

Evaluative Performance Framework

Mid-Year Performance Report 2025-2026



April 2026



About us

SONI (System Operator for Northern Ireland) is Northern Ireland's electricity Transmission System

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.

[1 SONI Forward Work Plan 2025-26](#)

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.

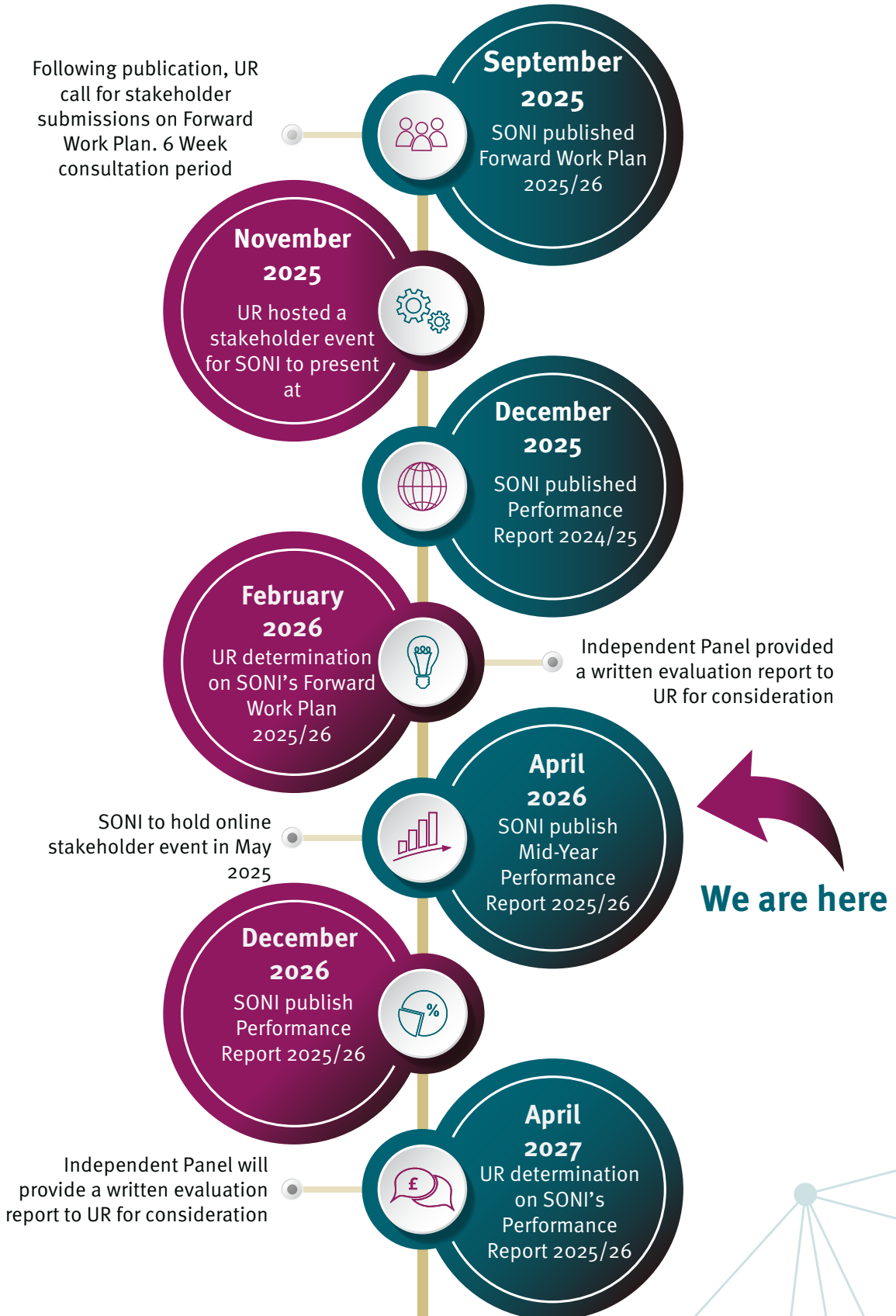
The EPF enhances transparency on how we deliver value and contribute to the four UR determined SONI Outcomes: Decarbonisation, Grid Security, System-Wide Costs, and Service Quality.

