve and collaborate with our customers and stakeholders in our innovation strategy to enable a low-carbon future.

Partners and stakeholders include; CRU, EirGrid, academia, SEAI, equipment manufacturers, system suppliers, generators, suppliers, community energy groups, Enterprise Ireland, trade associations (e.g. IWEA, ISEA, EAI), local authorities, NSAI, RECI, Safe Electric, environmental groups, EV Owners Association, and Government.

Engagement Activities

- To ensure a balanced portfolio of innovation projects, eight innovation roadmaps have been developed. Each one is based on an opportunity resulting from the challenges we face. We are confident that these roadmaps will enable us to deliver an electricity system which serves the future needs of our customers and Ireland
- We will engage with strategic stakeholders and customers on the 8 Innovation Roadmaps:
 1. Connecting Renewables
 2. Customer Engagement
 3. Electrification of Heat and Transport
 4. Asset Optimisation
 5. Flexibility on our Networks (including the Dingle Project)
 6. Operational Excellence
 7. Network Resilience
 8. Working with the TSO

Measurement and Outcomes

- Spring and Autumn Innovation Fora to engage with key stakeholder groups on our 8 roadmaps. These engagements will involve a mix of meetings, seminars, workshops, surveys, pilots/trials, presentations and exhibitions, depending on the nature of the topic, the customer/stakeholder groups and the purpose of engagement
- Some projects will have specific stakeholder engagements as part of the project activation process e.g.,
 - Dingle Project (Ambassador support initiatives, support for local community events)
 - Planning and Security of Supply Standards project (specific public consultations on project deliverables)
 - Non-Wires Flexibility project (workshops on project scope, terms of reference and milestones in the project)
- Consultation on ESB Networks Annual Innovation Summary Brochure
- Dissemination of learning/outcomes through seminars, conferences, industry panels and working groups as appropriate



CONNECTING RENEWABLES



Focus and Purpose

Provide customers and stakeholders with a voice in the connection and hosting of renewable energy sources on our network. Working supportively and collaboratively together, we can achieve the national targets for decarbonisation of the electricity system.

Engagement Activities

- Connection process review workshops with renewable generators
- Quarterly review meetings with renewable generators
- Regulatory and Commercial engagement with renewable stakeholders (Regulator, Industry groups and Developers)

Measurement and Outcomes

- Quarterly engagement with key stakeholder groups (e.g. TSO, IWEA, Meitheal na Gaoithe, ISEA, Demand Side Association, Storage Association)
- Process review workshops with renewable stakeholders (incl. IWEA, ISEA)

ELECTRIFICATION OF HEAT AND TRANSPORT



Focus and Purpose

Engage with customers and stakeholders in enabling the electrification of heat and transport. Using clean electricity to reduce carbon emissions is key to delivery of our national climate action plan.

Engagement Activities

- Engagement on Government Climate Action Plan (including electrification of heat and transport)
- National 'roadshow events' to inform and increase awareness of e-heat and e-transport

Measurement and Outcomes

- Engagement with strategic stakeholders and customers on Climate Action-related Innovation Roadmaps:
 - Connecting Renewables
 - Electrification of Heat and Transport
 - Flexibility on our Networks
- Engagement with key industry stakeholders (policy makers in Ireland and Europe), e.g. DCCAE, CRU, DG RES, EDSO, Eurelectric
- Engagements on Government Climate Action Plan

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



Focus and Purpose

Ensure that the needs of our customers are taken on board and satisfied in their interactions with our business

ESB Networks Customer Care Centre continues to meet its overall PR4 target, achieving 94% overall satisfaction level in May 2019. July 2019 YTD is 90% against 86% target.

We also continue to maintain overall Customer Satisfaction KPI at 82% (May 2019)

Engagement Activities

- Customer experience workshops for residential and multi-site customers
- Meetings and workshops with large energy users to understand their priorities and key requirements from the electricity network
- Engagement with SME customers through local Chambers to explore the requirements of the business community
- Engagement with farming community to explore the needs of farmers and discuss opportunities for electrification of farming activities
- Internal ESB Networks workshops to review the customer experience and explore opportunities to improve our customer interactions and exceed customers' expectations
- Quantitative and qualitative research with customers and staff to understand key drivers of customer satisfaction and requirements for improvements
- Appoint Customer Relationship Manager and team for multi-site customers and property developers; and CRU customer care team

Measurement and Outcomes

- Customer experience workshops with residential and multi-site customers
- Meetings and workshops with large energy users
- Workshops with customer delivery staff and management to design a customer experience improvement plan focused on the new connection process and residential, SME, multi-site and large customers
- Engagements with SME customers through local Chambers
- Engagements with farming community facilitated by IFA agreement
- Measurements of Customer Care Centre Satisfaction KPI level
- Measurements of overall Customer Satisfaction KPI level

CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT



Focus and Purpose

Engage with academia and the workplace on the capabilities needed to address the future network.

Engagement Activities

- Engagement on Apprenticeship Programme (including National Apprenticeship Council)
- Promoting engineering talent and STEM (including Engineers Ireland, Science Blast)
- Engagement on best practice - IR/HR/Management (including IMI, IBEC, ICTU, WRC, Labour Court)
- Engagement with Contracting Partners for network delivery (workshops/surgeries on standards, legislation and safety)

Measurement and Outcomes

- Level of apprenticeship applications to ESB Networks
- Engagements with the National Apprenticeship Council
- Engagements with academia on engineering and technical talent promotion
- Engagements with key best practice stakeholder groups
- Engagements with contracting partners (number of workshops/surgeries)

RESILIENCE AND GROWTH



Focus and Purpose

Ensure that we understand our customers' requirements related to economic growth and new energy usage patterns and that our network meets the challenges posed by climate change.

Engagement Activities

- Engagement with emergency and storm response stakeholders (including annual emergency preparedness; EirGrid black start; Eastern region emergency workshops; annual winter readiness campaign; ENA emergency group)
- Engagement with large customers on future operational interaction with increased renewables and services/flexibility
- EirGrid-ESB Networks 'TSO/DSO' quarterly meetings
- Workshops with EirGrid on operations with more renewables
- Engagement with EirGrid on grid development (on/offshore)
- Engagement on housing connections (IHBA, construction companies and developers)
- Engagement with local authorities, local government and IDA
- Engagement in rural and community development workshops led by Department of Rural and Community Development
- Engagement on Government National Plans (e.g. Ireland 2040, Low-Carbon Towns)
- Engagement on broadband (SIRO)

Measurement and Outcomes

- Engagements with key stakeholders on emergency and storm response
- Engagements with EirGrid on system operation with increased levels of renewable energy
- Engagements with EirGrid on electricity infrastructure delivery
- Engagements with large customers on future operations with increased levels of renewable energy generation and services/flexibility
- Engagements with economic sector development stakeholders
- Engagements with local community development groups

INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP



Focus and Purpose

Inform and engage on regulation and policy development and provide thought leadership in the sector.

Engagement Activities

- Regulatory and policy engagement - CRU and sector stakeholders (workshops, meetings, communications)
- Engagement through industry events, conferences and seminars (presentations and exhibitions)
- Engagement in international electricity sector organisations e.g. Eurelectric and EDSO (best practice; policy influence; innovation)

Measurement and Outcomes

- Engagements (meetings, seminars and workshops) with CRU, SEAI, SFI, Government departments and working groups, EDSO, Eurelectric, D-Code Panel, DG RES
- Engagements at industry events (e.g. presentations and publication of papers, participation on panels and working groups)

