Evaluative Performance Framework

Performance Report 2024-2025

CEO Foreword

Who We Are and What We Do

At SONI, we operate Northern Ireland’s electricity transmission system, ensuring that power flows safely, securely, and reliably from where it is generated to where it is needed, across homes, farms, businesses, and public services. We do not generate or sell electricity, nor do we own any grid assets. Our role, defined by our Transmission System Operator (TSO) licence and regulated by the Utility Regulator (UR), is to manage the real-time operation of the power system while planning for Northern Ireland’s energy future.

Our Responsibilities

As the TSO, we have a critical responsibility not only to manage the real-time operation of the power system, but also to plan for Northern Ireland’s future. We advise on the future direction of the system, identify the changes and investments required in both operational and physical terms, and deliver these plans through key initiatives. Achieving this requires close partnership with the UR, government, industry and communities. In particular, we work with NIE Networks and the Gas TSO as key partners on a daily basis to ensure an efficient, coordinated and secure energy system.

Evaluative Performance Framework

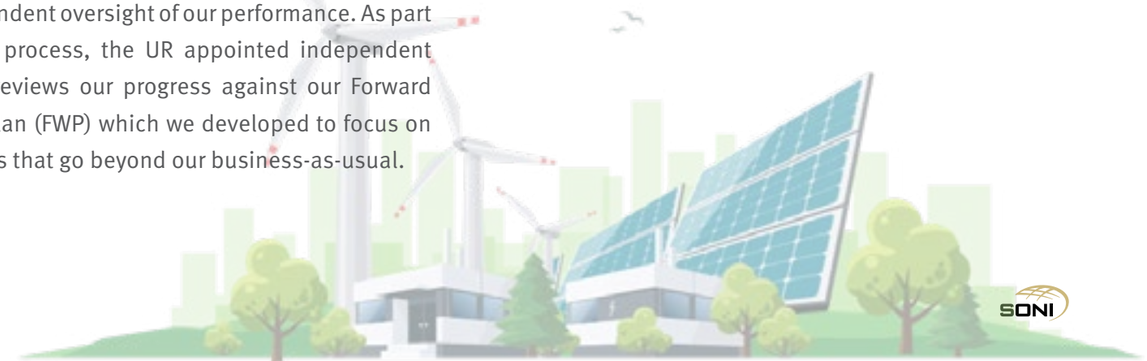
The Evaluative Performance Framework (EPF) was introduced by the UR as part of our 2020-2025 Price Control. The EPF process provides independent oversight of our performance. As part of this process, the UR appointed independent panel reviews our progress against our Forward Work Plan (FWP) which we developed to focus on projects that go beyond our business-as-usual.

The EPF enhances transparency on how we deliver value and contribute to the four UR determined SONI Outcomes: Decarbonisation, Grid Security, System-Wide Costs, and Service Quality. Our delivery of the projects and initiatives set out in the 2024/2025 FWP was set against the backdrop of what has been one of the most challenging periods in our history, testing both operational resilience and adaptability.

Challenges in 2024/25

During 2024/25, we faced one of the most challenging and unprecedented operational periods in our history, driven by severe weather events, multiple extended generator outages and limits on a number of Northern Ireland’s large thermal power generating units. Storm Darragh in December 2024 caused significant damage to Ballylumford Power Station, removing key generation capacity at short notice for over three months.

Some weeks later, Storm Eowyn, in January 2025, during which a red weather alert was issued, caused damage to the transmission system and resulted in loss of access to significant wind generation for a number of weeks. In summer 2025 Coolkeeragh Power Station failed to return from a planned outage and has remained offline for six months.



These events placed sustained pressure on the system and our ability to manage supply and demand. We needed to undertake rapid, evidence-based decision-making and collaboration with industry partners to protect security of supply. A System Alert warns of an increased risk of potential temporary electricity supply issues in the near future and allows pre-planned mitigation actions to be taken across the electricity sector to protect the integrity of the grid. Northern Ireland recorded eight system alerts during the reporting period, this is higher than in previous years. This higher occurrence of system alerts for 2025 is a reflection of the impact of generation loss at Ballylumford and ongoing issues at Coolkeeragh.

Our Response

Throughout the year, we worked tirelessly with the Department for the Economy, the Utility Regulator, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure security of supply. Following our extensive engagement and collaborative working with these key stakeholders, we secured a temporary relaxation of run-hour limits at Kilroot Power Station to keep homes and businesses powered. We continue to work closely with power stations and with the Department for Economy to address future challenges.

Delivering on our plan

When we set out our FWP for 2024/25, with the support of our board, we were deliberately ambitious, reflecting our commitment to driving progress and delivering meaningful outcomes for consumers and stakeholders. Despite the unprecedented challenges, we delivered thirty-three **(72%)** of the planned milestones.

Of the thirteen milestones not completed, all were outside of our direct control, but we remain committed to working with our industry partners to close out these important milestones and the majority are on track to be completed in the next business year. We also completed additional unplanned work to meet emerging needs. Whilst impacted by the unparalleled operational challenges, this achievement demonstrates our determination to maintain momentum in advancing strategic priorities that bring benefit to consumers.

Key Achievements

The second North South Interconnector reached a critical stage of progress as we handed the project over to NIE Networks to commence construction, marking a significant step forward for one of Northern Ireland's most critical infrastructure projects.

We published our Dispatch Down Action Plan and continue to implement actions to reduce renewable curtailment, a critical step towards maximising renewable energy use and minimising costs for consumers.

We also achieved a significant step towards a more flexible, low-carbon power system by safely operating the system with only two conventional generating units. This is a major milestone, which we accelerated to support our efforts in managing system security due to the aforementioned challenges seen in the last year. It was a first for Northern Ireland and helped to reduce our reliance on large conventional generating units and provided headroom for utilising more renewable, low carbon generation.

Building on this success, we prepared for the Minimum Stability Trial, targeted for January 2026, which aims to prove grid stability with fewer conventional units on the system.

Licence Condition 42 and Price Control

We advanced the requirements set out under Licence Condition 42 which focuses on governance and independent management and resources. Significant work has continued during the year, growing our organisational capability in parallel with our broader operational and strategic work. To support this, we initiated a proposal to extend the current 2020-2025 Price Control, which the UR agreed to implement. This extension allows us time to fully embed the governance reforms and organisational separation and ensures our future business plan meets the evolving needs of the Northern Ireland electricity system. Our next Price Control Business Plan submission will be in March 2026, for the new regulatory period commencing in October 2027.

Our Strategy

After extensive work with our Board, in February 2025, we published our Strategy 2025–2031[1], which sets out our long-term vision for Northern Ireland's power system and our role in the energy transition. Although this strategy was not in place when the 2024/25 FWP was published, this report shows how our projects align with its four pillars: **Advise**, **Plan**, **Operate**, **Deliver**, as well as the Evaluative Performance Framework.

Acknowledgements and Looking Ahead

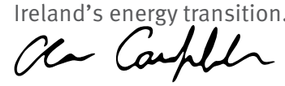
The challenges of the past year have reinforced that we undertake a vital role in keeping the lights on and ensuring that Northern Ireland's electricity system is secure while we also prepare it for the future

I want to thank our teams for their resilience, professionalism and commitment in delivering for consumers, industry and the wider energy transition.

Looking forward, we remain focused on innovation, collaboration, and transparency to help deliver a secure, decarbonised energy system and support Northern Ireland's journey to a cleaner, more sustainable future.

Finally, thank you to all of our stakeholders for their continued engagement, particularly in response to our 2023/24 Performance Report and 2025/26 FWP. We value your constructive input and have considered recommendations from the Independent Panel and stakeholders when shaping this year's report.

These insights have directly informed how we present progress, ensuring future reports provide greater clarity, transparency, and accountability in how we demonstrate our performance, commitment and contribution to Northern Ireland's energy transition.



Alan Campbell
Chief Executive Officer
SONI Ltd

1 SONI Strategy 2025-2031

Contents

SONI Roles and Responsibilities

Planning and operating Northern Ireland's electricity grid for the future.

We operate the transmission system to ensure that power can flow safely, securely and reliably from where it is generated to where it is needed in homes, farms, businesses and public services across Northern Ireland.

We do not generate or sell electricity, nor do we own any of the assets associated with Northern Ireland's electricity grid. In delivering our role, we are licensed and regulated by the Utility Regulator.

We also work closely with EirGrid, our counterpart in Ireland, to support the all-island Single Electricity Market, overseen by the regulatory authorities through the Single Electricity Market Committee.

Our role in operating the electricity grid extends beyond the present and is growing in importance. As the Transmission System Operator, we also have the vital job of planning for Northern Ireland's energy future.

We advise on the future direction of the power system, plan the changes and investments that are required, in both an operational and physical context and deliver on these plans through key projects and initiatives.

Embedded within each of these interrelated activities is a need to partner with statutory bodies, industry, and society to meet the energy needs of today as well as those in the future. Both NIE Networks and the Gas TSO are key partners in these activities.

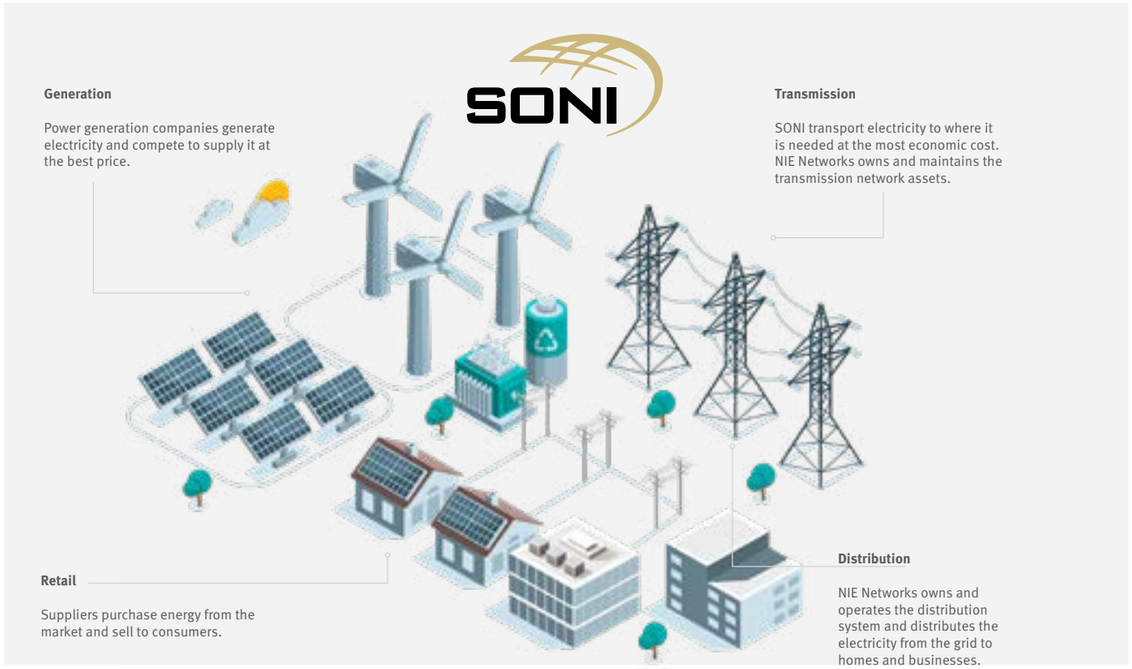


Figure 1: The structure of the electricity system in Northern Ireland

Key Responsibilities

01

Operating the Transmission System to manage electricity flows and balancing supply and demand in real time

02

Planning for Future Needs by identifying network developments and investments required to meet Northern Ireland's long-term electricity goals

03

Facilitating Transmission by processing connection applications to support renewable energy growth and economic development

04

Collaborating on Infrastructure Delivery by working closely with NIE Networks, the Department for Economy (DfE), the Utility Regulator, and local communities to deliver required grid updates

05

Cross-Border and Market Operations by coordinating with EirGrid on all-island planning and jointly operating the Single Electricity Market (SEM) under the oversight of the SEMC

SONI Governance, Management and Resources

As highlighted in our 2024/25 FWP, we continue to progress the implementation of a new licence condition relating to our governance, management and resources.

This programme represents a significant body of work. It requires close agreement and coordination with our parent company, EirGrid, followed by the preparation of derogations in line with guidance from the Utility Regulator. To do so we need to secure the necessary funding to deliver these changes and progress the recruitment of additional staff to ensure we have the in-house capability to meet our obligations.

We are delivering this programme alongside the milestones set out in our FWP. Activities around the implementation of separate management and separate resources have increased over the summer period as implementation has gathered pace. We are committed to ensuring that this work is completed in a timely and effective manner.

Importantly, the changes that we are implementing are being advanced in tandem with our broader work remit, ensuring that progress continues across all areas of work. We remain firmly focused on meeting our licence obligations while maintaining delivery across the full breadth of commitments contained in our FWP.

As a result of our new governance and independence obligations, we appointed a new, independent board, in October 2023, to drive a fresh vision and direction. Our board has led on the development of a new organisational design to build further expertise and capability to deliver on that vision and direction.

Our board has introduced a new executive team and management structure over the summer of 2024. Our team is leading on the implementation of our strategy and will equip our organisation with the leadership, purpose and accountability to succeed in this next phase of our journey.

Figure 2: SONI Independent Board

Overview of Evaluative Performance Framework

As previously mentioned, The Evaluative Performance Framework was introduced by the Utility Regulator (UR) as part of the 2020-25 Price Control Final Determination. It provides a transparent and structured process for assessing our forward planning and annual performance on work that goes beyond business as usual. The framework is designed to ensure accountability, encourage continuous improvement, and strengthen stakeholder confidence in our delivery against licence obligations.

The process is underpinned by detailed guidelines which set out the requirements for our Forward Work Plan and Annual Performance report, including how these must be structured, tracked, and assessed. Importantly, the independent evaluation panel, appointed through a process overseen by the Utility Regulator, play a central role in ensuring impartiality in the assessment process.

The panel's assessment is informed by evidence drawn from our written submission, stakeholder events and feedback received during consultation periods.

The assessment cycle operates in two phases: Forward Work Plan assessment and Performance assessment.

1. **Forward Work Plan Assessment -** The panel review our published FWP, considering evidence of ambition, alignment with UR Service Priority, Stakeholder Engagement, and Service Accountability, alongside stakeholder submissions. An evaluation report with recommended grades across our key roles will then be issued.
2. **Performance Assessment -** At year end, the panel evaluates our delivery of commitments set out in the FWP, considering evidence of delivery, adaptability and stakeholder satisfaction.

In both phases, the panel drafts a report with recommended grades which is submitted to the Utility Regulator. The Utility Regulator then engages with us before confirming the final grades and determining the incentive outcome, ensuring decisions are based on transparent, independent feedback.

We have taken on board lessons learned from previous assessment cycles and refined our internal processes accordingly. This continued improved approach aims to strengthen the quality of submissions, enhance the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement, and ensure that we are well positioned to demonstrate evidence-based performance against the EPF criteria.

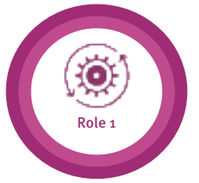
Performance Report Overview

The Performance Report provides a detailed account of our progress in delivering the activities and initiatives set out in our 2024/25 Forward Work Plan (FWP). While the FWP outlines the projects and commitments we plan to deliver across the year, the Performance Report assesses how we performed against those commitments – highlighting what was achieved, what has progressed, and where challenges were encountered. Both documents form key components of the Evaluative Performance Framework (EPF)[1]. The EPF evaluates our work across clear criteria, including delivery, stakeholder satisfaction and adaptability.

This report is structured around the same four core roles used in the FWP – System Operations and Adequacy, Independent Expert, System Planning and Commercial Interface, each designed to deliver against the four strategic outcomes of Decarbonisation, Grid Security, System-Wide Costs, and Service Quality.

For each role we provide:

- A summary of performance against the planned projects and milestones;
- Key highlights and lessons learned;
- Context around operational challenges or external factors that influenced delivery; and
- Evidence of how our work has contributed to the wider outcome for consumers and the energy system.



Role 1: System Operations and Adequacy

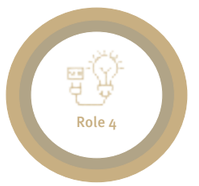
Covers our core responsibility for real-time operation of the transmission system, security of supply and keeping the lights on. It includes scheduling and dispatch, developing future system services, and ensuring we are prepared for emergencies, with a strong focus on renewable integration and compliance.

Role 2: Independent Expert

We act as a trusted, impartial voice for stakeholders by leading structured engagement, communicating transparently, and providing evidence-based advice. Initiatives such as the Dispatch Down Action programme, Plan-Led Proposal and SRP27 ensure stakeholder views are embedded in system and market development.

Role 3: System Planning

We are responsible for long-term transmission planning and securing consents through the three-part Grid Development Process. We work independently of generation companies, coordinating closely with NIE Networks and engaging stakeholders to ensure efficient network development.



Role 4: Commercial Interface

We manage customer connections, contracts, Tranmission Use of System (TUoS) arrangements, and oversee the Moyle Interconnector, supporting a fair and efficient transmission system.

1 Evaluative Performance Framework Guidance

Alongside our four roles, we take a structured approach to how we prioritise and deliver our work. This takes account of the outcomes that we are seeking to achieve, as outlined below, and the criteria that we use to assess the priority of our work. This helps us shape our work programme and schedule our projects.

Symbols for the outcomes are shown and will be used throughout this document for consistency. Each project in the Performance Report has been assessed against these outcomes and criteria, with detailed information on these in the table below.

EPF SONI Outcomes

SONI Outcome	Explanation of Outcome	Symbol
Decarbonisation	The Northern Ireland electricity system supports government decarbonisation policy and targets.	
Grid Security	Northern Ireland electricity customers receive secure and reliable electricity supplies.	
System-Wide Costs	Northern Ireland electricity consumers get good value for money which reflects efficiency within, and across, different parts of the Northern Ireland electricity system, over the short term and the longer term.	
SONI Service Quality	SONI provides an appropriate range and quality of services to participants in the Northern Ireland electricity system and other stakeholders.	

EPF Performance Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Explanation of Criteria
Delivery	The extent to which SONI has delivered against (a) the specified deliverables and/or performance commitments from its forward plan; and (b) the specified price control outputs (or deliverables) set by us for new initiatives, and the justification for this delivery.
Stakeholder satisfaction	The extent to which stakeholders are satisfied with the performance of SONI, taking its performance in 2019/20, as supplemented by its forward plan, as its baseline.
Adaptability	The extent to which SONI has shown successful adaptation and agility, to the benefit of SONI outcomes, in responding to opportunities not anticipated in the forward plan.

Cost Scale

We have created a Cost Scale in order to assist the audience in understanding the scale and/or importance of a project, and detailed where on this scale each project lies. The costs indicated are SONI related costs and do not cover any costs accrued by any stakeholder SONI may be collaborating with on the project.

Cost Scale Table

Cost	Cost Range
Low	£0 - 500K
Medium	£500K - £1M
High	£1M - £5M
Very High	£5M +

Cost Scale Gauge

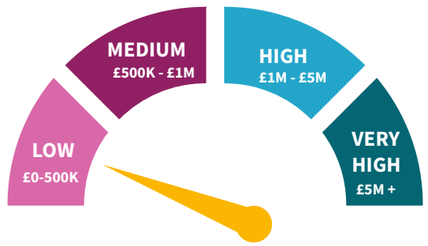


Figure 3: SONI Cost Scale

Overall Performance 2024/25

Our overall performance for the 2024/25 FWP reflects strong delivery of our FWP across the majority of planned initiatives, despite continued external dependencies, pressures and evolving regulatory and operational challenges.

At the outset the plan comprised of **50** milestones across **21** projects. During the year, 4 milestones were descoped across 3 projects. 2 were related to our Price Control, following the extension of the current Price Control period. Another milestone was associated with Limavady TNPP, which was driven by a customer initiative that they subsequently withdrew. The final milestone concerned the 80% SNSP Operational Trial. This trial has been postponed due to unresolved operational stability concerns therefore the post-trial review was no longer required and was removed from scope.

Taking account of these descoped projects, performance is being reported against **46** milestones across **19** projects.

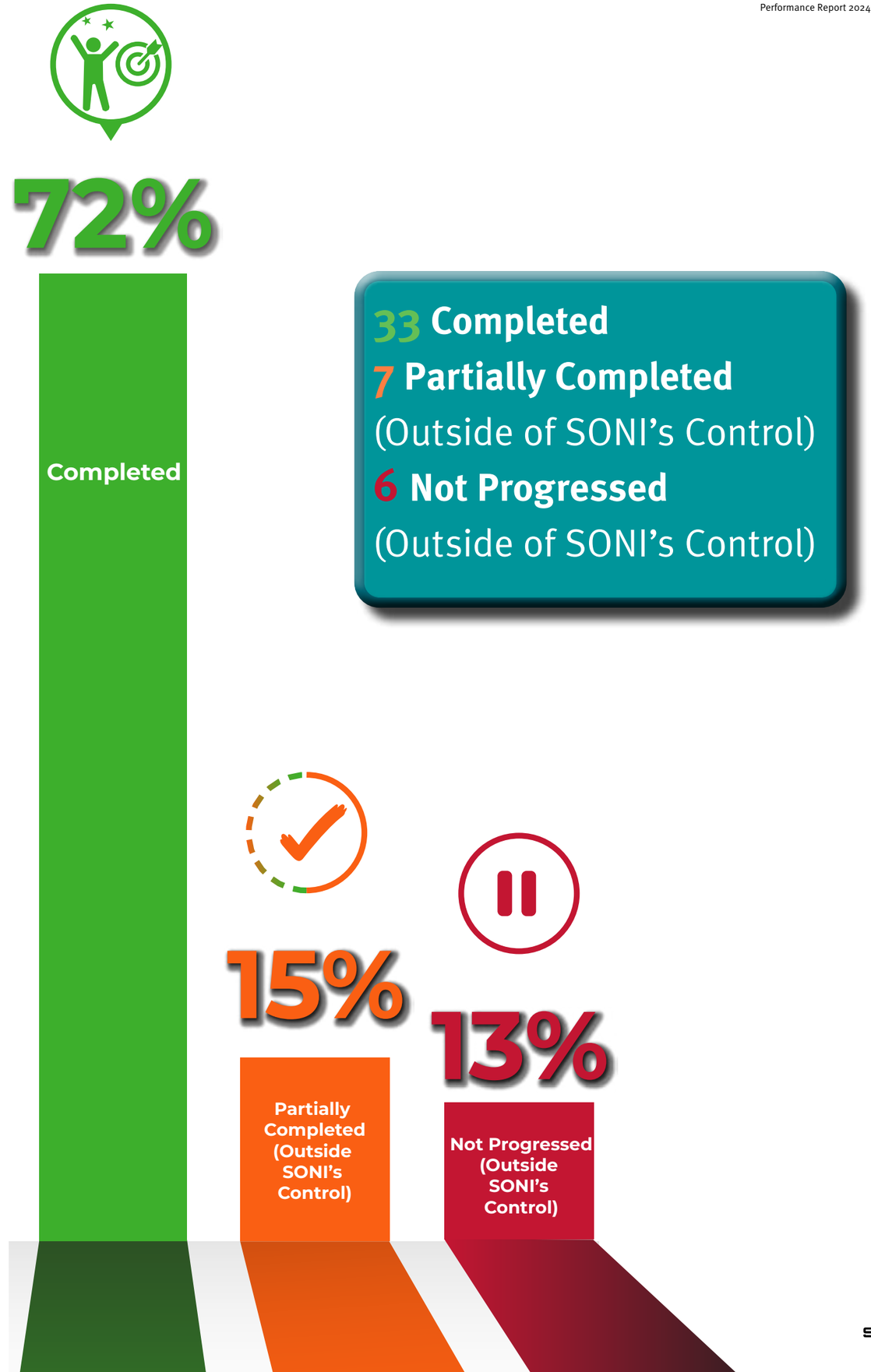
Of these remaining milestones:

- **33 (72%)** milestones were completed in full, representing delivery across a broad range of strategic, operational, and innovation led activities
- **7** milestones were **partially completed**, due to factors **ouside our control**
- **6** milestones were **not progressed** due to factors **outside our control**

Despite a highly challenging year operationally, we delivered **72%** of our in-scope commitments, maintaining progress on key strategic and operational priorities that advance Northern Ireland's energy transition, strengthen system security, and deliver long-term value for consumers.

In total **28%** (13 milestones) were impacted by circumstances **outside our control**. Where milestones were not completed, this was due to factors beyond our control, however we remain focused on addressing these areas and building on the progress achieved.

We have gained valuable lessons from previous cycles from the EPF and panel feedback. A key insight is that milestones should focus on what is within our ability to control, rather than external factors. This approach has been embedded into the 2025/26 FWP. However, for the current 2024/25 cycle, some projects will have made significant progress, but milestones remain incomplete due to external dependencies beyond our control.



Deliverables

This section provides an overview of our performance across projects. Each project is marked with a symbol indicating it's status: Completed, Not Progressed due to factors outside of our control, or partially completed for factors beyond our control. For ease of reference, we've also included the page number where you can find the full project details.

Key

- Completed
- Partially Completed - Outside SONI's Control
- Not Progressed- Outside SONI's Control

Role 1 - System Operations & Adequacy

Covers our responsibility for operating the power system and maintaining security of supply, including scheduling, dispatch and system services.

Project	Deliverable	Status	Page Reference
FWP23-01 Future Arrangements System Services	Publish System Service Charge Recommendations Paper		50
	Publish draft Plain English Version of System Services Code		
	Submit FASS Volumes Methodology recommendations paper to SEMC		
FWP23-02 Schedule & Dispatch Tranche 1	Vendor System Build and Test Complete for Scheduling and Dispatch Programme Tranche 1 Initiatives		54
	TSO/MO System Test and Validation Complete for Scheduling and Dispatch Programme Tranche 1 Initiatives		
	Participant Interface Test (PIT) Complete for Scheduling and Dispatch Energy Storage Power Station (ESPS)		
	Cutover activities Commences for Scheduling and Dispatch Energy Storage Power Station (ESPS)		
	Implementation and Go Live for Scheduling and Dispatch Programme Tranche 1 Initiatives		
FWP25-09 80% SNSP operational trial	Detailed technical studies to be completed		58
	Studies outcome and results approved by OPRC		
	Decision taken on whether to proceed with 80% SNSP operational trial		
FWP005 Control Centre Tools	Voltage Trajectory Tool (VTT) Multi-Timepoint Solution Live and Operational		60
	VTT Automated Modelling Environment.		
	Ramping Margin Tool (RMT) Enhancements		
	Look-ahead Security Assessment Tool (LSAT) Environments		

Role 2 - Independent Expert

Covers our responsibility in providing impartial advice, transparent engagement, and evidence-based input to policy and market development.

