Ofgem Stakeholder Engagement Incentive Scheme 2014/15

Placing stakeholders at the centre of our business
Engaging for a sustainable business

As my colleagues and I work to deliver new infrastructure needed to release the renewable energy potential of the north of Scotland, and to keep power flowing reliably every day, we do so with a new appreciation of the value of engaging effectively with stakeholders.

It’s been a year of learning for us, as we have developed new ways of engaging, and delivered change that just a few years ago, we would not have imagined. We are grateful to all our stakeholders for their input.

Broadening our engagement horizon

In planning our engagement this year, we continued to consider our engagement on a stakeholder group-by-group basis, but we set ourselves the challenge of considering our engagement on three levels: Strategic, Organisational and Operational. That has really enriched our activity and has brought a much wider range of views to our decision making.

Our engagement activities have expanded, as we have stepped up to lead on engagement at the highest levels on the biggest issues that affect our business, and to ensure that the services we provide to domestic customers and small businesses are as good as they can be.

This report sets out our engagement activity for 2014/15, and the associated wealth of change we have delivered. We highlight some of the most significant changes we have introduced as a result of our engagement, and some of the new initiatives that are poised to make a big difference to our activity in the years ahead.

Our future engagement

Our experience of the value that stakeholder engagement can bring to our business has really inspired me and my management team, and we are more committed than ever to continuing to build the views of our stakeholders into our decision making.

Looking ahead, whilst we’ll retain many of the key elements of our engagement strategy, we are planning to evolve our approach to engagement with a new focus on specific issues, on which effective engagement can, we believe, deliver even greater benefits for both SHE Transmission and our stakeholders.

David Gardner
Director of Transmission

Assessment Criteria Key

Ofgem identified five Assessment Criteria which our initiatives are measured against using the following key:

Outreach

To best serve specific interests of challenging groups of customers/communities/future stakeholders and result in measurable benefits

Innovative

To reflect innovative thinking in responding to the needs of stakeholders

Embedded in our business

Part of a holistic approach embedded in the business

Robust management

Supported by robust project management processes and appropriate resources

Replicable

Results from stakeholder engagement activities which may be recognised as smart practice and could be replicated across the industry

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy and implementation plan</th>
<th>Pg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our Engagement by stakeholder group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities and elected representatives</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developers and trade bodies</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry regulators and political stakeholders</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry colleagues</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation community</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landowners</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statutory consultees</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply chain participants</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategy and Implementation Plan

This year we reviewed our approach to engagement, with the intention of ensuring that we engage effectively at the highest levels on the biggest issues affecting our business, in addition to continuing effective and efficient engagement on our more day-to-day activities.

Building on our group-by-group approach to stakeholder engagement (see below right), introduced for 2012/13, we now plan and undertake our engagement with each stakeholder group on three levels: Strategic, Organisational and Operational. By taking this three-level approach, we are now engaging effectively right from international and European level, through UK government and industry, national organisations and ultimately to the communities and customers we serve.

In 2015/16 we will be restructuring our approach to engagement, with a focus on specific issues, on which effective engagement can, we believe, deliver significant benefits for both SHE Transmission and our stakeholders.

**Engaging on multiple levels**

**Our three levels of engagement**

In 2014/15, we shaped our engagement with each of our stakeholder groups around three levels of engagement:

**Strategic Engagement**

Our Strategic engagement concentrates on engagement with Scottish and UK governments and with the European parliament, and on issues involving multiple national organisations. Outcomes of our Strategic engagement are typically effected via changes to primary or secondary legislation, via licence changes or through new industry policies.

**Organisational Engagement**

Our Organisational engagement focuses on engagement with national organisations and regional bodies such as local authorities. Outcomes of this engagement are typically delivered via new working practices, policies or procedure.

**Operational Engagement**

Our Operational engagement activities will often have outcomes that affect how we work with local communities on particular issues or that change the way SHE Transmission colleagues operate.

