ED3 DELIVERY STRATEGY

ED3-S05

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our 10-year Delivery Strategy has been developed to best serve current and future consumers by delivering a safe, reliable and resilient network, while providing a credible plan for ED3, building the enduring capability required for ED4 and enabling the pathway to 2050. Our Sector Leading **Strategic Development Plans**[1] provide long-term visibility of electricity system needs by Grid Supply Point, enabling us to anticipate where and when investment will be required to secure network reliability and support future customer needs. The commitments set out in this strategy apply to ED3 and form the firm basis of our delivery plan. Beyond ED3, indicative requirements and forward-looking actions inform longer-term planning. These will adapt as network needs, customer demand and wider system requirements evolve. We will deliver ED3 safely and responsibly, protecting our people, partners, customers and the public, minimising disruption to communities and managing our environmental impacts

Workbank: Our ED3 workbank represents the firm delivery requirements against which we plan, mobilise and manage delivery. Beyond ED3, our LINP and Strategic Development Plans provide an indicative and evolving view of future investment need, enabling us to anticipate capacity requirements and build enduring capability while retaining flexibility as network needs evolve. In ED2 we have been rapidly growing the scale of our capital delivery particularly around EHV and HV capacity. ED3 continues this growth, although at a more sustained rate, providing an opportunity to standardise and streamline our delivery approach, at the same time we continue to build in-house and contracted LV delivery capacity with an extensive unlooping programme and [redacted] of LV cable replacement. Our LINP envisages continued investment building capacity at EHV and HV combined with a rapidly growing LV programme. That trend continues to 2050 with continued investment at EHV and HV and extensive asset replacement and new capacity programme at LV.

Approach: Our strategy builds on the foundations established through ED2, including expanded workforce capacity, stronger delivery partnerships and increased delivery volumes, while strengthening our approach for ED3 through more integrated, programme-led delivery. We have deliberately designed our delivery model around the characteristics, scale and risk of the work we need to deliver, selecting the safest and most efficient delivery route while recognising the constraints in workforce, supply-chain capacity, manufacturing lead times and network access. We retain critical in-house capability where network knowledge, operational control and resilience are essential; using integrated regional teams and strategic delivery partners for larger, more complex programmes; and specialist frameworks to efficiently scale repeatable, high-volume activity. Our approach aims to maintain a sustainable balance between insourced and outsourced delivery using today's work to develop the workforce needed for the future. Sustainability is the key driver of our supply chain strategy for example championing the UK and European supply chain to build capacity and resilience. Targeted innovation funding, strategic partnerships and the deployment of proven solutions, will develop and adopt new technologies, digital tools, construction methodologies and operational approaches to help address workforce, supply chain and network constraints. This creates a pipeline of future delivery capability, enabling safer, faster and more efficient delivery while reducing cost, improving customer outcomes and ensuring the network can adapt to emerging challenges throughout ED3 and beyond. Further information is provided in the ***(ED3-S09) ED3 Innovation Strategy***.

Insourced: At the heart of this is building in-house capacity for core functions, including faults, minor connections and high-volume, lower-complexity work. This will improve our control and flexibility, reduce exposure to market skills shortages and competing demands on suppliers, and strengthen our response to extreme weather events. We will also maintain and enhance strategic in-house capability at EHV and protection to retain critical network knowledge, respond to uncertainty and act as an intelligent client.

Outsourced*:* We deliver the bulk of our higher voltage complex work with our partners. We are building on our current contracting approach, moving towards long term partnerships, allowing them to invest in training and UK jobs and delivery capacity. By packaging work into regional and cross-regional programmes, we provide greater continuity and visibility of workload, make better use of scarce skills and supply-chain capacity, and create opportunities to standardise delivery through a “design once, build many” approach. This gives us a scalable and resilient model that combines clear accountability with the flexibility and specialist capability needed to increase delivery volumes efficiently, while giving our partners greater certainty to invest in people and capacity. Our strategy in ED3 for complex work is to mature our ED2

[1] Strategic Development Plan (SDP) - SSEN

"GSP" approach into a full partnership approach seeking to further drive efficiency and synergies in capital delivery by taking a long-term approach.

Workforce Strategy: Our workforce strategy provides confidence in delivery while creating jobs and skills opportunities in our communities and strengthening long-term industry capability. Our 10-year Strategic Workforce Plan combines top-down resilience modelling with bottom-up programme resource planning to identify the people, skills and authorisations required. This includes the need for [redacted] additional FTE across critical frontline roles, and we have pathways to build that capability through internal recruitment and development, strategic delivery partners and productivity. Since April 2021, we have already grown our workforce by almost [redacted] and have [redacted] apprentices, trainees and adult learners progressing through structured programmes. Redesigned craft pathways have reduced time to competence in some roles from around four years to approximately 18 months, while targeted productivity initiatives are already delivering improvements of 20 to 30%. Around 23% of the additional workforce required will be in place before ED3 begins.

Supply Chain Strategy: Successful long-term delivery is dependent on sustainable resilient supply chain. We have acted early to secure the supply chain capacity needed for ED3 and build resilience beyond the price control. We are transforming our approach to long term partnerships with the supply chain, facilitating investment in training and building capacity. Our strategy is grounded in extensive market engagement, including a supplier survey and strategic interviews, engagement with OEMs, designers, EPC contractors and Tier 1 and Tier 2 delivery partners, and further engagement with long-lead plant and equipment suppliers. This insight underpins our long-term procurement and commercial strategy spanning ED3 and ED4, using multi-price-control frameworks and strategic partnerships, programme-based contracting and portfolio packaging, earlier capacity commitments and category-specific sourcing strategies to give suppliers the certainty to invest in workforce and manufacturing capability. We are developing opportunities to strengthen UK manufacturing and skilled employment, balancing domestic resilience with competitive global supply routes to protect affordability and delivery certainty. Our leading role the ***Electricity Networks Sector Growth Plan***[2] has helped further industry level thinking on this.

ED3 Mobilisation: Our ED3 Mobilisation Programme is already underway to turn our plan into an executable workbank from the start of ED3, alongside early workforce mobilisation, secured critical plant capacity and live testing of scalable delivery approaches to build capability needed for ED4 and beyond.

By the beginning of ED3, 342 schemes representing [redacted] of investment are expected to have completed internal governance approvals required to commence delivery, supported by a further [redacted] of early investment progressing the design and development of priority non-load and subsea projects. Around 3% of the additional workforce required for year one will be in place before ED3 begins with the remaining workforce in place by the end of year three, while year one manufacturing capacity for Grid and Primary Transformers is already secured. Delivery continuity is also protected, with all remaining ED2 construction works contracted across 67 projects worth [redacted], while live ED2 programmes are being used to test and refine delivery models before they are scaled in ED3.

Outage Management Strategy: We have a well-established approach to outage management, which we are strengthening for the increased scale and complexity of delivery. Through our Transformation Programme, enhanced processes and digital capability will enable us to plan further ahead, coordinate network access more effectively and optimise available outages across our workbank. We will increasingly use forecasting, alternative network configurations and flexibility to support planned and unplanned outages, maintaining supplies, releasing operational capacity and reducing customer disruption.

Governance, systems and processes. Our governance processes and operating models have evolved during ED2 to support increasing delivery volumes, larger and more complex programmes, and greater coordination across teams and delivery partners. We have also invested in systems to support efficiency and productivity improvements.

[2] Interim Sector Growth Plan – Energy Networks Association (ENA)

Table 0.1 Our ED3 Commitments

	ED3 Commitment	Metric	Where the detail can be found
Ensuring a responsible and sustainable business			
We will boost jobs and sustainable growth	**We will support UK manufacturing by aiming to increase our expenditure across key categories (transformers, switchgear and cable) by 10% by April 2033 (on our ED2 baseline), increasing our UK manufacturing spend by an estimated [redacted] in ED3**	Support UK manufacturing by aiming to increase our expenditure across key categories (transformers, switchgear and cable) by 10% by April 2033 (on our ED2 baseline), increasing our UK manufacturing spend by an estimated [redacted] in ED3* *subject to market availability, value for customers, delivery requirements and compliance with applicable procurement obligations.	B.3 Supply chain strategy and capacity evidence. *BPI early proposal: Supporting our Local Supply Chain*
We will build the workforce of tomorrow	**We will support regional skills and employment by increasing earn-as-you-learn opportunities to more than 10% of our workforce by the end of ED3, while supporting every successful learner to progress into a substantive role on completion of their programme.**	Increase the diversity of our workforce to reach at least 40% female representation in senior leadership, 10% minority ethnic representation in our overall workforce, and 8% representation for both disability and LGBTQ+ employees by April 2033	B.2 Workforce capacity and capability assessment
		Optimise training delivery by shifting 10% of current in-person training to blended and innovative learning, increasing training capacity and accelerating time to competence while maintaining safety, quality and technical standards.	B.2 Workforce capacity and capability assessment, under *Approach to scaling safely*
		Have more than 10% of our workforce are in earn-as-you-learn opportunities by the end of ED3. Provide 100% of learners who successfully complete their programme progress with a substantive role on completion of training	B.2 Workforce capacity and capability, under *Workforce resilience, pipeline and volatility mitigation*

A. BUSINESS STRUCTURE

A.1 OPERATING MODEL AND GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

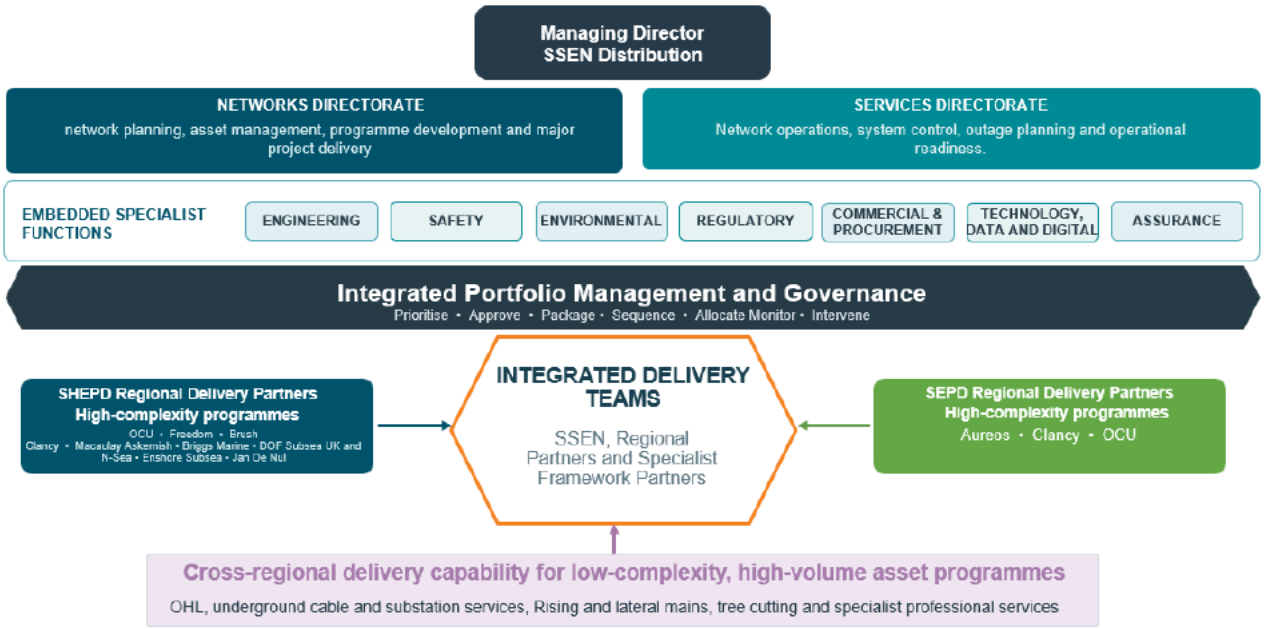
A scalable and integrated operating model

We have evolved our operating model during ED2 to support increasing delivery volumes (***Figure A.1***), larger and more complex programmes, and greater coordination across teams and delivery partners. It has already enabled us to increase delivery volumes while maintaining operational performance over the course of the price control.