Project	Deliverable	Status	Page Reference
FWP25-12 Dispatch Down Action Plan	Publish a Dispatch Down Action Plan		76
FWP25-11 Future Energy System Shared Paper (FPS)	Agree modelling approach & carry out Power System Studies		80
	Prepare Shared Future Energy Paper		
FWP25-02 SONI Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter rollout	Development of evidence-based Community Benefit proposal for Utility Regulator		82
	Development of new Community Forum model for future network projects with independent partner		
	Programme of strategic engagement on new Public Engagement Model		
	Programme of strategic engagement on new Landowner Charter		
	Partnership with Rural Support to develop Landowner Engagement Pack and outreach project		
	Development and implementation of new Landowner compensation model.		
FWP23-14 Support the NI Energy Strategy	Continue to support DfE via Annual action plan and established working groups		86
	Review DfE Action plan for 2025 and identify areas where SONI can support		
	Support next stages of DfEs Smart Systems Flexibility Plan		
FWP24-06 Tomorrow's Energy Scenario (TESNI)	System Needs Assessment		88
FWP23-23 TSO-DSO Future Operating Model	Update model proposals following lessons learned from the Flex trial and Control Centre of the Future (CCOTF)		90
	Update documents for operating model following Flex trial lessons learned		
FWP25-03 SONI Price Control Engagement Programme	Delivery of extensive stakeholder engagement programme to support the development of the SONI Business Plan submission.		92

Role 3 - System Planning

Covers our responsibility for planning the tranmission network, securing consents, and coordinating with NIE Networks and stakeholders.

Project	Deliverable	Status	Page Reference
FWP25-04 Transmission Clusters Consultation	Develop approach with NIEN and industry and issue for consultation	🟢	102
FWP25-06 Transmission nodes at/ reaching capacity	Complete review of obligations and identify solutions	🟢	104
	Stakeholder engagement with NIEN/UR & industry on way forward	🟢	
FWP25-07 FAQ Methodology	Consult on changes to FAQ methodology	🟠	106
FWP25-08 Joint SONI-NIEN Project Management Office	Joint SONI- NIE Networks Delivery Programme for NI Infrastructure projects communicated externally	🟢	108
FWP027 Energising Belfast: Castlereagh – Hannahstown	Secure options for 2 City Centre substation sites	🟠	112
	TPI for the post-connection works at Finaghy	🟢	
FWP028 Airport Road Main 110/33 kV Substation	Finalisation of the Landowner Agreements for the site and indicative cable routes	🟢	114
	Transmission Project instruction issued to NIEN	🟢	
FWP026 North South Interconnector	Issue Transmission Project Instruction (OHL)	🟢	116
	SONI to enter into a Transmission Project Agreement	🟢	

Role 4 - Commercial Interface

Covers our role as the commercial interface for connections, contracts, tarriffs and Moyle Interconnector arrangements.

Project	Deliverable	Status	Page Reference
FWP001 LCIS Phase 2	Consultation on LCIS Phase 2 product and commercial requirements, complete recommendation paper and submit to RAs Q2 FY2	🟢	126
	Recommendations paper on LCIS Phase 2 product and commercial requirements submitted to RAs	🟠	
	SEMC decision on LCIS recommendation paper	🔴	
	Prepare & commence PQQ procurement of LCIS Phase 2	🔴	

Performance Measures

Under the Evaluative Performance Framework (EPF) the UR requires each SONI outcome to be supported by clear performance measures. These measures provide a practical way to track progress and demonstrate how our actions contribute to system performance and consumer outcomes. The table below sets out the performance measures for each outcome, with further detail provided in Appendix A.

Performance Measure	Target	Actual	Commentary
System Non-Synchronous Penetration (SNSP)	80%	75%	The SNSP limit remains at 75%, which continues to support renewable integration. Plans to increase to 80% were deferred to protect the security of the system and provision of continuity of supply for consumers due to recently identified system stability concerns. Future progress will depend on grid code changes and compliance of large energy users in addition to the implementation of new tools and processes.
Imperfections Costs	Determined Annually Ex-Post	To be considered over the period	Total resettled actual costs for the 2023/24 year are €436m. This resulted in savings/over recovery of approximately €91m which was factored into 2024/2025 imperfections costs. We took action in year where possible and remain committed to working with industry partners to minimise future imperfections costs. Despite these efforts, costs remain significant across the all-island system.
System Frequency (%)	Within 50Hz ± 0.1Hz for 98% of the time	98.7%	System frequency was within the normal range. No reportable excursions occurred in Northern Ireland during the period.
Timely delivery of publications	100%	66%	Four of six scheduled milestones were delivered, including key FASS-related updates. Two were delayed due to external dependencies, with revised timelines under review.
Stakeholder Satisfaction	60%	75%	Overall satisfaction improved to 100%, with a notable 15-point increase in the “Very Satisfied” category. This exceeds our target and demonstrates strong progress in stakeholder engagement.

Engagement Evaluation Dashboard

This is our second-year publishing results through our Engagement Evaluation Dashboard, following its establishment in 2024 and the first dashboard featured in the 2023/24 Performance Report. This dashboard provides a structured evaluation of our Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan, developed in line with our Engagement Evaluation Framework outlined in our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. It offers a comprehensive view of our engagement activities, supported by data, insights and qualitative feedback across all areas of the business.

Within this section, we have included:

- Delivery data for engagement workstreams across all business areas
- Findings from the Annual Stakeholder Engagement Pulse Survey 2024/25, including insights from post-engagement surveys
- Overview of digital data and media presence, including social media and media engagement
- Qualitative feedback from stakeholders
- Case studies and testimonials from key stakeholders we have engaged with
- Insights into engagement with society, industry and statutory bodies

Finally, we have provided a year-in-review snapshot, capturing the breadth and depth of our engagement efforts and demonstrating our ongoing commitment to building meaningful, impactful relationships.

Engagement Evaluation Framework Dashboard 2024/25

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

This reporting period reflects strong progress in delivering our engagement objectives and maintaining high levels of stakeholder satisfaction. Engagement activities were successfully implemented across major workstreams, with positive feedback from stakeholders indicating confidence in SONI's approach and commitment to meaningful consultation.

Our aim has been to maintain or improve upon the stakeholder satisfaction benchmark established in 2034/24, with a refined focus on increasing the proportion of stakeholders who report being "Very Satisfied" with our engagement. This year, we achieved a 15-percentage point increase in the category, reflecting our commitment to building trust, strengthening relationships and delivering high-quality, meaningful engagement.

The benchmark itself is a work in progress as we continue to evolve our approach and review historical trends to ensure it remains robust and relevant.

Digital engagement also performed well, demonstrating increased reach and interaction compared to industry benchmarks. Overall, the results highlight continued improvement from the previous year and reinforce SONI's focus on transparent, collaborative engagement with communities and stakeholders.

1. A small number of engagements have been partially completed or postponed due to external factors beyond SONI's control. We remain committed to working with partners and stakeholders to ensure planned major engagements are delivered in a timely manner.

DELIVERY OVERVIEW

This section provides a snapshot of engagement activity across key business areas during the reporting period. It reflects the breadth of workstreams delivered, highlights areas of progress, and notes where external factors have influenced timelines. While the majority of initiatives were completed or remain on track, a small number required rescheduling or adaption to maintain momentum. These metrics demonstrate our commitment to proactive engagement and flexibility in addressing challenges as we advance critical projects.

We have aligned this delivery overview within teams across our four strategy pillars: Advise, Plan, Deliver, and Operate. While many projects and workstreams naturally span multiple pillars, for clarity in this report we have grouped activity under the pillar most closely associated with its primary focus. This approach provides a clear view of progress while recognizing the interconnected nature of our work

These metrics demonstrate our commitment to proactive engagement and flexibility in addressing challenges as we advance critical projects.

Advise

- Chief Executive Office
- 20 engagement workstreams completed/ongoing
- 1 partially completed (Committee visit postponed)
- 1 postponed (Annual Business Breakfast to Q1 25/26)
- Strategy & Regulation
- 7 engagement workstreams completed/ongoing

Deliver

Networks

- 29 engagement workstreams completed/ongoing
- 4 partially completed (landowner & environmental complexities)
- 2 projects delayed (Eden-Carnmoney & TCCMS

Plan

Future Operations & Future Power Markets

- 9 engagement workstreams completed/ongoing
- 1 partially completed (QTP under review)
- 2 delayed (LCIS Phase 2 & Operational Roadmap update)

Power System Insights & Research

- 6 engagement workstreams completed/ongoing

Operate

Operations

- 12 engagement workstreams completed/ongoing)

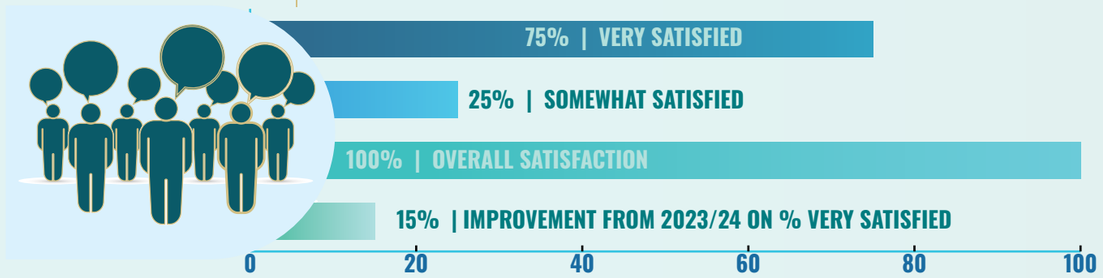
Market Operations & SEMO Market Interface

- 5 engagement workstreams completed/ongoing

Annual Stakeholder Engagement Pulse Survey 2024/25

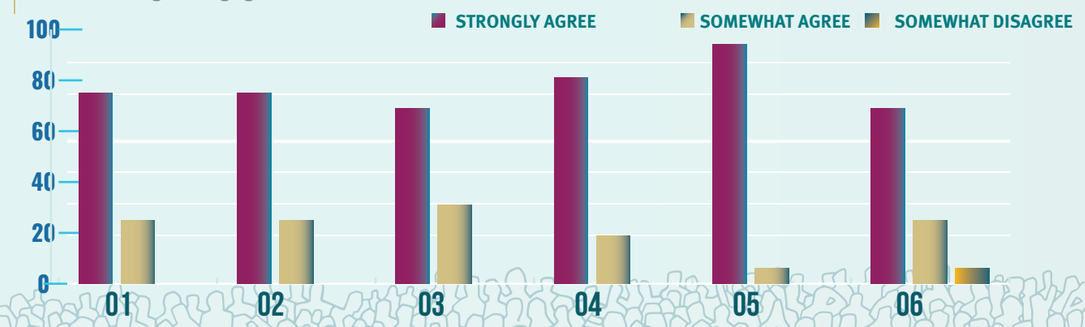
STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION

We continued our commitment to building trust and delivering meaningful engagement by maintaining or improving upon our 2023/24 benchmark, which is still evolving. This year, we placed a refined focus on increasing the proportion of stakeholders who reported being **"Very Satifised"** with our engagement.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholder feedback shows exceptionally high satisfaction with our engagement activities in 2024/25, with all respondents agreeing the sessions met expectations and added value. Across six key measures, the majority strongly agreed, reflecting improvements from last year and reinforcing our commitment to clear, accessible, and meaningful engagement.



SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF ENGAGEMENT

01 The engagement(s) met my expectations and added value to my role. **(75 % strongly agree, 25% somewhat agree)**

02 The information provided was accessible and proportionate to my needs. (**75% Strongly Agree, 25% Somewhat Agree)**

03 I have a better understanding of SONI's role and the relevant subject matter. **(69% strongly agree, 31% somewhat agree)**

04 There was sufficient opportunity for me to engage and ask questions. **(81% Strongly Agree and 19% somewhat agree)**

05 The SONI team were knowledgeable on the area of engagement. **(94% Strongly Agree, 6% somewhat agree)**

06 The frequency of my engagement with SONI is about right for my needs. **(69% Strongly Agree, 25% somewhat agree and 6% somewhat disagree)**

POST-ENGAGEMENT SURVEYS 2024/25[1]

Following the successful pilot in 2023/24, we have embedded post-engagement surveys as a core measure of stakeholder satisfaction across all teams. The 2024/25 results demonstrate consistently high agreement across key areas, confirming the value and effectiveness of our engagement approach.

Value Add

100%

100% of respondents Strongly Agreed or Agreed with "The engagement met my expectations and added value to my role"

Our Role

94%

94% of respondents Strongly Agreed or Agreed with "I have a better understanding of SONI's role and the relevant subject matter"

Needs

100%

100% of respondents Strongly Agreed or Agreed with "The information provided was accessible and proportionate to my needs"

Opportunity

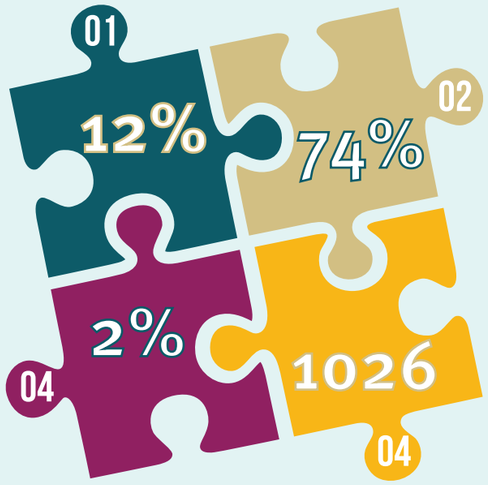
94%

94% of respondents Strongly Agreed or Agreed with "There was sufficient opportunity for me to engage and ask questions."

1. The post-engagement survey was issued immediately following engagements on an ad hoc basis. 17 responses were received across the period of 24/25

DIGITAL AND MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

In 2024/25 we focused on strengthening our online presence and improving how we communicate key projects and operational updates. Our clearer, more targeted digital activity has increased engagement and improved overall media sentiment. The metrics below highlight progress across our social and media channels.

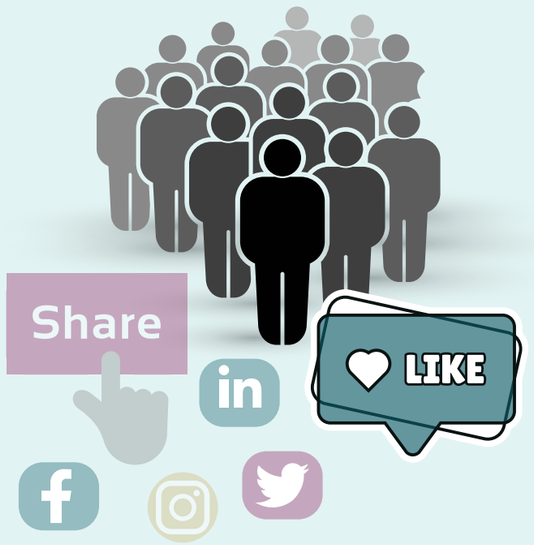


- **01 - LinkedIn Engagement Rate - 12% (Industry Average 2.7%)**
  This metric shows how actively audiences interact with our content. Our 12% rate, over four times the industry average, indicates strong relevance, high-quality output, and effective targeting across our digital channels.

- **02 - Prime Positive Coverage - 74%**
  This metric reflects the proportion of media coverage that portrays SONI in a favourable accurate or constructive light. Our Prime Positive coverage rose from 45% in 2023/24 to 74% in 2024/25, showing a significant improvement in how our work, projects and messaging are understood and reported by the media. This increase demonstrates stronger narrative control, better proactive engagement and clearer communication of our role.

- **03 - Prime Negative Coverage - 2%**
  Prime Negative is the share of coverage that reflects SONI negatively or raises concerns. At just 2%, this remains extremely low, indicating effective media management, strong relationships, and successful mitigation of potential issues before they escalate.

- **04 - Project-Related Social Media Engagement- 1026 interactions**
  This captures comments, likes, shares and messages specically related to infrastructure projects.



QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK

Alongside our survey results and quantitative performance measures, we also received detailed qualitative feedback from stakeholders across industry, government, local authorities and consumer bodies. These insights provide a richer understanding of how our engagement is experienced in practice, highlighting where our culture, collaboration and transparency have strengthened relationships. A selection of representative comments is included below.

> In the past couple of years there has been an appreciable cultural change. Away from an intolerance of consumer representation to one which we feel at least listened to.
>
> **Business representative organisation**

> The relationship between the respective operations teams in [redacted] is strong and valued. Informal interaction and communication are very good, and we value this highly.
>
> **Industry representative organisation**

> "[SONI] engaging well on 80x30 challenges and Joint Programme Management Office
>
> **Statutory partner**

> The opportunity for Solace NI members to visit the control room, observe the grid infrastructure and gain an insight into the supply and demand of electricity across Northern Ireland was very much appreciated.
>
> **Local government chief executive**

Cam Cluster

Public Engagement Society

About

The Cam Cluster Project is designed to make it easier and more efficient to connect renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar, to the electricity network. Instead of building a separate connection for each generator, the project uses a “cluster” approach. This means grouping several generators in one area and linking them through a single substation. This method reduces costs, speeds up delivery, and lowers environmental impact. The Cam Cluster is being established under NIE Networks Distribution Cluster Policy, ensuring alignment.

Overview

Several renewable energy projects have already been approved in the Cam area. To support these and prepare for future growth, a new cluster substation is planned. This substation will help us to move towards a cleaner electricity system, ensuring homes and businesses benefit from greener, more affordable and secure energy.

What We Did

To ensure local communities could understand and influence the plan, we followed our Public Engagement model and implemented a structured engagement process. Which included:

- **Clear Communication:** We explained what the project is, why it’s needed, and how it will benefit the wider community and environment.
- **Multiple Ways to Engage:** People could attend an in-person drop in event, access information online, and submit feedback through our consultation portal.
- **Proactive Outreach:** We sent letters to properties near the proposed site, published notices in local newspapers and used social media to reach a broader audience.
- **Direct Stakeholder Contact:** Local elected representatives and key stakeholders were invited to participate, ensuring transparency and accountability.

In addition to community engagement, we maintained close collaboration with NIE Networks and renewable developers to ensure all parties were aligned.

Challenges

Delivering the Cam Cluster Project involves several complexities beyond the technical design. The main challenge was ensuring that the project met energy system needs while addressing community expectations and complying with evolving regulations.

- **Balancing Technical and Community Needs:** The substation location had to meet strict engineering requirements while minimising impact on local residents and the environment
- **Explaining a Complex Concept:** The cluster approach is highly technical so making it understandable for people unfamiliar with the electricity network required clear, accessible communication
- **Managing Concerns about Impact:** Infrastructure projects often raise questions about visual impact, land use, and long-term effects, which needed to be addressed openly
- **Adapting to New Statutory Obligations:** Midway through the process, new consultation requirements were introduced, requiring an additional engagement period and adjustments to the timeline
- **Coordinating Multiple Stakeholders:** From landowners and local communities to elected representatives and renewable developers, ensuring everyone had a voice was a significant undertaking.

ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Consultation period between 6 June 2025 and 18 July 2025

Drop-in Public consultation event in Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre

Online consultation hosted on the SONI Consultation Portal

Additional period of online consultation carried out between 8th August and 5th September to comply with new statutory regulations.

We issued invitation letters to all properties within 500m of the proposed site

Public notices and advertisements including in the Belfast Telegraph, Northern Constitution and Coleraine Times

We delivered a campaign of social media activity on Facebook, Twitter and Linkedin

We issued direct Invitations to local elected representatives and key stakeholders

13 engagements at public drop-in

434 engagements on project specific social media posts

22 elected representatives engaged with during Part 2c engagement

10 responses received from particpants

75% of attendees at the public drop-in event live in the area

75% of attendees found out about the events through family/friends and social media

100% of respondents reported clear understanding of the Cam Cluster Project, its purpose, SONI’s role, and were satisfied with the engagement and the accessibility of information

88% agree the project will benefit the local community and help Northern Ireland meet its energy targets

SONI

Society

Partnering with Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU)

> Young people must have a voice in shaping Northern Ireland's electricity grid for a carbon-free future.
>
> *William Sufferin, Senior Landowner Engagement Lead, SONI*

BACKGROUND

We partnered with the Young Farmers' Club of Ulster (YCFU) in 2025 to strengthen engagement with the agricultural sector.

- We established a sponsorship and engagement programme with young people in rural communities
- We recognised YFCU as a critical stakeholder for shaping Northern Ireland's future electricity grid
- We created opportunities for young farmers to contribute to SONI's plans for a carbon-free power system

Aim

To strengthen engagement between SONI and the agricultural sector by involving young people in shaping the future of Northern Ireland's electricity grid

Development

We created this partnership to create a programme of sponsorship and engagement. This initiative was designed to give young farmers a platform to learn about our role and share their perspectives on grid upgrades

SOLUTION

- Sponsorship and engagement activities acrosss rural communities
- Workshops and events to educate young farmers on our plans for a carbon-free power system
- Direct dialogue between our landowner engagement team and YCFU members to understand sector challenges

BENEFITS

- Increased awareness among Young Farmers about our role and energy transition
- Strengthened relationships with rural communities
- Valuable insights from future landowners to inform our planning and engagement strategies

TESTIMONIAL

"In recent years, SONI have continued to introduce and invest in new approaches to engagement across Northern Ireland. As we work to deliver a power system for the future, we understand that young people must have a voice in our decision-making processes for upgrading Northern Ireland's electricity grid as we move toward a carbon-free power system.

"By working closely with the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU), our landowner and community engagement teams will have the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of some of the challenges the sector faces through the first-hand experiences of the next generation of farmers."

William Sufferin, Senior Landowner Engagement Lead, SONI

FUTURE PLAN

We will continue to build on this partnership to deepen engagement and deliver meaningful outcomes for rural communities.

Expand

We expanded the YCFU programme to include interactive workshops on energy transition and grid development

Develop

We developed educational resources tailored for young farmers on renewable energy and land use

Create

We created opportunities for YCFU members to particpate in SONI consultation processes

Strengthen

We strengthened feedback loops to ensure insights from rural communities

Statutory

Minister for the Economy Engages with SONI on Energy Transition

Control Room Visit

In July 2025, we hosted Minister for the Economy, Dr Caoimhe Archibald MLA at our Control Room, the hub where electricity supply and demand is managed in real time. This visit provided an opportunity to showcase our operational expertise and role in delivering a secure and sustainable electricity system for Northern Ireland. Minister Archibald met with SONI's Chair, Executive Leadership Team, and expert engineers based in the Control Room.

We briefed the Minister on the significant progress achieved to date and the scale of transmission grid upgrades required to meet Northern Ireland's ambitious climate targets. The discussion focused on the Transmission Development Plan for Northern Ireland (TDPNI) and the critical projects that will enable the energy transition.

The engagement also explored strategies to broaden societal understanding and support for upgrading grid infrastructure, an essential step in achieving a carbon-free power system.

> "SONI supports the decarbonisation of our economy by integrating renewables while maintaining security of electricity supplies"

Key Discussion Points

- Demonstrated our operational role in managing real-time electricity supply and demand
- Highlighted progress on transmission development and investment to date
- Discussed the scale and urgency of grid upgrades required to meet Northern Ireland's climate and decarbonisation
- Focus on the Tranmission Development Plan for Northern Ireland (TDPNI) and priority projects enabling the energy transition
- Explored approaches to increase public understanding and support for essential grid infrastructure upgrade

Minister's Perspective

"From integrating renewables to maintaining security of electricity supplies, SONI supports the decarbonisation of our economy. Today, I was pleased to meet with its senior leadership team, engineers and operators to gain insight into the planning and real-time decision-making necessary to ensure we all receive a secure, reliable, and sustainable electricity supply. I was also encouraged to hear about SONI's ambitious investment plans to upgrade transmission grid infrastructure and to faciliate the use of more renewable electricity."

Why this visit matters

01. Our Commitment
Reinforces our commitment to transparency and collaboration with government

02. Critical Role
Highlights the critical role of TDPNI projects in achieving Northern Ireland's climate goals

03. Strengthening Engagement
Strengthens engagement between SONI and the Department for the Economy

Industry

TRANSMISSION CLUSTER POLICY

Industry Webinar

Background

In August 2025, we hosted a webinar in collaboration with RenewableNI to address industry concerns regarding the Transmission Cluster Policy consultation. This initiative aimed to provide clarity on the policy's context, philosophy, and design, and to explain its interaction with our Grid Development and Connections processes, as well as NIE Networks' distribution Cluster Policy.

OBJECTIVES

- Present our rationale and design principles behind the Transmission Cluster Policy
- Explain how our policy integrates with existing grid development and connection frameworks
- Gather feedback from industry stakeholders to inform our policy development

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

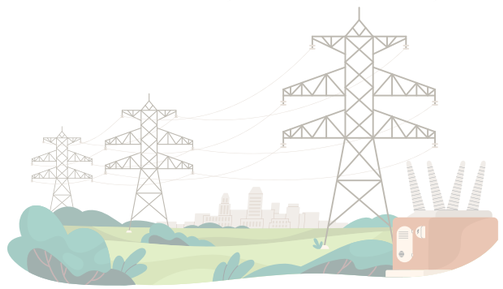
We demonstrated our commitment to meaningful engagement by creating a platform for open dialogue. The webinar allowed stakeholders to:

- Gain insight into our proposed details
- Understand implications for renewable integration and grid planning
- Provide constructive feedback to shape ourfinal policy

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

Speaking after the webinar, Shane Corcoran, Senior Policy Analyst at RenewableNI stated:

> *"RenewableNI values SONI's proactive approach to engagement. The Transmission Cluster Policy webinar provided our members with a clear understanding of the proposals and an opportunity to contribute constructively to the development of the policy."*



KEY OUTCOMES

- Strengthened our collaboration with renewable industry stakeholders
- Enhanced transparency around our policy development
- Valuable feedback collected to refine our Transmission Cluster Policy

NEXT STEPS

- Incorporate stakeholder feedback into our final policy design
- Continue our engagement through follow-up consultations and updates
- Align Transmission Cluster Policy with our broader grid development objectives to support renewable integration

External Recognition and Engagement

This year, we have achieved significant milestones that reflect our commitment to sustainability, diversity and stakeholder engagement.

We are pleased to share that we have achieved Gold in the 2025 Northern Ireland Environmental Benchmarking Survey by Business in the Community. This is our first time achieving Gold and marks our sixth year participating in the scheme. The award demonstrates our ongoing efforts to embed environmental responsibility and continuous improvements across all areas of our operations.

In addition, we have been recognised for our progress in advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) with the Diversity Mark Accreditation. This accreditation is granted to organisations that demonstrate measurable progress in creating an inclusive culture, focusing on gender, ethnicity, disability, LGBTQ+ inclusion, and age. Key initiatives introduced include:

- The Circuit – an internal women's networking group
- Enhanced family leave policies
- Support for SistersIN Mentoring programme
- Outreach programmes with schools and universities to promote careers in STEM
- Wellbeing days and provision of free period products onsite

These initiatives reflect our commitment to fostering a workplace where everyone feels valued and included. Our CEO noted, achieving Diversity Mark is an important milestone, but we recognised there is more to do, and we remain committed to continuous improvement.

Our engagement efforts also extended beyond the organisation. We continued our mentoring partnership with SistersIN, supporting young women through guidance and inspiration from our mentors. This programme exemplifies our belief in the power of mentorship to build confidence, open doors, and help shape the next generation of leaders.

These achievements underscore our dedication to environmental leadership, diversity, and meaningful engagement with stakeholders and communities. We will continue to build on this progress in the years ahead.