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**Our Board: leading from the top**

SHE Transmission is part of SSE plc’s electricity networks business, known as Scottish and Southern Energy Power Distribution (SSEPD). The SSEPD Board is championing stakeholder engagement across all parts of the business. In addition to attending stakeholder events and leading on some of the highest level engagement SHE Transmission undertakes, Board members challenge their teams to engage with stakeholders in key aspects of their work, and demand regular updates on both engagement activities that are undertaken and the outcomes that result. The Board reviews and approves significant business changes that have been driven by engagement with stakeholders.

On the following pages we report on how we have engaged with each of our Principal Stakeholder groups, considering:

- The key issues on which we have engaged with each group
- How we have engaged on Strategic, Organisational and Operational levels
- The outcomes, and anticipated outcomes, of our engagement activity, both for SHE Transmission and stakeholders

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**Our principles of stakeholder engagement**

1. **Identifying our stakeholders**
   - We have developed a list of stakeholders who we felt could add particular insight into our business. We have in place a Stakeholder Engagement Database, a contact and record management system to enable us to actively manage engagement across the business. This is managed in accordance with our Data Protection Standard.

2. **Understanding our relationship with our stakeholders**
   - We have categorised our stakeholders based upon our existing relationships with them; the level of influence they have over our business; and their interest in helping us shape it.

3. **Actively engaging our stakeholders**
   - We offer a range of ways to engage with us, tailored to the wishes of our stakeholders. We aim to continually monitor and evaluate our mechanisms of engagement to ensure they sustain constructive engagement. We also aim to increase the number and diversity of stakeholders with whom we engage.

4. **Informing our stakeholders**
   - Reports on our business will be made publicly available in a range of formats. We will regularly update our documentation in line with feedback from our stakeholders.

5. **Listening and responding to stakeholders**
   - We aim to publish key themes arising from our stakeholder consultation processes and our response to them so that our stakeholders know what action we will be taking to improve our business.

6. **Being accessible to our stakeholders**
   - We are committed to being open and easy to talk to. We want to make sure our stakeholders can contact the right person easily.

We will write in plain English and avoid jargon.

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**Principal Stakeholders**

- Developers
- Electricity Networks Strategy Group
- Landowners
- National Grid Electricity Transmission
- Ofgem
- Scottish Government
- SHE Transmission employees
- Statutory consultees
- Supply chain participants
- Trade bodies
- UK Government

**Community Stakeholders**

- Communities
- Consumer groups
- Elected representatives
- Local authorities

**Significant Stakeholders**

- Innovation community
- Non-governmental organisations
- Scottish Power Transmission

**Other Stakeholders**

- Energy suppliers
- Media
Communities and elected representatives

Residents
Community Councils
Local Businesses
Elected Representatives

Key issues

Economic development
We aim to operate sustainably, and wish to ensure that our construction programme leaves a legacy of social and economic benefits for the areas that host our assets.

Project matters
It is important that SHE Transmission conducts these activities in a way that is sensitive to the needs and wants of local people, while still delivering effectively on its business plan commitments to facilitate the growth of renewable energy in the north of Scotland.

Supply reliability
SHE Transmission plays an important part in keeping the lights on in the north of Scotland. We know that people rely on us to keep the power flowing.

Outcomes
The project has led us to develop an analytical framework to quantify the value of the social, environmental and wider economic impacts of transmission line developments. This will help us develop a triple bottom line approach to Transmission investment.

Strategic Engagement
Measuring economic, social and environmental impacts
In late 2014, SHE Transmission’s own Sustainability Accountant, in conjunction with professional services firm PwC, completed a £500,000 project to establish a ‘Sustainable Commercial Model’ (SCM) for transmission line developments. The initiative has an Advisory Board consisting of senior stakeholders from academia, government, and accounting organisations, and involved the consultation of over 3,000 local, national and international stakeholders.

