



Transmission Connection and Planning Arrangements – Rule Change Request Section 108A (NEL)

Purpose

The Commission is required under section 108A of the National Electricity Law (NEL) to publicly report on rules not made within 12 months of the publication of the notification of the commencement of the rule change process.

Background

On 27 July 2015, the COAG Energy Council submitted to the Commission a rule change request seeking to amend aspects of the National Electricity Rules (NER) to improve the transparency, contestability and clarity of transmission connections while maintaining clear accountability for shared network outcomes, and to enhance the transmission planning and decision making frameworks. It largely reflects the recommendations made by the AEMC in the Transmission Frameworks Review.

A consultation paper on the rule change request was published on 26 November 2015, with submissions closing on 28 January 2016.

Reasons for the rule determination not being made within 12 months

On 3 March 2016 the Commission extended the timeframe for making a draft rule determination on the rule change request until 24 November 2016 under section 107 of the NEL. The Commission determined that an extension was necessary as:

- The rule change request proposes significant changes to the rules that underpin transmission connections and planning arrangements in the National Electricity Market (NEM). These changes, particularly those related to connections, were commented on extensively by stakeholders in submissions to the consultation paper, discussion paper and in one-on-one meetings.
- The scope of the rule change request has expanded substantially from that originally contemplated in the Transmission Frameworks Review. For example, the Transmission Frameworks Review set out the Commission's recommended changes for connecting generation assets to the transmission network. The rule change request expands the scope of these proposed changes to consider all assets connecting to the transmission network, i.e. load, generation, Market Network Service Providers and distribution networks.
- Sufficient time was required to draft the significant amendments to Chapters 2, 4, 5, 6A, 8 and 10 of the NER.

The extended timeframe also enabled the Commission to consult extensively with stakeholders on the issues raised in the rule change request, specifically to:

- hold two workshops with stakeholders on the connections (9 March 2016) and planning (21 April 2016) aspects of the rule change request;
- publish a discussion paper on the connections aspects of the rule change request on 26 May 2016, with submissions closing on 30 June 2016.;
- hold a public forum on the discussion paper; and
- hold numerous other bilateral meetings on aspects of the rule change request.

A draft rule determination was published under section 99 and 91A of the NEL on 24 November 2016.

Expected timing for final rule determination

Based on the requirements in the NEL, the Commission is scheduled to make a final rule determination on the Transmission Connections and Planning Arrangements rule change request on 9 March 2017.