

Joint Office of Gas Transporters

Version 0.3

November 2018

A discussion paper by Penny Garner, Joint Office of Gas Transporters

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide a set of guidelines to be adopted by all Members of the Uniform Network Code (UNC) Modification Panel. The guidance is intended to help protect the reputation and work of the UNC Modification Panel and so maintain the trust of everyone that it interacts with.

The choices and decisions undertaken by the UNC Modification Panel really matter and are vital in shaping the future of the UK Gas Industry.

Background

Each of the Gas Transporters operating within England, Scotland and Wales are required under the terms of their Licence to establish and operate procedures for the Modification of the UNC and each Individual Network Code, so far as to better facilitate, consistently with the duties imposed on each Transporter under Section 9(1) and (2) of the Act.

To help facilitate the above, the UNC Modification Panel was established as an industry governance forum in which Modification Proposals and Requests could be discussed, quantified, reviewed and amended.

The Uniform Network Code Modification Panel

The UNC Modification Panel membership consists of: -

- An Independent Panel Chairperson – non-voting Member (except where a casting vote applies);
- Up to five (5) other Transporters' Representatives, being Voting Members;
- If appointed (or, as the case may be re-appointed), up to six (6) User' Representatives, being Voting Members;
- If appointed, the Independent Gas Transporters' Representative, being a Voting Member;
- If appointed, up to two (2) Consumers' Representative, being Voting Members;
- If appointed, an Ofgem Representative, being a non-voting Member;
- If appointed, the Terminal Operators' Representative, being a non-voting Member; and
- If appointed, the Independent Suppliers' Representative, being a non-voting Member.

The UNC Modification Panel meets monthly and has the capacity to call extraordinary meetings if required.

The Code Administrator (the Joint Office of Gas Transporters) provides meeting administration and secretariat duties; including provision of the UNC Modification Panel Secretary and Deputy Panel Chairperson (where required),

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Foreword from Mark Shurmer, Independent Modification Panel Chair

As Independent Panel Chair, I am strongly supportive of these guidelines. The UNC is the hub around which the competitive gas industry revolves. As part of this, the UNC Modification Panel plays a pivotal role in ensuring good governance of changes to the code. In particular, it is key that the Panel: assesses the case for change against the relevant code objectives; ensures that good quality and depth of analysis has been provided in code modification reports; and that arguments in support of code modification are well substantiated.

My role as Panel Chair is to hold the Panel to account against these objectives and to create and maintain the right conditions for overall Panel and individual Panel Member effectiveness. This involves a number of aspects, including:

- Ensuring the right level of formality;
- Encouraging active participation by all Panel Members;
- Ensuring there is good and balanced discussion and that all Panel Members feel that they get a fair hearing;
- Ensuring that Panel meeting minutes are accurate;
- Upholding the principles of good governance at all times;
- Ensuring that the Panel completes its order of business at each meeting.

Of course, my role very much acts in partnership with Panel Members and with the Joint Office to ensure that the Panel provides good governance of the Code. The Panel performs a very important and high-profile role of behalf of the gas industry and as such it is beholden on the Panel and its members to act with a high degree of professionalism, diligence and respect at all times. Again, part of my role is to ensure that this happens and to take action where I feel that the Panel or individual Panel Members are not living up to these expectations.

In this regard I view the Statement of Modification Panel Behaviour as an important and helpful statement of the expectations of the joint contract we should all have of each other. Moving forwards, part of my role will be to ensure adherence to these guidelines by all individuals. I firmly believe that if we meet these expectations that the Panel can continue to operate efficiently and effectively, overseeing changes to the UNC to the benefit of the industry and consumers.

Kind regards,

Mark Shurmer

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Statement of Modification Panel Behaviour

This statement of Behaviour is based on the principals of openness, respect, integrity and professionalism.

- Panel Members have a duty to ensure that the UNC Modification Panel Meeting is conducted in an environment in which, relevant discussion can take place and all parties are respected regardless of their opinions.
- Panel Members will always conduct themselves in a professional manner and will be expected to fully participate in the work of the UNC Modification Panel.
- Panel Members will always fulfil their duties responsibly.
- Panel Members will be as open as reasonably possible about the decisions and actions that they take and where possible if requested should be able to give their reasons for any decisions or recommendations made.
- Panel Members have a duty to declare Conflicts of Interests and/or potential Conflicting Appointments.
- The Code of Behaviour will be owned by Panel Members, with Members carrying out a review on request which is supported by the majority of Panel Members or as a minimum on an annual basis, in line with the Modification Panel Elections process.
- Any breaches of the above will be reported to the Independent Panel Chairperson for consideration.
- All UNC Modification Panel Members will be asked to sign up to and adhere to the Code of Behaviour.

Declaration

I xxxxxxxx, sit on the Modification Panel as a XXXX Member.

I hereby agree to abide by the Statement of Modification Panel Behaviour as outlined above.

Signed

Dated