Figure A.1 Delivery volumes across ED1, ED2, ED3 and indicative volumes for ED4



Figure A.2 Our ED3 Operating Model*



*This also shows the relationships between central functions, regional delivery teams, specialist functions and delivery partners

Our operating model is underpinned by the Networks Directorate, responsible for network planning, asset management, programme development and major project delivery, and the Services Directorate, which provides the operational capabilities required to deliver investment while maintaining a safe and reliable network. These directorates are supported by specialist cross-functional engineering, safety, commercial, procurement, environmental, regulatory and assurance functions, ensuring that programmes are developed and delivered safely and sustainably, with environmental impacts and disruption to communities considered throughout planning and delivery.

Feedback from contractors and delivery partners showed that fragmented, project-by-project releases constrain efficiency and Tier-2 capacity. Our blended delivery model combines our internal expertise with capacity and capabilities of strategic delivery and framework partners. This means we can deliver complex projects and programmes through integrated regional delivery teams, aligning strategic partners to regional workbanks. This gives greater workload visibility and certainty, and supports long-term investment in people, plant and supply chains. Specialist framework partners provide scalable, asset-specific capability for lower-complexity, high-volume activities, with resources deployed across regions to provide economies of scale, improve resource utilisation and strengthen supply-chain resilience, while retaining flexibility to respond to changing delivery requirements.

Decision rights and accountability across the delivery lifecycle

Our Distribution Governance and Investment Framework (DGIF), set out in ***Table A.1***, provides accountability and decision-making throughout the investment and delivery lifecycle. It has governed over £2.2bn of investment decisions across the ED3 portfolio and enabled the award of all remaining ED2 construction contracts.

Table A.1 DGIF Accountabilities

Planning & asset management	Network operations	Specialist functions	Integrated delivery teams	Delivery partners
Decide where investment is needed Identify network needs, develop long-term strategies and prioritise investment across the portfolio.	**Protect safe and reliable operation** Manage outage planning, network access, operational readiness and system security.	**Provide expertise, assurance & challenge** Engineering, safety, commercial, procurement, environmental, regulatory and controls teams test decisions against standards and requirements.	**Turn priorities into deliverable plans** Develop programmes and projects, including delivery plan, resources, cost, timing, risk and outputs.	**Deliver agreed work** Deliver to contractual requirements, technical standards and performance obligations, while providing buildability, workforce and supply chain insight.

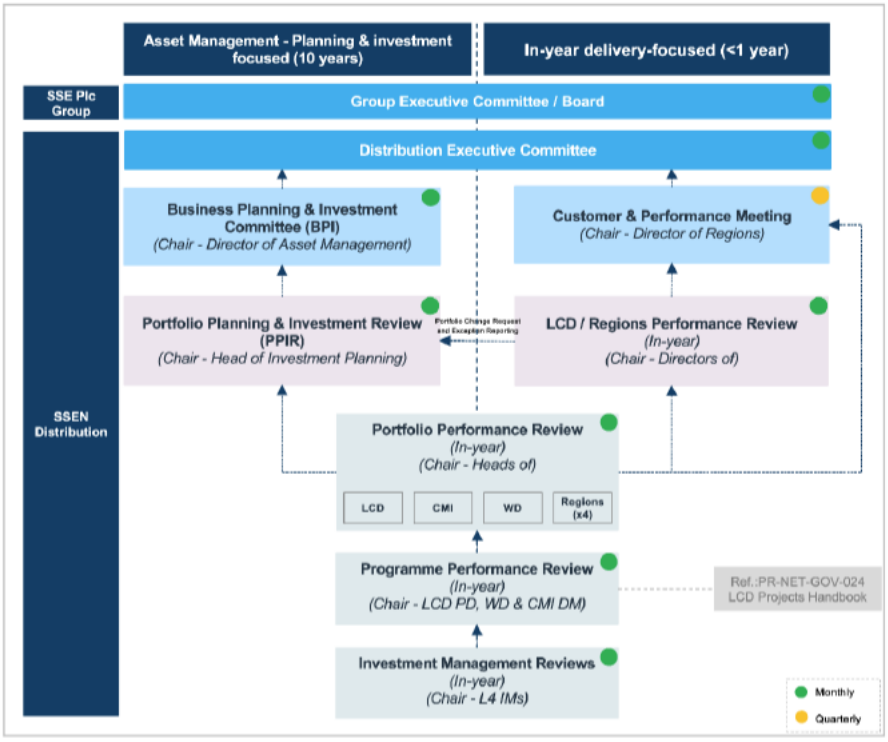
Governance and escalation routes

DGIF establishes clear accountability, delegated authority and escalation from programme delivery through executive and Board governance forums shown in ***Figure A.3*** and described in ***Table A.2.***

Table A.2 Governance forums

Business Planning and Investment Sub-Committee	Distribution Executive Committee (DEC)	SSEN Distribution Board / SSE Group governance
Portfolio oversight; delegated approvals Oversees portfolio delivery and approves investment decisions within delegated authority. Reviews delivery performance, material risks and decisions requiring approval above programme level.	**Executive oversight and escalation** Executive oversight of material delivery, safety, health and environment risks and major investment decisions. Receives escalations where matters exceed delegated authority, create material delivery, financial or regulatory risk, or require cross-business decisions.	**Strategic oversight; Group escalation** Oversees strategic delivery performance, business plan commitments and governance effectiveness. Escalates into SSE Group governance where required by reserved matters, delegated authority requirements or the Group Large Capital Project framework.

Figure A.3 DGIF-aligned governance and escalation route



A.2 PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND CONTROLS FRAMEWORK

Programme and portfolio structure

Consistent with the integrated operating model described in ***Figure A.2***, we have evolved our approach to manage a growing, integrated investment portfolio and we are already applying it to ED3, including supplier-informed packaging across our large capital workbank. Our programmes align work packages to asset classes, delivery activities and regulatory outputs, combining work with common delivery requirements, outage needs, supply chain routes and resource profiles. Learning from innovation pilots and early deployment can be applied across repeatable work packages, enabling successful technologies, construction methodologies and process improvements to be standardised across the portfolio.

CASE STUDY 01

Programmatic Delivery

Chickerell: Delivering efficiencies through programme-based delivery

At Chickerell, we combined five capex and two Connections projects with overlapping delivery requirements into a single Detailed Design and Construction programme. The consolidated award saved £651k in preliminary costs, equivalent to 19%, while reducing duplicated project and contract administration through a single coordinated programme and payment process. We are applying this approach across ED3 to package and sequence related works more efficiently, improve resource utilisation and reduce delivery cost.

Complex works, including subsea cables, transformer and switchgear replacement and major cable overlays, are packaged for delivery through Regional Delivery Partners, while higher-volume refurbishment and replacement activities are aggregated into cross-regional programmes. This creates workload continuity and enables repeatable delivery, including a "design once, build many" approach.

Our ED3 Early Design Mobilisation Programme demonstrates this approach in practice ahead of ED3. In SHEPD, 7 Subsea Cable projects, and in SEPD, 66 non-load projects planned for Years One and Two, have been grouped into 9 delivery programmes. These programmes have been developed around common asset types, delivery activities and geographic considerations, enabling more efficient work packaging and delivery.

Programme controls, investment decision and assurance process

DGIF provides the framework for developing, assuring, approving and controlling investment throughout its lifecycle. Programmes are managed against approved scope, cost, schedule, output and risk baselines, which are progressively developed and tested through six Investment Decision Points. (***Figure A.4***). This increases evidence, assurance and delivery maturity as an investment moves from identification of need towards financial commitment and execution. This process is already advancing the ED3 portfolio towards delivery, 342 schemes representing [redacted] of investment will have completed the governance and design approvals required to commence delivery in Year 1. Following approval, Integrated Delivery Teams manage performance against programme baselines, with material variances and risks escalated through DGIF. Performance monitoring is set out in ***Section D.1***.

Figure A.4 DGIF lifecycle including investment decision points



DGIF Investment Decision Points	
ID	**Decision focus**
ID1	**Strategic justification validation** Confirms approved need through regulatory funding, customer acceptance or business approval.
ID2	**Preferred electrical / asset option** Confirms preferred solution, funding envelope, delivery ownership, dependencies and Level of Control.
ID3	**Feasibility design** Validates technical feasibility, cost maturity, deliverability, risks, schedule and design maturity.
ID4	**Detailed design and execution cost validation** Assures final design, execution cost, delivery timescales and readiness before construction starts.
ID5	**Financial close and handover** Confirms outputs delivered, residual risks managed, records updated and financial closure completed.
ID6	**Project closure and post-investment appraisal** Tests whether outputs, benefits and outcomes were delivered within the approved funding envelope.

Integrated planning and forecasting

Our integrated planning approach links the network planning and asset management functions in our operating model directly to portfolio and delivery planning. Network need, asset risk, regulatory outputs and customer value inform portfolio priorities, while we plan jointly with delivery partners to coordinate resources, outages, consents and supply-chain capacity. Our Year 1 programme is defined and the remaining ED3 workbank sequenced, with our LINP and Strategic Development Plans providing an increasingly mature, probabilistic view into ED4. This enables us to identify dependencies, smooth delivery and make early capacity decisions, while retaining flexibility as requirements evolve. Approved programme baselines provide the basis for monitoring and control through ***Section D.1***.

Change control

Changes to baselines are managed through the DGIF change control process. Proposed changes follow defined authority thresholds and are supported by structured impact assessments covering regulatory outputs, expenditure, delivery milestones, risk, safety, quality, resource requirements and wider portfolio dependencies. This ensures material decisions consider their portfolio-wide implications. Where forecasts indicate that a programme may move outside agreed tolerances for scope, cost, schedule, risk or outputs, the programme is reviewed through the relevant governance route.

For major capital investments above £40m, programme controls are strengthened through the Group Large Capital Project (LCP) Governance Framework. These investments follow a formal gated lifecycle requiring evidence of mature business case development, cost estimates, delivery schedules, risk management and commercial readiness before progression. Each gateway includes independent cross-functional assurance and escalation to Executive Committees and Boards.

B. RISK, CAPACITY AND DELIVERABILITY ASSURANCE

B.1 ED3 DELIVERABILITY RISK REGISTER

Our risk management approach

We embed risk management throughout the investment lifecycle (***Figure A.4***), ensuring that delivery risks are identified and managed from network planning and programme development through to delivery. Using our enterprise risk management framework, in line with SSE Group Risk Policy and industry best practice, we identify, assess and actively manage risks that could affect delivery before commitment and throughout programme delivery. All material risks are assigned accountable owners, supported by defined mitigation plans and monitored through key risk indicators, performance measures and horizon-scanning activities. Risks are reviewed regularly through programme, portfolio and executive governance forums, and escalated through SSE Group governance where exposure exceeds agreed tolerances. This provides early warning, enables timely intervention and ensures risks are managed before outcomes are affected.