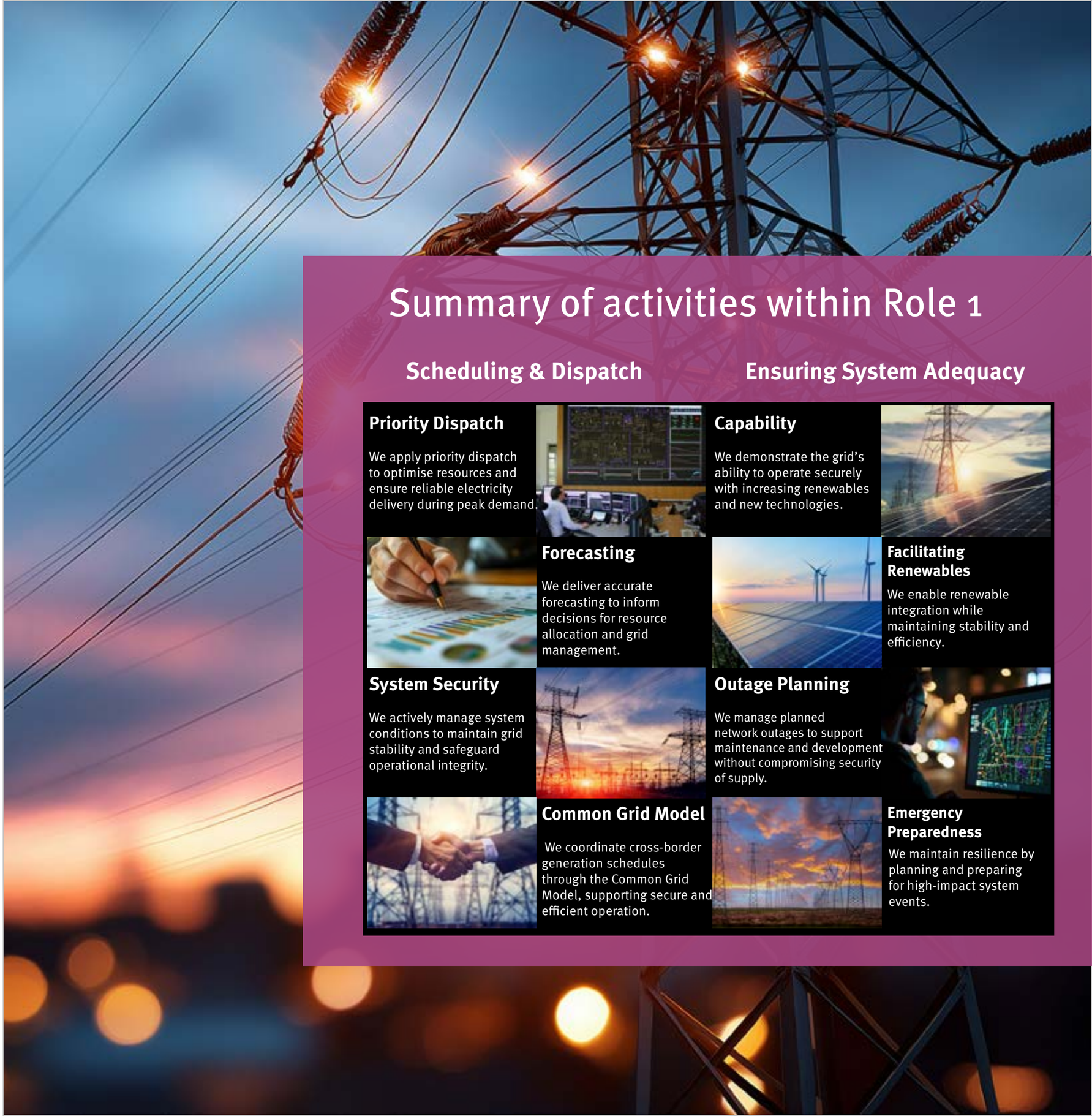
Stakeholder Engagement Snapshot 2024-25

Role 1 - System Operations & Adequacy

Operating and securing Northern Ireland's power system today, while preparing it for a renewable future

Role 1 focuses on our core responsibility for system operation and ensuring system adequacy. It encompasses our day-to-day operational and market activities such as scheduling and dispatch, delivering the future framework for system services, maintaining emergency preparedness, and contributing to overall security of supply, ensuring the lights remain on.

A key element of this role is for us to facilitate the integration of renewable generation, which is vital to achieving the ambitions of the Northern Ireland Energy Strategy. Role 1 is fully aligned with the requirements of the Single Electricity Market (SEM), ensuring that our operational activities support both system security and the efficient function of the all-island electricity market.



Summary of activities within Role 1

Scheduling & Dispatch

Priority Dispatch

We apply priority dispatch to optimise resources and ensure reliable electricity delivery during peak demand.

Forecasting

We deliver accurate forecasting to inform decisions for resource allocation and grid management.

System Security

We actively manage system conditions to maintain grid stability and safeguard operational integrity.

Common Grid Model

We coordinate cross-border generation schedules through the Common Grid Model, supporting secure and efficient operation.

Ensuring System Adequacy

Capability

We demonstrate the grid's ability to operate securely with increasing renewables and new technologies.

Facilitating Renewables

We enable renewable integration while maintaining stability and efficiency.

Outage Planning

We manage planned network outages to support maintenance and development without compromising security of supply.

Emergency Preparedness

We maintain resilience by planning and preparing for high-impact system events.

Role 1 - Summary of Quarterly Deliverables

FWP005 Control Centre Tools
- VTT Multi-Timepoint Solution Live and Operational
- VTT Automated Modelling Environment
- RMT Enhancements
- LSAT Environments

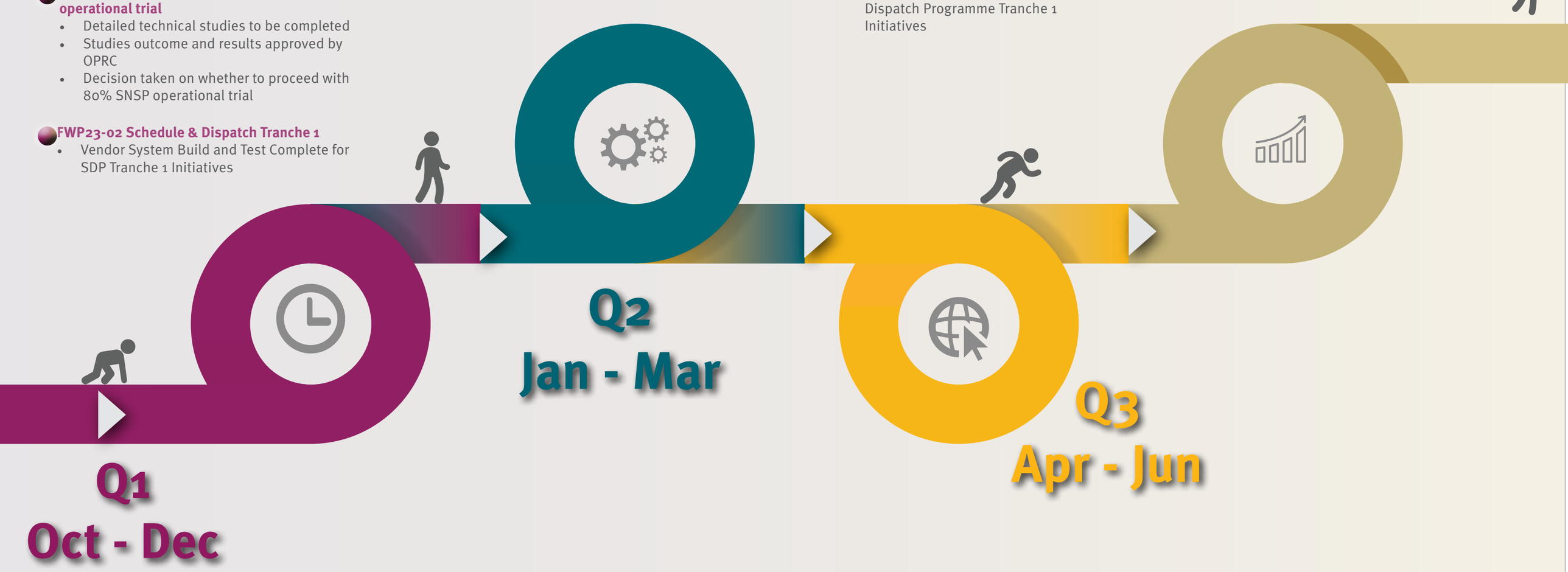
FWP23-01 Future Arrangements System Services
- Publish System Service Charge Recommendations Paper
- Publish draft Plain English Version of System Services Code
- Submit FASS Volumes Methodology recommendations paper to SEMC

FWP25-09 Recommendation to start 80% SNSP operational trial
- Detailed technical studies to be completed
- Studies outcome and results approved by OPRC
- Decision taken on whether to proceed with 80% SNSP operational trial

FWP23-02 Schedule & Dispatch Tranche 1
- Vendor System Build and Test Complete for SDP Tranche 1 Initiatives

FWP23-02 Schedule & Dispatch Tranche 1
- TSO/MO System Test and Validation Complete for Scheduling and Dispatch Programme Tranche 1 Initiatives
- Participant Interface Test (PIT) Complete for Scheduling and Dispatch Energy Storage Power Station (ESPS)

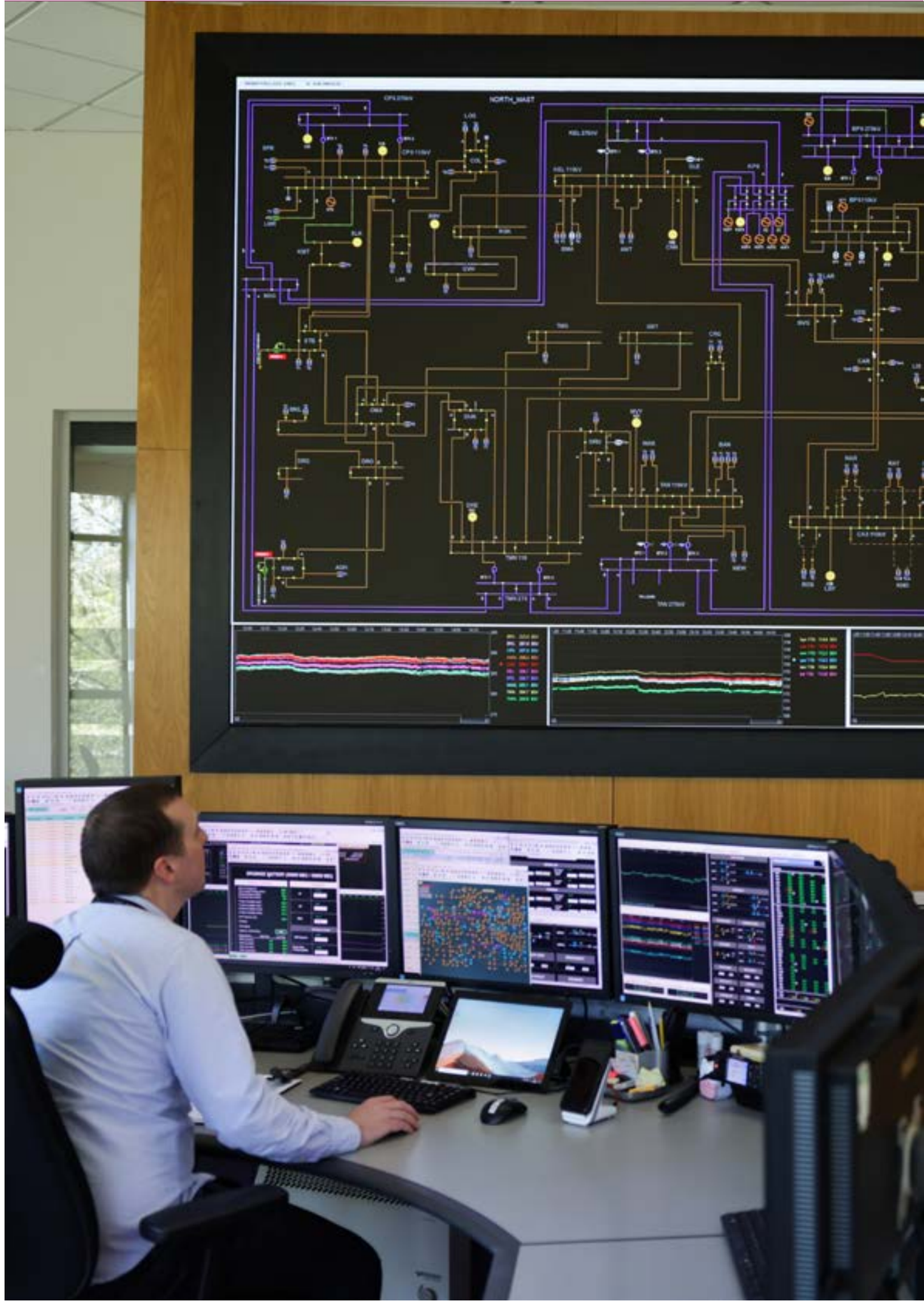
FWP23-02 Schedule & Dispatch Tranche 1
- Cutover activities commences for Scheduling and Dispatch Energy Storage Power Station (ESPS)
- Implementation and Go Live for Scheduling and Dispatch Programme Tranche 1 Initiatives Implementation and Go Live for Scheduling and Dispatch Programme Tranche 1 Initiatives



Role 1
Performance on a Page

Role 1	
Delivery Against Commitments	We delivered key milestones across all projects, with some delays due to factors outside our control (vendor issues, regulatory decisions). FASS completed 3 major milestones on schedule; SDP re-baselined plan approved; SNSP technical studies completed but trial deferred for system security reasons.
Performance Against Targets	**SNSP target:** 80%, actual: **75%** (trial deferred) **System frequency: 98.87%** within normal range (target: 98%) **Imperfections costs** Total resettled actual costs for the 2023/24 year are €436m. This resulted in savings/over recovery of approximately €91m[1] which was factored into 2024/2025 imperfections costs. More information can be found in Appendix A **Timely Delivery of Publications:** Delivered 2 FASS milestones within the quarter, dates flagged as indicative pending Phased Roadmap 2.0 updates. Timely delivery of publications maintained for these milestones.
Stakeholder Engagement & Feedback	We maintained strong engagement through monthly workshops, bilateral readiness sessions, public consultations and webinars. We received positive feedback on transparency and clarity, especially around complex reforms and SNSP trial decision.
Quality of Outputs	We delivered industry-accessible tools and plain-English guidance, enhanced governance and coordination with EirGrid and regulators. Developed worked examples to simplify technical concepts and implemented revised SNSP calculation ahead of schedule
Cost Efficiency & Impact	The delivery of the projects under Role 1 seek to enable long-term cost efficiency: thorough enhanced system services; and improved dispatch efficiency which in term help reduce balancing costs. The ongoing work on increasing SNSP lays further groundwork for higher renewable penetration, reducing fossil fuel reliance.

1 Imperfections Charges October 2024-2025



FWP23-01
Future Arrangements for System Services (FASS)

Overall Assessment

We delivered key milestones largely on schedule, with minor variances due to SEMC decision delays and some early resource challenges. During 2024/25, we achieved three major milestones. Our progress will continue in line with the re-baselined Phased Implementation Roadmap, supported by strong governance, proactive coordination with the UR And SEMC, and enhanced stakeholder engagement. Measures such as joint document sharing and weekly alignment have mitigated regulatory delays, enabling parallel workstreams and reducing risk of slippage

Project Overview

The Future Arrangements for System Services (FASS) programme is a major all-island market reform led jointly by SONI and EirGrid to design and deliver a competitive framework for procuring essential system services. This reform will replace the DS3 System Services arrangements, originally developed to meet the 2020 renewable target of 40%, replacing it with a modernised framework capable of supporting up to 95% System Non-Synchronous Penetration (SNSP) by 2030.

The project is a key enabler of Northern Ireland's energy transition and a response to EU legislative requirements, including the Clean Energy Package (CEP) and Electricity Balancing Guideline, which mandate competitive procurement of reserve services closer to real time.

FASS aims to ensure the secure and efficient operation of the electricity by:

- Enabling greater renewable integration and system stability
- Supporting innovation by opening the market to new low-carbon technologies.
- Ensuring cost-efficient procurement that delivers long-term value for consumers.

Our progress of the project remains dependent on regulatory decisions made by the SEM Committee.

Delivery

We adapted our approach to account for delays in SEMC decision-making and early-year resource mobilisation challenges, ensuring the programme remained largely on schedule and met the agreed milestones in the 2024/25 FWP.

During the report period, we successfully delivered the following milestones

- System Service Charge Recommendations Paper – submitted to the Regulatory Authorities in November 2024. External publication was delayed slightly pending the related SEMC Decision paper
- Plain English System Services Code (first draft) – published in January 2025, on schedule as per re-baselined Phased Implementation Roadmap v2.0
- Volumes forecasting Methodology Recommendations Paper – submitted SEMC in December 2024, on schedule as per Phased Implementation Roadmap v2.0

The programme continues to progress according to the re-baselined schedule, reflecting a structure and well-governed delivery approach consistent with SEMC timelines and inter-TSO coordination.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Publish System Service Charge Recommendations Paper	November 2024	Completed
Publish draft Plain English Version of System Services Code	December 2024	Completed
Submit FASS Volumes Methodology recommendations paper to SEMC	December 2024	Completed

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Advise** - Provides evidence-based recommendations and proposals to SEMC and Regulatory Authorities
- **Plan** - Embeds long-term system requirements into a robust market design for system service
- **Deliver** - Implements a market-ready procurement framework to meet technical and operational needs

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Advise** - Provides evidence-based recommendations and proposals to SEMC and Regulatory Authorities
- **Plan** - Embeds long-term system requirements into a robust market design for system services.
- **Deliver** - Implements a market-ready procurement framework to meet technical and operational needs

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Delivery of three major FASS milestones on or near schedule, aligned with re-baseline plan (PIR V2.0)

Enhanced alignment and collaboration with EirGrid and the Regulatory Authorities through structured governance and weekly coordination

Developed industry-accessible tools and worked examples to simplify complex market concepts.

Strengthened stakeholder engagement through consultations, workshops, and the Future Power Markets forum

Implemented a joint document-sharing and transparency process with the UR to mitigate regulatory delay impacts

Stakeholder Satisfaction

FASS has maintained strong engagement with stakeholders throughout the design and consultation phases.

- Regular public consultations, monthly Future Power Market workshops, and industry surveys have ensured transparency and early input on key design components.
- We meet with the Utility Regulator weekly and support bi-monthly engagement at the RA-led System Services Future Arrangements (SSFA) industry panel, ensuring continuous regulatory alignment.
- To support industry's understanding of complex technical concepts, the programme developed "day-in-the-life" worked examples to illustrate operational and market impacts of proposed design options.

We have received positive feedback from industry stakeholders, recognising our proactive approach to maintaining open, accessible communication and in providing clarity on complex reform topics.

Adaptability

This project has a number of regulatory dependencies and delayed SEMC decisions impacted elements of the design and code development timelines. In response we worked with the UR to establish a document-sharing and alignment process that helped mitigate delays, improve transparency, and maintain momentum across jurisdictions.

This proactive coordination has enabled workstreams to continue progressing in parallel with regulatory approvals, reducing the risk of further slippage and demonstrating adaptability in programme management.

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Provides essential system services to support high renewable penetration

Grid Security - Enhances system resilience and stability through competitive service provision

System-Wide Costs - Introduces competitive procurement to secure services at lowest cost while reducing long-term investment risk

Cost Scale

FWP23-02
Scheduling and Dispatch Program (SDP)

Overall Assessment

The SDP project has made strong progress this year, despite significant external and vendor-related delays that required a full re-baseline of Tranche 1. Notwithstanding these challenges we completed the necessary technical studies, resolved EMS testing issues and commenced TSO/MO system test and validation activities in line with the revised plan.

The programme has shown resilience and adaptability, absorbing delays while maintaining the overall delivery trajectory.

Overall SDP remains a critical modernisation programme for the SEM, and our proactive governance and collaborative approach have sustained confidence in delivery, even in the face on challenges Outside of SONI's Control.

Project Overview

The Scheduling & Dispatch Project (SDP) is a multi-year programme designed to modernise how the power system across Northern Ireland and Ireland is scheduled and operated in real time. The programme underpins compliance with the EU Clean Energy Package (CEP) and supports increased renewable integration and higher System Non-Synchronous Penetration (SNSP) levels.

By upgrading scheduling processes, tools and polices, SDP will ensure that the most efficient mix of generation, storage, and demand-side resources is dispatched to maintain system stability, meet demand, and minimise costs to consumers. The programme represents a cornerstone of our market and operational transformation, supporting the transition to a low-carbon, flexible electricity system.

Delivery

The SDP has made significant progress during 2024/25, despite the need to rebaseline several milestones due to factors Outside of SONI's Control, primarily linked to vendor system build delays and testing of Energy Management System (EMS) changes.

Having resolved these issues, we worked with EirGrid, and the SDP Programme Board to approve a revised Tranche 1 delivery plan, communicated to the Regulatory Authorities (RAs) on 20th January 2025, and presented this to industry on 21st January 2025.

Key delivery updates include:

- Completion of vendor system testing and commencement of TSO/MO system test and validation activities
- Completion of Participant Interface Test (PIT) Complete for Scheduling and Dispatch Energy Storage Power Station (ESPS)
- Cutover activities were split into two milestone, one for ESPS and one for non-priority dispatch renewables and wind dispatch improvements, with final go live now targets for November 2025

The tranche 2 implementation milestone has been revised from April 2025 to November 2025 to reflect updated sequencing and dependencies.

Overall, the SDP remains on track against its revised delivery plan, with testing and market readiness activities progressing in line with the new schedule.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Vendor System Build and Test Complete for Scheduling and Dispatch Programme Tranche 1 Initiatives	December 2024	Completed
TSO/MO System Test and Validation Complete for Scheduling and Dispatch Programme Tranche 1 Initiativese	March 2025	Partially Completed - Outside of SONI's Control
Participant Interface Test (PIT) Complete for Scheduling and Dispatch Energy Storage Power Station (ESPS)	March 2025	Completed
Cutover activities Commences for Scheduling and Dispatch Energy Storage Power Station (ESPS)	April 2025	Partially Completed - Outside of SONI's
Implementation and Go Live for Scheduling and Dispatch Programme Tranche 1 Initiatives	April 2025	Partially Completed - Outside of SONI's Control

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Advise** - Provides evidence-based input into SEM Committee policy decisions and future market design
- **Plan** - Supports long-term planning for market evolution and system resilience
- **Operate** - Delivers operational system changes and policies to manage complexity in high renewable grid

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Delivered key milestones in line with revised Tranche 1 plan approved by SONI, EirGrid and RAs

Re-baseline delivery approach communicated transparently to industry and regulators

Extended participant testing window and enhanced support materials in direct response to stakeholder feedback

Strengthened coordination between SONI, EirGrid, UR, and CRU through structured governance and regular engagement

Maintained progress towards go-live while absorbing vendor and system-related challenges with no impact to the critical path

Stakeholder satisfaction

We have maintained an extensive engagement and communication programme throughout 2024/25 to ensure industry readiness and confidence in advance of go-live.

Engagement activities include:

- Monthly Future Power Market workshops providing transparent status updates to industry participants
- Monthly FPM newsletter highlighting programme and key milestone updates
- Dedicated SDP documentation and guidance materials, including plain-English summaries of system and market changes
- Bilateral meetings with all in-scope participants to assess readiness and provide targets support during the PIT and cutover periods
- SDP-02 Information Session open to all participants to explain system changes and answer operational queries
- Ongoing query management via the SDP mailbox to provide timely clarification and support

Our feedback mechanisms have been integral to the programme's continuous improvement. Some of the key actions taken in response to stakeholder feedback include:

- Extension of the PIT testing window from four to six weeks to allow participants additional preparation time
- Development of additional support materials to enhance participant understanding of SDP-02 changes
- Increase programme team availability during key delivery phases to directly address participant concerns

Throughout this programme we have ensured the Utility Regulator (UR) and Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) receive regular updates through monthly and ad hoc meetings, as well as formal reporting via the Trading & Settlement Code Modification Committee and Grid Code modification processes.

Adaptability

We have, along with our SDP programme partners, demonstrated strong adaptability in managing complex dependencies, vendor delays, and evolving design requirements. Adjustments have been made to several interim milestones to account for:

- Additional regression testing required for the MMS N.13 release
- The increased complexity of the SDP-04 cutover approach, requiring further time for finalisation
- Delayed delivery of defect fixed and temporary unavailability of test environments

These challenges were absorbed by the programme team without impact to the overall critical path. Revised timelines were implemented swiftly, with full transparency to RAs and market participants.

The programme's ability to adapt to change has ensured continued stakeholder confidence and mitigated reputation risk associated with any potential delay to SDP-02 or SDP-04 go-live milestones.

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Enables higher SNSP and greater renewable integration through upgraded scheduling tools and processes

Grid Security - Strengthens real-time operational resilience via new EMS functionality, enhanced testing and improved dispatch capabilities

System-Wide Costs - Supports more efficient dispatch decisions, reducing reliance on costly conventional generation and improving market efficiency

Cost Scale

FWP25-09
80% SNSP operational trial

Overall Assessment

This project delivered all re-baselined milestones and demonstrated strong technical capability, robust governance, and responsible decision-making. While the operational trial has been paused due to unresolved operational stability concerns, we have met expectations by prioritising system security, addressing operational risks, and establishing the necessary foundation for progressing to 80% SNSP when conditions allow.

Project Overview

The 80% SNSP Operational Trial aims to determine whether the power system can be operated securely with higher levels of non-synchronous renewable generation. Building on the existing 75% operating limit, we completed the technical studies required to assess the feasibility of moving to 80% SNSP, a key step towards achieving 2030 renewable targets. SNSP measures the proportion of real-time system demand met by non-synchronous sources such as wind, solar and HVDC interconnectors. Following a successful trial and rollout of 75% SNSP in 2022, work during 2024/25 focused on completing the detailed studies required to support an 80% SNSP operational trial.

Delivery

The project progressed through robust governance with all technical studies completed, submitted and reviewed by the OPRC. These first three milestones were originally planned to be delivered by December 2024. These dates were subsequently re-baselined to July 2025 to allow additional time for robust analysis, further internal review and detailed OPRC consideration.

Within this revised timeframe:

- The necessary technical studies to support the 80% SNSP trial were successfully completed and demonstrated that 80% operation is technically feasible under specific conditions.
- The outcomes and results of these studies were reviewed and approved by the OPRC following additional time allocated to address queries and ensure the breadth and robustness of the analysis.
- A formal decision on whether to proceed with the trial was taken within the revised schedule. The OPRC ultimately decided to not proceed with the trial at this time, due to unresolved operational stability concerns.

In parallel with this work, as part of progressing towards a future 80% SNSP trial:

- A revised SNSP calculation was developed, approved, and implemented, with the new methodology going live on 3 September 2025.