Organisational Engagement
Trialling 3D visualisation technology
In early 2015, SHE Transmission began a project to assess the value of using 3D visualisation technology to help communities and consenting organisations to better understand the visual impact of proposed transmission developments.

Anticipated Outcomes
The project will see a range of technologies critically assessed by local authority planners and by community representatives to identify the technology that most effectively meets their needs. The ‘winning’ technology will then be trialled on one of our infrastructure projects which is at an appropriate stage of development. The value of using the 3D technology will be assessed by seeking detailed feedback from residents and planning decision makers.

Outcomes
In response to the survey, we have undertaken a full review of the payment process and introduced changes that will allow us to make payments more quickly. We have also committed to undertaking a similar survey next time we make compensation payments to assess how effective these process changes have been.

What we learned
We have learned through this process that when we undertake surveys of our customers, we should ask their permission to contact them again in order to let them know how we have acted in response to their feedback.
Developers and trade bodies

Developers of Generation
Representatives of Developers

Key issues

Speed of delivery of connections
Many connections for new generation are reliant on the construction of new Transmission infrastructure.

Being kept informed of plans and project progress
Trade Bodies play a key role in communicating news about Transmission matters to their members, and in representing their views.

Explaining clearly the Transmission Connections process
The process of securing a connection for new generation to the network is necessarily complex; however we are aware that developers, especially smaller developers, would benefit from a clearer understanding of the process.

Ease of access to the correct person and being kept informed
Developers have expressed concern about the difficulties they experienced in contacting the right person within SHE Transmission.

Operational Engagement
Improving customer service for developers
In 2013/14, our annual Stakeholder Survey showed low levels of satisfaction amongst developers of generation. Key areas of dissatisfaction appeared to relate to the quality and frequency of communication they received through the connections process. This was a cause of great concern and an action plan was developed to increase the level of satisfaction expressed by this stakeholder group.

Activity undertaken to improve satisfaction levels has included bespoke training on stakeholder engagement for all members of the SHE Transmission connections contract management team; all members of the team taking part in our Winning Service training programme (see page 6) and the creation of a stakeholder service action plan as part of that training; delivery of a range of communications improvements; and establishing a working group with National Grid (in their System Operator role) and Scottish Power Energy Networks (Scotland’s other Transmission owner) to plan improvements in areas where our service provision may impact upon theirs and vice versa.

Outcome
Our 2013/14 Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey found that developers rated their satisfaction with SHE Transmission at 5.0 out of 10; in 2014/15, their satisfaction had risen to 7.6 out of 10.

Explaining the Connections process
In 2014 we published our first plain English guide to SHE Transmission connections, an ‘essential guide for generation developers applying to connect to the GB Transmission Network’. It sets out how to go about preparing an application, a guide to costs and timescales and explains the main points of a connection offer.

We have also added an area on our website dedicated to Transmission connections, including useful information, links and details of how to get in touch with the connections contracts management team.
Industry regulators and political stakeholders

Ofgem
European Parliament
UK Government

Scottish Government
Electricity Networks Strategy Group

Key issues

Delivery of large infrastructure projects
These stakeholders have concerns about, and influence over, the timescales in which transmission infrastructure will be developed and the effect of those timings on bringing new renewable energy generation to market.

The effects of the cost of infrastructure projects on generation developers and consumers
A balance must be struck between any increase in consumer bills as a result of SHE Transmission infrastructure investment and the value derived from that investment in terms of economic development and progress towards renewable energy targets.

Interaction of Transmission activity with other areas of energy policy
There are many areas where the effects of wider energy policy have implications for SHE Transmission’s business. It is important to work with stakeholders to manage the impact of such legislation.

Contributing Stakeholders:
- DECC
- Scottish Government
- Ofgem
- National Grid Electricity Transmission
- Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Developers of renewable generation
- Local Authorities

Each contributing stakeholder has committed to addressing the issues within its own area of responsibility in order that fully informed decisions may be made on island connections.