Key systemic ED3 delivery risks, mitigations and monitoring

Our delivery strategy has been designed around the principal risks to delivery, identified through stakeholder engagement, horizon scanning, market intelligence and our experience of delivering ED2. Engagement with local authorities, connections customers, developers, suppliers, delivery partners and consumer representatives identified workforce availability, supply chain capacity, network access and outages, wayleaves and consenting, safety performance and delivery interfaces as the principal delivery risk. Stakeholders also identified delivery capability as a significant sector risk, reflecting concerns around skills shortages, manufacturing capacity, access to network outages and coordination across organisations.

We have embedded targeted mitigations within our delivery strategy alongside defined ownership, monitoring arrangements and early warning indicators. These risks are broadly consistent across SHEPD and SEPD, but their materiality varies by geography and specific programme constraints. Project-level risk management is evidenced through their respective EJPs.

For risks beyond our direct control, we work collaboratively with suppliers, delivery partners, local authorities, NESO, SSEN Transmission and other stakeholders to implement coordinated mitigation plans. Where conventional mitigations do not address an identified constraint, we use targeted innovation to test alternative solutions. The principal leading indicators proposed for ED3 regulatory reporting are set out in ***Section D.1***.

Table B.1 Risk areas, mitigations and indicators

Risk area	Stakeholder and industry insight	Embedded mitigations	Ownership	Early warning indicators
Workforce capacity and capability	Availability of suitably skilled and authorised resource may constrain delivery as volumes increase, particularly in specialist and safety-critical roles. Transition to new technologies, automation, digital systems and innovative delivery methodologies may also create retraining and workforce adaptation requirements	Demand-led workforce planning, expanded recruitment and training pipelines, accelerated development pathways, targeted investment in authorisation capability, and use of strategic delivery partners. Workforce impact assessments for major innovation and business change initiatives, development of future skills pathways, targeted retraining programmes, and early capability planning for emerging technologies.	Director of HR	Vacancy rates, recruitment performance, training throughput, authorisation capacity, workforce availability and resource utilisation.

Supply chain capacity and availability	Increasing demand across the energy sector may affect the availability of strategic equipment, materials and specialist contractor resource. This risk reflects concerns raised by strategic suppliers regarding constrained manufacturing capacity and uncertainty in future investment volumes.	Long-term agreements and partnerships, early market engagement, advance procurement of long-lead assets, supplier diversification, standardisation and strategic capacity planning.	Director of Procurement and Commercial	Equipment lead times, supplier performance, manufacturing capacity constraints, framework utilisation and market intelligence.
System access and outage coordination	Developers and major connections customers highlighted increasing outage complexity and constraints on network access could affect programme sequencing, connections activity and delivery schedules.	A proactive, data-led approach to outage management, including earlier planning, enhanced coordination with SSEN Transmission and NESO, greater use of flexibility services and deployment of a new outage management platform to improve visibility, coordination and decision-making.	Services Director	Percentage of outages approved 12 months in advance, late outage changes, outage approval performance, network access constraints and outage-related delivery delays.
SHE performance	Increased delivery volumes, workforce growth and wider use of delivery partners may increase SHE risk if capability, supervision and assurance do not scale accordingly.	SHE governance, workforce competency programmes, contractor assurance, independent challenge, leading indicator monitoring and operational oversight.	Director of SHE	Safety observations, near misses, assurance findings, audit outcomes and leading indicators.
Planning, delivery and partner interfaces	Stakeholders highlighted the risk of delays where planning, operations, delivery teams and external partners are not aligned around common priorities and delivery schedules.	Integrated programme planning, DGIF governance, portfolio-level coordination, common delivery baselines and structured engagement with delivery partners.	Networks Director	Forecast variance, delivery readiness assessments, dependency risks, programme conflicts and governance actions.
Wayleaves and Consents	ED2 experience and stakeholder feedback show planning approvals, land rights and third-party consents as potential constraints on programme delivery timescales.	Early stakeholder engagement, strategic land and consenting plans, standardised processes, dedicated resource, forward programme visibility and active management of critical approvals.	Networks Director	Consent approval times, wayleave progress, planning milestones and critical approval risks.

B.2 WORKFORCE CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

A capable, authorised and resilient workforce is fundamental to delivering the required investment. Across the energy sector, workforce availability remains a major delivery risk, driven by increasing competition for technical skills, demographic pressures, expanding infrastructure programmes and growing demand associated with the energy transition. Our strategy combines growth in critical internal roles, scalable capacity through strategic partners and productivity improvements enabled by digitalisation and new ways of working. This protects operational control and network knowledge while providing the flexibility required to deliver increasing volumes safely and sustainably.

Our workforce strategy responds to stakeholder expectations that network investment should create local employment opportunities, support apprenticeships and leave a lasting local skills legacy and is based on three principles:

- **Grow critical internal capability** in safety-critical and operationally essential roles where direct control is required to maintain safety, resilience and customer outcomes.
- **Use strategic partners and specialist expertise** to provide flexibility and scalable delivery capacity while retaining critical network knowledge and authorised capability within SSEN Distribution.
- **Increase productivity alongside workforce growth** through digitalisation, automation, improved planning, standardised delivery and more effective deployment of specialist skills, reducing reliance on proportional workforce growth.

We are committing to grow and develop a skilled, diverse workforce capable of delivering one of the largest investment programmes in our history, including increasing representation to at least 40% female senior leadership, 10% minority ethnic representation and 8% disability and LGBTQ+ representation by 2033. These targets are designed to broaden access to talent, strengthen workforce resilience and support sustainable workforce growth during a period of significant expansion across the electricity sector. They are deliberately stretching against our current position and external sector benchmarks. Women represented 27.7% of SSE's leadership group in 2024/25[3], compared with 33.6%[4] of leadership roles across organisations participating in Energy & Utility Skills' latest Inclusion Measurement Framework; reported disability representation across the sector is 4%. The challenge is particularly acute in energy networks: ENA cites historic sector evidence of only 26% female and 7.5% ethnic minority representation[5].

Our early-careers recruitment data reinforces this challenge and identifies where targeted action is needed. In the 2026 apprentice and trainee campaign, women represented 11.2% of applicants and 5% of hires, while ethnically diverse candidates represented 29.9% of applicants but 5% of hires. The greatest reduction occurred during eligibility and CV screening, with female representation particularly low in craft and operational roles. Graduate recruitment was more representative, although based on a small cohort.

In response, we are simplifying recruitment, clarifying entry requirements and promoting defined apprentice, trainee and graduate pathways across our north and south licence areas. A revised STEM and External Engagement Strategy, due in 2027, will strengthen regional outreach through education and industry partnerships, discovery days and virtual work experience. During ED3, we will use programme, location and recruitment-stage data to target activity, monitor outcomes and adjust our interventions where progress is not being achieved. The Early Career Programmes booklet already sets out the routes, qualifications and locations available across SSEN Distribution.

Strategic workforce plan

Our Strategic Workforce Plan translates firm ED3 delivery requirements and the indicative, emerging needs of ED4 into ten-year workforce demand.

[3] *Inclusion and Diversity Report 2025.*
[4] *EU Skills Inclusion Measurement Report 2025*
[5] *ENA Showcasing DEI Inclusion Initiatives 2024*

Figure B.1 Strategic workforce planning



Figure B.1 combines strategic priorities, workforce demand forecasting, scenario modelling and workforce supply analysis to identify the capability required to deliver increasing investment volumes safely and efficiently. The approach considers both demand and supply factors, including delivery volumes, competence and authorisation lead-times, labour market conditions, retirement profiles, training capacity and supply chain capability. This enables workforce risks to be identified early, and interventions prioritised according to delivery criticality and workforce constraints.

CASE STUDY 02

SCALING EFFICIENCTLY AND SAFELY

PCB programme: Increasing delivery capacity through smarter working

We introduced live-line oil sampling for high-risk pole-mounted transformers, enabling us to identify PCB contamination while assets remain in service and target intervention where it is needed most. This demonstrated the potential to avoid unnecessary replacement for 84% of the high-risk transformers assessed, while reducing customer interruptions and operational complexity and making better use of skilled resources and network access. This provides practical evidence of how we are using innovation to improve productivity and release capacity for ED3 delivery.

Our proven track record supports confidence in this approach of workforce expansion and capability development. Since April 2021, we have increased workforce capacity by almost [redacted] while continuing to improve workforce capability and operational performance. During this period, learning and development activity has increased from 7.2 to 9.2 days per employee. Suppliers and contractors highlighted training capacity as a constraint, while employees prioritised protected development time and faster career pathways. We have responded by accelerating critical craft pathways from four years to 18 months where safely achievable, expanding recruitment from transferable-skills sectors and strengthening cross-DNO training coordination.

Skills mix requirements

Delivering our long-term plan requires greater workforce capacity and stronger existing capability through programme integration and developing the technical and digital skills needed to optimise delivery. Future electricity networks will require a broader mix of skills across operations, engineering, digital and analytics. Engagement with industry

stakeholders, Energy & Utility Skills, large energy users and delivery partners identified demand for digital capability, operational technology expertise, data analytics, cyber resilience and programme delivery skills alongside traditional operational roles.

The most significant workforce needs are concentrated in safety critical and specialist disciplines where labour market availability is constrained, and competence development can take several years. Existing development pipelines are making a significant contribution to meeting these needs, with 86 jointers and 90 overhead line workers progressing through apprenticeship, reskilling and upskilling programmes and expected to qualify by 2027/28.

Alongside operational growth, we are investing in future-facing skills including digital capability, advanced planning and scheduling, operational technology, data and analytics, AI-enabled decision support, cyber resilience and programme leadership. This ensures we have the skills needed to deliver ED3 and future investment programmes while operating, maintaining and developing an increasingly digital, decentralised and data-enabled electricity network.

We developed the future skills framework with employees, trade unions, future workforce cohorts, large energy users, businesses, Energy & Utility Skills, DESNZ, industry partners and our Independent Stakeholder Group (ISG). Stakeholder feedback strengthened the framework's focus on practical capability needs, workforce adaptability and transferable skills. Stakeholders then re-tested the framework to confirm alignment with future delivery requirements and workforce expectations. Further detail is provided in our ***(ED3-S18) ED3 Workforce Annex***.

Use of internal resources, partners and specialist skills

Our workforce strategy balances between internal capability, strategic delivery partners and specialist expertise. Certain capabilities are fundamental to safe and reliable network operation for our customers and must remain core to our business, while others can be delivered through strategic partnerships and flexible delivery models.

Stakeholders highlighted challenges sourcing critical operational skills through external recruitment alone and emphasised the importance of building sustainable capability across the sector. Our strategy therefore places greater emphasis on developing internal capability, strengthening long-term talent pipelines and working with partners to build capability across the delivery ecosystem. This blended workforce model provides the flexibility and specialist expertise needed to deliver our investment programme, while ensuring critical operational knowledge and authorised capability remain under direct organisational control.

Internal capability is prioritised for activities needing direct operational control, including fault response, system operation, network control, and other safety-critical activities requiring deep system knowledge and operational accountability. These capabilities are central to maintaining network resilience, responding to operational events and protecting customer outcomes.

Delivery partners and specialist providers supplement internal capability where additional capacity, specialist expertise or large-scale programme delivery is required. Through longer-term partnerships and greater visibility of our workbank, we are enabling partners to invest in the recruitment, training and retention of scarce skills. We align workforce requirements, competence and authorisation pathways and talent pipelines with strategic partners. This expands deployable, competent resource across our delivery ecosystem, providing scalable capacity for ED3 while building the enduring skills and capability required for ED4.

Approach to scaling safely

Scaling workforce capacity must never compromise safety, competence or operational readiness. Stakeholders and delivery partners repeatedly highlighted that workforce growth must be aligned to realistic mobilisation profiles and supported by appropriate supervision and competence development arrangements. Evidence from across the utility sector demonstrates that rapid workforce expansion without sufficient training, mentoring and operational readiness can create safety, quality and productivity risks.