Mid-Year Performance Update

The Mid-Year Performance Update forms a key interim stage within the EPF cycle. It provides an update on progress against the milestones set out in the 2025/26 Forward Work Plan¹, covering delivery in the first half of the year. The report does not re-evaluate ambition or re-set commitments; instead, it focuses on how projects are progressing against planned milestones, highlighting areas of strong delivery, emerging risks or dependencies, and any external factors influencing progress.

By reporting mid-year, SONI and the independent panel gain early visibility of delivery performance, enabling constructive challenge, learning and course-correction where required. This supports a more transparent and proportionate assessment at year-end and helps ensure that delivery remains aligned with the outcomes and priorities established by the UR.

Overview of Evaluative Performance Framework



Forward Work Plan Progress Year to Date

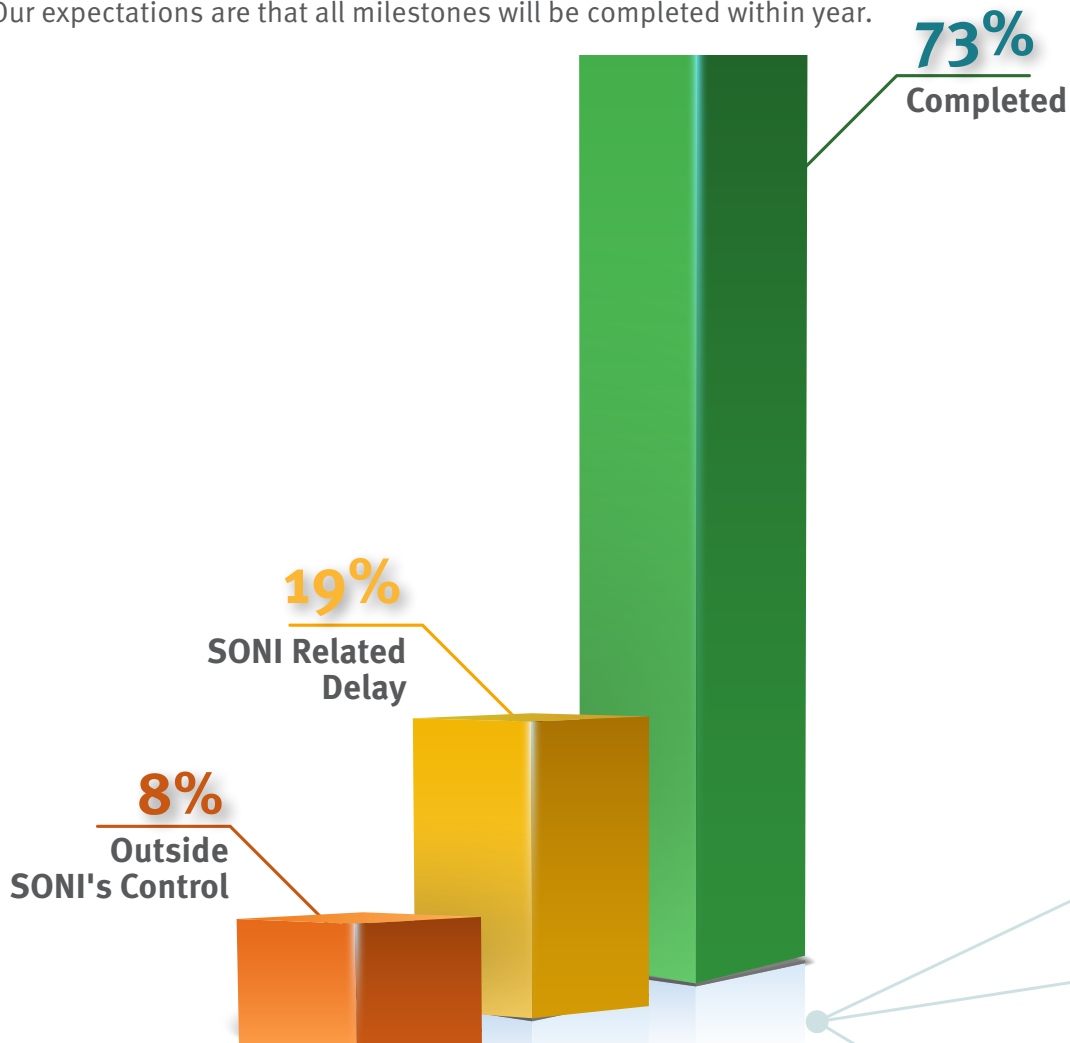
Our performance during the first half of the 2025/26 Forward Work Plan demonstrates robust progress across most planned initiatives in both Q1 and Q2. This has been achieved despite ongoing external dependencies and evolving regulatory and operational challenges.