In relation to its own ‘enablers’, SHE Transmission has held formal meetings with relevant stakeholders, including organisations with specific interest in the Western Isles, Orkney or Shetland, and with developers of generation, regulatory and consenting bodies and groups focused on economic development.

Outcomes

The Building Certainty – The Enablers project prompted the Energy Secretary to commit to announcing the Contract for Difference Strike Price for both 2019/2020 and 2020/21 in July 2015, rather than just for one year as had previously occurred. This provides the certainty that generation developers need to make investment decisions and which in turn will allow SHE Transmission to develop a robust Needs Cases for new island connections. The Building Certainty – The Enablers project has, in the words of Scotland’s Minister for Business, Energy and Tourism, Fergus Ewing “secured the most significant progress for the islands since the Delivery Forum was established”.

Supporting the development of a European Energy Union

SHE Transmission is a member of ENTSO-E, the European Network of Transmission System Operators for electricity. ENTSO-E is established under primary European legislation, and in addition to undertaking required functions, aspires to being the professional body to which European and national policy makers, regulators and market participants turn for competent guidance. It prepares proactive proposals and objective assessments for technical, market and policy issues related to the European electricity systems. It interacts with power system users, EU institutions, regulators and national governments.

In 2014/15, ENTSO-E has sought to help the European Commission make the most of the opportunity for Member States to move towards a genuine Energy Union. ENTSO-E has contributed to strategic thinking on this matter by publishing a position paper on proposals for a European Energy Union.

Anticipated Outcomes

By playing its part in the work of ENTSO-E, SHE Transmission contributes to the development of a European Energy Union the objectives of which are secure, affordable and sustainable energy for European businesses and citizens.

Energy Upgrade Forum

SHE Transmission participates in the Scottish Government’s Energy Upgrade Forum which discusses strategic issues around the upgrade of transmission infrastructure and issues of common concern relating to delivery of grid projects. The aim of the Forum is to ensure that the process of developing essential transmission infrastructure is as smooth and efficient as possible.

The forum involves SHE Transmission, Scottish Power Transmission, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage, Heads of Planning Scotland and the Scottish Government’s Energy Consents Deployment Unit.

Outcomes

Our work with the Energy Upgrade Forum triggered a review by the UK and Scottish governments of how secure energy supplies are in the north of Scotland, which led to the development of a project to install equipment to stabilise system voltage under certain conditions. This will make energy supplies more secure.
Industry colleagues

SHE Transmission employees
Transmission Owners
System Operator

Key issues

Communication and engagement
Colleagues in the Transmission industry must communicate effectively, both within their business and between them.

Sharing knowledge
We also need to work well together to share information on a day-to-day basis and to plan for the future.

Innovation
Our colleagues’ involvement identifying and understanding new ways of doing things is crucial in taking new ideas from concept to business as usual. Our work in relation to innovation is covered in detail on page 7.

Outcomes
We contribute most extensively on matters specific to the north of Scotland, with the aim of ensuring Future Energy Scenarios accurately reflect the situation in the north of Scotland.

Future Energy Scenarios
National Grid in its role as System Operator each year publishes its UK Future Energy Scenarios document. This annual publication describes the System Operator’s new analysis of credible future energy scenarios out to 2035 and 2050. The Future Energy Scenarios help Government, customers and other stakeholders make informed decisions.

In 2014/15 we engaged extensively with National Grid in its development of Future Energy Scenarios, through a series of meetings and via consultations and seminars, to contribute to continual improvement in the quality of analysis that feeds into the scenarios.

Strategic Engagement
Future Energy Scenarios C

In 2013/14, we committed to ensuring that, by the end of 2014/15, all members of the SHE Transmission team would have received face-to-face training on stakeholder service and all teams would be tasked with developing an action plan for improving the service they provide to their stakeholders. In March 2014, we delivered a pilot training session to assess whether the proposed training course would achieve the objectives of increasing colleagues’ commitment to providing excellent service and helping teams create action plans.