Our workforce strategy is driven by delivery requirements, competence lead times and authorisation pathways, rather than headcount targets alone. This is especially critical for SAP, protection engineering and operational craft roles, where

skills development can take several years and labour market availability remains constrained. Mobilisation is already underway. Around 23% of the additional workforce needed for ED3 delivery will be in place through recruitment and internal capability development before ED3 begins, with the remaining in place by the end of Y3. Three key training and authorisation programmes covering LV operations, SAP capability and overhead line skills are expected to deliver approximately [redacted] qualified frontline FTEs, supported by the early mobilisation of [redacted] additional SAPs.

Innovation complements the workforce growth set out in our Strategic Workforce Plan. We target innovation where it can reduce safety exposure, remove repetitive activity, increase productivity or enable scarce skills to be deployed more effectively. For example, technologies such as Lancet are helping improve the efficiency and safety of asset sampling and inspection activities by reducing intrusive intervention requirements whilst maintaining the quality of asset condition information. Investment in digitalisation, automation, advanced planning and scheduling, workforce optimisation, enhanced outage planning, AI-enabled decision support and field technology will enable higher delivery volumes without proportional increases in workforce size. This approach builds on a proven track record, with productivity initiatives already delivering improvements of 20-30% and external recognition through the 2024 Management Consultancies Association Award for Performance Improvement.

We will optimise training delivery through greater use of blended and innovative learning during ED3, releasing trainer days to increase training capacity as our workforce grows. Face-to-face delivery will remain where practical experience, assessment or safety-critical competence requires it, protecting safety, quality and technical standards.

Workforce resilience, pipeline and volatility mitigation

Workforce resilience is central to delivery confidence and underpins our ability to respond to changing delivery profiles, operational events and labour market conditions. Stakeholders identified ageing technical workforces, retirement risk, specialist skills shortages and long competence-development lead times as significant risks to future delivery capability. Our approach combines long-term capability development with retention, workforce agility and targeted succession planning, recognising that the greatest risk is often the availability of critical skills at the point of need rather than overall workforce numbers.

Existing learning and development pipelines provide a strong foundation. Continued investment in apprenticeships, adult learner programmes, reskilling and specialist development creates a sustainable talent pipeline across ED3 and ED4, reducing the risk that future delivery growth is constrained by the long lead times associated with developing scarce technical capability.

Today, we employ approximately 4,800 people and maintain one of the largest talent pipelines in the UK energy sector. Stakeholders identified apprenticeships, reskilling and early-career pathways as critical to addressing long-term skills shortages. We currently have 306 apprentices, trainees and adult learners progressing through structured development programmes and will maintain at least 10% of our workforce within earn-as-you-learn pathways during ED3, compared with 7% in ED2 and twice the 5% industry benchmark, and support 100% of learners who successfully complete their programmes into substantive roles. This established pipeline, combined with our demonstrated ability to recruit, train and deploy safety-critical resources at scale, provides confidence that the workforce growth assumed within our baseline plan is both achievable and deliverable. Progress is monitored through workforce planning governance, workforce analytics and skills-versus-demand tracking, including recruitment performance, authorisation progression, training throughput, attrition, workforce availability and pipeline maturity.

B.3 SUPPLY CHAIN STRATEGY AND CAPACITY EVIDENCE

Strategic supplier model and commercial frameworks

Our strategy has been developed through extensive engagement with suppliers across equipment, materials, design and construction markets. It draws on SSEN Transmission's RIIO-T3 supply chain insights[6], an independent review involving 57 suppliers and detailed interviews with 19 strategic suppliers representing our highest spend categories[7] and targeted

[6] SSEN Transmission RIIO-T3 Networks Renewal Supply Chain Insights, 2024

[7] SSEN – Distribution: ED3 & Beyond Procurement & Supply Chain Strategy Review, October 2025

engagement with 18 OEMs, designers, EPC contractors and Tier 1 and Tier 2 delivery partners. We also engaged with 27 long-lead plant and equipment suppliers across transformers, overhead line materials, switchgear and cable markets[8]. This evidence identified five consistent themes shaping supply chain capacity and deliverability for ED3 and beyond:

- the need for greater visibility of long-term demand;
- early commitment to future workloads;
- increased standardisation of equipment and specifications;
- more collaborative commercial and delivery models; and
- actions to strengthen resilience and support growth in UK supply chains.

Stakeholders also identified increasing pressure on critical manufacturing capacity, extended lead times, workforce shortages, specification complexity, fragmented delivery models and continued exposure to global supply chain volatility. The feedback reinforced that capacity growth is increasingly constrained by confidence and certainty of future demand rather than capability alone. In response, we have developed a supply chain strategy built around five core principles, creating the conditions for suppliers to invest and deliver ED3, shown in ***Figure B.2***.

Figure B.2 Our long-term supply chain strategy principles



Our commercial arrangements are designed to deliver these outcomes across price-control boundaries. Multi-price-control frameworks and strategic partnerships will provide visibility of committed ED3 requirements and emerging ED4 demand, giving suppliers greater confidence to invest in workforce, manufacturing capacity and delivery capability over the longer term. Building on our ED2 capacity reservation mechanisms, we are introducing early commitment mechanisms for critical long-lead assets, alongside commercial models with balanced risk allocation, transparent change mechanisms and incentives aligned to delivery, productivity and customer value.

To address constraints in critical equipment markets, we have developed category-specific sourcing strategies and procurement horizons for all major asset categories. Further detail is provided in the ***(ED3-S19) ED3 Supply Chain Annex***. These strategies provide suppliers with clear visibility of future demand, planned procurement activity and continuity of commercial arrangements across ED3 and into ED4.

In parallel, procurement activity for key delivery contracts with an estimated contract value of [redacted] is progressing, with contract awards planned throughout the remainder of ED2 and into ED3. Market engagement has been undertaken to inform our new long-term procurement and commercial strategy, with mobilisation planning, tender design and market engagement underway to support implementation across ED3 and into ED4.

OEMs and manufacturers identified design variation and late specification change as constraints on efficient production and capacity planning. We are responding through greater standardisation, earlier design freeze and our "Design Once, Build Many" approach, allowing demand to be aggregated and suppliers to plan production more efficiently

[8] ED3 Supply Chain – Supplier Engagement Report, September 2026

CASE STUDY
03

STANDARDISATION

33kV Transformers: Standardisation and supply-chain scalability

We developed a standardised 33kV primary transformer specification, using modular configurations and a common engineering baseline to accommodate project requirements efficiently while reducing design variation. Our framework launched in September 2026, combining this standardised specification with commitment-based allocation to give suppliers greater visibility and certainty of future demand. This "Design Once, Build Many" approach enables more repeatable manufacturing and scalable procurement, increasing available supply-chain capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing lead times as we scale delivery.

CASE STUDY
04

STANDARDISATION

33kV Outdoor Switchgear: Standardisation and supply-chain scalability

[redacted]

Providing long-term visibility and smoothing workload demand

A consistent theme emerging from engagement with manufacturers, OEMs and delivery partners was that predictable demand and early commitment are essential to unlocking future capacity. Our supply chain strategy adopts a programme-led approach to demand signalling and workbank management, designed to smooth delivery profiles and provide suppliers with stable, long-term visibility of workload. Recognising uncertainty in future funding allowances, we have prioritised no- and low-regret activities and identified a likely funding range for forecasting purposes to safeguard deliverability.

Key elements of the strategy include:

- Multi-year visibility of demand through alignment with the Long-term Integrated Network Development Plan, strategic development plans and future investment pipeline.
- Early signalling of volumes and commitment thresholds to allow suppliers to reserve manufacturing capacity and plan workforce growth.
- Phasing of delivery across ED3 and into ED4 to avoid peaks in demand that could exceed market capacity or drive inefficient boom-and-bust cycles.
- Early procurement of critical long-lead equipment, reducing exposure to constrained manufacturing timelines and global market volatility.
- Early ED3 design procurement, ensuring certainty of delivery for Year 1 and 2 ED3 volumes.
- Next generation commercial and delivery models, including frameworks that drive efficiency and customer satisfaction with consistent throughput and improved productivity.
- Utilising innovation funding and technology scouting activities to identify emerging materials, construction techniques, manufacturing methods and supply chain innovations capable of improving resilience, reducing lead times and increasing delivery capacity.
- Standardisation initiatives across plant and equipment categories, supporting demand aggregation and enabling suppliers to optimise production methodologies and increase capacity.

Our approach is already generating delivery confidence. All remaining ED2 construction works are now contracted, enabling suppliers to plan workforce and resource requirements. We have shared our proposed ED3 investment volumes with suppliers and tested the deliverability of our programme assumptions. Feedback from delivery partners provided an overall delivery confidence rating of 4.4 out of 5, indicating that market capacity can support our delivery profile while identifying areas where early commitment and capacity reservation are needed. We are going to market to secure that capacity competitively, diversify our supplier base and establish the long-term delivery arrangements required for ED3 and beyond.

For our five most critical equipment categories, we have already secured [redacted] of Year 1 and Year 2 long-lead equipment requirements and will secure the remaining requirements by December 2027, significantly reducing exposure to supply chain constraints and manufacturing lead times.

CASE STUDY 05

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

132kV Cable: Strategic partnership and capacity reservation

[redacted]

Building a resilient supply chain through outcome-based delivery models

We are evolving our commercial model to align our delivery partners around shared delivery outcomes. The evolved model creates a clear link between our regulatory commitments, customer outcomes and commercial arrangements, helping partners focus on long-term programme performance. The model is built on five principles, aligned to our supply chain strategy:

- rewarding delivery of programme outcomes;
- allocating risk to the organisations best placed to manage it;
- combining long-term strategic partnerships with competitive procurement where appropriate;
- encouraging innovation, productivity and collaboration; and
- balancing cost and programme performance with safety, quality, customer service and delivery certainty.

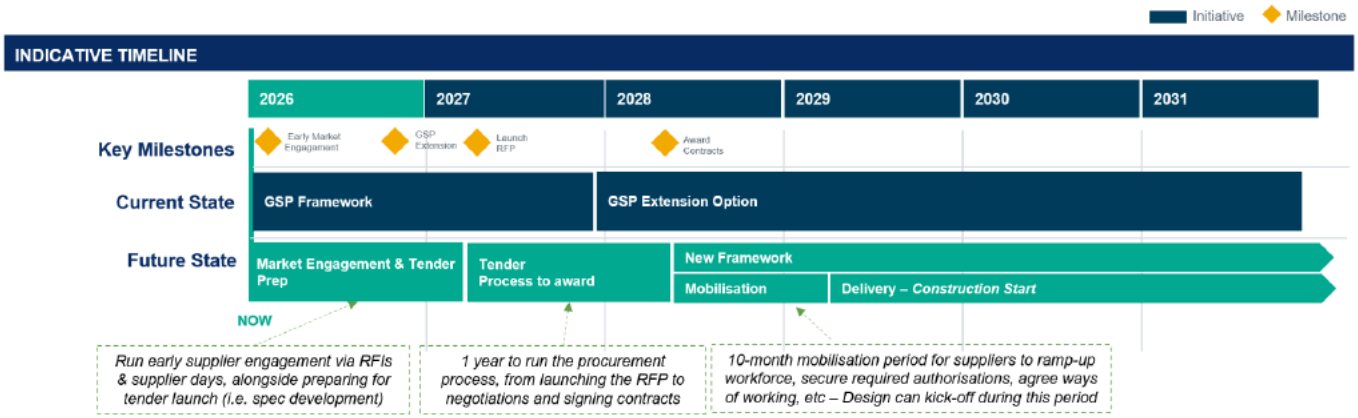
Many of these principles are already being embedded within our existing delivery arrangements. We have strengthened supplier performance management, increased visibility of future workbanks, improved programme packaging and expanded the use of outcome-focused performance measures. This allows us to evolve our approach progressively while maintaining delivery continuity throughout the transition.

