

UNC Workgroup 0776S Minutes
Revision of the Modification Panel Meeting Location Requirement in
the Modification Rules
Wednesday 01 September 2021
via Microsoft Teams

Attendees		
Kate Elleman (Chair)	(KE)	Joint Office
Helen Cuin (Secretary)	(HCu)	Joint Office
Clare Manning	(CM)	E.ON
Darren Lond	(DL)	National Grid
Dave Mitchell	(DM)	SGN
Ellie Rogers	(ER)	Xoserve
Oorlagh Chapman	(OC)	Centrica
Pavanjit Dhesi	(PD)	Interconnector UK Ltd
Phil Lucas	(PL)	National Grid
Tracey Saunders	(TS)	Northern Gas Networks

Copies of all papers are available at: www.gasgovernance.co.uk/0776/010921

The Workgroup Report is due to be presented at the UNC Modification Panel by 21 October 2021.

1.0 Outline of Modification

KE introduced the Modification and summarised that this Modification has been raised to change the requirement for holding UNC Modification Panel meetings in London.

Phil Lucas (PL) provided an overview of the change noting that the requirement for meetings to be held in London has been in place since 1996 which at the time of implementation reflected the majority of panel member's work locations. The view is this is now an unnecessary constraint taking into account the wider geographical spread of panel members, the advancement of technology to allow more flexible working arrangements and to optimise cost savings.

PL explained National Grid had considered when drafting the Modification, the removal of the location, supplementing London with an alternative location but allowing the Modification Panel the right to veto.

The result of the considerations was to modify the UNC to remove the requirement for meetings to take place in London and replacing it with a location specified by the Code Administrator. PL noted that pre-Modification discussions supported the principle, with a request to consider a minimum notice period to facilitate efficient travel arrangements. PL also noted that the UNC Panel had some additional questions.

2.0 Initial Discussion

The Workgroup acknowledged the need to consider hybrid working, advances in technology and the need to provide sufficient notice, to allow the booking of travel arrangements.

KE recognised the need to be in a position to run efficient meetings and an ability to cater for a mix of some delegates physically being present in a room and others wanting to join remotely.

Tracey Saunders (TS) believed the Modification was very simple and suggested that the solution should avoid being prescriptive to avoid restricting options. TS believed the

Workgroup should avoid considering the potential different organisational approaches with regards to hybrid working solutions and focus discussions on the need for flexibility and an approach that supports this. TS believed conversations around remote working should not delay the progression of the Modification or complicate the need for flexibility within the provisions. It was agreed that the Modification should be limited to the scope set out to allow the location to be specified by the Code Administrator. It was noted that Modification Rules already allowed for the support of remote meeting arrangements.

It was agreed upon drafting the Workgroup Report that the report would acknowledge that significant investment has taken place within the Joint Office to support the ability for delegates to join meetings remotely. However, TS wished to note the investment in equipment had not yet been rigorously tested by all parties with a mix of delegates in the room and some remotely to test the quality of sound.

The Workgroup considered whether there should be a minimum notice period for changing a meeting location. TS suggested there should be a minimum notice period, noting there had been a suggestion of 3 months.

The Workgroup considered the aim to hold face-to-face meetings from January and providing sufficient notice for this. The Workgroup also considered the constraints of having a 3-month notice period and having to change a location when there are unforeseen circumstances such as flooding.

TS suggested the legal text should reflect that sufficient notice should be provided and expressed a preference for this to be stated. TS suggested there should also be suitable provisions in place, a contingency, under extreme circumstances. The Workgroup considered having a standard period of 3 months but allowing this to be changed by agreement with the Panel. PL suggested a reasonable endeavours approach would allow for a suitable notice period and the need to change meeting locations.

The Workgroup re-acknowledged the investment in equipment at Radcliffe House, noting although this was outside the scope of the proposal, the testing and feedback on locational equipment would assure suitability for industry meetings. It was agreed to reflect the Workgroups considerations within the Workgroup Report but avoid detracting the need for flexibility. It was acknowledged that the need for appropriate technology was not changing within this Modification.

The Workgroup considered the general need for hybrid working and how meeting arrangements/requirements could cascade to other meetings. It was noted however this was out of scope of this Modification as there was not a requirement to hold meetings solely in London for other meetings.

It was agreed by the Workgroup as more organisations are moving towards varying ways of hybrid working, that the Governance Workgroup is an appropriate forum to discuss such working arrangements and how to accommodate different stakeholder requirements for industry meetings.

KE enquired if the Workgroup had any specific questions the Workgroup would like as part of the consultation. PL suggested the Workgroup may like to seek views on the minimum notice period, however some concern was expressed about the potential for differing views and stalling a simple change.

The Workgroup briefly considered the complete removal of legal text relating to the location of meetings. It was agreed to keep changes to a minimum and rather than removing sections of text it would be better to amend the text as initially proposed.

To allow the initial draft of the Workgroup Report ahead of the next meeting the Workgroup considered the likely consumer benefits. It was agreed without detailed analysis it would be difficult to substantiate a positive reduction of environmental impacts. This would require a comparison of travel arrangements for each individual attending.

Further to discussions PL agreed to amend the Modification and provide suitable Legal Text for the Workgroup to review at the next meeting.

2.1. Issues and Questions from Panel

See item 2.0.

2.2. Initial Representations

None received.

2.3. Terms of Reference

As matters have been referred from Panel a specific Terms of Reference has been published alongside the Modification at <https://www.gasgovernance.co.uk/0776>

3.0 Next Steps

KE summarised that National Grid will provide an amended Modification, and Legal Text to allow the Workgroup to conclude the Workgroup Report at the next meeting.

TS suggested as the Workgroup was in agreement with the changes required to the Modification and what needed to be captured within the Workgroup Report that the Workgroup Report should not be held-up if the October meeting was not quorate. The Workgroup agreed as there had been a full discussion and agreement on some minor revisions the Workgroup Report could be concluded at the next meeting and submitted to the October UNC Modification Panel if the next meeting was not quorate.

KE agreed, to assist concluding the Report, that a Draft Workgroup Report would be provided ahead of the next meeting.

4.0 Any Other Business

None.

5.0 Diary Planning

Further details of planned meetings are available at: www.gasgovernance.co.uk/events-calendar/month

Workgroup meetings will take place as follows:

Time / Date	Paper Publication Deadline	Venue	Programme
10:00 Monday 11 October 2021	5pm Friday 01 October 2021	Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amended Modification• Consideration of Legal Text• Conclusion of Workgroup Report