Between October 2014 and January 2015, we delivered a training programme reaching almost 90% of our SHE Transmission colleagues. The session content was developed jointly by the SHE Transmission Stakeholder Engagement team and the SSE Group Training and Development team.

In the training, colleagues learned about the importance of stakeholder service for SHE Transmission. The concept of stakeholder service and its value for SHE Transmission was explained to participants.

Outputs
Stakeholder service training delivered to almost 90% of SHE Transmission employees, with commitment to continue training to capture all existing and future colleagues.

Senior management commitment
The Winning Service sessions were delivered by qualified SSE Group trainers, supported in each session by a member of SHE Transmission’s senior management team.

Measuring the effectiveness of the Winning Service training programme
To help us understand the effectiveness and benefits of the staff training course, participants were surveyed by an independent research agency prior to participation in the course and again afterwards. The survey report stated:

“The evidence from this evaluation shows that the provision of staff training on stakeholder engagement has had a significant impact. The course was universally welcomed by staff with almost all saying they would benefit from the course.

At a very basic level, the evaluation evidence points to improved awareness among staff of who their stakeholders are. Prior to the training course, 22% said they had no contact with stakeholders, which fell significantly to 8% following training.

In terms of specific outcomes, the evidence points to the course having had a significant impact on staff knowledge and understanding of the importance of good stakeholder engagement to SHE Transmission (e.g. a shift of 33 percentage points in staff understanding of what good stakeholder service is (up from 59% prior to training to 92% following training)). Furthermore, in the post-training survey staff were more likely to report understanding the benefits of good stakeholder service (up 22 percentage points from 68% prior to training to 90% following training).”

Scottish and Southern Energy
Power Distribution

Part 2 Submission
SHE Transmission
Ofgem Stakeholder Engagement Incentive Scheme 2014/15

Assessment Criteria Key

A Outreach
B Innovative
C Embedded in our business
D Robust management
E Replicable
Innovation community

Engineering and Technology Companies
Academic Institutions
Business Experts
Other Network Operators

Key issues

Access to the right people and visibility of ideas
It’s important that we allow potential innovation collaborators to contact us easily; equally, it’s important that SHE Transmission colleagues can make contact with organisations who may have solutions to challenges they face.

Access to third party funding
Many European and UK funding streams that could support the development of innovative solutions to Transmission challenges require that projects involve a wide range of stakeholders.

Strategic Engagement

Multi-Terminal Test Environment

With increasing development of HVDC systems, Great Britain’s electricity transmission grid could soon be one of the most complex integrated AC/DC networks worldwide. The National HVDC Centre is the first facility of its type in GB and will de-risk the development and operation of HVDC schemes. The Centre is being developed by SHE Transmission’s Multi-Terminal Test Environment project. Throughout 2014-2015, the project team has created strategic and novel collaboration agreements with transmission network operators and with the supply chain, and has engaged with various HVDC centres across the world.

Outcomes

A visit to RTE France’s HVDC Centre in Paris influenced the National HVDC Centre’s design and has enabled sharing of HVDC models and knowledge in Europe. A signed technical support agreement was made with Scottish Power Transmission plc and National Grid Electricity Transmission plc to provide resources, system data, knowledge and expertise to The National HVDC Centre. The project team also worked with the supply chain to establish the functional and design specifications for the Centre. These outcomes will contribute to the successful use of The National HVDC Centre by transmission licensees, and by suppliers.

Organisational Engagement

Innovation Speed Dating

In March 2014, in conjunction with the Energy Innovation Centre, we ran a rapid-fire event, inspired by social speed-dating, to match innovative solutions to SHE Transmission challenges. At the event, held at the inspiring Power Networks Demonstration Centre, 64 focused conversations took place in just one day.

Outcomes

SHE Transmission participants were asked to highlight any potential solutions they had identified through their conversations. All participants in the event were thanked for their participation and advised which potential solutions were to be taken forward.

