

# Isolations for Safe Working (ISW)

## Working Group Draft Minutes

Meeting 04

13 January 2019 at 10:30

Bloomsbury Building, 10 Bloomsbury Way, London, WC1A 2SL

Attendee	Representing
David Brown [DB]	E.ON
Frank Bertie [FB]	NAPIT
Kevin Liddle (KL)*	NPg
Ian Crawley [IC]	SSEN
Jonathan Elliott [JE]	Electrical Safety First
Paul Abreu [PA]	Energy Networks Association
Dave Wright (DW)	Npower
Gillian Groundwater (GG)	SSE
Simon Wilson [SW]	EDF Energy
<b>Secretariat</b>	
Darta Valtere [DV] Chair	ElectraLink
Richard Colwill (RC) Secretariat	ElectraLink
Tim Hipperson [TH]	ElectraLink

\*Dialled-in

Apologies	Representing
Richard Hill [RH]	British Gas
Richard Brady [RB]	WPD

Geoff Huckerby [GHu]	AMO
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## 1. Welcomes and Apologies

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- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the 4<sup>th</sup> DCUSA Isolations for Safe Working, working group meeting, noting the apologies received from Richard Hill, Richard Brady and Geoff Huckerby.
- 1.2 The Working Group agreed to act in accordance with the terms set out in the DCUSA “Competition Law Guidance”.

## 2. Working Group Meeting 03 – Draft Minutes

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- 2.1 The Group approved the minutes of the last meeting on 25 November 2019 as an accurate record. These can be found in Attachment 1.

## 3. Outstanding Actions

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- 3.1 The outstanding actions are included as Attachment 2.

## 4. Relevant Regulation and Legislation

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- 4.1 The Working Group reviewed the “Relevant Regulation and Legislation” paper (ISW 20191125 02), which was circulated prior to the meeting. The paper outlines the legal view on de-energisation and re-energisation permissions from the regulation perspective with the key points summarised as follows:
  - A DNO can undertake a de-energisation or re-energisation (and can therefore authorise others to do so in the DNO's behalf). DNOs have statutory rights to disconnect a premises (which includes de-energisation). DNOs have also supplemented these statutory rights via their contracts with the persons that would be affected by de-energisation – electricity suppliers (under the DCUSA) and connectees (under connection agreements). However, these contractual rights are largely aligned with the statutory rights.
  - DNOs have agreed in the DCUSA to notify the electricity supplier of a de-energisation. However, a DNO does not need a supplier's permission to de-energise a connection.
  - Therefore, an authorisation scheme does not seem necessary. However, if there was to be a scheme between electricity distributors and suppliers, then DCUSA is probably the most appropriate home for such a scheme.

- 4.2 PA noted that the only reasons a DNO would wish to de-energise a supply are for planned works on the distribution network, where processes are in place for notifying the customer, or emergency works, where notice is not required.
- 4.3 The Working Group discussed the roles and responsibilities for giving electricians permission to de-energise a supply or providing the isolation service. The Working Group recognised the different views from members and agreed that legal advice would need to be sought in order to determine the responsible party for providing the permissions.

**ACTION 04-01:** ElectraLink to seek legal advice regarding the responsible party for approving de-energisation of a supply.

## 5. Review of Agreed Potential Solutions

- 5.1 The Working Group reviewed the proposed solutions, which are detailed below:

### 1. SWITCH ON THE METER

#### Pros

- All the principles are covered and met
- Eliminates the need for the process

#### Cons

- Timescales (w. smart meter programme in motion)
- Cost
- Manufacturing of new meters

### 2. ISOLATION SWITCH

#### Pros

- One-off visit
- All the principles are covered and met
- Positive customer experience
- Opportunity to inspect assets

#### Cons

- Not always practical
- Additional point of possible failure

### 3. ATTENDED ISOLATION

#### Pros

- All the principles are covered and met
- Opportunity to inspect assets or install smart meter