Our Responsibilities

At the outset of the 2025/26 Forward Work Plan, delivery was structured around 41 milestones across 29 projects. Of these, **26** milestones across **21** projects were scheduled for delivery within the first six months of the Plan year.

Progress to date against these milestones is as follows:

- **19** milestones (**73%**) have been completed in full, demonstrating delivery across a broad range of strategic, operational, and innovation-led activities.
- **2** milestones are delayed due to factors outside SONI's control, reflecting external dependencies impacting delivery.
- The remaining **5** milestones are impacted by SONI-related delays and remain in progress, with actions in place to support delivery over the remainder of the year.
- Our expectations are that all milestones will be completed within year.



SONI Strategy

SONI published our new Strategy for 2025–2031 in February 2025. The Strategy sets out the transformative change required across energy policy and the operation of the power system to support 2030 and 2050 targets. It also recognises that, while the scale, pace and complexity of this transition are significant, it must be delivered in a way that ensures a just transition for consumers.

The Strategy is underpinned by four Strategic Ambitions: **Advise**, **Plan**, **Deliver** and **Operate**. Our Forward Work Plan has been structured to align each project directly to one or more of these ambitions, ensuring clear visibility between our strategic objectives and the activities we undertake.

Advise - our advisory role will be pivotal in shaping the future energy landscape of Northern Ireland.

Plan - we are committed to planning the optimal future design of the electricity network and the all-island electricity markets.

Deliver - to enable the collective renewable energy ambitions, the transmission system must be transformed - physically and operationally - at a scale, pace and level of complexity that is unprecedented.

Operate - as the Transmission System Operator for Northern Ireland, our priority is to operate the electricity network to ensure that power can flow safely, securely and reliably from where it is generated, at the power stations, wind farms and solar farms, to where it is needed in homes, businesses, farms and public services across Northern Ireland.



SRP27 Price Control (2027–2032)

In March 2026, we published our SRP27 Price Control Business Plan, achieving a key milestone set out in the 2025/26 Forward Work Plan. The publication of SRP27 represents a significant step in setting out how we propose to operate, develop and transform Northern Ireland’s electricity transmission system over the 2027–2032 period, while continuing to deliver a safe, secure and reliable electricity supply.

The SRP27 Business Plan clearly and transparently sets out the investment required in our people, systems, data and operational tools, alongside the scale of transmission network development needed to support increasing levels of renewable generation, reduce curtailment and maintain security of supply. A central objective of the plan is to deliver long term value for consumers in Northern Ireland, demonstrating how targeted investment during the SRP27 period can unlock future efficiencies and contribute to lower overall system costs in subsequent price control periods.

Developed in close collaboration with stakeholders across government, industry and society, SRP27 reflects our evolving role as a trusted advisor and to our ambition to move to a more plan led approach to grid development. Through this price control, we aim to accelerate progress towards a net zero ready power system, support economic growth, and ensure the electricity system continues to meet the needs of consumers as Northern Ireland transitions to a cleaner energy future.



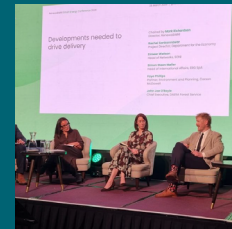
Stakeholder Engagement and External Recognition

Over the last six months, we have continued to actively engage with stakeholders and partners across the energy sector, government and the wider community, while also receiving external recognition for our work and culture. Key activity has included:

- Working closely with system operator partners across Northern Ireland, Ireland and Great Britain, including signing a new Memorandum of Understanding with EirGrid and NESO to strengthen collaboration on decarbonisation, system resilience and energy affordability.
- Engaging directly with policymakers, including welcoming the NI Assembly Committee for the

Economy to our headquarters to discuss the challenges and opportunities of the energy transition and to demonstrate live system operation in our control room.