Overall, although the operational trial itself has been paused, the project delivered the required technical work and governance milestones within the revised July 2025 timeline, supporting informed and responsible decision-making based on system stability considerations.

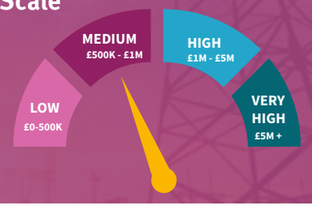
Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Advances the system towards operating at higher renewable penetration levels

Grid Security - Ensures operational stability through detailed technical studies and revised SNSP methodologies

Service Quality - Delivers transparent communication on trial decisions, risk and next steps

Cost Scale



Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Detailed technical studies to be completed	December 2024	Completed
Studies outcome and results approved by OPRC	December 2024	Completed
Decision taken on whether to proceed with 80% SNSP operational trial	December 2024	Completed
Post Trial Review	June 2025	Descoped

Stakeholder satisfaction

We kept stakeholders informed throughout the year through several channels including:

- The Shaping Our Electricity Future Advisory Council
- Dedicated engagements on the Dispatch Down Action Plan
- Renewable quarterly updates
- Wider system operation and market-design stakeholder forums.

Feedback from ongoing engagement confirmed that stakeholders value our transparency and ongoing communication, particularly regarding the implications of the Large Energy User fault ride-through issue and the rationale for postponing the 80% SNSP trial.

Stakeholders welcomed clarity on our next steps, including the implementation of the new SNSP calculation and ongoing collaboration with EirGrid, UR and industry.

Adaptability

We demonstrated significant adaptability in response to emerging operational risk and external dependencies:

- **Large Energy User Fault Ride-Through Issue**: The identification of this system-wide risk required SONI and EirGrid to shift programme priorities. We supported urgent grid code modifications and derogation processes to address the issues before any increase in SNSP could be trialled.
- **SNSP Calculation Update**: We adapted the programme to implement a revised SNSP methodology ahead of schedule, aligning with market system change sand ensuring consistency for future operations.
- **Governance Responsiveness:** We worked closely with the OPRC to ensure all queries and clarifications were addressed before approval. This ensured decision-making was evidence-based and reflected the full technical and operational picture.

Given the criticalness of operational security, adapting the programme, rather than progressing to trial, was the most appropriate action. Addressing these risks has been prioritised before any further progression toward an 80% SNSP trial.

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Technical studies completed and approved to support potential 80% SNSP operation

Updated SNSP calculation implemented in operational systems

Comprehensive risk assessment completed, identifying fault ride-through issues requiring mitigation before trial

Governance-led decision to defer the trial to prioritise system security.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Operate** - Will enable greater utilisation of renewables in real-time system operation
- **Plan -** Supports forward-looking system planning by validating new operational policies and technologies for a high-renewable system
- **Advise** - Provides data-driven recommendations on operational limits to stakeholders and the Utility Regulator

FWP005
Control Centre Tools

Overall Assessment

The Control Centre Tools programme has delivered meaningful progress this year, completing the Voltage Trajectory Tool (VTT) Multi-Timepoint Solution and advancing Look-ahead Security Assessment Tool (LSAT), Ramping Margin Tool (RMT) and VT enhancements despite several delays outside of our control.

The innovative and technically complex nature of the tools, particularly the VTT, required sustained engagement with specialist vendors, iterative design, and extensive internal familiarisation in the Control Room.

Three milestones did not progress as planned due to external delays. However, we maintained strong governance, adapted sequencing effectively, and ensured continuity of critical development activities. Overall, the programme is strengthening operational capability and directly enabling future increases in SNSP and reduced reliance on conventional generation.

Project Overview

As the Northern Ireland power system grows increasingly more complex, with higher renewable penetration, tighter stability margins, and fewer conversional generators our control centre needs advanced, world-leading decisions capabilities.

To meet this challenge, we have developed innovative solutions that provide our engineers with accurate real-time insights, greater visibility of system conditions, and enhanced ability to safely increase SNSP while minimising renewable curtailment.

These capabilities represent a significant step forward in system operations and will position SONI and EirGrid as amongst the first TSOs globally to embed such functionality directly into scheduling and dispatch processed.

The project commenced in in 2019 using Agile methodologies. During 2024/25 we focused on refining, validating and advancing enhancements aligned with regulatory and business priorities.

Delivery

This year's delivery reflects a mixed outcome: of four planned milestones, one was successfully completed while three were delayed due to factors outside our control.

Key achievement

- Successful delivery and operationalisation of the VTT Multi-Timepoint Solution, enabling engineers to model and monitor voltage trajectories across multiple future scenarios, critical for operating the system with fewer synchronous generators. Complementary activities, including stakeholder familiarisation and internal training, progressed well, ensuring smooth integration into daily operations.

Delayed milestones and revised timelines

- VTT Automated Modelling Environment – this milestone has been revised to July 2026. The timeline has been revised as production fixes for operational issues were prioritised over project-related changed.
- RMT Enhancements – This milestone has been revised to March 2026. Our delivery was impacted by a vendor work pause due to security concerns, and rollout into the test environment was delayed because the environment was reserved by the Scheduling and Dispatch Programme.
- LSAT Environments – This milestone has been revised to June 2026. The scope changes to rebuild the modelling environment necessitated further infrastructure architecture revisions to meet updated security requirements.

All milestones experienced delays due to limited availability of key personnel engaged in higher-priority projects and operational tasks.

Security concerns relating to applications hosted by the RMT vendor caused a prolonged halt in the programme, resulting in significant delays, against the original delivery plan. Upon restarting, it was necessary to remobilise the team, further extending timelines. A comprehensive replan of the project schedule has since been completed.

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Enabling higher SNSP and reduced reliance on fossil generators, unlocking greater renewable penetration

Grid Security - Enhances real-time stability assessment ensuring safer operation, especially under reduced conventional generation conditions

System-Wide Costs - By reducing curtailment and enabling more efficient dispatch, the tools help lower long-term operational and market costs

Cost Scale

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
VTT Multi-Timepoint Solution Live and Operational	October 2024	Completed
VTT Automated Modelling Environment	November 2024	Not Progressed - Outside of SONI's Control
RMT Enhancements	December 2024	Not Progressed - Outside of SONI's Control
LSAT Environments	December 2024	Not Progressed - Outside of SONI's Control

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

First-of-its-kind global innovation: SONI and EirGrid will be the only TSOs worldwide with integrated LSAT, RMT, and VTT capabilities

VTT multi-timepoint solution fully operational, delivering enhanced visibility of voltage stability under high SNSP conditions

Operational readiness strengthened, as engineers actively engage with and familiarise themselves with the new tools

Strong foundations established for higher SNSP, reduced curtailment, and future two-set operational capability

Adaptability

Given the project's pioneering nature, adaptability has been essential and we have demonstrated strong agility across multiple areas.

- Agile delivery approach involving continuous testing, rapid iteration and structured refinement to respond to system operator feedback.
- Responsive re-sequencing: adjusting timelines when vendor documentation, cyber-security requirements or design clarity delayed progress.
- To help offset the impact of vendor delays we ensured operational readiness integration by embedding familiarisation early to support incremental operational adoption rather than waiting for the programme to be fully completed.
- Global first-of-kind development by navigating the off the shelf solutions, which required tailored engineering and close vendor collaboration.
- Our ability to maintain momentum, refine scope, and safeguard delivery quality despite external delays represents strong adaptability and aligns closely with Role 1's operational resilience and system security objectives.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Operate** -Enhances real-time decision-making, system visibility and control room capability, directly strengthening system security and resilience
- **Plan -** Supports long-term planning for operating the system with fewer synchronous generators and integration more renewable energy safely
- **Advise** - Provides advanced system insights that will inform future operational policy, SNSP limits and stability management approaches
- **Deliver** - Introduces world-leading operational technologies that represent a major step towards enabling a modern, flexible, low-carbon power system

Additional Project 1
Operational Resilience and Two-Set System Operation

Project Overview

During 2024/25, we faced one of the most challenging operational periods in our history, driven by severe weather events, extended generator outages and increasing run-hour constraints on Northern Ireland's large thermal units. Storm Darragh in December 2024 caused significant damage to Ballylumford Power Station, removing key generation at short notice. This was followed by Storm Eowyn in January 2025, during which a red weather alert resulted in transmission system impacts, operational challenges and uncertainty.

These events placed sustained pressure on system adequacy and required rapid, evidence-based decision-making to protect security of supply. With two of the three large power stations remaining, and Kilroot generation approaching environmental run-hour limits, we had to carefully navigate significant constraints. Across the reporting period, Northern Ireland experienced eight system alerts, reflective of the challenges we faced managing system security.

In response, we acted swiftly to deliver a major operational milestone, safely operating the Northern Ireland power system with only two conventional generating units online. This was the first time such operation has been achieved and marked a significant step in our roadmap to enable reduced reliance on fossil fuel generation. This approach also allowed us to conserve and minimize run-hours on four generators subject to annual run hour limitations.

Throughout the year, we worked collaboratively with DfE and UR to enable solutions to security of supply challenges in the short and medium term.

This project demonstrates our ability to manage real-time operational risk, deliver innovation under pressure, and continue to accelerate progress toward a more flexible, low-carbon power system.

Delivery

We delivered a high-performing operational response, meeting the immediate challenges presented by major storms, generator outages, and environmental constraints

Key elements of delivery include:

- Rapid stabilisation of the system following Storm Darragh and Storm Eowyn, ensuring continuity of supply despite loss of key generation and transmission impacts
- Successful two-set operation, implemented at pace, following in-house system studies that determined requirements for stability and security under reduced generator availability
- Real-time management of competing security of supply constraints, avoiding risk to customers whilst minimising environmental impact
- Support to government and regulator, informing emergency decisions required to maintain security of supply
- Progression to structured trialling with the new minimum stability trial launched in August 2025, demonstrating the transition from emergency response to long-term operational improvement

Despite significant external pressures and system risk, we consistently delivered reliable operation and preserved system adequacy throughout 2024/25.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Operate** - Maintained secure system operation during severe disruption, delivering real-time stability actions and successfully implementing two-set operation
- **Plan -** Used insights from the storm response and two-set operation to strengthen future operational planning and reduce reliance on conventional units
- **Advise** - Provide rapid, evidence-based advice to DfE, UR and NIEA to support urgent decision on system security and environmental limits

Stakeholder satisfaction

Our engagement during this period was intensive, collaborative and essential to maintaining security of supply.

We worked closely with:

- DfE, and UR during emergency risk assessments and decisions on run-hour extensions.
- Generators, wind operators and market participants, to ensure transparency around operating conditions, available flexibility and system risks.
- EirGrid, aligning real-time operational positions across the island and maintaining cross-border system stability.
- Feedback from stakeholders acknowledged our calm, evidence-driven approach under pressure, with stakeholders noting clear communication, timely updates and strong coordination during periods of severe operational stress

Adaptability

We demonstrated high adaptability, responding to complex, evolving challenges not anticipated in the Forward Work Plan.

Key examples include:

- Rapid operational innovation, moving from a three-set to a two-set operating system with accelerated technical analysis, risk assessment and implementation.
- Dynamic management of run-hour constraints, adjusting operational strategies to comply with environmental limits while maintaining security of supply.
- System study mobilisation, delivering detailed stability and contingency analysis within compressed timeframes to enable safe reduced-set operation.
- Transition from immediate response to embedding sustainable improvements and carrying these into the Minimum Two-Set Trial ensuring the capability is fully evaluated and carried forward in the 2025/26 FWP.
- Integration of EMS upgrade changes during the same period, enhancing control room tools and resilience while managing unprecedented system conditions.

This adaptability enabled us to maintain secure system operation, protect consumers and advance our strategic objectives of reducing reliance on large conventional units.

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Responded to two major storms, Darragh and Eowyn, with fast, coordinated action to protect system security

Managed eight system alerts, ensuring uninterrupted supply despite unprecedented operational pressures

Successfully operated the system with two conventional units, a historic first for Northern Ireland and a key step toward decarbonised system operation

Minimised insofar as possible available operating hours on constrained units during March 2025

Supported government and regulatory decision-making during period of severe system risk

Utilising operational learnings and development of the 2025/26 Minimum Stability Trial

Additional Project 2
Energy Management System (EMS)

Project Overview

Alongside one of the most challenging operational years in our history, we successfully completed the Energy Management System (EMS) Upgrade, a multi-year, mission-critical modernisation of the core platform used to monitor, control and optimise the Northern Ireland and all-island power system. The new EMS (version 3.3), introduced into our Control Room in 2025, replaces end-of-life hardware, software and telecoms infrastructure and delivers major enhancements in system performance, resilience, cybersecurity and operational reliability.

This work was delivered in parallel with unprecedented system pressures caused by storms, generation outages, and the need to move rapidly to two-set operation to protect security of supply.

Delivery

The programme secured all required technical, architectural and operational upgrades, including:

- Full replacement of end-of-life EMS hardware, software, middleware and databases
- Deployment of new production and pre-production infrastructure
- Completion of rigorous system testing, operator training and mitigation activities
- Introduction of the upgraded EMS into the live control-room operations with minimal disruption

Strong governance, daily stand-ups, weekly checkpoints, monthly programme boards and Executive Steering oversight, ensured disciplined progress throughout

.

Stakeholder satisfaction

Collaboration across the business and external partners was central to the programme's success. Engagement included:

- Close coordination with control-room operators to ensure readiness
- Regular cross-functional technical workshops with Operations, IT, Market Operations and Telecoms teams
- Ongoing vendor engagement to resolve technical queries and maintain momentum

Feedback has been positive, reflecting confidence in the upgraded system's stability, performance operational benefits.

Adaptability

We demonstrated significant agility in this programme particularly in:

- Overcoming global hardware procurement delays by re-sequencing critical-path activities
- Adjusting build and testing timelines when operational resource was directed to storm and outage response
- Re-planning technical work in 2023/24 and 2024/25 to protect quality and ensure readiness for go-live

This flexibility meant the upgrade progressed uninterrupted despite unprecedented operational challenges.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Operate** - The upgraded platform improves situational awareness, resilience and cybersecurity, crucial for maintaining a safe and reliable power system
- **Plan -** A modern EMS supports long-term system development and provides the digital foundation required for increasing renewable integration
- **Deliver** - Successful implementation, during a challenging operational year, demonstrates our ability to deliver major digital infrastructure programmes effectively

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Successfully delivered a multi-tear, mission-critical EMS upgrade during one of the most challenging operational years

Maintained progress despite storms, generation outages, and rapid transition to two-set operation

Seamless go-live with zero disruption, replacing end-of-life infrastructure and boosting resilience, cybersecurity, and reliability

Strong governance and cross-team collaboration ensured disciplined delivery and readiness

Upgrade lays the digital foundation for higher SNSP, reduced curtailment, and future system security

Summary of SONI Outcomes for Role 1

Decarbonisation

The projects detailed in Role 1 are driving decarbonisation by modernising how the power system operates and ensuring that more renewable energy can run on the system safely and efficiently. Through the Scheduling and Dispatch Programme, (SDP), we are upgrading the tools and processes that determine how renewable generation, storage and flexible demand are dispatched, removing operational barriers that previously constrained wind and solar. Our 80% SNSP programme has completed all the technical studies required to further raise the systems renewables hosting capability, laying the groundwork for future SNSP increases once the system stability risks are addressed. With the Future Arrangements for System Services (FASS) project, we are redesigning the market framework so that low-carbon technologies can provide the essential services needed to operate a highly renewable system. Together these projects are building the operational capabilities and market incentives required for Northern Ireland to progress towards its 80% renewable electricity target and the wider ambitions of the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022.

Grid Security

We are strengthening the security and resilience of the electricity system as it transitions to higher levels of non-synchronous renewable generation. SDP is modernising real-time operational system, ensuring that the most secure and efficient mix of generation and flexibility is selected at every moment, even as the system becomes more dynamic. Through the 80% SNSP work, we have undertaken a rigorous study, governance and risk assessment to ensure that any increase in SNSP occurs only when the system can operate safely, demonstrating a responsible, evidence-based approach to system stability. FASS embeds security of supply into future system service design, ensuring that the market procures the right services to maintain frequency, voltage and stability as traditional forms of inertia decline. Together these programmes ensure that operational security keeps pace with decarbonisation and that consumers continue to receive a safe and reliable electricity supply.

System-Wide Costs

The projects included within Role 1 are improving value for consumers by enhancing operational efficiency and reforming markets to drive down long-term system costs. Our SDP programme will enable more efficient dispatch of renewable generation and storage, helping to reduce balancing costs and minimise renewable curtailment. The 80% SNSP work provides the technical foundation for future cost reductions by enabling the system to rely less on fossil fuel units once stability constraints are resolved.

FASS is a major market reform designed to introduced competitive procurement of system services, replacing legacy arrangements and opening participation to a wider range of cost effective low-carbon technologies. These changes collectively support a more efficient system, reduce the cost of maintaining security, and deliver better value for consumers over time.

Service Quality

We continue to enhance our service quality by delivering transparent, well-governed processes and strong engagement with industry, the Regulatory Authorities and stakeholders. SDP has established a comprehensive engagement approach, including monthly workshops, newsletters, bilateral readiness sessions and detailed guidance materials, to ensure that participants are fully prepared for upcoming operational changes. FASS has delivered clear consultations, public webinar and regular RA engagement, supporting understanding of complex reforms and ensuring stakeholders can influence design decision.

For the 80% SNSP programme, we maintained open communication on study outcomes, risk assessment and next steps, providing clarity around the rationale for postponing the trial. Across all Role 1 projects, we are committed to listening, responding and demonstrating accountability, ensuring that the service we provide meet the needs of participants and support confidence in the evolving electricity system.

Role 2 Independent Expert

Providing trusted expertise and transparent engagement to shape policy and deliver consumer value

Role 2 reflects our responsibility to act as a trusted and impartial expert voice for stakeholders, ensuring that their perspectives are actively understood and meaningfully incorporated into decision-making. We approach this role by leading structured engagement activities, providing clear, evidence-based expertise, and ensuring transparency in how we develop and communicate our plans.

Key activities under this role include the delivery of our Dispatch Down Action Programme, our Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter rollout, and our programme of engagement for our fortcoming Price Control along with wider industry consultation processes. Through this role, we ensure that stakeholders have a direct and credible channel into the development of system and market arrangements, while we work to strengthen collaboration across industry, government, and consumers.

Summary of activities within Role 2

Expert Voice

Industry Governance

NI Voice in Europe

We represent Northern Ireland's interest in European forums and all-island engagements.

Grid Code Management

We maintain and develop the Grid Code with stakeholders to reflect evolving system needs.

Transparency

We promote openness and accountability by publishing clear and accessible information.

EU Network Code Implementations

We align Northern Ireland's arrangements with European market and operational standards.

Regulatory Engagement

We work closely with the Utility Regulator to align our activities with compliance and deliver better outcomes for consumers.

Stakeholder Advisory Challenge Group

We run a dedicated group to gather structured feedback on SONI's Price Control and other key initiatives including the EPF.

Role 2 - Summary of Quarterly Deliverables

FWP25-12 Dispatch Down Action Plan (FPS)
- Publish a Dispatch Down Action Plan

FWP25-02 SONI Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter rollout
- Development of evidence-based Community Benefit proposal for Utility Regulator

FWP24-06 Tomorrows Energy Scenario Northern Ireland (TESNI)
- Publish System Needs Assessment

FWP23-23 TSO-DSO Future Operating Model1
- Update model proposals following lessons learned from the Flex trial and Control Centre of the Future (CCOTF)
- Update documents for operating model following Flex trial lessons learned

FWP23-14 Support the NI Energy Strategy
- Review DfE Action plan for 2025 and identify areas where SONI can support

FWP25-11 Future Energy System Shared Paper (FPS)
- Partnership with Rural Support to develop Landowner Engagement Pack and outreach project

FWP25-02 SONI Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter rollout
- Partnership with Rural Support to develop Landowner Engagement Pack and outreach project

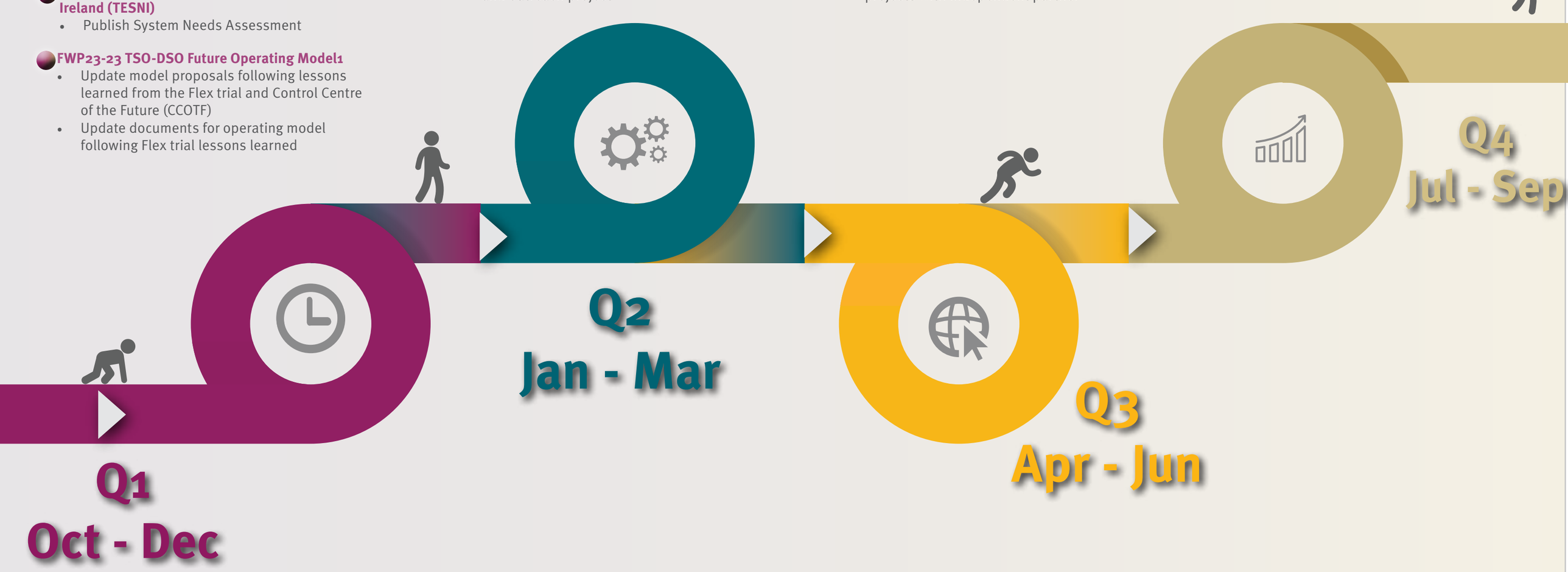
FWP25-11 Future Energy System Shared Paper (FPS)
- Prepare Shared Future Energy Report

FWP25-02 SONI Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter rollout
- Development of new Community Forum model for future network projects with independent partner

FWP23-14 Support the NI Energy Strategy
- Continue to support DfE via Annual action plan and established working groups
- Support next stages of DfEs Smart Systems Flexibility Plan

FWP25-03 SONI Price Control Engagement Programme
- Delivery of extensive stakeholder engagement programme to support the development of the SONI Business Plan submission.

FWP25-02 SONI Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter rollout
- Programme of strategic engagement on new Public Engagement Model
- Programme of strategic engagement on new Landowner Charter
- Development and implementation of new Landowner compensation model.



Role 2
Performance on a Page

Role 1	
Delivery Against Commitments	We delivered key milestones across all Role 2 projects, including our Public Engagement Model rollout, SRP27 engagement programme, Future Energy Modelling Report, Dispatch Down Action Plan, and TSO-DSO Operating Model. Minor delays occurred due to external dependencies, but all critical milestones were completed or progressed in line with revised timelines.
Performance Against Targets	**Timely Delivery of Publications:** Published Dispatch Down Action Plan. Tomorrow's Energy Scenario not published yet, pending joint review with EirGrid. Publication timelines actively managed.
Stakeholder Engagement & Feedback	We maintained extensive engagement across communities, industry, and government. Highlights include six-week public consultation on our Public Engagement Model, SACG establishment, RenewableNI deep-dive sessions, and collaborative modelling with DfE and UR. Feedback consistently positive, citing transparency, responsiveness, and proactive approach.
Quality of Outputs	We delivered updated engagement frameworks, compensation models, and operating procedures. We produced first-of-its-kind cross-organisational energy modelling report. Developed Dispatch Down Action Plan and accelerated operational actions. Strengthened governance and collaboration across all projects.
Cost Efficiency & Impact	We act as a trusted, impartial voice through structured engagement and evidence-based advice to deliver the best outcomes for consumers. Our Public Engagement Model reduces infrastructure delays, enabling renewable integration and lowering costs. SRP27 ensures our plan reflects stakeholder priorities and aligns with the NI Energy Strategy. Future Energy Modelling improves policy insights; Dispatch Down actions cut curtailment; and the TSO-DSO model drive efficient, flexible system operation.

FWP25-12
Dispatch Down Action Plan

Overall Assessment

This project met its delivery objective, demonstrated high stakeholder satisfaction and, and showed strong adaptability in navigating operational, technical and stakeholder-driven complexities. We delivered a transparent, analytically robust foundation for long-term dispatch down reduction, successfully engaging stakeholders and progressing meaningful short-term actions.

Project Overview

Dispatch Down of local renewable generators in Northern Ireland have risen significantly in recent years, prompting sustained scrutiny from developers, industry, government and the Regulatory Authorities. In response, we established a dedicated programme to analyse the roots causes, identify credible operational and strategic solutions, and develop a comprehensive Dispatch Down Action Plan. The project focuses on assessing operational constraints, advancing short, medium and long-term mitigations, and engaging stakeholders to ensure solutions are transparent, evidence-based and aligned with system needs.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Publish a Dispatch Down Action Plan	December 2024	Completed

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Operate** - Implements operational changes to improve system flexibility and efficiency
- **Plan -** Integrates dispatch down reduction measures into long-term system strategy
- **Advise** - Provides evidence and recommendations to stakeholders and Regulatory Authorities into long-term system strategy

Delivery

The project progressed as planned, we delivered a structured programme of analysis, engagement and option development to underpin the Dispatch Down Action Plan.

Key elements delivered include:

- Identification of key drivers of increasing dispatch down, including operational constraints, minimum conventional generation requirements, and cross-border market flows.
- Assessment of a suite of credible actions, ranging from near-term operational solutions to longer-term infrastructure and policy requirements.
- Detailed engagement with developer and technology providers to explore potential flexible demand solutions, negative reserve options and innovative approaches.
- Development of the initial prioritised actions including:
    1. Enabling negative reserve on wind turbines
    2. Reducing the minimum number of conventional units from three to two, trial commenced August 2025)
    3. Reviewing our operational security standards.
    4. Integration of emerging solutions into the FWP 25/26 to ensure delivery and monitoring continue beyond the initial project window.

We also advanced enabling workstreams, such as dynamic line rating with NIE Networks and engagement with thermal generators regarding minimum stable generation, that strengthens the evidence base for medium-term actions

Stakeholder satisfaction

Our Stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the Dispatch Down Action Plan has been extensive, constructive and positively received across industry, government, and regulatory parties.