Our model will be supported by a broader delivery ecosystem of regional delivery partners, engineering and design providers, specialist contractors and SMEs, while we retain overall accountability for delivery, programme governance and investment decisions.

The transition is already under way. Engagement with 18 OEMs, designers, EPC contractors and Tier 1 and Tier 2 suppliers has tested and directly shaped the future model, including programme delivery, performance measures and incentives. We will continue to refine these arrangements through procurement to reflect supplier capability and market capacity.

We are managing the transition to protect delivery continuity while new arrangements are mobilised. All remaining ED2 construction contracts have been awarded, securing capacity across 67 projects valued at [redacted]. We also have, subject to performance, the option to extend the GSP Delivery Partner contract up to 2031, allowing us to retain critical resources, knowledge and capability. As shown in ***Figure B.3***, new frameworks will be introduced alongside existing arrangements, allowing ways of working and performance mechanisms to be tested and refined before full implementation.

Figure B.3 Commercial Model Transition Plan



Key dependencies and risk mitigations

Our market analysis and supplier engagement identified pressures from growing global demand, constrained manufacturing capacity, long lead times, workforce shortages, commodity volatility and concentration of supply in critical asset categories. We are mitigating these risks through:

- Early procurement and strategic reservation of capacity for long-lead assets including transformers, switchgear, cables and other critical equipment.
- Supply-base diversification and resilience, qualifying additional suppliers, exploring alternative sources and mapping upstream dependencies to identify bottlenecks.
- Standardisation and rationalisation of specifications to reduce complexity, improve manufacturability and increase sourcing flexibility.
- Integrated workforce and supply chain planning, aligning labour, contractor and material requirements with the programme.
- Earlier supplier and contractor involvement, supported by Group-wide supplier relationship management, to inform technical decisions, improve demand visibility and identify emerging constraints.
- Stronger forecasting, governance and change control, providing credible demand signals and greater certainty to suppliers.
- Deploying innovation funding to identify and test alternative materials, equipment, manufacturing approaches and construction methodologies that can reduce dependency on constrained supply routes, shorten delivery times or improve productivity.

These interventions depend on strong internal delivery disciplines. We are strengthening demand forecasting, standardisation by default, early technical decision-making, governance and internal programme capability through our ED3 mobilisation programme. Together, these measures will enable earlier supplier commitment and capacity reservation, reduce exposure to supply constraints and support more resilient and efficient ED3 delivery.

BPI early proposals: Strengthening Supply chain resilience and UK capability

Alongside our core sourcing strategies, we have developed two Business Plan Incentive (BPI) early proposals that deliver additional value for customers by addressing supply chain challenges that cannot be fully mitigated through conventional procurement alone.

Our stakeholder and market engagement has highlighted common concerns around manufacturing capacity, extended equipment lead times, global supply chain volatility and limited visibility of future investment pipelines. In response, we are developing two priority proposals for ED3: **Strategic Spares and Joint Procurement** and **Supporting our Local Supply Chain.** Further detail can be found in our ***(ED3-S20) ED3 Regulatory Framework Annex***.

BPI early proposal 1: Strategic Spares and Joint Procurement

The scale of UK energy infrastructure investment anticipated during ED3 will increase competition for critical network equipment. Longer lead times and concentrated global manufacturing capacity could constrain equipment availability, increasing both delivery and network resilience risks.

We are therefore exploring a shared strategic spares and procurement model with other network operators, potentially supported through innovation and wider industry collaboration. The proposal would assess the case for a centrally managed repository of strategically important equipment, including transformers, switchgear and SF6-related equipment, alongside opportunities for greater coordination of procurement across network operators.

A shared approach could reduce exposure to supply disruption, improve access to critical equipment following unplanned events and strengthen security of supply during periods of market constraint. Coordinated procurement could also provide suppliers with clearer aggregate demand and create opportunities to improve purchasing efficiency.

Our next phase of development will quantify the potential whole-system and customer benefits and establish the technical, commercial, operational, ownership, governance and regulatory arrangements required to make a shared model workable. This will determine whether the proposal can deliver additional value beyond the resilience already provided through our core sourcing strategy.

BPI early proposal 2: Supporting our Local Supply Chain

The scale and visibility of ED3 investment creates an opportunity to use our purchasing power to strengthen UK supply chain capability while maintaining competition and affordability for customers. Our supplier engagement indicates that greater certainty over future requirements can support decisions to invest in manufacturing capacity, facilities and skilled employment. We are developing a proposal to increase the proportion of our equipment and materials expenditure attributable to products manufactured or materially assembled in the UK, where this can demonstrate customer and wider economic value.

Government and business stakeholders placed greater emphasis on using ED3 investment to support UK manufacturing, skilled employment and local economic growth, while customers continued to prioritise affordability and reliability. We will therefore maximise opportunities for British manufacturers and increase UK content but not pursue a 100% UK-sourcing position. This balances economic and supply-resilience benefits against market availability, competition, procurement requirements and value for customers.

We are starting from a defined evidence base. Based on our ED2 baseline, our current UK content is 36.8% for cable, 47.5% for switchgear and 47.2% for transformers. For this proposal, UK content is defined as the proportion of annual equipment and materials expenditure attributable to products wholly manufactured or materially assembled within the UK.

For ED3 we will aim to procure an additional 10% from UK-based manufacturers. This 10% relative uplift applied to ED3 volumes materially increases UK content by an estimated additional [redacted].

Table B.2 UK content sourcing

Asset	Current % UK Content *	ED3 % UK Content aim
Cable	36.8%	40.5%
Switchgear	47.5%	52.3%
Transformers	47.2%	51.9%

*** UK Content means the proportion of spend (as a percentage of annual total spend) on equipment and materials that is attributable to products wholly manufactured *or* materially assembled within the United Kingdom.** (Baseline calculated based on 25/26 spend, excluding categories where a UK supply chain does not exist)

We have already progressed the foundations to test the proposal, including collaboration with other DNOs on a common definition of UK content, establishment of the current baseline, legal review against the Procurement Act 2023, engagement with DESNZ, and economic and cost modelling of potential implementation options. We have used our ED3 volumes and the uplift from ED2 to determine stretching but deliverable ambitions for ED3.

The proposal has the potential to support greater domestic manufacturing and engineering capability, skilled employment, security of supply and resilience to global disruption, while generating wider economic value from ED3 investment. Case Study 6 illustrates how this approach could support increased UK content and capability. However, increasing UK content will not be pursued at the expense of affordability or supply security. Our approach will retain dual sourcing and access to competitive global markets, balancing opportunities to grow UK capability with cost, capacity, quality and resilience.

CASE STUDY 06

SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE

UK Supply Chain: Long-term certainty builds UK capacity

We are using long-term demand visibility and early commitment to unlock investment in UK supply-chain capacity. Our commitment for 104 33kV transformers has supported Winder Power's £3.5m investment in UK manufacturing capacity and 40 skilled green jobs. Early ED3 engagement with Briggs Marine is supporting investment in specialist subsea capability, including the £20m Forth Constructor and £2m+ of UK-built equipment. Together, these partnerships show how greater certainty enables UK suppliers to invest ahead of need, strengthening capacity and resilience while supporting skilled jobs and more efficient delivery.

C. SAFETY AND SUSTAINABLE DELIVERY

C.1 SAFETY AT SCALE FRAMEWORK

Customers, communities and local authorities rightly expect the network to be delivered safely and reliably, regardless of the scale of investment required. As investment, workforce and supply-chain activity increase, Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) operates as a strategic delivery capability. Our framework will scale and be strengthened to reflect the size, complexity and risk profile of the programme, moving towards proactive, intelligence-led risk management. SHE Environment is a core value is embedded across investment, design, procurement, construction and operation, to prevent harm, reduce disruption and delay, improve delivery confidence and protect long-term network resilience.

Safety Excellence

We are strengthening critical risk management, process safety and Safety by Design across our workforce and delivery partners. Hazards are identified and controlled early in planning, design and delivery, with clear ownership of critical controls and improved visibility of barrier effectiveness. We are increasingly deploying predictive insight, operational learning and targeted assurance to identify weak signals, test whether controls are working in practice and support intervention before incidents occur. This prevents serious harm, protects service reliability and reduces disruption, rework, delay and operational failure.

Throughout ED2 we are strengthening SHE performance and consistency across our workforce and delivery partners. Since 2023/24, our focus on risk reduction has delivered measurable progress: combined TRIR improved from 0.28 to 0.26; contract-partner TRIR reduced from 0.89 to 0.36. These improvements provide a strong platform for ED3. We will continue this direction of travel through stronger critical controls, earlier intervention, workforce and contractor capability, leading indicators and intelligence-led assurance as delivery scales.

Health and Wellbeing

We sustain a healthy, capable and resilient workforce by preventing work-related ill health and managing both physical and psychosocial risks. Health surveillance, exposure monitoring, occupational hygiene and early intervention inform risk and workforce insight. We are strengthening mental wellbeing, psychological safety and fatigue management, recognising their influence on judgement, decision-making and operational performance. We are working with the ENA, cross-industry working groups and the HSE to further enhance our health initiatives, integrating health into workforce planning, leadership and supply-chain engagement we protect our people, reduce absence-related disruption and maintain delivery capability throughout ED3.

Environmental Leadership

We are improving how we embed environmental stewardship into investment, design, procurement and delivery decisions so that risks and opportunities are addressed before they affect programme outcomes. We are working with Environment Agency and Scottish Environmental Protection Agency to refine our sustainability targets and delivery. We

are increasing our specialist capability to manage environmental critical-risk controls and clear requirements within category and tender strategies such as carbon management requirements and will strengthen accountability across the delivery ecosystem. Our approach will support climate resilience, circular-economy principles, efficient resource use and responsible infrastructure delivery. Earlier decisions will improve planning certainty, maintain regulatory confidence and reduce environmental harm, redesign, delay and additional cost.

Assurance and Governance

Our dedicated SHE Assurance team is aligned to Group SHE Assurance requirements and operates within the wider governance framework outlined in ***Section A***, while retaining its specialist SHE remit. The SHE assurance findings are reported to the Distribution Executive Committee through the monthly SHE committee. Assurance is supported by the digital and data capabilities described in ***Section D.2***. Assurance uses operational data, assurance findings and will continue to move towards using an increasing number of leading indicators to identify emerging risks and implement effective risk management, test control effectiveness and target interventions, strengthening prevention as delivery scales and driving continuous improvement.

Capability and Culture

As outlined in ***Section B.2*** we are strengthening technical competence, growing future capability pipelines, improving contractor integration and embedding shared standards across our delivery ecosystem. Employees and delivery partners will drive improvement of standards, with clear expectations and practical SHE support aligned to the risks they manage. Visible leadership, meaningful engagement, immersive learning and effective sharing of experience promote ownership and continuous improvement. People will be empowered to identify emerging risks and challenge unsafe or unsustainable practices, supporting right-first-time delivery, accountability and fewer avoidable failures.

C.2 SUPERVISION, WORKLOAD AND FATIGUE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The scale of our delivery programme requires workforce wellbeing to be designed into resource planning and operational decision-making. Sustainable resource plans, effective supervision and robust fatigue controls will protect our people while maintaining safe and resilient delivery.