- Strengthening whole system planning, through formal collaboration with gas transmission operators in Northern Ireland to better align electricity and gas network investment and support future energy pathways.
- Supporting education, outreach and future talent, welcoming students to SONI as part of Engineers Week to showcase engineering careers and our role in operating Northern Ireland’s electricity system.
- Embedding inclusion and wellbeing within our organisation, reflected in achieving Diversity Mark Accreditation and continuing to invest in initiatives that support equality, diversity and staff wellbeing.
- Being externally recognised for our sustainability and workplace culture, including receiving a Gold rating in the BITC Environmental Benchmarking Survey and winning the Belfast Telegraph Excellence in Workplace Health and Wellbeing Award.




Role 1 System Operations and Adequacy

The table below provides an overview of the projects and milestones scheduled for delivery in the first six months of the Forward Work Plan 2025/26 for Role 1, System Operations and Adequacy. This includes revised dates where available, status and the percentage progress for each project.

Key

 Completed

 SONI Related Delay

 Delayed - Outside SONI's Control

Project	Milestone	Due Date	Revised Date	Status	% Complete
FWP26-01: NI Minimum Stability Trial	Deliver the NI Minimum Stability Trial	January 2026	-		100%
FWP26-04: System Strength	1. Agree SONI-EirGrid System Strength Definition	December 2025	May 2026		95%
	2. Define system strength metrics and commence studies	March 2026	July 2026		50%
FWP23-01: Future Arrangements for System Services (FASS)	High level Design completed and Detailed Design initiated.	March 2026	-		100%
FWP23-02 Scheduling and Dispatch	1. Testing, training and implementation of SDPo2 In control centre operations	November 2025	-		100%
	2. Completion of approved Tranche 1 initiatives and transition to post-implementation phase	December 2025	-		100%



Project Updates

FWP26-04: System Strength

Progress against early milestones has been delayed due to additional time being required to onboard specialist engineering resources and establish the necessary power system analysis tools.

Given the complexity of introducing this new and innovative approach, SONI has allowed additional time to ensure quality assurance and control have been fully considered in clarifying the system strength definition and in ensuring robust alignment between operational and planning engineering activities across the business.

With the project team now in place and the system strength definition issued for internal review, work has progressed into model development, data collection and quality assurance, including the development of study plans and developer specific models.



Role 2 Independent Expert

The table below provides an overview of the projects and milestones scheduled for delivery in the first six months of the Forward Work Plan 2025/26 for Role2, Independent Expert. This includes status and the percentage progress for each project.

Project	Milestone	Due Date	Revised Date	Status	% Complete
FWP24-05 SONI Price Control 2027	Submission of Business Plan to UR	March 2026		●	100%
FWP26-06: Grid Forming Strategy	1. Industry webinar grid forming technology	December 2025		●	100%
	2. Commence evaluation of grid-code grid forming requirements for HVDC	December 2025		●	100%
	3. Commence evaluation of grid-code grid forming requirements for HVDC	December 2025		●	100%
FWP26-05 Innovation Strategy	Delivery of Innovation Strategy	March 2026	-	●	100%
FWP25-03: SONI SRP27 Business Plan Stakeholder Engagement Programme	Deliver SRP27 stakeholder engagement plan	March 2026		●	100%

Project Updates

All milestones within Role 2 have been completed in full during the reporting period. This includes delivery of the Grid Forming Strategy milestones, the Innovation Strategy, submission of the SONI Price Control 2027 Business Plan to the Utility Regulator, and delivery of the SRP27 Business Plan stakeholder engagement plan. Each milestone has reached 100% completion, in line with or ahead of the Forward Work Plan due dates, demonstrating successful delivery across this role.

Role 3 System Planning

The table below provides an overview of the projects and milestones scheduled for delivery in the first six months of the Forward Work Plan 2025/26 for Role 3, System Planning. This includes revised dates where available, status and the percentage progress for each project.