RenewableNI provided particularly strong and encouraging feedback on our work on this. They highlighted the value of transparency we have brought to dispatch down reporting and analysis and noted growing interest from GB colleagues in the approaches taken in Ireland. They indicated that our positioning as a world-leading grid operation including our modelling, operational policy work and dispatch down transparency, has resonated strong and is influencing wider thinking on constraint management within DESNZ and Renewable. This reflects a positive perception of our leadership and expertise and has prompted interest in further knowledge sharing with GB stakeholders.

In addition:

- A deep-dive public engagement session with RenewableNI and wide stakeholders was well attended and well received, offering detailed insight into dispatch down trends and drivers.
- Regular bi-weekly update calls with DfE and the UR ensured ongoing transparency and alignment as our action plan evolved
- We engaged openly with developers, flexible demand providers, and both thermal generator owners, creating multiple channels for feedback and technical challenge
- We presented the draft action plan to NIE Networks and participated in external forums, including the RenewableNI seminar series, supporting broad stakeholder awareness and understanding.

A key outcome expressed across stakeholders was an improved understanding of our role, responsibilities and constraints, along strong appreciation for the “no stone unturned” approach taken. Developers and industry participants welcomed our clarity, the analytical depth of the project, and the proactive engagement with innovative solutions.

Overall, feedback demonstrates that our work on dispatch down is viewed as credible, transparent, and influential, both within Northern Ireland and increasingly across the wider GB system.

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Removes barrier to renewable utilisation by addressing operational constraints and enabling negative reserve

Grid Security - Assesses system stability impacts of reducing minimum conventional unit requirements

System-Wide Costs - Identifies actions that can materially reduce constraint costs and improve operational efficient

Service Quality - Demonstrates clear, proactive engagement, with strong feedback from industry, government and RenewableNI

Adaptability

Throughout this project we demonstrated strong adaptability to deliver the Action plan.

- The project operated to a tight, fixed timeline targeting a draft action plan by December 2024, requiring focused prioritisation of the highest impact action.
- We adapted our operational roadmap to accelerate actions already identified as strategic priorities, most notably the trial to reduce the minimum conventional generation requirements from three units to two, which commenced in August 2025, and is yielding early operational benefits.
- The team adopted a flexible engagement model, shifting between bilateral and group session to address emerging stakeholder needs and areas of concern.
- We expanded engagement beyond traditional stakeholders to explore technical innovations, despite not currently having a dedicated innovation function, highlighting the need for future resourcing under our new licence condition 42.
- The project adjusted its timelines and outputs to reflect the evolving system context, including changes in market conditions, thermal generator capability, and flexible demand options.

These adaptions ensured that the project maintained momentum, responded effectively to stakeholder feedback, and advanced actions with the highest potential to reduce dispatch down in both the short and medium term.

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Delivery of a comprehensive, evidence-based Dispatch Down Action Plan framework

Extensive, constructive engagement across industry, government, UR and developers

Prioritisation and acceleration of key operational actions including the reduction of minimum conventional generations to two units

Strengthened collaboration with NIE Networks on dynamic line rating and other enabling technologies

Strengthened coordination betweel SONI, DfE, UR, NIE Networks, RenewableNI and other industry bodies

FWP25-11
Future Energy System Shared Paper

Overall Assessment

This project met all delivery expectations and demonstrated strong cross-organisational coordination, effective engagement, and adaptability in navigating data and governance constraints. The work provides and essential foundation for future modelling phases and plays a critical role in supporting NI's pathway towards net-zero.

Project Overview

The Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 significantly accelerates Northern Ireland's decarbonisation trajectory, creating a need for deeper, more coordinate energy system modelling. In response, we worked with DfE and the UR to establish the Future Energy Modelling Group (FEMG). This group develops shared modelling approaches, align assumptions, and provides evidence to inform the NI Energy Strategy and Climate Action Plan. The project's first phase focused on producing a collaborative modelling report assessing electricity system outcomes to 2030, supported by a structured cross organisational governance framework.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Agree modelling approach & carry out Power System Studies	March 2025	Completed
Prepare Shared Future Energy Paper–	June 2025	Completed

Delivery

The project successfully delivered its core objectives within the revised timeframe agreed by SONI, DfE and the UR. The Shared Future Energy Paper was shared with the FEMG steering group on 18 April 2025, ahead of the steering group meeting on 1st May 2025. The Executive Summary, originally planned as a one-page output, evolved into a short PowerPoint pack and was completed by the revised August 2025 timeline.

Key elements delivered include:

- Successful completion and submission of the joint Future Energy Modelling Paper to the FEMG Steering Group in April 2025, meeting the revised governance timeline.
- Establishment of a new cross-organisational modelling framework, enabling transparent, structured collaboration between SONI, DfE and the UR.
- Open and constructive engagement on modelling assumptions, methodologies and scenario design.
- Joint agreement on scope, resources and timelines, supporting effective delivery and ensuring alignment across all three organisations.

The project delivered exactly as defined in the FEMG Terms of Reference and established the foundation for ongoing annual modelling cycles required under the Climate Change Act.

Stakeholder satisfaction

Stakeholder feedback was positive, particularly through the DfE 80 by 30 working group, where the FEMG outputs were well received and recognised as valuable for informing cross government decision making. NIE Networks were also engaged, acknowledged positively the work carried out by SONI.

Key stakeholder response included:

- Acknowledgement of the benefits of structured, cross-organisational modelling collaboration, particularly between SONI, DfE and the UR.
- Recognition of the FEMG as a model for transparent evidence-sharing, with the Steering Group requesting exploration of an expanded Phase 2.
- Calls to broaden participation to additional organisations and sectors, demonstrating confidence in the process and interest in wider involvement.

The FEMG Steering Group has asked SONI and partners to define the scope for future phases based on the success of this initial work.

Adaptability

For this project we demonstrated adaptability across several areas including.

- Rapid establishment of the working group in response to emerging policy needs under the Climate Change Act, ensuring modelling support was available when required.
- A clear scope and assumptions were approved from the outset, however we showed flexibility by adapting project outputs, formats and processes as Steering Group expectations evolved.
- Data sharing constraints required methodological adaption: While technical limitations restricted full sharing of proprietary modelling files, we adapted our approach to ensure transparency by providing full access to modelling inputs, assumptions and outputs. This ensured robust channels and scrutiny without delaying delivery.
- The project team maintain momentum by adjusting workflow and governance to ensure the work progressed within agreed timelines, avoiding slippage of critical deliverables.
- We have committed to exploring, with partners, a potential common modelling framework for future phases to enable deep transparency and shared capability.

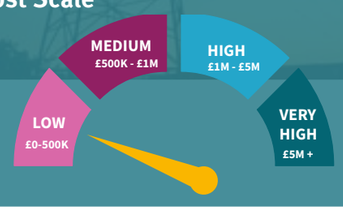
Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Provides cross-government evidence to support climate targets and long-term renewable policy

Grid Security - Aligns modelling assumptions across organisations, reducing duplication and improving policy efficiency.

Service Quality- Strengthens collaboration and shared understanding between SONI, DfE and the UR

Cost Scale



The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Delivered a first-of-its kind cross-organisational energy modelling report for Northern Ireland aligned with Climate Change Act requirements

Established a new collaborative governance model (FEMG) between SONI, DfE and UR

Laid the foundation for annual modelling cycles and a potential expanded Phase 2 including a broader stakeholder base

Successfully adapted outputs and methods to overcome data-sharing limitations awhile preserving analytical integrity

Strengthened transparency and consistency in modelling approaches across organisations

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- Advise - Provides data-driven evidence insights around the progression of the 2030 target to the Department for the Economy and the Utility Regulator

FWP25-02
SONI Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter

Overall Assessment

This project successfully delivered all six planned milestones, embedding early, transparent, and structured engagement as a core principle of our grid development process. While there were minor delays in developing the Community Benefit model proposal, the proposal has now been completed, and UR and DfE are discussing the next steps to take. The project has strengthened trust and collaboration with stakeholders, ensuring our engagement model exceeds statutory requirements and supports a more inclusive approach to infrastructure delivery.

As noted in our mid-year update, the scope of the project changed slightly to reflect the need for a different delivery partner. Instead of partnering with Rural Support, we partnered with the Young Farmers' Club of Ulster to deliver the engagement activities, ensuring continuity and maintaining strong connections with rural communities

Project Overview

This project strengthens our approach to public and stakeholder engagement by embedding early, transparent and structured communication throughout the grid development process. Its goal is to build trust, foster collaboration, and promote active participation among communities and landowners affected by transmission infrastructure projects. Key initiatives include the Public Engagement Model, Community Benefit Model, Community Forum Framework, and a revised Landowner Charter and Compensation Model.

Delivery

We successfully completed all milestones for this project 2024/25. The project achieved our strategic objective of strengthening relationships with key stakeholders through the development and implementation of an enhanced engagement models and frameworks.

We have fully developed the proposal for the Community Benefit model. UR and DfE are now working together to determine what mechanisms are used to being it forward. Despite these factors, Overall, all planned milestones were met and delivery outcomes achieved in full. The project has significantly strengthened our relationship with stakeholders across its design, development and delivery stages, embedding early engagement as a core principle in our wider engagement strategy.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Development of evidence-based Community Benefit proposal for Utility Regulator	December 2024	Completed
Development of new Community Forum model for future network projects with independent partner	June 2025	Completed
Programme of strategic engagement on new Public Engagement Model	September 2025	Completed
Programme of strategic engagement on new Landowner Charter	September 2025	Completed
Partnership with Rural Support to develop Landowner Engagement Pack and outreach project	March 2025	Completed
Development and implementation of new Landowner compensation model	September 2025	Completed

Adaptability

We demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness in adapting to both stakeholder dependencies and evolving regulatory requirements.

- **Community Benefit Model** – Timelines were extended due to capacity constraints and policy alignment needs. We mitigated this through direct escalation, strengthened collaborating, and reprioritisation to ensure momentum was maintained.
- **Public Engagement Model** – Responding to the introduction of new Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2025 we reviewed and refined the model to ensure full compliance with updated statutory requirements. This provided an opportunity to reinforce our leadership in early, transparent, and community-first engagement practices.

Through these adaptive measures, we have ensured delivery of an engagement framework that not only meets current regulatory and stakeholder expectation but sets a new standard for openness and collaboration in infrastructure delivery.

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Delivery of 6 key milestones across community engagement, landowner, and benefit model workstreams

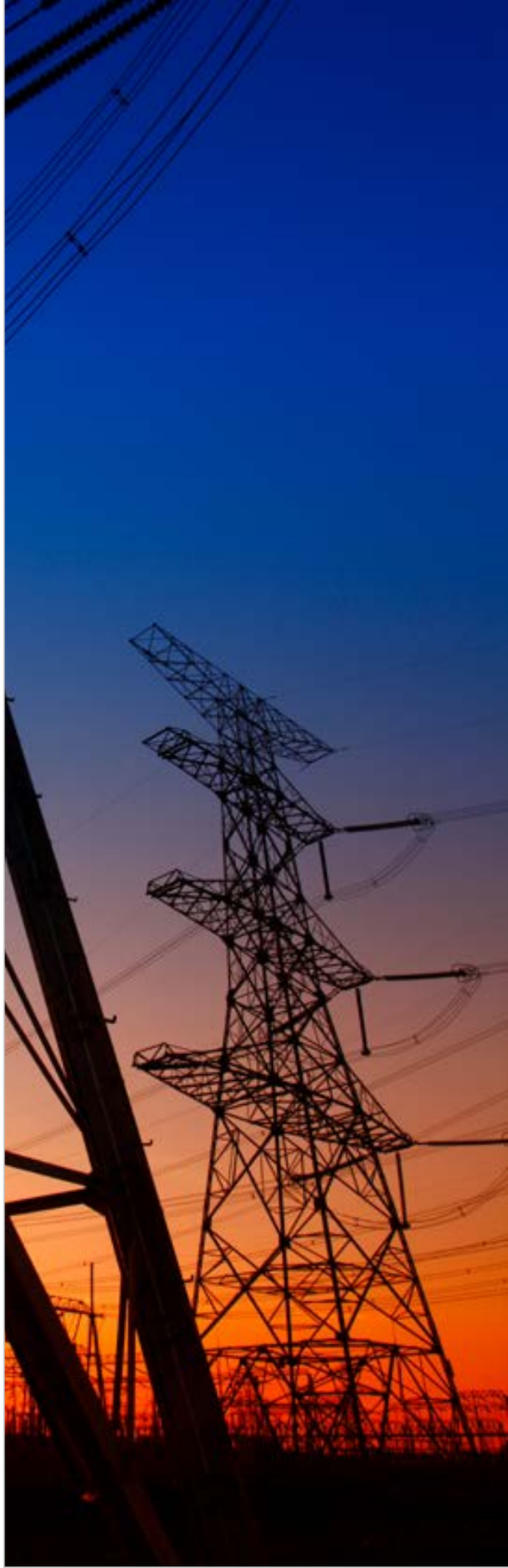
Completion of a six-week public consultation, including independently facilitated focus groups across civic, planning and industry sectors

Development and pilot of a new Community Forum and citizen Sounding Board under the Mid-Antrim Upgrade project

Completion of a full review and update of Landowner Charter and Compensation Model following extensive consultation

Establishment of a new partnership with Young Farmers' of Ulster Club to engage and build relationships with the next generation of landowners

Review of Public Engagement Model to ensure that it remains in-step with the new Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2025



Stakeholder Satisfaction

Key to the success of this project was the extensive engagement we had with community, industry and government stakeholders to co- design the engagement and compensation models. This is set out in more detail below.

- Community Benefit Model – This was developed collaboratively with DfE and the UR and supported by independent expert analysis. Ongoing engagement continues to refine implementation pathways.
- Community Forum Framework – Piloted as part of the Mid Antrim Upgrade, incorporating participant feedback, and best practice learnings to shape the final framework.
- Public Engagement Model – A six-week consultation process, supported by independently facilitated focus groups, led to direct refinements to the model, including embedding early engagement as a guiding principle.
- Landowner Charter and Compensation Model – Developed through consultation with the Ulster Farmers' Union, Young Farmers' Club, and Rural Support, Independent reporting and analysis of consultation outcomes directly informed the final xmaterials. Developed collaboratively with DfE and the UR, supported by independent expert analysis. Ongoing engagement continues to refine implementation pathways.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

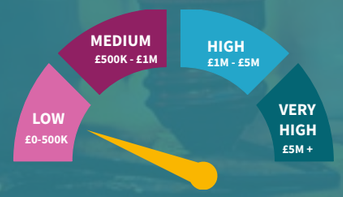
- **Operate -** Embeds feedback into a flexible stakeholder-focused transmission system
- **Plan -** Develops clear, credible business plans aligned with energy transition goals
- **Advise -** Uses stakeholder insights to provide evidence-based guidance to the Utility Regulator and policymakers
- **Deliver -** Ensures confidence in future investment and operational strategie

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Supports timely delivery of new grid infrastructure by improving acceptance and reducing future project risk

Service Quality - Embeds early, transparent community-centred engagement and delivers improved framework for landowners and communities

Cost Scale



FWP23-14
Support the NI Energy Strategy

Overall Assessment

We delivered strongly across all controllable areas within this project, demonstrating effective collaboration, proactive stakeholder engagement, and adapting to evolving priorities. Despite external delays on the Smart Systems Flexibility Plan, the team maintained readiness and continued to influence key policy areas through evidence-based input and consultation responses. The work provides a critical foundation for future flexibility planning and plays an essential role in supporting Northern Ireland's pathway to net zero.

Project Overview

We continue to play an active and collaborative role in supporting the Department for the Economy (DfE) in delivering the 2024 and 2025 NI Energy Strategy Action Plans. This work is central to ensuring Northern Ireland achieves its renewable energy and climate targets. We provide technical expertise, policy input, and system operation insights to help shape an effective and sustainable pathway to net zero. Our engagement extends across key working groups with DfE, DAERA, NIE Networks, the Utility Regulator, and wider industry ensuring a coordinated and evidence-based approach to energy transition planning.

Delivery

During 2024/25, we successfully completed the first 2 milestones highlighted below including maintaining regular engagement with government departments and providing input to the NI Energy Strategy Action Plan working groups. We also supported DfE and NIE Networks through joint working arrangements on shared priorities, ensuring alignment across the transmission and distribution systems.

Unfortunately, DfE has not yet published the next phase of its Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan and so we were unable to progress this particular milestone. In line with this the associated milestone is listed as not progressed due to issues Outside SONI's Control. We remain ready to support DfE with this plan once published and we continue to closely engage with the department in supporting the NI Energy Strategy. Overall, delivery performance has remained strong across all areas within our control.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Continue to support DfE via Annual action plan and established working groups	Ongoing throughout the year	Completed
Review DfE Action plan for 2024 and identify areas where SONI can support	Expected early 2025	Completed
Support next stages of DfEs Smart Systems Flexibility Plan	Ongoing throughout the year	Not Progressed – Outside of SONI's Control

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Advise** - Provision of expert, evidence based insights to government to inform policy decisions and development

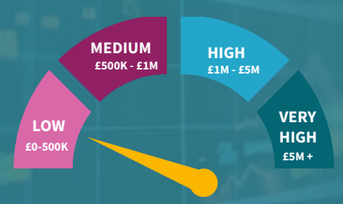
Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Provides government with robust system insights that support credit, deliverable pathways to net zero

Grid Security - Ensures emerging policy decisions are grounded in maintaining a secure electricity system with our technical advice

Service Quality- Providing clear, evidence-based engagement, we are delivering high-quality support and strengthening confidence in SONI

Cost Scale



Stakeholder satisfaction

Throughout 2024/25, we maintained extensive engagement with government, regulatory and industry partners to ensure policy design aligns with operational realities and supports decarbonisation. We are actively involved in the Renewable Electricity Price Guarantee (REPG) design, Future Energy Modelling Group, bi-weekly Dispatch Down sessions with DfE and UR, and the CAP and Offshore Renewable Energy Action Plan working groups. We also responded to key consultations, including the Climate Action Plan 2023-2027, Programme for Government, Smart Metering, and Connection Cost Socialisation, providing evidence-based recommendations on decarbonisation, system planning and affordability.

Feedback from stakeholders has been positive, noting our constructive, evidence-based approach, and willingness to provide transparent technical details. Our contribution to ongoing Dispatch Down discussion and the design of the REPG framework has been recognised as valuable in shaping practical, consumer-focused policy outcomes.

Adaptability

During 2024/25, we have shown flexibility in adapting to shifting government priorities and external factors that were not anticipated when the FWP was drafted. At the time of drafting, many of the DfE requirements had not yet been defined, and a significant portion of the asks have since emerged through channels such as the 80 by 30 Working Group.

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Supporting decarbonisation goals by aligning with the Climate Action Plan (CAP 23-27) and advising on the integration of renewables and flexibility solutions

Strengthening collaboration with DAERA, DfE and NIE Networks to ensure a joined-up, whole-system approach across environmental, regulatory, and operational priorities

Future-Proofing policy delivery by embedding operational and system expertise within working groups

Shaping long-term policy through contributions to major consultations such as the Programme for Government, CAP 23-27 and Smart Metering

FWP24-06
Tomorrows Energy Scenario Northern Ireland (TESNI)

Overall Assessment

The TESNI project has made significant progress in delivering the detailed technical analysis required to understand Northern Ireland's long-term transmission needs. We have completed all core modelling and scenario assessment work, providing a robust evidence base for planning the 2030-2050 network.

This is an All-Island document and publication of the System Needs Assessment has been delayed, due to a number of dependencies and alignment requirements for EirGrid rather than shortcomings in project delivery.

To maintain momentum, we have shared the completed System Needs Assessment with the DfE and the UR in September 2025, ensuring key stakeholders have access to these essential insights. While we are not in a position to publish the all-island version yet, we are actively developing a pathway to publish a Northern Ireland-specific System Needs Assessment next year.

Project Overview

We are responsible for ensuring a safe, secure, and reliable electricity system, both today and into the future. As Northern Ireland moves rapidly toward net zero, it is essential that transmission planning reflect credit long-term pathways for demand growth, renewable integration and system security.

Building on the extensive engagement delivered through Shaping Our Electricity Future and the strategic direction outlined in Tomorrows Energy Scenario 2023 (TES 2023), this project advances the next stage of long-term system planning: the System Needs Assessment (SNA). The SNA evaluates what the electricity transmission system will required between 2030 and 2050 across a range of decarbonisation scenarios.

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Following publication of TES 2023, we committed to:

- Modelling detailed scenario and locational data
- Assess network impacts across all plausible futures
- Produce a comprehensive Needs Assessment to inform policy makers, regulators and system planners.

This work is critical to identifying future reinforcement needs, supporting strategic planning decisions, and enabling Northern Ireland to meet its long-term net zero ambitions.

Delivery

This project has progressed the technical assessment in full, completing the complex modelling, scenario analysis and system impact studies required for the System Needs Assessment. While publication has been delayed, the analytical foundation is complete, with only minor alignment and coordination issues in Ireland delaying publication.

We have proactively explored alternative delivery options, such as publishing a standalone Northern Ireland System Needs Assessment, to mitigate external delays and ensure value for stakeholders. This approach maintains momentum in a strategically important area and supports evidence-based decision-making for long-term grid development.

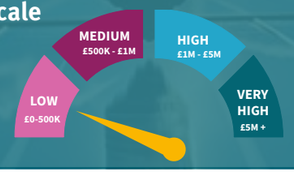
Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Models long-term pathways toward net zero and identifies infrastructure needs to support a clean energy transition

Grid Security - Highlights future reinforcement needs to maintain reliability as demand and low-carbon technologies grow

Service Quality - Provides clear, evidence-based long-term insights to policy makers, NIE Networks and other stakeholders.

Cost Scale



Stakeholder satisfaction

Our stakeholder engagement in this project has been constructive and collaborative. We have worked closely with NIE Networks to gather locational information on large-scale generation, emerging demand technologies, and small-scale renewable deployment. This shared insight has strengthened the modelling inputs for both of our organisations, improving consistency between our System Needs Assessment and NIE Networks' Future Energy Scenarios.

Stakeholders have recognised the importance of this work in informing long-term network planning and policy development. Feedback has shaped refinements to scenario assumptions and approved alignment on spatial development trends across Northern Ireland.

Adaptability

This project has demonstrated adaptability by responding proactively to external and cross-jurisdictional delays. When the all-island publication timeline became constrained, we proposed developing and publishing a Northern Ireland specific System Needs Assessment, leveraging completed modelling while incorporating NI-specific locational data by stakeholders.

Our flexible approach ensures long-term planning can progress even when external factors delay all-island publication.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Advise** - Provides evidence-based insights for evolving system policies and regulatory frameworks

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Publish System Needs Assessment	November 2025	Partially Completed - Outside SONI's Control

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Completion of all core-modelling and analytical work required for the 2030-2050 System Needs Assessment

Strengthen collaboration with NIE Networks, improving locational data and modelling consistency across both organisations

Provision of strategic insights to support long-term policy development under the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022

Development of a contingency pathway to publish a Northern Ireland only SNA to mitigate all-island publication delaysy

Enhanced understanding of future reinforcement needs, supporting early, evidence-based planning for Northern Ireland's net zero transition

FWP23-23
TSO-DSO Future Operating Model

Overall Assessment

All the milestones for this project have been fully completed, delivering a strengthened future-ready TSO-DSO operating model for Northern Ireland. We, alongside NIE Networks successfully incorporated lessons learned from the flex trials, resulting in updated operational procedures and a detailed design document aligned with all-island and EU requirements. The project significantly improved joint processes, enhanced stakeholder confidence, and established a robust platform for future systemisation, critical for enabling greater demand flexibility and supporting Northern Ireland's decarbonisation pathway.

Project Overview

The TSO-DSO Future Operating model project is designed to ensure we work collaboratively with NIE Networks to deliver whole-system solutions that meet the Government's energy policy ambitions. The project focuses on developing an enduring TSO-DSO Operating Model for Northern Ireland, including the supporting operational procedures, design documentation, and learnings from ongoing Flex Trials and the Control Centre of the Future (CCTOF) programme. Key activities during 2024/25 included producing documentation, outlining the proposed model, developing communications for Flex Trial participants and updating the operating model following lessons learned.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Update model proposals following lessons learned from the Flex trial and Control Centre of the Future (CCOTF)	October 2025	Completed
Update documents for operating model following Flex trial lessons learned	December 2025	Completed

Delivery

The project delivered its core objectives, though timelines were revised to incorporate additional work identified through the lessons-learned process.

- The NIEN Flex Trial was completed, generating important practical insights on procedures, dispute handling, operational coordination and data exchanges.
- Following these learnings, we partnered with NIE Networks to deliver a suite of updated, operational procedure documents, and the TSO-DSO detailed operating model design document.
- To ensure a consistent all-island approach, we worked alongside our subject matter experts and those from EirGrid to review the documents and validate alignment with the EU Network Codes, particularly the System Operation Guideline (SOGL) and Demand Connection Code.

The milestone relating to updating the TSO-DSO operating model documentation following Flex Trial learning was originally due December 2024 but was completed in April 2025. This delay was necessary to account for additional refinement arising from lessons learned, feedback from trial participants and updated alignment with the EU Network Codes.

Despite this revised timeline, both milestones were fully completed within the year and delivered to a higher standard due to the additional analysis and design work undertaken.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Operate** - Strengthened future-ready TSO-DSO operating model for Northern Ireland
- **Plan -** Established a future pathway recognising the ongoing complexity of TSO-DSO interactions
- **Advise** - Provided data-driven insights that have informed current and future operational models and procedures between SONI and NIE Networks as TSO-DSO
- **Deliver** - Delivered a collaborative project that serves to enable greater utilisation of resources across the TSO- DSO interface

Stakeholder satisfaction

Our stakeholder engagement throughout this project has been constructive, iterative, and well received.

- We engaged regularly with NIE Networks and Flex product participants via bilateral meetings, workshops and Teams calls.
- Feedback from both NIE Networks, and trial participants was directly incorporated into the revised operational guidance and operating model documents.
- The collaborative approach highlighted issues requiring refinement to dispute escalation pathways and the need for a future workstream focused on systemisation of TSO-DSO interactions.
- We, together with NIE Networks recognised that a multi-year TSO-DSO systemisation programme is required to support more frequent and complex interactions, reinforcing the strategic importance of this project.
- Stakeholders consistently acknowledged the responsiveness of our approach and the professionalism of engagement throughout the trial and redesign process.

Adaptability

The project demonstrated strong adaptability across several dimensions:

- The Flex Trial allowed SONI and NIE Networks to test new operational procedures in real-world conditions, uncovering practical challenges that could not be identified through design alone.
- We took additional time to re-engage with participants, assess lesson learned in detail and introduce further modifications to strengthen operational robustness.
- The team adapted the model to ensure that future systemisation is feasible, a key enabler for flexible demand, efficient system operation and long-term decarbonisation.
- By taking a reflective and iterative approach, we ensured that the resulting operating model is fit-for-purpose, implementable, and aligned with international

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Completion of Flex Trial, providing critical operational insights

Delivery of updated operating procedures and detailed model design, fully aligned with EU SOGL and Demand Code

Strong collaborative working with NIE Network and Flex Trial participants, resulting in improved procedures

Establishment of a pathway for multi-year systemisation, recognising the future complexity of TSO-DSO interactions.

