

NIRIG response to NIE Consultation Regarding Small Scale Generation Setting Schedule

17 February 2017

The Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group (NIRIG) represents the views of the renewable electricity industry in Northern Ireland, providing a conduit for knowledge exchange, policy development, support and consensus on best practice between all stakeholders. Committed to making a positive difference, we promote responsible development, support good community engagement and deliver low-cost electricity generation from sources such as onshore wind, solar and storage using our greatest natural resources.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation. In principal NIRIG approves the introduction of the small scale settings and appreciate the benefits and grid stability that these amendments will bring, **provided the requirement is implemented throughout the whole of Northern Ireland on an equitable basis.**

According to NIE there are approximately 800 small-scale generators that fall into the 100KW to 250KW subset of the settings schedule of 100KW-5MW category. The majority of these turbines have been installed without SCADA and Reactive Power Control. We estimate that a capital investment of approximately £25,000/turbine will be required for sub-250KW turbines without the SCADA and Reactive Power capability required under the new settings.

In addition to the lead-times in implementing solutions to make the sub 250KW turbines compliant with the new code, we are concerned as to how NIE will enforce compliance to these new settings including the implementation of SCADA and Reactive Power Control. Implementation of compliance must be equitable across all 800 small-scale generators.

As outlined in the consultation (5.4) NIE Networks will begin an enforcement process for new and existing power stations to ensure they fulfil their Distribution Code obligations and in particular the requirement for SCADA.

In order to ensure that compliance, we would like to see a detailed compliance implementation plan including NIE resourcing, NIE turbine selection policy, NIE implementation requirement timelines and impact of non-compliance as part of this new settings programme.

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