#### Cons

- Would require 2 or more visits
- Poor customer experience
- Logistically complex
- Not a permanent solution

### 4. SCHEME FOR ELECTRICIANS

## Pros

- Encourages safe working
- Good customer service
- Provides an auditable trail
- All the principles are covered and met

## Cons

- Governance difficulties
- Electricians not obligated to sign-in
- Still need stand-alone options (2 or 3)
- Cost of liability insurance may be barrier to some, however it could be that 100% buy-in is needed

## 5. DO NOTHING

## Pros

- No change required

## Cons

- Several principles are not met
- Could discourage safe working
- Increased outage alert noise to Suppliers & DNOs

## Option 1

- 5.2 The Group recognised that the SMETS 2 type meters are already being manufactured and changing the current specification to include the isolation switch on the meter would not support the government's view of keeping the cost of the meter as low as possible. It was agreed that this could be considered at a later date with any new meter specifications, however, was not a feasible solution currently and was therefore excluded as an option.

## Option 2

- 5.3 The Working Group acknowledged that it is not always possible for a switch to be installed for various reasons, available space being the major one, however, the benefits identified were considered significant and so the group agreed that installing the switch would be an option to take forward and propose to the industry. It was agreed by all members that the switch installation could be considered as the preferred option and therefore best practise where practical.

## Option 3

- 5.4 The Working Group agreed that attending site and providing isolation would be the minimum requirement to enable electricians to carry out the necessary works by not compromising their safety. It was recognised that where the isolation switch installation is not practical, the attended isolation process would be deployed. The group agreed that the process itself needs clear steps as well as defined roles and responsibilities. Once a process is in place it will need to be communicated at the appropriate levels and stakeholders. The Working Group agreed to pursue this as a solution option.

#### Option 4

- 5.5 The Working Group discussed the complexities of governance around introducing a new scheme and the time restraints associated with any change of this scale. Following a thorough discussion the group agreed that even though this could be a potential solution further down the line, the current scope and limited amount of meetings left would not allow the group to fully analyse and propose a solution for the Scheme as well as deal with the issues quickly since a Scheme development could take significant amount of time. The group agreed to not pursue this option at this time, however, noted that this could be revisited once the first solution option is implemented and results reviewed after 12 months of the implementation date.

#### Option 5

- 5.6 The Working Group agreed that taking no action could discourage safe working and pose a safety risk for the customer as well as the electrician. Members also recognised that the sporadic process could indirectly mean not working in line with the initiative of reducing carbon footprint. The group agreed that this was not an option to be pursued.

#### Next Steps

- 5.7 ElectraLink took an action to map out what the process would look like combining option 2 and 3 above, considering/ including the following:
- Metering Account Holder or Authorised Person on behalf of the Customer contacts DNO/ Supplier
  - Arrangement for MOP/ Field Operative to attend site to isolate or fit isolation switch. Steps include:
    - An AM/PM slot agreed within an agreed timeframe (i.e visit arranged within 14 days)
    - Appropriate information provided to customer, i.e an isolation switch may be fitted, or it may require two visits.
- 5.8 It was agreed that a DCUSA Change Proposal would be drafted regarding the above proposed solution. ElectraLink will produce a draft for review at the next meeting. It was noted that a DCUSA Party would need to sponsor this change. It was agreed that this will be considered once we have received the legal advice regarding the Party responsible for this process.

ACTION 04-02: ElectraLink to map out what the process would look like for a combined option 2 and 3 solution.

ACTION 04-03: ElectraLink to produce a draft DCUSA Change Proposal for review at next meeting.

## 6. AOB

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- 6.1 The Chair queried whether members had any other business to raise. No items were raised.

## 7. Next Meeting

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- 7.1 The Chair confirmed that the next ISW working group meeting will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at ElectraLink's offices, Northumberland House, 303-306 High Holborn, London, WC1A 7JZ.