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Supports whole-system coordination to enable more flexible demand and increased renewable penetration

Grid Security - Clarifies operating protocols to manage more complex system conditions and DSO interactions

Service Quality - Provides improved operational documentation, clearer roles and processes, and direct engagement with flex product participants

Cost Scale

FWP25-03
SONI Price Control Engagement Programme

Overall Assessment

The SRP27 engagement programme successfully delivered Phase 1 and commenced Phase 2 during 2024/25, ensuring early, meaningful and collaborative input into our next price control. Activities included one-to-one stakeholder meetings, industry events, consumer research with over 2,000 participants, and a formal consultation process. Despite minor delays caused by rescheduling requests, we demonstrated flexibility by adapting timelines and moving sessions online where necessary, maintaining inclusivity and momentum. This approach strengthened transparency and stakeholder confidence, ensuring robust input into the development of the SRP27 business plan and alignment with our long-term strategic objectives.

Project Overview

This project focused on the delivery of an extensive stakeholder engagement programme to support the development of our next Price Control (SRP27). We designed the engagement programme to ensure early, meaningful, and collaborative input from our stakeholders, to shape the business plan and align with our long-term strategic objectives.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Delivery of extensive stakeholder engagement programme to support the development of the SONI Business Plan submission.	September 2026	Completed

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Operate** - Embeds feedback into a flexible stakeholder-focused transmission system
- **Plan -** Develops clear, credible business plans aligned with energy transition goals
- **Advise** - Uses stakeholder insights to provide evidence-based guidance to the Utility Regulator and policymakers
- **Deliver** - Ensures confidence in future investment and operational strategies

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Delivery

Recognising the critical need for meaningful engagement to serve the people of Northern Ireland, we designed the SRP27 Stakeholder Engagement Programme to ensure early, transparent, and representative input into our next price Control. This programme reflects our commitment to building trust and fostering collaboration with stakeholders whose perspectives shape the future of the electricity system.

Following the extension of our current price control at the start of 2025, to allow for the implementation of Licence Condition 42 on SONI Independence, we revised our engagement timelines to align with the new implementation date.

The programme is structured into three phases:

1. Phase 1 - Strategy development and early stakeholder input
2. Phase 2 – Development of the SRP27 Business Plan
3. Phase 3 – Post-submission consultation and refinement.

During 2024/25, we successfully completed Phase 1, and commenced Phase 2 Phase 1 involved:

- Detailed one-to-one engagement with key stakeholder groups across industry, consumer and regulatory sectors
- An external stakeholder survey to capture broad perspectives
- Industry and business events to facilitate open dialogue
- Consumer research with over 2,000 participants, ensuring the voice of end-users informed our approach
- A formal consultation process, providing transparency and accountability.

This extensive programme demonstrates our commitment to inclusivity and responsiveness. Every engagement was designed to ensure stakeholders feel heard and represented, with their input directly influencing the SRP27 plan. As we progress through Phase 2, we continue to integrate feedback, reinforcing our role as a trusted and accountable TSO working in the public interest.

Stakeholder satisfaction

Our early engagement approach has been positively received by stakeholders across all sectors, reinforcing the importance of transparency and collaboration in shaping our future plans. In 2024, we established the Stakeholder Advisory Challenge Group (SACG), as a dedicated forum for independent challenge, feedback and advice during the development of our strategy and SRP27 business plan.

The SACG, brings together representatives from society, industry, and statutory bodies, ensuring a broad and inclusive perspective. Through a series of facilitated workshops, the group has provided valuable insights that have directly influenced our priorities and delivery themes.

Feedback from members, confirms the effectiveness of this forum, with strong interest expressed in continued the SACG beyond the remit of the price control process. This recognition highlights the success of our early engagement model and its role in building trust, fostering collaboration, and ensuring decisions reflect the needs of the people of Northern Ireland.

Adaptability

Given the importance and need for robust stakeholder feedback around the business plan development all of these meetings have been in person.

We have worked closely with the SACG to accommodate any rescheduling requests to minimise any delays and were necessary have accommodated the meeting online.

A limited number of engagement session were rescheduled at stakeholder request, leading to minor delays. We demonstrated flexibility by moving sessions online to maintain attendance and avoid further disruption.

This approach ensured the engagement process remained comprehensive and inclusive, capturing the full range of stakeholder perspectives.

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Revised engagement programme following the extension of the price control period, aligning activities with the new Licence Condition 42 timeline

Completion of Phase 1 and commencement of Phase 2 of the Price Control Engagement Programme.

Established Stakeholder and Advisory Challenge Group (SACG) to support co-design and critical review of our strategy and business plan.

Engaged over 2,000 consumers and multiple stakeholder groupings through extensive research and consultation

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

System-Wide Costs - Ensures a well-informed business plan that reflects stakeholder priorities and delivers value for consumers

Service Quality - Strengthens trust and accountability through comprehensive, early and representative engagement

Cost Scale

Summary of SONI Outcomes for Role 2

Decarbonisation

Our work within Role 2 supports decarbonisation by ensuring that communities, industry and government are fully engaged in shaping the transition to a low-carbon electricity system. Through the SRP27 engagement programme and the Future Energy Modelling Group, we have helped policymakers, regulators and consumers understand the system pathways needed to reach 80% renewable electricity by 2030 and net zero beyond. The Dispatch Down Action Plan has deepened collaboration with developers and flexible demand providers to reduce curtailment and make better use of renewable energy already connected to the system. Our TSO-DSO Operating model work supports the integration of new forms of demand flexibility, essential for maximising renewable output. Across these projects, transparent dialogue, co-design and shared evidence ensure that decarbonisation policies are grounded in operational reality and supported by those they impact the most.

Grid Security

We are strengthening grid security with the projects contained in Role 2 by creating the partnerships and engagement structures needed to deliver major grid projects and operational change safely, efficiently and with public confidence. Our public engagement model, community forums and updated landowner frameworks ensure that transmission projects essential for security of supply progress with strong local understanding and support. The Dispatch Down work deepened technical collaboration with government, industry and thermal generators to address constraints that affect system stability. Through the TSO-DSO Operating Model we have enhanced joint working arrangements with NIE Networks, enabling more coordinated whole-system planning and operation. Working with DfE and UR through multiple policy and operational groups ensures that decisions on security of supply are informed by shared data, transparent assumptions and common understanding across organisations.

System-Wide Costs

Projects within Role 2 are directly driving system-wide cost reductions by enabling the timely delivery of grid infrastructure, strengthening regulatory and policy alignment, and ensuring that system planning decisions are based on robust evidence and informed by stakeholder input. Through our early and structured engagement with communities and landowners, we are reducing delays to infrastructure projects that would otherwise add significant cost to the system. The SRP27 engagement programme ensures that our business plan reflects stakeholder priorities while avoiding spending money on things that aren't needed or duplicated. The joint Future Energy Modelling Group promotes consistent assumptions across government and regulators, reducing uncertainty and improving value-for-money decision-making. The Dispatch Down Action Plan advances actions and innovations that will reduce curtailment costs over time. By investing in better engagement, coordination and evidence, these projects help ensure that consumer bills reflect efficient, well-governed system developments.

Service Quality

Projects within Role 2 are improving service quality by fostering openness, accountability, and responsiveness in every interaction with stakeholders and communities. The Public Engagement Model and Community Forum Framework are providing clearer, earlier and more structured routes for communities to influence how projects are developed and delivered. Our updated Landowner Charter and Compensation Model seek to improve transparency, fairness and trust in how we work with landowners. The SRPP7 engagement programme demonstrates our commitment to early, representative and challenge-led decision-making, with the SACG providing an independent forum for advice and scrutiny. The positive feedback received from RenewableNI, DfE, local communities and industry bodies reflects increased confidence in our leadership, willingness to listen and ability to respond proactively. Through this work, we are delivering a higher standard of service that strengthens relationships and supports our role as a trusted independent system operator working in the public interest.

Role 3 System Planning

Planning a future-ready grid to enable decarbonisation and secure electricity for all

We are independent of interests in the generation and supply of electricity and is responsible for planning the configuration of the transmission system and securing all necessary consents. Our approach is set out in our three-part Grid Development Process, which is underpinned by close co-ordination with NIE Networks, the Transmission Asset Owner who is responsible for building, maintain, and replacing transmission assets in Northern Ireland.

As demand, generation, and interconnection patterns evolve, power flows across the transmission network change. To maintain performance and reliability, the transmission system must be adapted and strengthened in an economic, efficient, and coordinated way. We work with NIE Networks on functional and design specifications, options reports and other pre-construction activities, alongside this we also engage with other stakeholders including the Utility Regulator, communities, landowners and government departments.

Our Grid Development Process, particularly Part 2 (pre-construction), is reliant on collaboration with these stakeholders and on processes set out in the Transmission Interface Agreement with NIE Networks.

Summary of activities within Role 3

System Planning

Assess & Communicate System Needs
We identify long-term network requirements and share them with stakeholders to guide investment and planning.

Outline Design & Consenting
We prepare indicative designs and secure consents, balancing system needs with environmental and community considerations.

Project Scoping & Feasibility
We evaluate potential solutions early to confirm they are technically and economically viable.

Handover & Commissioning
We transfer approved projects for delivery, ensuring readiness for construction and operation.

Role 3 - Summary of Quarterly Deliverables

FWP25-04 Transmission Clusters Consultation
- Develop approach with NIEN and industry and issue for consultation

FWP25-06 Transmission nodes at/reaching capacity
- Complete review of obligations and identify solutions

FWP028 Airport Road Main 110/33 kV Substation
- Finalisation of the Landowner Agreements for the site and indicative cable routes
- Transmission Project instruction issued to NIEN

FWP026 North South 400kV Interconnector
- Issue Transmission Project Instruction (OHL)
- SONI to enter into a Transmission Project Agreement

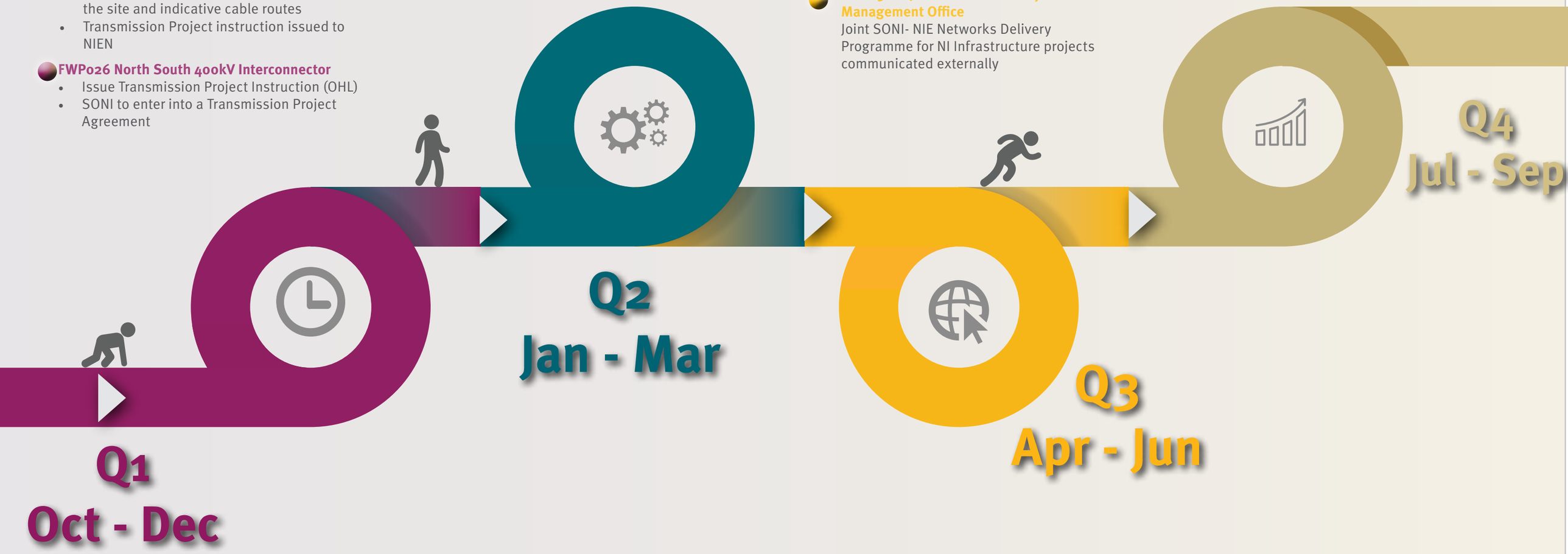
FWP25-06 Transmission nodes at/ reaching capacity
- Stakeholder engagement with NIEN/UR & industry on way forward

FWP25-07 FAQ methodology
- Consult on changes to FAQ methodology.

FWP027 Energising Belfast: Castlereagh – Hannahstown
- Secure options for 2 no. City Centre substation sites

FWP25-08 Joint SONI-NIEN Project Management Office
Joint SONI- NIE Networks Delivery Programme for NI Infrastructure projects communicated externally

FWP027 Energising Belfast: Castlereagh – Hannahstown
- TPI for the post-connection works at Finaghy



Role 3
Performance on a Page

Role 1	
Delivery Against Commitments	We delivered key milestones across major projects including Transmission Cluster Policy Consultation, Transmission Nodes capacity review,[KO20.1] Joint SONI-NIEN Project Management Office, and progressed critical infrastructure projects (Energising Belfast, Airport Road Substation, North-South Interconnector). Some milestones were re-baselined due to external dependencies, but overall progress maintained with strong governance and collaboration.
Performance Against Targets	**Timely Delivery of Publications:** Publication delayed due to external factors: FAQ Methodology consultation deferred to align with UR timelines and programme complexity. Timeliness of publications impacted by dependencies outside SONI's direct control.
Stakeholder Engagement & Feedback	We had extensive engagement with NIE Networks, UR, RenewableNI, landowners, and government bodies. Highlights include bilateral sessions, public consultations, webinars, and structured forums. The feedback we received was consistently positive, citing transparency, responsiveness, and proactive approach to planning and delivery.
Quality of Outputs	We delivered our proposed Transmission Cluster Policy Consultation, new joint SONI-NIEN assessment process for constrained nodes, revised FAQ programme, and updated JPMO governance model. Alongside progressing major infrastructure projects with clear communication of Estimated Completion Dates and improved transparency through TDPNI.
Cost Efficiency & Impact	The projects we have outlined in role 3 underpin long-term cost efficiency: Transmission Cluster Policy reduces both connection costs for developers and wider infrastructure costs for NI consumers ; The FAQ review seeks to improve dispatch assumptions and to balance both opportunities for developers and cost impact on consumers from constraint costs; JPMO provides joint oversight and coordination to track progress, manage dependencies and resolve delivery risks in order to expedite the consumer benefits of project realisation.

FWP25-04
Transmission Clusters Consultation

Overall Assessment

The key milestone, publication of the proposed Transmission Cluster Policy Consultation, was achieved within the reporting year following a revision to the delivery date to accommodate additional governance and technical development. The delay reflected the complexity and strategic importance of the work, rather than performance shortfall.

Project Overview

A significant number of transmission-scale renewable generators are expected to seek connections in the coming years to support the transition to a Net Zero energy system. The current connection process does not facilitate synergies between projects through a clustering approach, nor does it allow for the anticipatory delivery of connection infrastructure. This can result in high connection costs for developers, as well as inefficiencies and uncertainties in system development, potentially hindering the achievement of energy strategy targets.

In collaboration with NIE Networks and the industry, SONI will develop a policy to enable the efficient anticipatory development of new infrastructure for generation connections. After conducting workshops with NIE Networks, industry stakeholders and engaging with the Utility Regulator, SONI will consult on the policy and any necessary changes to SONI's Connections Policy and Transmission Connections Charging and Methodology Statement.

Delivery

We completed the development and publication of the consultation on 30th June 2025, following extensive engagement with NIE Networks, the Utility Regulator, and Renewables NI. The collaborative approach ensured the policy was well-designed, robust and aligned with broader regulatory and strategic objectives.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Develop approach with NIEN and industry and issue for consultation	December 2024	Completed

Stakeholder satisfaction

We engaged bilaterally with key stakeholders through the development of this consultation; this was further supplemented by a dedicated webinar during consultation. NIE Networks also provided feedback relating to lessons learned on the Distribution Cluster Policy, which was incorporated into the consultation document. Stakeholders acknowledged the transparent and inclusive approach adopted.

Adaptability

The project required additional internal governance review and refinement to ensure alignment with long-term system needs. We demonstrated flexibility by extending delivery timelines to ensure the consultation was comprehensive and future proofed.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Plan -** Introduces a plan-led cluster approach to cut constraints, optimise investment, and give developers and communities greater clarity
- **Advise** - Provides clear evidence-based guidance to DfE, UR and industry on optimal renewable connections to enable efficient long-term grid planning
- **Deliver** - Implementing a structured transmission cluster model to connect renewables efficiently, supporting targets while minimising costs and disruption

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Delivery of the Transmission Cluster Policy Consultation in collaboration with NIE Networks and key industry partners

Completion of extensive bilateral engagement with the Utility Regulator, NIE Networks and Renewables NI

Integration of stakeholder lessons learned from previous cluster policy application

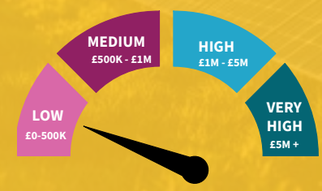
Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Supports timely and efficient connection of large-scale renewables by enabling anticipatory grid development

System-Wide Costs - Reduces connection delays and avoids piecemeal, higher cost-infrastructure by enabling coordinate cluster delivery

Service Quality - Strengthens transparency through extensive consultation, clear policy design and early engagement with developers and NIE Networks

Cost Scale



FWP25-06
Transmission nodes at/reaching capacity

Overall Assessment

This project has demonstrated strong delivery and effective collaboration with us working in partnership with NIE Networks to address capacity constraints at key Bulk Supply Points (BSPs). The milestone was achieved within a revised timeframe, with the work resulting in the implementation of a new, more efficient assessment process for transmission nodes across the system. This improved methodology strengthens coordination with NIE Networks, enabling more effective integration of small-scale renewable generation and directly contributing to wider decarbonisation goals.

Project Overview

Currently a number of 110kV Bulk Supply Points (BSPs) are operating at or nearing their N-1 capacity for generation. This poses a significant challenge to the integration of new generation, particularly Small-Scale Generation (SSG) i.e. under 5MW also referred to as uncontrollable generation, at these nodes. This bottleneck is primarily linked to the capacity limitation of the 110/33KV transformers and radial circuits.

To address this issue, we have been working closely with NIE Networks to pinpoint areas where additional capacity is warranted at BSPs. The goal being to assess the existing infrastructure, identify potential capacity constraints and propose viable options to enhance capacity. Subsequently, a detailed cost analysis will be conducted to evaluate the financial implication of implementing capacity enhancement solutions.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Complete review of obligations and identify solutions	November 2024	Completed
Stakeholder engagement with NIEN/UR & industry on way forward	February 2025	Completed

Delivery

The scale and complexity of the technical analysis required to assess network capacity constraints for this project was greater than initially anticipated. The review of obligations and identification of solutions (originally scheduled for November 2024) and stakeholder engagement with NIE Networks, UR and industry on the way forward (originally scheduled for February 2025), were both delivered in September 2025 following a mid-year to revision to delivery dates. This adjustment was necessary due to the significant level of technical and analytical work involved in assessing the nodes. Despite these challenges, both milestones have now been successfully completed.

The project developed a systematic, scalable approach to evaluating transmission nodes operating at or near capacity.

Following completion of the assessment stage, we engaged with NIE Networks, the UR and industry to discuss the findings and agree on next steps.

A key outcome was the implementation of a new Joint SONI-NIE Networks assessment process, which not only improves the speed and efficiency of evaluating how small-scale distribution connections impact the transmission system but also strengthens collaboration between SONI and NIE Networks. This enhanced process is now fully operational across all nodes, enabling NIE Networks' customers to receive faster, clearer feedback on the status of their connection projects, supporting a more responsive and customer focused service.

Stakeholder satisfaction

Throughout this project we maintained strong and effective engagement with NIE Networks having regular, bilateral sessions to review technical findings and agree on the implementation of the new process. NIE Networks welcomed the improved approach, recognising its benefits in enabling faster responses to connection applications. We also supported a number of tripartite discussions with NIE Networks and affected customers to explain how small-scale distribution connections can impact the transmission network and outline the steps being taken to manage and mitigate these impacts.

This collaborative approach strengthened these relationships and built confidence among industry participants in our ability to deliver efficient, evidence-based network solutions.

Adaptability

Early in the project we recognised the benefit of broadening the scope of the project beyond the initial focus on constrained nodes. We demonstrated adaptability by moving away from limiting analysis to nodes nearing capacity by revising our methodology to create a consistent, system-wide process for assessing how small-scale connections affect the wider transmission network. The outcome of this shift in project scope enables early identification of emerging issues and supports a more proactive approach to network management. It also directly advances decarbonisation efforts by facilitating the timely integration of renewable and low-carbon technologies.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Plan -** Supporting the integration of renewables and supporting technologies, ensuring the transmission network is designed for future needs
- **Advise** - Strengthening of collaboration and sharing data and technical insights to support NIE Network's distribution connection process
- **Deliver** - Balancing the transition in a safe, secure and just way ensuring that infrastructure delivery is underpinned by clear, consistent standards for efficiency and reliability

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

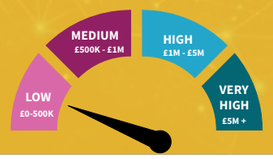
Decarbonisation - Facilitates integration of small-scale renewables by resolving transformer and BSP constraints

Grid Security - Ensures the transmission system can safely accommodating increasing distributed generation without overloading key nodes

System-Wide Costs - Introduces a more efficient, joint SONI-NIE Networks assessment process to avoid unnecessary reinforcement costs

Service Quality - Provides faster, clearer feedback to customers through a streamlined, standardised connection-impact assessment

Cost Scale



The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Completion of milestones, following detailed technical and analytical assessment

Development of a new operational process jointly implemented with NIE Networks to assess distribution-to-transmission impacts

Enhanced collaboration with NIE Networks and industry stakeholders to identify and resolve capacity issues

Adoption of a system-wide approach supporting renewable integration and future decarbonisation goals

FWP25-07
FAQ (Firm Access Quantity) methodology

Overall Assessment

The FAQ Methodology Review has advanced significantly during 2024/25, even though the consultation milestone was not reached within this reporting period. This was primarily due to the need to align with the UR's plans, which required us to recalibrate our project timelines and priorities to ensure regulatory consistency with high quality outcomes. Rather than progressing to consultation prematurely, we focused on safeguarding the integrity of the model and strengthening the robustness of the analysis, ensuring the revised FAQ framework accurately reflects evolving system conditions and technology interactions. The revised FAQ programme is now operational, and work to finalise the consultation paper is well underway. This is supported by ongoing proactive engagement with the UR and industry stakeholders as the project moves into our 2025/26 FWP with the consultation publication milestone as of January 2026.

Project Overview

The Firm Access Quantity (FAQ) methodology is currently based on the 2013 decision paper; however, it requires updating to reflect changes in legislation and technology mix. The new methodology needs to incorporate more realistic dispatches, consider a broader technology mix, including PV and battery storage, and assess how different technologies interact.

The FAQ methodology review will address these updates while evaluating their impact on both encouraging investment in generations and protecting consumers from high constraint costs.

This update requires both software and methodology/policy redesign. The goal is to develop a new firm access policy and methodology that better aligns with current policies and technologies, accurately reflecting the modern power system.

Additionally, this work will provide greater clarity for large-scale generation projects regarding their pathways and timelines to achieve full access.

Effective engagement, collaboration, and co-ordination with third parties and NIE Networks, in their roles as Transmission Operator, Distribution Network Operator and Distribution System Operator, are essential for this process.

Delivery

The milestone to consult on proposed changes to the FAQ methodology (originally due 31 March 2025) was not completed within the reporting year and has been carried forward into the 2025/26 Forward Work Plan.

This was primarily due to the need to align with the UR's regulatory timelines and forward planning processes, combined with the scale and complexity of the revised FAQ programme, which required significant software redevelopment, detailed system testing and methodological refinement. Collaboration with the UR remains ongoing to ensure alignment with regulatory timelines.

We have made strong progress in advancing the core programme, which calculates firm access quantities for all generation connected to the power system. The new model will incorporate updated assumptions, improved dispatch simulation, and enhanced capability to reflect a wider technology mix including solar PV and battery storage.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Consult on changes to FAQ methodology	March 2025	Partially Completed - Outside of SONI's Control

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Plan -** Aligning firm access with the Transmission Development Plan to ensure efficient long-term planning
- **Advise** - Providing expert recommendations to UR and SEMC to modernise access policy
- **Deliver** - Supporting delivery of infrastructure and system changes by enabling better investment signals
- **Operate** - Ensuring operational feasibility by integrating realistic dispatch modelling and system constraints

Stakeholder satisfaction

We have maintained regular engagement with the UR to discuss methodological developments, testing progress and draft consultation content. These discussions have supported shared understanding of technical challenges and alignment with the UR's 2025 Forward Work Plan, where the FAQ review is also referenced.

In parallel, we have engaged biannually with Renewables NI (RNI) to provide updates and gather feedback. RNI has expressed strong interest in the timely delivery of this work, recognising its importance to industry investment certainty and efficient network access. This continued two-way engagement with both regulatory and industry stakeholders demonstrates our transparent and collaborative approach in delivering complex market reforms

Adaptability

We have demonstrated adaptability by recalibrating the project timelines and priorities to accommodate regulatory alignment and ensure quality of outcomes. Rather than advancing consultation prematurely, we have priorities the integrity of the model and the robustness of analysis, ensuring the new FAQ framework accurately reflects evolving system conditions and the interactions between technologies.

This approach balances keeping things moving while thinking ahead, helping both consumer and investors by using a smarter, future-ready method.

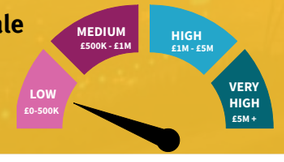
Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Updates firm access rules to reflect modern technology mixes, enabling more renewable and storage projects to progress

System-Wide Costs - Introduces a more efficient, joint SONI-NIE Networks assessment process to avoid unnecessary reinforcement costs

Service Quality - Enhances clarity for investors and developers through a more robust, transparent access methodology

Cost Scale



The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Development of a revised Firm Access Quantity (FAQ) programme with enhanced functionality and updated technology representation

Ongoing collaboration with the UR to align project timelines and consultation planning

Engagement with Renewables NI to maintain transparency and stakeholder support

Refinement of the methodology to better reflect the realities of a low-carbon, multi-technology power system

FWP25-08
Joint SONI-NIEN Project Management Office

Overall Assessment

The JPMO milestone for communicating infrastructure projects externally was successfully completed within the year, marking a significant improvement in how grid delivery is managed. Revised Estimated Completion Dates were communicated to key stakeholders and published in the draft TDPNI 2025 to meet licence obligations and maintain transparency.