Three strands of innovation arising from the speed-dating event have been instigated and a further three possible collaborations are being actively pursued, and a follow-up engagement day was held with one technology provider.

Co-hosting the Low Carbon Networks and Innovation Conference

SHE Transmission, along with its sister companies Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution and Southern Electric Power Distribution, co-hosted the 2014 Low Carbon Networks and Innovation Conference in Aberdeen in October 2014.

The event, which is organised by Energy Networks Association on behalf of Ofgem and the network operators, set out the critical innovation and new technologies that will ensure security of supply that is low carbon and affordable to consumers. With almost 800 delegates from 14 different countries and over 75 exhibitors it was the largest smart grid event in the UK.

Anticipated Outcomes

The app could allow us to fix damage more quickly, preventing power cuts from happening, or reducing their duration; it could also prevent safety incidents as issues can be reported and resolved before they pose a danger.

Modular Approach to Substation Development (MASC)

Our £2.6m, four-year MASC project aims to deliver a substation which is up to 70% smaller than traditional models by using innovative substation components and civil engineering techniques.

Feedback gathered through a series of independently facilitated activities such as surveys, workshops and interviews is informing the development of the technical and functional aspects of the MASC substation.

SHE Transmission, along with other SSEPD businesses, is trialling Grid Reporter, a smartphone application that allows consumers to easily submit reports regarding power outages, damaged equipment or downed electrical lines. This will allow us to locate the house or equipment in question and send engineers to fix the problem.

Grid Reporter is being tested by SHE Transmission colleagues to allow initial troubleshooting, prior to engagement with a range of stakeholders, to include landowners and the emergency services, in extensive user testing of the app.

Anticipated Outcomes

Stakeholder views gathered from a programme of facilitated events will inform the nature of the new substation design such that the final proposals are closely aligned to the wants and needs of stakeholders, facilitating the transition of the new approach from trial to business as usual. The project could, if widely adopted by all of the GB licensees, bring cost savings of up to £655 million and could help the faster connection of new, renewable generation.

Assessment Criteria Key

A Outreach
B Innovative
C Embedded in our business
D Robust management
E Replicable
Landowners

People or organisations in whose land our assets are situated or through whose land we must move.

**Key issues**

**Understanding wayleaves agreements**
Engagement via the Scottish Electricity Wayleaves Forum (SEWF) has identified that the Terms and Conditions of wayleaves agreements are difficult to understand. This can lead to misunderstandings and resources being taken up managing disputes.

**Equitable payments**
Through the SEWF, we know that landowners want the payments we make to them for use of their land, and the associated terms and conditions, to be equitable. Achieving that is good for SHE Transmission, too, as it will mean we neither overpay (and waste customers’ money) nor underpay (and face costly legal challenge).

**Contractor Compliance**
Via the SEWF, we are aware that it is extremely important to landowners that we ensure contractors working on our behalf comply with all aspects of wayleaves agreements.

**Operational Engagement**

- **Raising awareness of emergency numbers amongst landowners**

  Landowners and their agents are often the first to notice a problem developing with electrical equipment located on their land. However, in 2014/15, we became conscious of a need to raise awareness of the quickest way for landowners to contact us if they spot a problem with the network.

  This issue applies to SHE Transmission and to our sister networks companies Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution and Southern Electric Power Distribution.

  We worked with a land agent, who had himself reported a fault to us, to develop a media campaign to raise awareness of how simple and easy it is to report problems that if addressed quickly could prevent a power cut, or even an injury. The land agent agreed to be the ‘face’ of the campaign, lending credibility to the messaging with the intention of securing coverage in a wide range of media outlets.

  Targeting the agricultural and rural communities via relevant publications, and promoted online and via social media, we delivered a multi-media campaign featuring a member of that community urging his peers to report problems quickly by calling us on our emergency number.