Principles for controlling cumulative workload

We operate a structured and multi-layered approach to controlling cumulative workload and managing fatigue risk, underpinned by formal policy limits and system-enabled controls. Working time is governed by defined standards (RS-SHE-205), which set clear parameters for daily hours and rolling reference periods. These limits are actively monitored through enterprise reporting, with Power BI providing ongoing oversight of working patterns and compliance.

Control is embedded at multiple stages of the work lifecycle. At the point of entry, electronic time recording systems enable individuals to assess their own fatigue exposure before taking on additional work, supporting proactive decision-making. This is complemented by back-end monitoring to identify emerging risks and ensure adherence to policy.

We are progressing toward a “safe-by-design” control environment, where fatigue risk is managed upstream through system-led scheduling. Our field service technology, described in ***Section D.2***, supports resource planning and scheduling, and planned enhancements will strengthen controls so that individuals approaching fatigue thresholds are not presented as available for additional work.

Operationally, we recognise that workload pressure is not constant and must be managed dynamically. Increasingly volatile fault volumes, driven by extreme weather events, require flexibility in deployment. Our approach allows for planned work to be paused, and resources redeployed to fault response, ensuring resilience during peak periods while maintaining control of cumulative workload. This informs our workforce planning approach outlined in ***Section B.2***, which is designed to ensure capacity for peak operating conditions rather than reliance on sustained overtime.

Management of concurrent programmes in shared geographies

We manage delivery capacity across the portfolio and geographies. When fault response, planned investment and concurrent programmes compete for the same resources, we reprioritise and redeploy teams according to network and customer need. This approach is supported by the portfolio planning and change controls in ***Section A.2*** and the performance framework in ***Section D.1***, providing visibility of resource pressures and enabling intervention, resequencing or reallocation where required. Planning for this flexibility protects network resilience while controlling cumulative workload and fatigue.

Role of local leadership

Digital and portfolio controls are reinforced by local leadership. We have strengthened this through the introduction of independent fatigue oversight, with dedicated management rotas focused solely on workforce welfare rather than delivery outputs. Local leadership plays a critical role in translating policy and system controls into safe, real-world decision making, particularly under dynamic operating conditions. This separation ensures that safety considerations are prioritised, particularly where there may otherwise be operational pressure to continue working.

Local leaders are supported by structured fatigue risk assessment processes, including defined check-in points at extended working durations. These provide clear decision gates to assess whether work should continue and reinforce a culture where individuals are empowered to act on fatigue risk. Our "licence to stop" policy empowers employees and supervisors to stop work where fatigue creates an unacceptable risk.

Capability is further enhanced through targeted training, developed in collaboration with external human factors specialists, to improve recognition and management of fatigue at an individual and team level. This is complemented by industry collaboration, including active participation and leadership within cross-sector fatigue management initiatives, ensuring alignment with best practice.

Looking forward, local leadership will be central to the transition toward new ways of working, including the implementation of safer rota designs and the move away from reliance on extended working hours. This will be supported by engagement with workforce representatives and independent validation of proposed working patterns, ensuring that changes are both operationally effective and within safe limits.

D. PERFORMANCE, MONITORING AND CONTROL

D.1 PERFORMANCE, COST AND SCHEDULE REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Performance management framework and intervention thresholds

Our performance framework provides a single, integrated approach to monitoring, controlling and assuring delivery across our integrated delivery teams and our delivery partners. It combines delivery, cost, schedule, quality, customer outcome and delivery-readiness measures to provide visibility of progress, emerging risks and delivery confidence.

The framework combines leading and lagging indicators to monitor performance, delivery confidence and regulatory outcomes. Leading indicators provide early visibility of workforce, supply chain, quality and programme risks before they affect outputs, customer commitments or regulatory performance, enabling timely corrective action through the governance framework described in ***Section A.1***.

Consumer representatives asked for evidence of delivery against commitments, not planned activity. Local authorities, connection customers and supply chain partners sought visibility of programme delivery, future work pipelines, constraints and readiness. This feedback shaped our performance framework, prioritising KPIs for delivery progress, customer outcomes, workforce and supply chain readiness, and emerging delivery risks.

The framework applies equally to internal teams and external delivery partners. Our outcome-based commercial model, described in ***Section B.3***, aligns supplier incentives with customer, business and regulatory outcomes, creating shared accountability for delivery performance. For external partners, performance expectations are reinforced through

contractually binding KPIs, incentive and consequence mechanisms, milestone-based payment controls and future workload allocation linked to performance.

Performance reporting follows a structured cadence aligned to the governance forums and decision-making cycles described in ***Section A.1***. Weekly operational reporting monitors leading indicators and emerging risks, while monthly portfolio and executive reporting provides a consolidated view of delivery performance, risk and delivery confidence.

Standardised scorecards, dashboards and RAG thresholds provide a consistent assessment of delivery, cost, schedule, quality and customer outcomes across all delivery routes. Variances outside agreed tolerances trigger escalation, investigation and recovery planning to resolve issues before customer or regulatory commitments are affected.

Table D.1 Performance management KPIs and control thresholds

Area	KPI	Purpose	Why stakeholder insight supports	Green	Amber	Red
Delivery Performance	Volume delivery against plan (%)	Tracks delivery against a profiles and programme outputs, giving early visibility of under- or over-delivery. Enables proactive intervention and portfolio balancing.	Customers and stakeholders consistently emphasised delivery confidence, visible progress and evidence of commitments translating into outputs.	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Cost Performance	CAPEX delivery against plan (%)	Tracks spend against forecasts, allowances and efficient unit costs to identify emerging risks.	Clear link between customer benefit and efficient delivery.	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Schedule and Readiness Performance	Critical milestones achieved on time (%)	Tracks delivery against programme schedules and critical customer journey milestones, providing early indication of delivery risk and future output confidence.	Multiple stakeholders want greater transparency, visibility and confidence in delivery timescales and progress against commitments.	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Delivery Capability and Quality	Design acceptance rate (%)	Measures the proportion of designs approved at first submission, providing early visibility of delivery readiness and potential downstream schedule risk.	Design stability, specification certainty and project readiness are critical enablers of efficient delivery.	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

Customer and Regulatory Outcomes	ODI-linked outcomes NARM, MVA	Measures delivery of customer & regulatory outcomes, ensuring operational delivery translates into better customer experience and regulatory performance.	Customers consistently sought greater visibility of progress, transparency of risks and evidence that investment is improving outcomes.			

Escalation and intervention mechanisms

A defined escalation framework ensures emerging performance issues are identified and addressed early. Performance outside agreed tolerance levels trigger proportionate escalation and corrective action through the governance framework. Key intervention mechanisms include:

- **Threshold-based escalation:** KPI performance is assessed against defined RAG thresholds. Amber performance triggers increased scrutiny and corrective action planning, while red performance requires formal escalation and management intervention.
- **Root cause analysis and recovery planning:** Material variances are subject to structured review to identify underlying causes and implement targeted recovery actions, including process improvements, resource reallocation, delivery reprioritisation or supplier intervention where required.
- **Early intervention through leading indicators:** Leading measures, including design maturity, workforce coverage, long-lead material availability, consents and milestone readiness, provide early warning of emerging risks before they affect delivery outputs.
- **Portfolio optimisation:** Delivery performance is actively managed at portfolio level to ensure resources, investment and delivery activity remain aligned with regulatory commitments, customer priorities and agreed output profiles.

Common Resilience Metrics

From our wider performance framework, we propose six proportionate leading resilience metrics for ED3 regulatory reporting. These provide actionable early warning of the principal delivery risks identified in ***Section B.1***.

Table D.2 Resilience metrics

Area	KPI	Purpose
Workforce resilience	Critical role coverage (%)	Measures the proportion of key delivery roles filled against forecast resource requirements, giving early visibility of workforce capacity risks.
Supply chain resilience	Strategic supplier performance (%)	Measures supplier performance against agreed delivery, quality and programme commitments, identifying supply chain risks early.
Supply chain resilience	Long lead material availability (%)	Measures the availability of critical materials and equipment required to support planned delivery activities.
Delivery readiness	Workbank contracted (%)	Measures planned delivery activity secured through contracts and framework arrangements, giving visibility of future delivery readiness.
Delivery readiness	Consents secured versus required (%)	Measures progress in obtaining the statutory approvals and consents required to support delivery programmes.
Delivery readiness	Design maturity by required date (%)	Measures whether projects are progressing through key design and governance milestones in line with delivery plans.

D.2 DIGITAL ENABLEMENT AND DATA STRATEGY

Digital capability is embedded within our overall delivery model. As investment volumes increase, these capabilities will help us prioritise the workbank, coordinate resources and network access, monitor cost and schedule performance, and identify emerging delivery risks early, while maintaining safety, quality, affordability and customer outcomes.

Local authorities, developers, flexibility providers and delivery partners called for better network information, greater visibility of capacity and constraints, improved forecasting, integrated systems and responsible use of AI. Our digital tools provide trusted data and integrated planning, programme control, asset management and field delivery capabilities:

- **Oracle Unifier:** our core project controls platform, integrating cost, schedule, risk, change, governance and reporting. Used by over 530 colleagues across more than 1,000 projects valued at approximately [redacted], it provides consistent and auditable delivery control.
- **Copperleaf:** optimises asset risk and investment needs into prioritised, deliverable investment plans.
- **VisNet Design, Forecast and Connect:** provides scalable LV network analysis, forecasting, design and connections capability.
- **Probabilistic Planning Tools, PowerFactory and flexibility toolkit:** support multi-scenario forecasting, network analysis and option assessment, strengthening planning under uncertainty.
- **LENZA:** provides network planning information integrated with wider planning data sources.
- **Maximo, EO-GIS and IPS-Energy:** support asset information and operational records, ensuring delivery information is captured and available for asset management, network safety and regulatory reporting.
- **Oracle Field Service:** supports scheduling and delivery of high-volume field activities, improving resource utilisation and visibility of field operations.

Data-driven decision making

Data supports decision-making throughout the investment lifecycle, helping ensure delivery activities are evidence-based, transparent and aligned with customer and network needs. Forecasting, network modelling, operational monitoring and asset data are used to prioritise investment, support operational planning and manage network performance. During ED2, investments in smart meter integration, HV and LV forecasting capabilities, network analytics and modelling enhanced network visibility and planning capability, including publication of over 3.2 billion smart meter data points and development of the Unified Network Model. These capabilities give a strong foundation for ED3, with additional integrations and governance enhancements underway to embed them consistently across functions.

Our LV unlooping pilot demonstrated how coming network data, customer engagement, contractor feedback and cost validation can refine delivery assumptions and future investment plans. This enabled learning from delivery experience to be incorporated into future decision-making, improving confidence in both delivery models and investment choices.

Looking ahead, our ED3 Data & Digitalisation investments will strengthen the digital foundations for efficient delivery by integrating planning, programme control, field delivery, trusted data, forecasting, flexibility, asset intelligence, and governed AI and automation. Together, these capabilities support better prioritisation, coordinated execution, earlier identification of delivery risk and evidence-based intervention. See the ***(ED3-S13) ED3 Data & Digitalisation Annex***.

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement is embedded within our delivery approach through structured feedback loops linking planning, delivery, operations, performance management and investment decision-making. Performance information is captured through operational reporting, programme governance, assurance activities, project close-out reviews, customer feedback and delivery partner engagement. Digital platforms provide visibility of delivery performance, enabling trends, risks and lessons learned to be identified and reviewed consistently across programmes.

Through the DGIF, this evidence is reviewed and used to inform future planning, delivery strategies and investment decisions. Insights from delivery performance, operational outcomes, customer feedback and delivery partner engagement are incorporated into business planning and programme development, creating a feedback cycle between planning, delivery and operations that supports improved deliverability, risk management and value for customers.