We must ensure we comply with our licence obligations at all times and increased volume of applications to connect to the transmission system meant that a degree of necessary resource reprioritisation resulted in a need to extend the initial timelines for this deliverable. This project has achieved its objectives and established a robust framework for continuous improvement. We remain committed to refining the JPMO with NIE Networks to support efficient delivery of Northern Ireland's energy transition.

Project Overview

Meeting Northern Ireland's energy ambitions requires a transformative approach to delivering transmission infrastructure. To address concerns around grid delivery timelines and ensure the development plan is achievable. We collaborated with NIE Networks to establish the Joint Project Management Office (JPMO) in 2024. The JPMO is a dedicated, centralised team with joint governance, created to oversee and coordinate an unprecedented volume of transmission investment projects, the most significant in the system since its construction. Its purpose is to provide integrated planning, deeper collaboration, accountability, and transparent reporting, ensuring robust timelines for individual projects and the overall programme.

Through the JPMO, we have undertaken a comprehensive review of all transmission reinforcement projects assessing status, risk and opportunities for acceleration. Using lessons learned and enhanced modelling capability, we developed a credible, end-to-end multi-year programme for transmission investment, supported by jointly agreed Estimated Completion Dates that reflect the deliverability of the portfolio as a whole.

The JPMO delivers:

- Joint oversight and coordination across both organisations to track progress, manage dependencies, and resolve delivery risks.
- A streamlined, standardised approach to project timelines, milestone tracking and change control.
- Enhanced risk management and stakeholder engagement, including earlier identification of schedule risks and mitigation measures.
- Continuous improvement and innovation, enabling efficiency gains and optimised delivery of critical infrastructure.

This joint management approach ensures that the infrastructure required to support Northern Ireland's energy transition is planned, prioritised, and delivered effectively within the constraints of the licences, policy, regulation, and public acceptability.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Joint SONI- NIE Networks Delivery Programme for NI Infrastructure projects communicated externally	June 2025	Completed

Delivery

The milestone was successfully completed within the year. We communicated the revised JPMO Estimated Completion Dates (ECDs) externally to key stakeholders as follows:

- Utility Regulator (UR): July 2025
- Departments for the Economy (DfE): August 2025
- Renewable NI: October 2024, ahead of publication of the Transmission Development Plan (TDPNI) 2025.

The TDPNI 2025 included the updated JPMO ECD's fulfilling our licence requirement to publish this information transparently.

Although agreement from NIE Networks on publishing the outworking of the JPMO was not secured, we proceeded with publication to meet regulatory obligations, ensuring continued transparency and accountability.

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Milestones complete, revised JPMO estimated completion dates communicated externally to UR, DfE and RNI

Transparent publication of JPMO outcomes in the TDPNI 2025, fulfilling SONI's licence obligations

Positive feedback from DfE on SONI's openness and leadership in collaboration with NIE Networks

Refinement of the methodology to better reflect the realities of a low-carbon, multi-technology power system

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

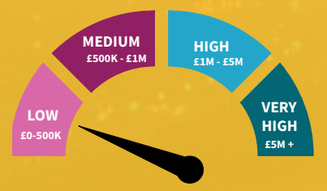
Decarbonisation - Accelerates delivery of essential grid infrastructure required to reach renewable targets

Grid Security - Provides coordinated oversight of all reinforcement projects to ensure timely delivery of security-critical upgrades

System-Wide Costs - Improves planning efficiency, reduces duplication and strengthens programme-wide cost management

Service Quality - Enhances transparency through joint governance, shared milestones and consistent external reporting

Cost Scale



Stakeholder Satisfaction

We maintained proactive and open communication with stakeholders through this milestone. The publication of the revised ECDs was well received.

- The DfE commended SONI for the transparent approach in sharing the JPMO outputs and recognised the improved collaboration between SONI and NIE Networks in supporting critical grid delivery.
- SONI also briefed RenewableNI ahead of the TDPNI launch to provide early visibility of the revised programme timelines.
- We continue to participate in the DfE's Grid Development Monitoring Group, alongside the UR, NIE Networks, and Department for Infrastructure (DfI), to strengthen coordination and accelerate grid infrastructure delivery across Northern Ireland

This open and constructive engagement has built confidence among key stakeholder in the joint approach to infrastructure planning and delivery.

Adaptability

The JPMO represents a fundamental shift in how we collaborate with NIE Networks on grid delivery. We recognised that existing processes were no longer sufficient to meet the scale of upcoming infrastructure needs, both organisations have embraced a new model focused on transparency, joint planning and performance accountability.

We remain committed to working with NIE Networks to continuously refine and enhance the JPMO, ensuring that the programme evolves to meet future system requirements and supports the efficient delivery of Northern Ireland's' energy transition.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Plan -** Central to SONI's planning role, providing a single, coordinated programme for transmission investment to meet future system needs
- **Advise** - Supplies accurate, evidence based progress tracking and reporting to inform policymakers, Utility Regulator and stakeholders
- **Deliver** - Focused on accelerating project timelines, optimising delivery, and ensuring infrastructure is in place to support the energy transition

FWP027
Energising Belfast: Castlereagh – Hannahstown

Overall Assessment

Of the two milestones scheduled for 2024/25, one was completed, and one partially achieved. The TPI for post-connection works at Finaghy was issued within the year, while securing options for two City Centre substation sites was delayed due to complex land negotiations and limited site availability, factors Outside SONI's Control. Despite these challenges, project momentum has been maintained through proactive engagement with landowners, Belfast City Council, and statutory stakeholders, alongside refinements to governance and planning processes. We continue to adapt to market and planning conditions and remain focused on delivering subsequent phases including the full TPI submission for City Centre works in 2027.

Project Overview

The Energising Belfast initiative is a critical transmission development that will strengthen supply to Belfast, improve security of supply and facilitate future electrification and renewable integration in the Greater Belfast area.

Following approval of the Transmission Network Pre-Construction project (TNPP) in June 2021, the project entered Part 2 of the Grid Development Process. The next phase involves submission of the Transmission Project Instruction (TPI) for post-connection works at Finaghy and Castlereagh substations, and securing options for two new City Centre substation sites. These are essential activities to the overall Energising Belfast programme, which forms part of the long-term development of Belfast's transmission network.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Secure options to purchase two sites for substation developments	March 2025	Completed
SONI to issue TPI to NIEN for the post connections works at Finaghy	July 2025	Partially Completed - Outside of SONI's Control

Of the 2 milestones scheduled for 2024/25, one was achieved and one was partially completed, with delays due to factors Outside SONI's Control.

1. **Milestone 1: Secure options for two City Centre substation sites**: Partially completed, outside of SONI's Control. The acquisition process has been delayed due to complex land negotiations and limited availability of suitable sites within Belfast city centre. These challenges are being experienced across multiple infrastructure sectors, driven by high land values, competing development priorities, and extensive due-diligence requirements. We are continuing to engage proactively with landowners, Belfast City Council and statutory stakeholders to progress these negotiations and deliver a value for money solution for consumers.
2. **Milestone 2: Issue TPI for post-connection works at Finaghy:** Completed. The scope of this milestone was reduced following external changes to site access and project dependencies. We issued the revised TPI to NIE Networks within the year, ensuring that preparatory work can progress in parallel with wider City Centre redevelopment activities.

Despite external challenges, overall project momentum has been maintained. Internal governance, technical planning, and commercial engagement have continued to ensure readiness for subsequent stages of delivery.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

We have maintained regular and transparent engagement with key stakeholders to progress with the project. This includes ongoing discussion with Belfast City Council, NI Housing Executive, NIEA, Invest NI, and local Business Improvement Districts, such as the Linen Quarter and Titanic Quarter, as well as local political representatives.

These engagements have focused on identifying viable land options, understanding future development constraints, and ensuring that the project aligns with Belfast's wider regeneration and sustainability objectives. Stakeholder feedback has been constructive and supportive of our collaborative approach and continued transparency regarding the project's progress and challenges

Adaptability

For this project we have shown adaptability by refining our approach to land acquisition and governance processes to respond to complex urban site constraints. This includes exploring alternative engagement mechanism with public bodies and seeking early input from the Utility Regulator on the structure and treatment of land rights under the TNPP framework.

We continue to monitor and adapt to market and planning conditions to maintain delivery confidence for subsequent phases include the planned submission of the full TPI for City Centre works in 2027.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Plan -** Ensures proactive, coordinated planning to deliver long-term network reinforcements
- **Deliver** - Progressing a major infrastructure project that will strengthen resilience and support growth in the city centre
- **Operate** - Reinforces the system to maintain reliability in real-time as demand and renewable penetration increase

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

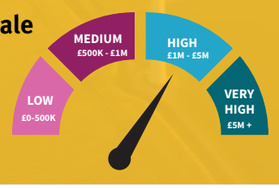
Decarbonisation - Enables future electrification and renewable integration in the Belfast area by strengthening the urban network

Grid Security - Improves supply resilience for the city through new substations and upgrade transmission routes

System-Wide Costs - Maintains value for money by managing land and planning risk proactively and sequencing works effectively

Service Quality - Demonstrates strong engagement with landowners, councils and statutory bodies to progress complex site acquisition

Cost Scale



The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Completion of TPI issuance to NIE Networks for revised post-connection works at Finaghy

Ongoing engagement with multiple public and private stakeholders to progress City Centre substation site acquisition

Adaption of project scope and governance processes to reflect external dependencies and urban land constraints

Continued alignment with Belfast's strategic regeneration and electrification objectives to deliver long-term benefits for consumers

FWP028
Airport Road Main 110/33 kV Substation

Overall Assessment

During 2024/25, both scheduled milestones were completed within the year, the finalisation of landowner agreements for the site and indicative cable routes had a date revision to the end of December, and the issuance of the TPI was slightly later due to factors outside SONI's Control. Delays earlier in the year were caused by complex legal negotiations and awaiting NIE Networks' final design specification under the Transmission Interface Agreement. Despite these challenges, the project remains on track for energisation in 2027

Project Overview

The Airport Road Main 110/33kV Substation project will deliver a new transmission substation within the Belfast Harbour Estate, supporting the growing electricity demand in the Titanic Quarter and surrounding industrial area. The new substation will connect to the existing Rosebank Substation via the 110kV tower line currently operated at 33kV, strengthening the transmission network and enhancing security of supply in this economically significant region.

During 2024/25, we focused on finalising site acquisition and advancing the legal agreements required to progress to construction. While issues relating to these legal agreements caused delays earlier in the year, they were resolved by summer 2024, allowing negotiations to recommence and both milestones to be completed within the reporting year.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Finalisation of the Landowner Agreements for the site and indicative cable routes	October 2024	Completed
Tranmission Project instruction issued to NIEN	October 2024	Completed

Delivery

Two milestones were scheduled for 2024/25, both were delivered within the year, one by its revised date and one slightly later due to external factors.

1. Milestone 1: Finalisation of Landowner Agreements for the site and indicative cable routes: Completed (Revised date 31st December 2024, original date: 31st October 2024). Delays arose earlier in the year due to complex legal negotiations Outside of SONI's Control. Engagement recommenced by summer 2024 and the milestone was achieved by the revised date.
2. Milestone 2: Transmission Project Instruction (TPI) issued to NIE Networks- Completed (Delivered 30th August 2025; original date: 31st December 2024)

The delay in issuing the TPI was due to awaiting the final Design Specification from NIE Networks under the Transmission Interface Agreement (TIA). Once received, we promptly issued the TPI, maintaining overall project progress.

Although milestone delivery dates were revised, the project remains on track for its planned energisation in 2027. We continue to work closely with NIE Networks to ensure alignment between design, procurement and delivery timelines.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

We maintained regular engagement with key stakeholders throughout the year, including Belfast Harbour Commissioners, local business and planning authorities, keeping them informed of project progress. Stakeholders have expressed strong support for this development, recognising its role in enabling continued investment and economic growth in the Titanic Quarter and wider Belfast Harbour Estate.

Adaptability

We demonstrated adaptability by responding to an unexpected design change requiring the replacement of a tower at Rosebank Substation. This additional scope may necessitate planning permission, therefore, SONI, in coordination with NIE Networks, adapted internal governance and TIA processes to enable construction at the new Airport Road substation to commence while the Rosebank consents are finalised. This flexible approach ensures continued progress on critical infrastructure delivery despite new technical and regulatory challenges.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Plan -** Ensures proactive, coordinated planning to deliver long-term network reinforcements
- **Deliver** - Progressing a major infrastructure project that will strengthen resilience and support growth in the city centre
- **Operate** - Reinforces the system to maintain reliability in real-time as demand and renewable penetration increase

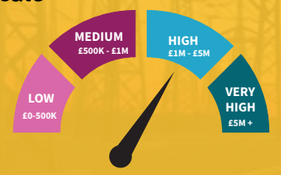
Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Decarbonisation - Supports growth in the Titanic Quarter and enables future low-carbon economic development

Grid Security - Adds new transmission capacity in a high-demand area, reducing over-reliance on existing substations

System-Wide Costs - Ensures a coordinated design with NIE Networks to avoid reword and manage construction risks efficiently

Cost Scale



The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Completion of legal agreements for substation site and indicative cable routes.

Issuance of Transmission Project Instruction (TPI) following receipt of final design specifications

Adaptation of project delivery processes to manage new planning and technical requirements at Rosebank

Ongoing engagement with local stakeholders to support Belfast's growing demand and economic development

FWP026
North South 400kV Interconnector

Overall Assessment

North South 400kV Interconnector
The project progressed well in 2024/25, meeting key milestones and enabling construction to start in November 2024. Despite delays in wayleave issuance and legal challenges, we adapted processes to maintain momentum and stakeholder alignment. The interconnector remains critical for system security and renewable integration, with full land access expected by June 2026 and operational delivery by 2031. Focus for 2025/26 is sustaining construction progress and managing external dependencies.

Project Overview

The North South Interconnector is a strategically significant infrastructure project designed to enhance security of supply, reduce consumer costs, and increase renewable integration across the island. During the reporting period, progress continued on securing land access, although delays in the DfE's issuance of wayleaves impacted initial timelines.

By August 2024, 70% of land access has been secured following the first batch of wayleaves, with full access now expected by June 2026 due to ongoing legal challenges. Construction commenced in 2024, and the interconnector is scheduled to be fully operational by 2031.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Issue Transmission Project Instruction (OHL)	October 2024	Completed
SONI to enter into a Transmission Project Agreement	October 2024	Completed

Delivery

The project delivered all agreed milestones, enabling handover to NIE Networks and the commencement of construction activities. This achievement reflects strong coordination and effective management of dependencies, ensuring progress despite earlier delays.

Stakeholder satisfaction

We maintained close and regular collaboration at senior management level throughout the year to support the first phase of construction activities. This proactive engagement has strengthened alignment and decision-making, and feedback from NIE Networks indicates that this approach is well received and valued.

Adaptability

Throughout the year, we demonstrated flexibility in responding to unforeseen challenges and external dependencies. SONI and NIE Networks worked closely together to adapt our approach to progressing this critical project while managing a significant legal challenge. By implementing alternative engagement methods with stakeholders and adjusting internal processes we maintained momentum and safeguarded delivery confidence for future phases.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Deliver** - Progressing a major infrastructure project that will strengthen system security and support growth in Northern Ireland
- **Operate** - Reinforces the system to maintain reliability in real-time as demand and renewable penetration increase

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Completion of agreed milestones, enabling handover of the projects to NIE Networks and commencement of construction activities

Start of construction in November 2024, marking a major step toward delivery of this regionally significant infrastructure

Maintained stakeholder engagement and senior-level collaboration, ensuring alignment and progress despite external delays.

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

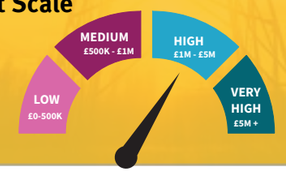
Decarbonisation - Provides the capacity required for high renewable penetration across the island

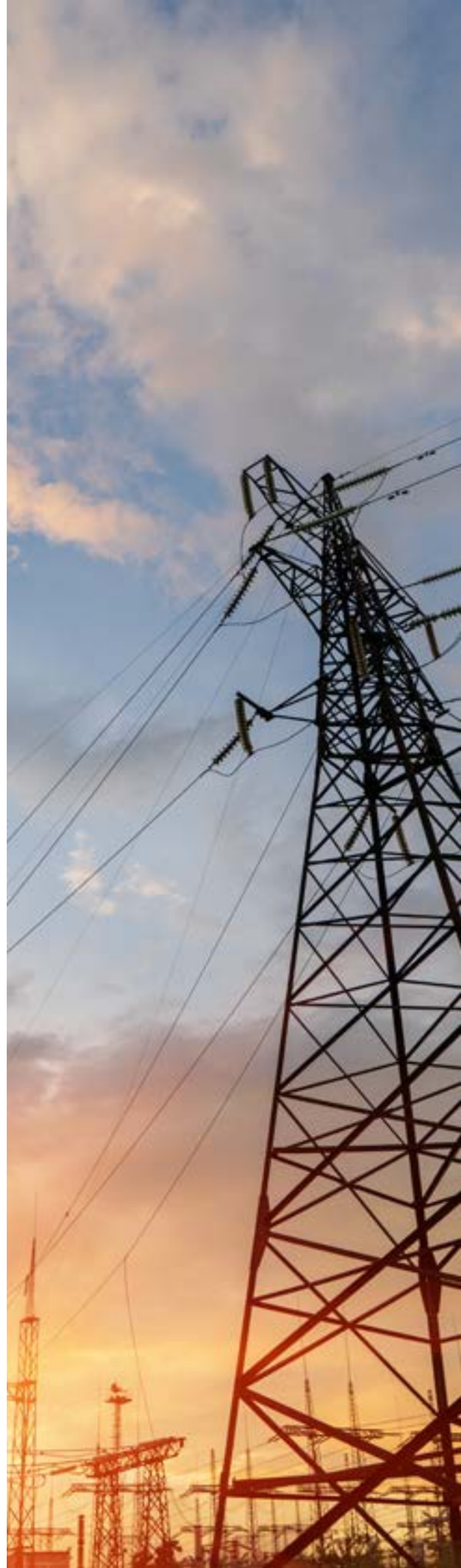
Grid Security - Delivers long-term adequacy and interconnection resilience, reducing risk of supply shortfalls

System-Wide Costs - Significantly lowers constraint costs by increasing transfer capacity between NI and ROI

Service Quality - Maintains strong collaboration with NIE Networks and transparent communication with DfE and communities as construction advances

Cost Scale





Summary of SONI Outcomes for Role 3

Decarbonisation

By planning the transmission system so renewable projects can connect at scale and in the right locations, Role 3 plays a key role in supporting decarbonisation. The Transmission Cluster Policy and FAQ Methodology review are reshaping how new generation accesses the network, moving from a one-by-one approach to a more strategic, coordinated development that reflects modern technology mixes such as solar and battery storage. Our work on transmission nodes at or nearing capacity, along with major projects such as the North-South Interconnector, ensures that the grid can accommodate increasing levels of renewable generation without being held back by local bottlenecks. Projects like Energising Belfast and the Airport Road Substation also contribute to decarbonisation, but their primary drivers are improving system resilience, strengthening security of supply and meeting growing demand in key city areas. Through the Joint Project Management Office, we now have a clearer, whole-system view of how, where and when infrastructure needs to be delivered to support net zero.

Grid Security

Role 3 underpins grid security by identifying where the system is most exposed and planning reinforcement before these risks impact customers. The North-South Interconnector, Energising Belfast and Airport Road Substation are central to strengthening security of supply for Belfast, the wider region and the all-island system. Our transmission nodes project has introduced a new, joint assessment process with NIE Networks, allowing us to understand and manage capacity constraints at Bulk Supply Points in a more consistent and proactive way. The JPMO gives both organisations shared visibility of project progress, risks and dependencies across the entire investment portfolio, improving our ability to sequence works and keep critical projects on track. Together, these initiatives ensure that as demand grows and generation changes, the network continues to provide secure, reliable electricity for customers.

System-Wide Costs

By designing a network and access framework that reduces inefficient investment, avoids unnecessary constraint costs and delivers long-term value for money, Role 3 plays a critical part in managing system-wide costs. The Transmission Cluster Policy aims to reduce connection costs and avoid piecemeal reinforcement by enabling anticipatory, shared infrastructure for groups of renewable projects. The transmission nodes work and Airport Road/Energising Belfast projects ensure that capacity is added where it delivers the greatest system benefit, rather than an ad-hoc fashion. Through the JPMO, we now have a more credible, deliverable multi-year programme, reducing the risk of delay, duplication and cost escalation across the portfolio. In combination, these projects support efficient, coordinated investment that balances the needs of developers, consumers and the wider system.

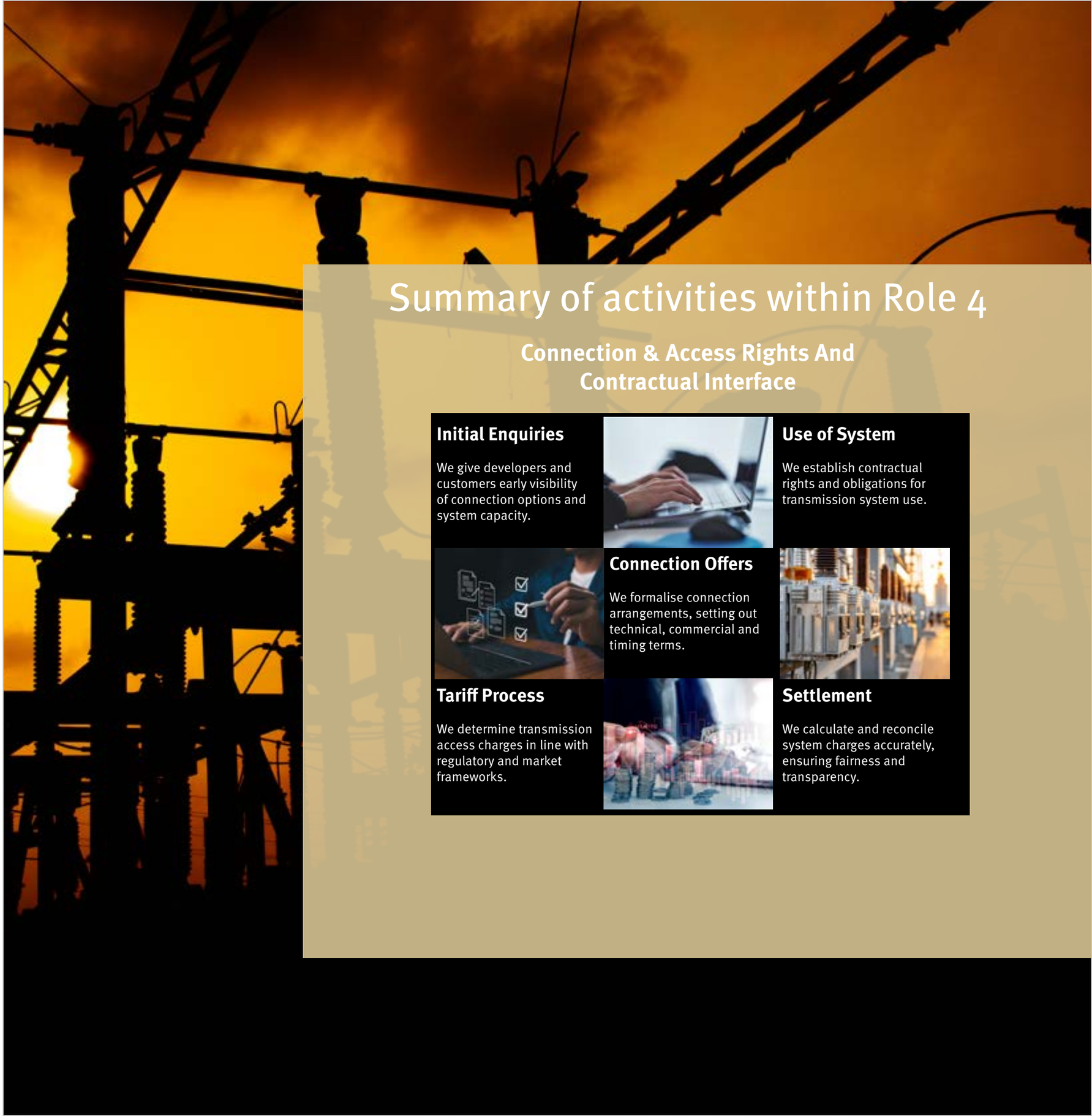
Service Quality

Our work within Role 3 is enhancing service quality by providing clearer access frameworks, more transparent plans and stronger collaboration with stakeholders. The Transmission Cluster Policy consultation, FAQ Review and transmission nodes work all involved structured bilateral engagement and public consultation, giving developers, industry and the UR better visibility of how connection and access decisions are made. The JPMO has improved how we report timelines through TDPNI, providing stakeholders with more realistic Estimated Completion Dates and a clearer understanding of programme-wide constraints. For major projects such as Energising Belfast, Airport Road and the North-South Interconnector, we have maintained ongoing engagements with government, landowners, local authorities and industry, explaining progress, challenges and trade-offs. Across all of these initiatives, our planning work is becoming more open, evidence based and collaborative, strengthening trust in our role as system planner and providing stakeholders with the information and assurance they need to make their own decisions.

Role 4 Commercial Interface

Enabling fair, transparent access to the grid to support investment and innovation

This role covers our activities as the commercial interface for the transmission system. It includes managing customer interactions through our Connection Offer Process, working with NIE Networks on associated construction offers, and preparing Connection Agreements and Transmission Use of System (TUOS) agreements. Role 4 also encompasses our responsibility for the Moyle Interconnector, which connects Northern Ireland to Scotland, and the contractual arrangements we facilitate in support of its operation.



Summary of activities within Role 4

Connection & Access Rights And Contractual Interface

Initial Enquiries

We give developers and customers early visibility of connection options and system capacity.

Use of System

We establish contractual rights and obligations for transmission system use.

Connection Offers

We formalise connection arrangements, setting out technical, commercial and timing terms.

Tariff Process

We determine transmission access charges in line with regulatory and market frameworks.

Settlement

We calculate and reconcile system charges accurately, ensuring fairness and transparency.

Role 4 - Summary of Quarterly Deliverables

FWP001 LCIS Phase 2

- Consultation on LCIS Phase 2 product and commercial requirements, complete recommendation paper and submit to RAs Q2 FY25.