Project	Milestone	Due Date	Revised Date	Status	% Complete
FWP25-07: Firm Access Quantity Methodology	Consult on proposed changes to FAQ calculation methodology.	January 2026	May 2026	●	80%
FWP26-14: Connect West	1. Confirm and publish Final Preferred Option	December 2025		●	100%
	2. Submit TNPP to UR for approval	February 2026		●	100%
FWP25-08: Joint Project Management Office	1. Publish updated TDPNI timeline	October 2025	-	●	100%
	2. Introduce quarterly programme updates and acceleration opportunities	December 2025		●	100%
FWP034: Mid Antrim Upgrade	Delivery of Part 2c Stakeholder Engagement	February 2026		●	100%
FWP26-13: North Sperrin Generation Cluster	Confirm Option and Publish	March 2026	May 2026	●	80%
FWP25-04: Transmission Cluster Policy	Final Proposal set out in decision paper for the Transmission Cluster Policy incorporated into the TCCMS and issued for consultation	March 2026	June 2026	●	80%
FWP26-12: Transmission Development Plan 2025	1. Publish TDPNI Consultation	October 2025		●	100%
	2. Submit TDNPI for UR approval	February 2026		●	100%
FWP26-11: Transmission System Security and Planning Standards (TSSPS) Review	Consult on updated TSSPS changes.	October 2025		●	100%

Project Updates

FWP25-07: Firm Access Quantity (FAQ) methodology

The consultation on proposed changes to the FAQ calculation methodology is at an advanced stage with consultation expected in May. We have engaged with the Utility Regulator regularly on the development of the FAQ calculation methodology and the progress that has been made. In addition, we presented an overview and update on this work to the Independent Expert Panel in February, and Renewables NI in March.

The Firm Access methodology review has evolved to be more complex than originally thought and is impacted by other considerations that have been uncovered relating to the impact of SEM Committee decisions and European law as the new design has emerged. This has had implications for the timeline for delivery of this work.

Delivery of this milestone has been impacted by the temporary diversion of resources to conclude the Transmission Cluster Policy work and other priority activities, including and the Capacity Market Qualification process for the Capacity Auction T-4 2029/30. The qualification process involved assessment of the achievability of grid connections for all applications, adopting an enhanced and more collaborative cross-functional approach to ensure each stage of the assessment, review and dispute process was technically and legally robust, having learnt from experience in previous auctions.

FWP25-04: Transmission Cluster Policy

Delivery of the final proposal and decision paper has been impacted by the scale and complexity of the policy development work. A Position Paper following consideration of the responses received to the consultation was published in February 2026. This Position Paper forms the basis for the Transmission Connection Charging and Methodology Statement (TCCMS) changes and drafting is now underway, with the revised timeline allowing sufficient time to ensure a robust and coherent proposal ahead of consultation on the TCCMS.

FWP26-13: North Sperrin Generation Cluster

The milestone to confirm the preferred option is well progressed with the Options Report being finalised and is on track for the revised date. Publication of the Options report will happen alongside our Transmission Network Pre-construction Project (TNPP) submission to the Utility Regulator, planned for Q3 2026.



Role 4 Commercial Interface

The table below provides an overview of the projects and milestones scheduled for delivery in the first six months of the Forward Work Plan 2025/26 for Role 4, Commercial Interface. This includes revised dates where available, status and the percentage progress for each project.

Project	Milestone	Due Date	Revised Date	Status	% Complete
FWP001 :LCIS Phase 1 – Dynamic Stability Assessment	Commence LCIS Phase 1 technical studies	January 2026	May 2026	●	70%
FWP26-15: LCIS Phase II Procurement Process	1. TSO LCIS Phase II recommendations paper submission to SEMC	October 2025		●	100%
	2. SONI Start of Procurement	January 2026	May 2026	●	50%

Project Updates

FWP001: LCIS Phase I – Dynamic Stability Assessment

Commencement of Phase I technical studies has been impacted by dependencies on external inputs, particularly the outcomes of the All Island Large Demand Facility fault ride through work, which underpin the required analysis. While preparatory work has progressed, reliance on these inputs, alongside IT and system compatibility issues associated with onboarding new staff, has constrained the commencement of full studies.

FWP26-15: LCIS Phase II Procurement Process

The start of the Phase II procurement process has been impacted by the timing of regulatory approval and subsequent stakeholder feedback. Following SEM Committee approval, procurement timelines were refined to reflect consultation responses, with publication of the pre qualification stage subject to final approval.



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