The Perform Programme provides a structured mechanism for translating insights into practical improvements. Through process optimisation and standardisation, Perform has supported improvements in productivity, consistency and operational effectiveness throughout ED2 and continues to support ED3 readiness activities.

E. CONNECTIONS DELIVERABILITY AND CUSTOMER OUTCOMES

The ***(ED3-S16) ED3 Connections Strategy*** establishes our customer commitments and service improvements. This section explains how the operating model, governance arrangements and delivery framework described above create consistent customer outcomes across both licence areas.

E.1 CONNECTIONS OPERATING MODEL AND TRANSITION PLAN

Stakeholder feedback consistently highlighted the need for greater delivery certainty, improved visibility of progress and confidence that growing demand can be accommodated. This has shaped the evolution of our operating model described in ***Section A.1***, strengthening the alignment between connections forecasting, network planning and delivery to support future LV, HV and EHV demand.

Demand forecasting and capacity planning

Our demand forecasting framework combines outputs from our Strategic Development Plans, Strategic Energy Needs assessments, Local Area Energy Plans and connections pipeline data to give a robust understanding of when and where network capacity will be required. Forecasts are supported by probabilistic planning tools, whole-system analysis, DNOA processes, flexibility assessments and scenario modelling, enabling transparent decisions on whether to build, flex or defer investment. These forecasts directly inform our workforce, supply chain and delivery strategies, as described in ***Sections B.2 and B.3***, ensuring the capability required to support forecast growth in customer demand is aligned with wider network investment programmes.

Integration with Wider Network Delivery

Connections delivery is enabled through the scalable and integrated operating model described in ***Section A.1***. Our operating model brings together network planning, asset management, programme delivery, network operations and delivery partners into a single delivery system with clear accountability across the investment lifecycle.

While a common operating framework applies across our network, delivery approaches reflect differing regional requirements. In SEPD, the focus is on scaling delivery capability through in-house resources, delivery partners and programme-based delivery to support increasing electrification and demand growth. In SHEPD, the focus is on leveraging strong regional capability, proactive communication and coordinated delivery planning to support geographically dispersed networks, remote communities and growing distributed generation demand. All our customers benefit from consistent governance, service standards and delivery outcomes. Integrating connections with wider network programmes improves connection-date credibility, dependency visibility and resource coordination, outages and network access, reducing disruption and delivery risk. These are particularly important for HV and EHV customers, whose projects often interact with reinforcement programmes, outage requirements and wider network constraints.

Scaling and testing LV delivery models

We are using ED2 to test and refine the repeatable, programmatic delivery models needed to operate safely and efficiently at the greater scale that will be needed to accommodate the significant increase in LV connections expected during ED3. The associated readiness milestones and mobilisation plan are set out in ***Section F.1***.

We are testing the end-to-end delivery approach, including customer engagement, contractor mobilisation, operational interfaces, construction methodology, and productivity through a targeted unlooping pilot across three SEPD regions. We have completed over 780 surveys of the more than 1200 properties identified for assessment, providing practical evidence to refine ED3 volumes, resource requirements, unit costs and programme phasing. This responds to

stakeholder expectations for proportionate, need-led LV investment, better coordination of works and reduced disruption, while providing evidence that the delivery model is being tested and mobilised ahead of ED3.

Learning is informing the wider programme-based approach to proactive unlooping, targeted LV reinforcement and LV mains overlay, while digital capabilities including ConnectDirect, the Connections Readiness Indicator, AI-ID and DigiLoop[9] support improved network readiness, streamlined applications and more efficient delivery. Further detail is provided within the ***(ED3-S16) ED3 Connections Strategy*** and ***(ED3-S09) ED3 Innovation Strategy***.

E.2 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND CONSISTENCY OUTCOMES

How standardisation improves predictability and service

Customers told us they value predictability, transparency and consistency as much as speed. Stakeholders highlighted variation in communications, project visibility and customer experience as key drivers of dissatisfaction. We are therefore embedding consistency through common processes, governance arrangements, standards and digital tools. As described throughout Themes 2, 3 and 4 of the ***(ED3-S16) ED3 Connections Strategy***, this includes:

- common Standards of Service and performance measures;
- standardised delivery, design and project management methodologies;
- shared digital platforms providing visibility of milestones, risks and progress;
- common escalation and governance processes; and
- consistent performance reporting through the Connections Annual Report

These standards apply across our internal teams and delivery partners. Customer and service expectations are embedded in performance measures and contractual arrangements. Digital tools will improve visibility and responsiveness, while customers will continue to have access to appropriate assisted and non-digital channels where required, ensuring greater digitalisation improves rather than restricts accessibility. Our integrated delivery teams will use a pod-based model to provide clearer ownership throughout the customer journey. Integrated portfolio planning aligns resource planning, outage coordination and delivery sequencing across connections and wider network programmes.

Alignment between regions and licences

Our customers face different network and delivery challenges across our networks, but they consistently value a more predictable and consistent experience. Regional teams will retain flexibility to respond to local network conditions and customer needs within a shared framework that provides consistent standards of communication, responsiveness and delivery, supported by our pod-based operating model and continued investment in workforce capability.

F. ASSURANCE AND READINESS

F.1 ED3 READINESS AND MOBILISATION PLAN

Stakeholders consistently challenged whether the scale and pace of investment required for the energy transition can be delivered given workforce, supply-chain and operational constraints across the sector. Our response is to mobilise before ED3 begins, bringing forward the workforce capability, supply-chain capacity, project development, design and delivery arrangements needed to convert our ED3 plan into an executable workbank from the start of ED3.

Readiness and mobilisation plan

Our mobilisation programme brings together critical activities for ED3 readiness across workforce, supply chain and plant, project development, design, commercial arrangements and delivery. It is led by an appointed mobilisation lead and managed through the governance and programme controls described in ***Sections A.1 and A.2***, with performance and readiness monitored through the framework in ***Section D.1*** and assurance provided through ***Section F.2***.

[9] ENA Smarter Networks Portal

Table F.1 ED2 to ED3 mobilisation programme



Mobilisation is already under way across the principal constraints to ED3 delivery:

- Recruitment and capability development are focused on roles with the longest competence and authorisation lead times. Around 23% of the additional workforce required will be in place before ED3 begins. Further detail is provided in ***Section B.2***.
- Procurement and capacity commitments are being made ahead of need, with Year 1 manufacturing slots for Grid and Primary Transformers already secured. Our wider sourcing and capacity strategy is in ***Section B.3***.
- By the beginning of ED3, 342 schemes representing [redacted] of investment will have completed the governance approvals required to commence delivery in the first year of ED3. A further [redacted] of early investment is progressing design and development of priority non-load and subsea projects. Further detail is provided in ***Section A.2***.
- ED2 activity is being used to test delivery approaches before they are scaled in ED3. This includes the SEPD unlooping pilot, where more than 1,200 properties have been issued for assessment and over 780 surveys completed, providing evidence to refine ED3 resource, cost and programme assumptions. Further detail is provided in ***Sections D.2*** and ***E.1***.

RIIO-ED2 LRE mobilisation funding

Our approach to early mobilisation was established through our October 2025 RIIO-ED2 Load Related Expenditure Re-opener application and has since been refined in response to Ofgem's Draft Determination. Following a detailed review of network need, project deliverability, optioneering and phasing, we are now requesting [redacted] of ED3 mobilisation funding during RIIO-ED2. This comprises [redacted] for defined schemes, [redacted] for the forecast pipeline, [redacted] for workforce recruitment and training, and [redacted] for voltage management. These activities form part of the wider mobilisation programme on the design and contract of load schemes.

Readiness gates, dependencies and intervention

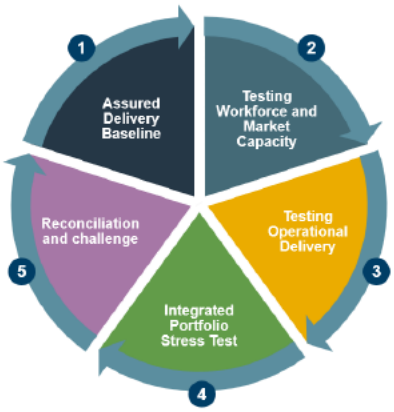
Our mobilisation programme actively manages the critical dependencies required to convert the ED3 workbank into delivery, including governance and design maturity, land and consents, outages, workforce capability, contractor capacity and long-lead plant. The gates are shown in ***Figure 9*** and monitored through the programme controls and DGIF governance described in ***Sections A.1*** and ***A.2***, with readiness indicators monitored through the performance framework in ***Section D.1***. Where a dependency moves outside the required delivery window, this triggers intervention, including resource reallocation, alternative sourcing, project substitution or programme resequencing. This portfolio approach enables us to manage individual constraints while protecting overall delivery, safety and ED3 readiness.

F.2 INTERNAL AND INDEPENDENT ASSURANCE

Internal assurance routes

We have applied a structured, evidence-led and iterative assurance process to develop and test our Delivery Strategy. As shown in ***Figure F.1*** the five stage process assesses the plan as an integrated whole, providing a clear line of sight from network need through to an assured delivery baseline and a governed assessment of deliverability.

Figure F.1 Delivery assurance process



- **Assured delivery baseline:** We translate delivery volumes into the workforce, capabilities and resources required, considering skills, recruitment, training and mobilisation.
- **Capacity tests:** We test requirements against internal, contracted and supply-chain capacity, including delivery partners, specialist capabilities, critical resources and lead times
- **Operational delivery test:** Operational teams test deliverability in practice, considering resource availability, outages, network access, sequencing, geography, interfaces and competing demands .
- **Portfolio stress test:** We assess cumulative constraints and dependencies, stress-testing key assumptions to identify delivery headroom and required mitigation.
- **Reconcile and challenge:** We reconcile volumes, workforce, market capacity, operational requirements and costs, identifying and resolving material inconsistencies.

Independent Assurance

In addition to internal assurance, we adopt a proportionate approach to independent review to provide objective validation of key assumptions, risks, and delivery readiness, particularly where complexity, scale, or uncertainty is greatest. Independent review is embedded across the lifecycle of the strategy, beginning with plan development, where external expertise is used to challenge and validate key components such as volume assumptions, phasing, workforce capability, and supply chain readiness.

Independent assurance is also applied to critical risk areas and delivery dependencies, including supply chain constraints such as the Efficio review, outage planning interactions with NESO and SSEN-T, and major programme interfaces are reviewed by our delivery partners, providing additional confidence that risks are well understood and appropriately mitigated. Alongside this, external input is used to benchmark our approach against industry best practice, ensuring that our delivery model, governance, and assurance processes reflect leading practice and remain resilient under ED3 conditions. Reviews are undertaken at defined points in the delivery lifecycle, or triggered by emerging risks or performance concerns, to validate progress against plan and provide objective insight into delivery performance and readiness.

ED3 DELIVERY ANNEX — STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & FEEDBACK

Stakeholder engagement for deliverability has challenged and strengthened our proposals. Feedback from domestic customers, large business consumers, employees, trade unions, supply chain partners, the Independent Stakeholder Group (ISG), government bodies and wider stakeholders have resulted in changes to how we approach workforce planning, supply chain development and delivery partnerships. In several areas, we have adapted our plans to reflect stakeholder concerns and priorities. In others, we have deliberately maintained our position where stakeholder requests would conflict with safety, affordability, competence standards, legal obligations, or efficient use of customer funding. This demonstrates a balanced approach that both responds to stakeholder feedback and protects long-term network resilience and customer value.