Q1 Oct - Dec

FWP001 LCIS Phase 2

- Recommendations paper on LCIS Phase 2 product and commercial requirements submitted to RAs
- SEMC decision on LCIS recommendation paper

Q2 Jan - Mar

FWP001 LCIS Phase 2

- Prepare & commence PQQ procurement of LCIS Phase 2

Q3 Apr - Jun

Q4 Jul - Sep

Role 4
Performance on a Page

Role 1	
Delivery Against Commitments	Delivered key milestones for LCIS Phase 2, including completion of the public consultation and submission of the recommendations paper (October 2025). Some milestones, such as SEMC decision and procurement preparation, were delayed due to external dependencies but sequencing was adapted to maintain readiness.
Performance Against Targets	**Timely Delivery of Publications:** Delivered LCIS Phase 2 consultation, delayed due to complexity of system studies, procurement design and legal review. Publication delivered on schedule under challenging conditions.
Stakeholder Engagement & Feedback	Strong engagement demonstrated through 14 consultation submissions, a well-attended webinar (75 participants), monthly updates to UR, and integration of LCIS updates into wider operational forums. Feedback highlighted clarity and thoroughness of consultation materials.
Quality of Outputs	Delivered a robust public consultation and recommendations paper supported by detailed technical studies and a market competition assessment. Maintained transparency and governance throughout, ensuring readiness for procurement once SEMC approval is received.
Cost Efficiency & Impact	The delivery of LCIS Phase 2 seeks to enable long-term cost efficiency; through competitive procurement of stability services; and reduced reliance on fossil-fuelled synchronous units, which in turn lowers constraint and curtailment costs over time. Programme sequencing ensures procurement only proceeds when supported by robust analysis and market readiness.

FWP001
Low Carbon Inertia Services (LCIS) Phase 2

Overall Assessment

Significant progress has been made across the LCIS project. LCIS Phase 2 has successfully completed its first milestone the consultation process, within the reporting year, albeit on a revised timeframe. This consultation was a critical step in shaping recommendations and ensuring strong stakeholder engagement. The second milestone, submission of the Recommendations paper to the Regulatory Authorities, was also achieved shortly after the reporting window, by the end of October 2025. With both milestones now complete, the programme has progressed to the next phase, which includes securing the SEMC decision and preparing for and initiating the PQQ procurement process. These activities are reflected in the 2025/26 Forward Work Plan and will build on the solid foundation established through the consultation. The achievements to date demonstrate our ability to deliver complex milestones and maintain momentum, even when timelines shift.

Project Overview

Low Carbon Inertia Services (LCIS) are essential to reducing system constraints and enabling increased penetration of wind and solar generation in line with Northern Ireland's 2030 renewable electricity ambitions. LCIS provides the synchronous inertia, short-circuit contribution and reactive power needed to relax operational limits and maintain stability as non-synchronous penetration grows.

Phase 1 procurement (2026 requirements) was completed in 2023/24.

Phase 2 focuses on the 2030 needs, involving updated system studies, a public consultation, a recommendations paper and preparation for procurement. A number of Phase 2 milestones are dependent on SEM Committee (SEMC) decisions and therefore Outside SONI's Control.

Delivery

Phase 2, although several activities required revision to timeline due to the complexity of system studies, procurement design work and legal review.

Progress:

- Consultation on LCIS Phase 2 requirements, planned to be delivered in December 2024, however, was delivered in September 2025. The consultation commenced once technical studies, procurement arrangements and legal reviews were finalised.
- Recommendations paper on LCIS Phase 2: originally planned for delivery in June 2025, was submitted to the RA's in October 2025. The revised timeline supported the completion of a market competition assessment to ensure a viable procurement phase.
- SEMC decision on LCIS recommendation has not been progressed in this period due to factors Outside of SONI's Control. Similarly, the preparatory work for Phase 2 procurement (PQQ stage) is dependent on SEMC approval therefore this has not been completed and is Outside of SONI's Control.

The project delivered a robust public consultation and recommendations paper within the revised schedule. Later milestones are pending regulatory decisions.

Deliverable	Due Date	Status
Consultation on LCIS Phase 2 product and commercial requirements, complete recommendation paper and submit to RAs Q2 FY25.	December 2024	Completed
Recommendations paper on LCIS Phase 2 product and commercial requirements submitted to RAs	June 2025	Partially Complete* – Outside of SONI's Control *Complete as of 30th Oct 2025.
SEMC decision on LCIS recommendation paper	June 2025	Not Progressed – Outside of SONI's Control
Prepare & commence PQQ procurement of LCIS Phase	June 2025	Not Progressed – Outside of SONI's Control

The key highlights we delivered from this project are:

Delivered a full public consultation following completion of detailed technical studies and procurement design work

Completed the LCIS phase 2 recommendations paper, incorporating extensive stakeholder and market feedback

Integrated a market competition assessment to ensure the future procurement phase is viable and delivers value for consumers

Maintained strong engagement with industry and regulators, including a well-attended public webinar, and regular updates

Adapted programme sequencing and documentation to reflect external dependencies and ensure readiness for the next phase once SEMC approval is granted

Alignment with SONI Outcomes

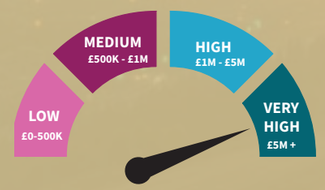
Decarbonisation - Provides long-term inertia and system strength solutions needed to relax fossil-fuel constraints and integrate more wind and solar

Grid Security - Ensures the system can maintain voltage and stability as reliance of conventional generation reduces

System-Wide Costs - Designs a procurement framework that encourages competition and secures services cost-effective

Service Quality - Delivers transparent consultations and strengthens regulatory alignment

Cost Scale



Stakeholder Satisfaction

Our engagement during this period was extensive and constructive.

- Public Consultation: 14 submissions received, reflecting strong engagement from industry stakeholders.
- Consultation Webinar (19 August 2025): 75 attendees, detailed Q&A and broad participation.
- Regulatory engagement: Monthly updates provided to the UR through established SOEF Operations governance structures.
- Industry alignment: LCIS updates were integrated into wider operational engagement forums, including the dispatch down programme.
- Stakeholders expressed appreciation for the clarity of our communication and the thoroughness of the consultation materials.

Adaptability

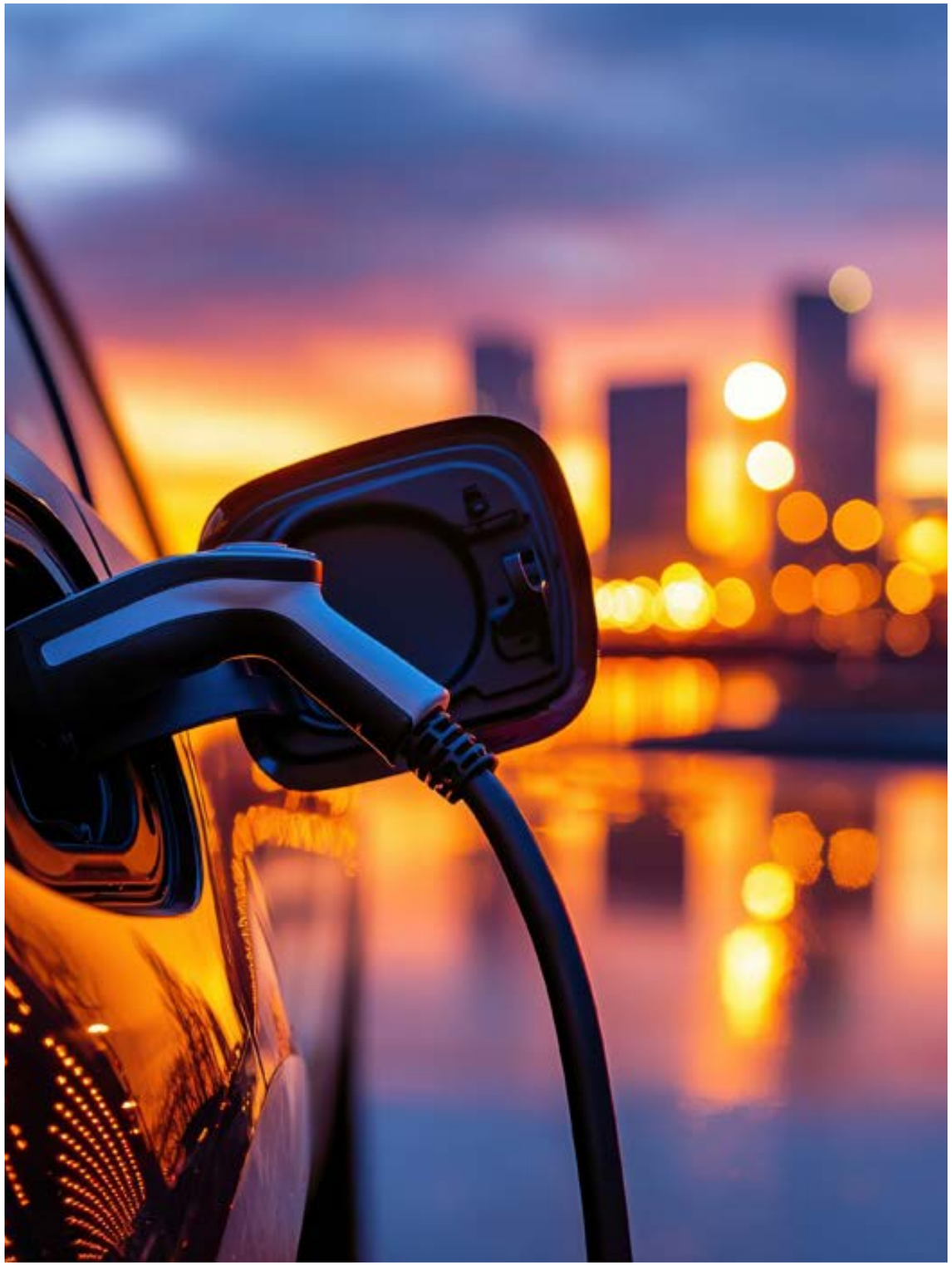
The programme demonstrated flexibility in response to a range of challenges and dependencies.

- Timelines were adjusted to allow completion of system studies, development of procurement arrangements and legal review.
- A competition assessment was incorporated into the process to ensure the procurement can attract sufficient market participation.
- The programme sequencing was adapted to account for SEMC decision timelines and regulatory approvals.

These adjustments ensure that Phase 2 is structured for successful procurement once external dependencies are resolved.

Alignment to SONI Strategy

- **Deliver** - Executes procurement and contracts for advanced system services
- **Operate** - Integrates new low-carbon services into operational practices for system stability
- **Advise** - Provides evidence and recommendations to SEMC and Regulatory Authorities on market design for system services
- **Advise** -Embeds LCIS procurement into long-term planning for a renewable-led electricity system



Summary of SONI Outcomes for Role 4

Decarbonisation

Role 4 supports decarbonisation by designing the market arrangements needed to unlock the next wave of renewable integration. The LCIS programme provides the inertia, reactive power and short-circuit strength required to relax system constraints and operate securely with significantly higher levels of wind and solar. Phase 2 focuses on the 2030 requirements and ensures that the system has the stability supports necessary to reach Northern Ireland's renewable electricity targets. Through the completion of detailed technical studies, a full public consultation and the development of a recommendations paper, we have laid the groundwork for procuring low-carbon stability services at scale. This work ensures the system can safely rely less on fossil-fuelled synchronous units, enabling cleaner operation and helping Northern Ireland progress toward its decarbonisation ambitions.

Grid Security

LCIS is central to maintaining grid security as the system transitions to higher non-synchronous penetration. By defining the volumes and specifications of inertia, short-circuit contribution and reactive power required for secure operation to 2030, this project is ensuring that key stability services continue to be available as conventional units run less frequently. The extensive technical studies completed during the year, alongside the competition assessment and regulatory engagement, provide a robust evidence base for informed decision-making. The consultation process also ensured transparency around system needs and allowed stakeholder to test assumptions and risks. Once procured, LCIS Phase 2 will provide essential stability services that maintain frequency control, voltage performance and fault-ride-through capability, ensuring the system remains secure as renewable penetration increase.

System-Wide Costs

Role 4 is contributing to a better system-wide cost outcomes by designing a competitive procurement framework for stability services that deliver value for money. he LCIS Phase 2 recommendations paper incorporates a market competition assessment to ensure that procurement can attract sufficient bidders and deliver cost-efficient outcomes for consumers. By enabling greater relaxation of operational limits, LCIS also reduces reliance on conventional generators that must currently run for stability rather than energy needs. Reducing this reliance will help to reduce constraint and curtailment costs in the longer term. The revised programme sequencing ensures that procurement will proceed only when informed by robust analysis, regulatory alignment and market readiness, reducing the risk of inefficiency or poorly targets investment.

Service Quality

Through LCIS Phase 2, Role 4 strengthens our service quality by delivering a clear, transparent and well-governed process for developing new market arrangements. The public consultation, supported by detailed technical documentation, a webinar and early engagement with developers and service providers, demonstrated our commitment to openness and accessibility. Regular monthly briefings to the UR, integration of LCIS updates into wider operational forums, and proactive publication of consultation responses all contributed to strong stakeholder confidence. The programme also showed adaptability by refining timelines to accommodate legal review, system studies and procurement design, ensuring outputs were high-quality, robust and future-proofed. Together these approaches reinforce our role as a trusted, evidence-based system operator delivering clear reliable and accountable processes for industry and regulatory partners.

Appendix A:

Further information on Performance Measures and Alignment with SONI Outcomes

Grid Security	
Performance Measure	System Frequency
Purpose of the metric	Maintaining system frequency within normal operating limits is essential to protect equipment and ensure a high-quality electricity supply for consumers. The Grid code requires frequency to remain within 50Hz ±0.1Hz under normal conditions. Measuring the percentage of time the system operates within this range provides a clear indicator of compliance and system stability
Context and Challenges	Frequency management is becoming increasingly complex as the system transitions to higher levels of non-synchronous generation. While SONI aims to maintain frequency within the target range, certain event, such as generator trips, are outside our control and can cause temporary deviations. It is important to balance performance against cost; achieving 100% compliance would require holding additional dynamic operating reserve, which would significantly increase costs for consumers.
2024/25 Performance	The minimal frequency of the all-island transmission system is 50Hz, normally controlled with 49.95 Hz to 50.05 Hz. A frequency event occurs when frequency drops below 49.8 Hz, and a chargeable event is defined as below 49.7 Hz. For 2024/25, our target was to operate within the normal range for 98% of the time. Actual performance was 98.87%, which was within target frequency range. There were no reportable frequency excursions in Northern Ireland during the reporting period.
Looking ahead	As decarbonisation accelerates, maintaining frequency stability will require new tools and operational approaches to compensate for reduced conventional generation. We continue to invest in solutions that support system security while balancing cost and performance.

Decarbonisation	
Performance Measure	System Non-Synchronous Penetration (SNSP)
Purpose of the metric	SNSP measures the proportion of electricity generation coming from non-synchronous sources, such as wind and HDVC interconnection imports, relative to system demand. Increasing SNSP is critical to enabling higher levels of renewable generation and achieving decarbonisation targets. This metric reflects progress toward operating a power system that can accommodate variable, non-synchronous resources while maintaining security and stability.
Context and Challenges	Managing SNSP at higher levels is technically challenging because non-synchronous generation does not provide inherent inertia or frequency support. While the operational trial was successfully increased to 75% following previous trials, plans to raise the limit to 80% in 2024/25 were deferred during 2024/25 due to due to unresolved operational stability concerns. Balancing ambition with system security and cost remains essential. Achieving higher SNSP levels without compromising reliability will require new operational tools, enhanced system services and investment in technologies that support stability.
2024/25 Performance	Our operational policy for SNSP remains set at 75%, following successful completion of previous trials. While the Forward Work Plan 2024/25 included an ambition to increase the SNSP limit to 80%, this was not achieved during the reporting period. The Operational Policy Review Committee determined that the system inertia floor should be maintained above the previously planned levels, and that further trials be deferred pending resolution of the operational stability concerns associated with Large Demand Facility Fault Ride Through. As a result, the planned increase to 80% SNSP has been placed on hold while these technical considerations are addressed. Despite this, maintaining 75% SNSP continues to represent a significant achievement and supports the integration of renewable generation on the system. Future progress will
Looking ahead	Work to resolve outstanding technical challenges is ongoing, and increasing SNSP beyond 75% remains a priority for achieving 2030 decarbonisation targets.

Service Quality	
Performance Measure	Stakeholder Satisfaction (formerly Quality & Quantity of Feedback)
Purpose of the metric	Our aim is to maintain or improve upon the stakeholder satisfaction benchmark established in 2023/24, with a refined focus on the proportion of stakeholders who report being “Very Satisfied” with our engagement. This reflects our commitment to building trust, strengthening relationships and delivering high-quality, meaningful engagement.
Context and Challenges	2023/24 was the first year we had implemented a structured quantitative measure of stakeholder satisfaction, following the publication of our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. Our first survey produced a very high overall satisfaction level (96%), creating a benchmark that combined both “Very Satisfied” and “Somewhat Satisfied” response. Recognising the very high level achieved in this overall satisfaction metric, and in line with our commitment to revisiting and refining the metric over time, for 2024/25 we have adopted a more ambitious and challenging measure, focusing specifically on the proposition of stakeholders who consider themselves “Very Satisfied”. This is a higher threshold than used by other TSOs. The adoption of this refined metric demonstrates our commitment to strive for higher standards in our engagement with stakeholders.

2024/25 Performance	The performance target for 2024/25 was to maintain or improve upon the previous year’s benchmark.
	• **2023/24 benchmark**
	  • 96% satisfied overall
	  • 60% Very Satisfied
	  • 36% Somewhat Satisfied
	• **2024/25 Performance**
	  • 100% Satisfied overall
	  • 65% “Very Satisfied”
	  • 25% “Somewhat Satisfied”
	This represents a 15-percentage point improvement in the “Very Satisfied” category, the new performance measures, and demonstrates that we have successfully achieved the target of improving the stakeholder satisfaction benchmark.
	
	This reflects
	• Strengthened engagement structures
	• Earlier and more transparent communication
	• Improved pathways for feedback
	• Stronger alignment with stakeholder expectations
	• Consistent delivery against our engagement strategy

Looking ahead	For 2025/26, we will continue using the “Very Satisfied” metric as our primary measure of stakeholder satisfaction. This sets a deliberately high bar for performance, beyond those in similar organisation such as NESO and EirGrid, who typically rely on average overall satisfaction scores (70-80%). Our approach: • Committed to improving stakeholder experience • Aims to sustain or increase the “Very Satisfied” proportion • Will evolve informed by comparative research and as more years of data become available • Reflects the ambition set out in our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy • Strengthens transparency and accountability in how we measure and report engagement quality In our stakeholder engagement, we are committed to a cycle of continuous improvement. By focusing on the most demanding category of satisfaction in only year three of a structured quantitative measure of stakeholder satisfaction, we are signalling our commitment to strive for and consistently deliver a high-quality experience for all stakeholders. We will continue to evolve and refine this metric over time as more data and trends emerge and in line with best practice in the energy sector.

Service Quality	
Performance Measure	Timely Delivery of Publications
Purpose of the metric	We aim to deliver all publications on or before planned dates. Where unavoidable deviations occur, full context and justification are provided to maintain trust and transparency.
Context and Challenges	Delivering publications on time requires coordination across multiple projects, regulatory processes, and external stakeholders. Challenges in 2024/25 included dependencies on joint work with EirGrid, alignment with regulatory timelines, and the inherent complexity of certain programmes.

2024/25 Performance	• **6** milestones were scheduled to be published within this measure
	• **4** completed:
	  • FASS System Service Charge Recommendations Paper
	  • FASS Plain English System Services Cod
	  • Dispatch Down Action Plan
	  • LCIS Consultation on product and commercial requirements
	• 2 milestones delayed due to external factors:
	  • System Needs Assessment for Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios (pending joint review with EirGrid)
	  • FAQ methodology consultation (deferred to align with UR timelines and due to programme complexity)

Looking ahead	For 2025/26, we have revised how milestones are defined in the Forward Work Plan, taking on lessons learned from previous cycles. Where possible, we have focused on including publications that are within our control to reduce dependency-related delays. With this approach we are aiming to improve our delivery confidence, enhance transparency, and maintain stakeholder trust through clearer timelines and proactive communication.

System Wide Costs	
Performance Measure	Imperfections Costs
Purpose of the metric	Imperfections Costs are recovered through the all-island market, SEM, with their purpose being to enable SONI & EirGrid as TSOs to recover their total costs associated with: • managing the costs that arise given the transmission system (the wires) cannot deliver the efficient outcomes from the electricity market. **and** • the operational requirements of the electricity system (e.g. minimum number of generating units on requirements, local Security of Supply (SoS) requirements in Dublin and Northern Ireland). These charges are also sometimes referred to as constraint costs or Dispatch Balancing costs and ensure that the TSOs can recover the costs associated with addressing these network constraints and maintaining system security and are a key feature of the energy transition. The total annual cost of imperfections is based on a forecast built up of various projections on demand, interconnector flows, generator and network outages, commercial bids from participants and operational policies. This annual cost is levied on suppliers across the island on a per MWh basis. Given the annual charge is based on a forecast, the overall charge for each year includes a K-Factor adjustment which adjusts the difference between forecast and actual costs in the preceding periods.
Context and Challenges	The TSOs have limited ability to control or influence all of the variables that impact on the outturn position of imperfections such as fuel commodity costs or generator outages; however, we can endeavour to ensure the forecast model is as robust as possible. Each year, to provide transparency and accuracy, we use the PLEXOS-based backcast model, which incorporates actual system data to help analyse variances between actual and the forecast that was made six months before the tariff year. This approach helps refine and improve the model for future forecasting. Our reporting on imperfections focuses on the performance of our forecast relative to the backcast model. The EPF and imperfection reporting cycles are not aligned and so there is a natural lag between reporting years. Based on the 2023/24 Imperfections – Outturn Report the resettled actual costs for the 2023/24 year are €436m, and the total backcast cost is €465m. The 2023/24 backcast cost is €29M (7%) higher than the 2023/24 actual cost. Therefore, the predictive power of the PLEXOS model was quite strong, and overall variance reflects the inherent limitations in simplifying a complex system. Overall, a 7% delta suggests the modelling approach is quite strong.

	We continue to implement measure to manage reduce these costs, including constraint management initiatives and operational improvement. While our focus is on the performance of our modelling the final actual outturn (following further resettlement) was an over recovery of approximately €91M . This is applied as a K factor reduction for 2024/2025 imperfections costs – as this is levied on suppliers, consumers would benefit across the island relative to their consumption. Quarterly imperfections cost reports and a mid-year report were published on the SEMO website, providing visibility of constraint reduction actions, progress and future improvements.
Looking ahead	Going forward it should be noted that across Europe imperfection charges have followed an increasing trend in recent years due to various changes in market conditions, including, inter-alia, significant increases in underlying wholesale energy prices (the cost of deviating from the market position increases as the cost of energy itself increases). We will continue to refine operational strategies and implement measures to reduce imperfections costs while maintaining system security. Future improvements will focus on enhancing modelling, operational flexibility, and collaboration with stakeholders to address key cost drivers.

Glossary:
Key Acronyms and Technical Terms

Term/Acronym	Explanation
BSPs	Bulk Supply Points: a node on the system where the transmission network steps down to a distribution network
CEP	Clean Energy Package:
CRU	Commission for Regulation of Utilities: Ireland's regulator for utilities
DAERA	Department for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs: Government department responsible for environmental policy in Northern Ireland
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security & Net Zero: UK government department responsible for UK energy security, protecting billpayers and reaching net zero.
DfE	Department for the Economy: Government department responsible for energy policy in Northern Ireland
DSO	Distribution System Operator: is responsible for operating the electric power distribution system that delivers electricity to end users. NIE Networks is the DSO in Northern Ireland
DS3	Delivering a Secure Sustainable Electricity System: A programme that developed services and tools to keep the grid stable as renewable generation increased
EMS	Energy Management System: A system of computer-aided tools used by operators of electric utility grids to monitor, control, and optimize the performance of the transmission system.
EPF	Evaluative Performance Framework: Process used by the UR to assess SONI's performance on its Forward Work Plan and Performance Report
ESPS	Energy Storage Power Station: Energy storage facility that can absorb and release electricity to support grid balance, frequency control, and integration of renewables
FAQ	Firm Access Quantity: The amount of grid capacity a generator is guaranteed access to

Term/Acronym	Explanation
FASS	Future Arrangements for System Services: A programme to modernise how services needed to keep the grid stable are procured.
FWP	Forward Work Plan: SONI's annual plan of key projects and initiatives beyond day-to-day operations
GFM	Grid Forming Technology: Advanced inverter-based technology that can stabilise the grid without traditional fossil-fuel generators
HVDC	High Voltage Direct Current - an electric power transmission system that uses direct current (DC) for electric power transmission
IBR	Inverter-Based Resources: Renewable technologies (like wind, solar, batteries) that connect to the grid using electronic inverters
Imperfection Costs	Additional system operation costs due to constraints and balancing actions, compared to an unconstrained scenario
JPMO	Joint Project Management Office: Shared office between SONI and NIE Networks to coordinate delivery of transmission projects
LCIS	Low-Carbon Inertia Services: Services that provide system stability traditionally supplied by large rotating fossil-fuel generators
LDES	Long-Duration Energy Storage: Storage technologies that can provide power over long periods, supporting renewable integration
MMS	Market Management System – The TSOs' market systems which include the scheduling and dispatch tools.
MO	Market Operator – the operator of the wholesale energy market (SEMO)
MUON	Minimum Units on: A requirement for a minimum number of conventional generators to run for system stability
NIEA	The Northern Ireland Environment Agency - an Executive Agency within the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairss
NIE Networks	Northern Ireland Electricity: Owns and maintains the physical transmission and distribution network.
NPDR	Non-Priority Dispatch Renewables: Renewable generators that do not have priority rights to be dispatched ahead of other generation
OPRC	Operational Policy Review Committee: Industry group that oversees operational policy and trials
REPG	Renewable Electricity Price Guarantee: A support scheme encouraging investment in renewables
SACG	Stakeholder Advisory Challenge Group - an expert challenge group of stakeholders with an interest in the SONI TSO price control
SDP	Scheduling & Dispatch Project: Programme to modernise how generation and storage are scheduled and dispatched in real time

Term/ Acronym	Explanation
SEM	Single Electricity Market: The wholesale electricity market covering both Northern Ireland and Ireland
SEMC	Single Electricity Market Committee: Regulatory body overseeing the all-island electricity market
SNSP	System Non-Synchronous Penetration: A measure of how much renewable (wind and solar) generation is on the system at any time
SONI	System Operator for Northern Ireland. Manages the electricity transmission system and plans future grid needs
SRP27	SONI Review of Prices 2027 – The Utility Regulator's Price Control which regulates the outputs and costs of SONI across the period 2027 - 2032
TES	Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios - TES outlines credible pathways for Northern Ireland's clean energy transition.
TIA	Transmission Interface Arrangements – The TIA sets out how SONI & NIE Networks will co-operate and co-ordinate in planning and developing the transmission system
TDPNI	Transmission Development Plan for Northern Ireland: A statutory plan setting out future grid investments
TNPP	Transmission Network Preconstruction Project – an application by SONI to the UR for the approval of costs in relation to Transmission Network Pre-Construction Projects
TPI	Transmission Project Instruction
TSO	Transmission System Operator: Responsible for operating the high-voltage electricity grid
TSSPS	Transmission System Security and Planning Standards: Standards for designing and operating a secure grid
UR	Utility Regulator: Independent regulator overseeing SONI and other energy market participants

SONI

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