**Outcomes**

The campaign delivered extensive local, trade and social media coverage, including:

- Publication in print media with circulation totalling over 30,000
- Extensive social media sharing by key stakeholders in including national Farmers Union, Scottish Land and Estates, a land agency and a local authority, reaching over 25,000 followers
- An interview on local BBC Radio
- 150 views of a video featuring the land agent describing his experience and encouraging his peers to contact us on the emergency number if they spot problems

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**Assessment Criteria Key**

- A Outreach
- B Innovative
- C Embedded in our business
- D Robust management
- E Replicable
### Statutory consultees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic Scotland (HS)</th>
<th>Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)</th>
<th>Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)</th>
<th>Local Authorities</th>
<th>National Park Authorities</th>
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### Key issues

**Awareness of Historic Issues**

In order to deliver on commitments to Historic Scotland to increase the rigour and passion with which we approach historic environmental issues, we must improve understanding and appreciation of such matters amongst our colleagues and contractors.

**Developing best practice for Species Protection Plans**

SNH would like other infrastructure developers to benefit from the knowledge we have gained about Species Protection Plans on construction projects.

**Controlled Activities Regulations**

Controlled Activities Regulations, which govern activity around watercourses, are stringent and detailed and ensuring compliance requires a great deal of work by both SHE Transmission and Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA).

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### Strategic Engagement

**Sharing best practice on Species Protection Plans**

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<tr>
<td>Species Protection Plans set out how an organisation will carry out work in areas where certain animals, such as Scottish wildcats, red squirrels and water voles are known to live, to avoid causing them harm. Traditionally, Species Protection Plans were developed individually for each project; SHE Transmission is working towards agreeing standardised Species Protection Plans that could be used for all its construction projects, simplifying and speeding project development and ensuring the protection of some of the country’s most vulnerable animals.</td>
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<td>In recent years we have worked with Scottish Natural Heritage to develop Species Protection Plans for all designated animals, for our Beauly–Denny replacement transmission line project. We shared the Plans with Scotland’s other Transmission Owner, Scottish Power Transmission who recognised their value and adopted them for use in relation to its own transmission part of the Beauly–Denny line. Since these were originally agreed for Beauly-Denny, they have been further developed and agreed with SNH to cover SHE Transmission’s wider project portfolio.</td>
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### Organisational Engagement

**Engaging for understanding**

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<td>In order to smooth the progression of projects through consent and delivery, SHE Transmission must work to understand the challenges and priorities of statutory consultees and to develop effective working practices that work well for everyone concerned.</td>
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<td>We work to achieve this in a range of ways, prime amongst which is our series of Regional Statutory Consultee Liaison Meetings. These meetings provide insight for Statutory Consultees to the status of the projects we have in development and allow them to plan for future workload, and to raise any questions or concerns they may have.</td>
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### Operational Engagement

**Embedding Controlled Activities Regulations in business as usual**

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<tr>
<td>Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) govern the way in which construction projects are conducted around watercourses. In 2013/14, we developed our own CAR procedures which recognised the distinctive features of the types of watercourse we commonly encounter when developing transmission construction projects in our largely rugged and remote areas of operation. 2014 has seen us provide training for SHE Transmission colleagues on our approach to CAR, and hosting site visits from SEPA to help their representatives’ understanding of the challenges CAR pose for our construction projects and to demonstrate the effectiveness of the practices that we have adopted.</td>
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### Outcomes

**Our North Region Statutory Consultee Liaison Meetings identified a conflict with the way in which they were consulted in relation to site selection for substations and route selection for new Transmission projects. They felt that in the Highland Council area, SHE Transmission should undertake consultation prior to submitting planning applications through the Council’s own pre-application consultation process, rather than applying our own process as we had previously.**

This now allows Highland Council and other statutory consultees to contribute more effectively to pre-application consultations, leading to more robust decision-making by both SHE Transmission and statutory authorities.

**Outcome**

SHE Transmission shared improved plans with the Scottish Government. The Government recognised the new plans as contributing to best practice, and agreed that where appropriate, they would be referred to in future transmission line planning consent determinations.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Criteria Key</th>
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<td>Outreach</td>
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<td>Robust management</td>
<td>Replicable</td>
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</table>
Supply chain participants

Participants in our supply chain include main contractors and smaller businesses

Key issues

Contractor safety
The SSE Group’s Contractor Total Recorded Injury Rate (TRIR) is much higher than that for SSE Group employees. As SHE Transmission delivers a multi-billion pound investment programme, we have more contractors working on our behalf than any other part of the SSE group, and it is right that we place a strong emphasis on engaging with our contractors to help reduce the TRIR.

Paying a Living Wage
There is clear evidence that providing a fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work leads to improvements in staff retention; reducing recruitment costs, increasing productivity and the wellbeing and motivation of the workforce. We believe that people should get a wage they can live off, not just survive on, and we recognise that the benefits of paying a Living Wage will ultimately help reduce costs for customers and ensure that we can employ the right people and keep them with us for the long term.

Operational Engagement

Outreach for improvement
To better understand why injury rates are much higher amongst contractors than amongst SHE Transmission employees, we need to speak directly to people working on our construction sites in a way that they feel comfortable and are able to talk freely. Whilst we collect extensive quantitative data on safety matters, qualitative information is sought less often.

Qualitative research
In late 2014 SHE Transmission’s Safety Performance Manager – once a site worker himself – visited several of our construction sites, inviting people to speak freely about safety. He held sessions for hands-on workers separately to those for supervisors and managers. This approach allowed frank opinions to be aired without fear of reprisals. Verbatim feedback from the sessions was provided to the SHE Transmission management team, providing what was a somewhat uncomfortable insight into the concerns of site workers. Site workers said that when SHE Transmission employees visit sites to conduct their regular safety audits, SHE Transmission colleagues have a reputation of seeking out problems, and tackling them aggressively rather than constructively.

Next Steps
SHE Transmission has committed to training in behavioural change for SSE colleagues and Contractors alike. SSE will work with principal contractors and site workers to understand safety concerns and develop solutions, a step change from the current ‘inspect and challenge’ model to a more constructive, more engaging, approach to improving contractor safety. A comprehensive programme of measuring the effectiveness of this approach is currently being considered.

Outcomes

Engaging for fair pay
In 2013, following engagement with The Poverty Alliance, the Scottish Government, the Scottish Living Wage Accreditation Initiative (the Business Leadership Group of which we chair), the SSE Group, SHE Transmission’s parent company, became the first large energy company to achieve Living Wage accreditation.

In 2014, we engaged with over 15,000 of our suppliers to extend our Living Wage commitment to service and works contracts.

SHE Transmission became the first UK business to apply the Living Wage commitment to a complex engineering supply chain, when it awarded Scotland’s largest ever Living Wage contract – worth £460million – to ABB Limited. The contract is part of the Caithness to Moray Transmission Project; it is Scotland’s largest ever Living Wage contract to date and will support at least 600 jobs.

In 2014 the SSE Group received the independently-judged 2014 Living Wage Champion Award for Scotland. We are sharing our learning by advising other major utilities on how we made our commitment; by contributing to academic research; leading Living Wage Week events; and taking part in a BBC documentary on the issue.

Measuring the Benefits
‘Living Wage Employers: evidence of UK Business Cases’, a qualitative research project by the University of Strathclyde, to which SSE was a key contributor, quotes SSE’s Director of Sustainability, Rachel McEwen as saying:

“For SSE, being a Living Wage employer is about doing the right thing for people who work for us. That’s good for our employees and it is good for business too. But just as importantly, it is a symbol of the type of company we want to be: being responsible in all that we do in order to make a difference to people’s lives.”

Research by Queen Mary University of London suggests that longer term outcomes may include an increase in positivity and loyalty of affected employees; reduction in staff leaving rates; and improvements in family life and financial benefits including workers being able to save more.