HIGHLIGHTED AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

1. Supply chain workforce and authorisations

Supply chain partners wanted greater flexibility to move authorised staff between organisations to address scarce skills and accelerate delivery. Employees, unions and safety-focused stakeholders place greater emphasis on competence, accountability and retaining critical skills. We have balanced these views by supporting clearer training expectations and more consistent competence pathways across the sector, while maintaining that authorisations should not automatically transfer between employers without reassessment. [RN7]

2. Senior Authorised Person (SAP) resource shortages

Suppliers highlighted shortages of Senior Authorised Person resource as a delivery risk and called for greater sector support to build capacity. Customers, however, continue to place strong emphasis on affordability, efficient delivery and value for money. We have balanced these views by supporting earlier visibility of future work, shared learning, common training expectations and clearer qualification pathways to support contractor forward planning activities. This strengthens sector capability without creating unnecessary duplication of cost for customers. [RN7]

3. UK supply chain and workforce growth

Government, business customers and local stakeholders placed greater emphasis on UK manufacturing, local employment and regional economic value. Domestic customers placed stronger weight on affordability, reliability and efficient delivery. We have balanced these views by increasing the focus on UK manufacturing and local workforce development where this strengthens resilience and value, while avoiding a fully UK-based sourcing approach that could reduce competition, limit availability or increase costs for customers. [RN7]

4. Workforce operating model and fatigue

Customers and operational stakeholders expect reliable, responsive fault restoration. While all stakeholders agree safety remains a top priority. To support this, SSEN has engaged extensively with employees and trade unions on how working arrangements may need to modernise to reduce reliance on extended working hours and better align workforce availability to customer fault demand profiles. This includes exploring more shift-based and flexible operating models that support safer working by design, and strengthen operational resilience. The approach is focused on negotiating a future workforce model that provides

choice, protects wellbeing, supports retention and remains attractive to a diverse employee base. The means of delivering this in a sustainable enduring way has been an area of significant engagement, including work to look at a successful transition plan.

5. Enabling equal access to LCTs (RB2)

Equal access is constrained by affordability and digital exclusion; the plan must retain human contact and address up-front cost barriers.

6. Proactive vs reactive unlooping for LCT enablement, accuracy of forecasting and network visibility (ET5)

Affordability trade-off (ET1): proactive investment is 'short-term pain for long-term gain'; it must be balanced against ability to pay and tested with customers, because willingness to accept up-front cost is constrained by cost-of-living pressure and is conditional on visible long-term bill benefit.

7. Biodiversity and environment including SF6 emissions (RB3)

Progress toward science-based-target alignment remains limited across the supply chain, requiring continued engagement and proportionate support for SMEs.

OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR DELIVERABILITY

The tables below set out the stakeholder engagement undertaken and the feedback received that have shaped our ED3 Delivery strategy. Each table is aligned to the relevant Ofgem ED3 outcome areas and all link to our consumer-prioritisation key messages, including the deliberative ED3 Stakeholder Engagement Workshops. Diverging views and continued trade-offs are summarised beneath the table.

ED3 Outcome – Responsible and Sustainable Business

Policy Area (theme)	Type of Engagement Undertaken	Stakeholder Groups	Summary Feedback	Impact on Business Plan	Alignment to Key Messages
Skilled workforce capacity and capability • **recruitment and retention** • **skills shortages** • **training** • **competition with other networks and wider supply chain**	**Workshops** (GSP Contractor & Manufacturer Workshop, ELT Conference, Future Ways of Working, ED3 Workshops) **Surveys** (GPTW Survey, Employer Branding Research)	• Current Employees • Contract Partners • Supply Chain Partners • Future employees • DNOs • TOs • ISG	Consistent themes across engagements highlighted sector-wide skilled labour shortages with 56,000+ roles to fill by end of ED3/T3. Consumer research placed emphasis on reliable, affordable and sustainable outcomes. Business research placed greater focus on building skills for the future, closely tied to protecting and sustaining their own operations, as well as on local economic growth and faster,	Adapted our plans to ensure the right balance of in-house and contractor workforce, alongside training and emphasis on reskilling (adult learners), as well as utilising new technologies appropriately to increase productivity. Developed a demand calculator which uses existing data alongside robust projections, and future volume requirements to show what levels of workforce numbers we need and where from. Also developed the 7Bs framework (see	RB3 — Workforce capability and ethical, sustainable supply-chain stewardship are core expectations

	In-person Events (Sustainable Supplier Events, BT OpenReach Careers Fairs) **Focus Groups** (GSP Framework) **Research** (People Workforce Vision, Consumer Priorities, Fair Future Panel) **ISG Governance** **Industry Workshops** (ENSGP Skills and Workforce Workstream, Energy Network Group Session)	• Government Bodies • Regulators • Domestic Consumers • Small and Medium sized businesses • Major energy users	easier connections. The Fair Future Panel supported investment in the capability needed to deliver a future-ready network, provided the need, customer benefit and affordability case were clearly explained. Suppliers and contractors highlight limited training capacity and the need for coordinated skills planning, whereas employees emphasised the need for structured career pathways, protected development time, and clearer progression routes with strong support for accelerated training pathways (reduced from 4 years to 18 months). There is broad support for skills passports and cross-sector transferable skills programmes alongside recruitment from 'sunset industries' (e.g., BT Openreach) which have proven successful with 102 external re-skillers recruited. The ISG proposed an option around reaching those who are home educated as a potential entry route to new starters in the industry. There remain concerns about workforce stability, burnout risk and unclear role accountability and the ISG emphasised digital skills, inclusive recruitment and local employment commitments as being key components of our delivery strategy. 100% of suppliers rate long-term workforce visibility as important for capacity planning.	workforce section) balancing internal capability, strategic partners and automation. While consumer and business research showed some differences in priorities, the core difference was around importance placed on building skills and jobs for the local communities (more important for businesses). This must be balanced against delivery and workforce needs, supplier and contractor willingness to train, ability to scale growth and training, and affordability which was a customer priority. The Services Supply Chain survey responses told us that all respondents support strategic workforce planning, with 91% supporting a common training programme. We have also accelerated time-to-competence training pathways (18-month craft programmes). A cross-DNO training workstream has been established with TOs. In line with building jobs for local communities, we have expanded recruitment from transferable skills sectors and targeted sunset industries (e.g. BT Openreach). We have set workforce diversity targets (40% female in senior leadership, 10% minority ethnic, 8% disability/LGBTQ+) to reflect local communities. We investigated the ISG proposal of recruiting from those who are home educated, with targeted campaigns. However, on balance, the scale of growth required means we are focused on building in-house skills, and increasing those with existing transferable skills. We need to build the middle layer of the workforce as a priority, as they are required to oversee any new joiners. This was explained to the ISG, alongside ways that we do support those in education (both home and in schools) to build their knowledge of the industry. To support the safety aspects, TRIR safety reduction targets have been established;	

				wellbeing, flexible working and retention measures strengthened; leadership capability and Critical Behaviours framework rolled out; and workforce readiness and sequencing tested through Future Ways of Working employee engagement group.	
Supply chain capacity, and readiness to deliver	**Workshops** (GSP Contractor & Manufacturer Workshop, ELT Conference, ED3 Programme Overview Session with SEPD GSP Delivery Partners, LCD Procurement and Supply Chain Strategy Workshop) **Surveys** (Supplier Insights Survey - 107 stakeholders, Supply Chain Mapping Questionnaire, Services Supply Chain Survey, ED3 Supply Chain Commitment Questionnaire) **In-person Events** (Sustainable Supplier Events - 115 partners) **Webinars** (ED3 Supply Chain Engagement – 60 stakeholders from 44 organisations) **Roundtables** (SSEN Supply Chain Supplier Roundtable) **Research** (ED3 Procurement Strategy	• Contract Partners • Supply Chain (Tier 1, 2, 3) • OEMs • Manufacturers (Transformers, Switchgear, Cable, Poles, Insulators, Conductor) • Consultants • DNOs • TOs • NESO • Government • Regulators • ISG	Long-term volume visibility was identified as the single biggest enabler of supplier confidence. All suppliers surveyed in the supply chain engagement webinars rated a clearly articulated network investment plan beyond ED3 as important, with cable suppliers (75%) and transformer and switchgear suppliers (89%) classifying it as critical. In addition, 92% stated that early visibility of the ED3 pipeline would be highly beneficial. The Fair Future Panel supported targeted, evidence-led investment in future capacity and resilience. By Workshop 4, new capacity and flexible networks were customers' top priority, provided investment remained affordable, well-forecast and efficient. Suppliers emphasised commitment, clarity, consistency, collaboration and capacity as the key conditions required to unlock delivery. There were strong calls for design freeze, earlier procurement, standardisation and reduced specification variants (e.g., 170 switchgear configurations to be rationalised). Feedback from Tier 1 suppliers also indicates that fragmented, project-by-project releases reduce efficiency and create challenges in retaining Tier 2 supply chain capacity. Tier 1 supply-chain mapping highlighted the importance of understanding the capability, geographic coverage,	We are shifting from project-based procurement to programme-based delivery. Supply-chain mapping is being used to identify critical Tier 2 dependencies, test where Tier 1 partners provide integration and risk-management value, and identify direct engagement opportunities where additional resilience or capacity could be secured. This evidence informs programme development, sourcing and contracting decisions. The strategy adopts integrated programme planning and supplier-informed delivery programmes across GSP and asset-based programmes. Load, non-load and connections activities will be combined where practical, supported by earlier enabling activity, programme-level resource forecasting, progressive design assurance and coordinated sequencing against energisation dates. Commercial arrangements will combine strategic partnerships with appropriate competition, supplier diversification and SME participation, balancing commitment and resilience across the supply chain. Our strategy sets out a10-year delivery horizon, with explicit focus on early pipeline visibility, multi-year planning and clearer volume signaling beyond ED3 to support supplier investment decisions. It commits to earlier design, consenting and procurement, including advanced ordering, factory-slot reservations and early market engagement for constrained	RN7 — Delivery capability - workforce, supply chain and digital capacity - is the primary constraint on pace

	Review - 17 internal + 19 supplier interviews, Critical Equipment Horizon Scanning, Fair Future Panel) **Focus Groups** (GSP Framework) **ISG Governance** **ED3 Stakeholder Engagement Workshops**		specialisms and dependency risks within the Tier 2 subcontractor market. Stakeholders supported greater transparency over where delivery is self-performed or subcontracted and earlier engagement with strategically important Tier 2 organisations. Delivery partners supported an integrated, programme-led model with work packaged around GSP areas, network outcomes and compatible asset groups. They called for earlier sequencing of enabling activity, programme-level resource forecasting, progressive design assurance, repeatable designs and greater visibility of work across future programme years. Suppliers also stressed that collaborative behaviour, fair risk allocation and consistent delivery signals matter as much as the contractual model. Strategic partnerships should therefore be supported by clear incentives, transparent change mechanisms and ongoing engagement Global supply chain constraints remain a risk, with 2-5 years needed to scale ~50% capacity, and lead times for large power transformers now 120-160+ weeks. These challenges reinforce the need for advanced planning, early market engagement and multi-year frameworks. Government, business customers and local stakeholders placed greater emphasis on UK manufacturing, local employment and regional economic value. Domestic customers placed stronger weight on affordability, reliability and efficient delivery. We have balanced these views by increasing the focus on	categories such as transformers, switchgear and cable. Multi-price control frameworks will be established (enabled by Procurement Act 2023). Design-freeze governance and variation-control processes, supported by annual OEM reviews, will be introduced alongside greater standardisation of specifications ('design once, build many') to improve manufacturability and increase capacity. The strategy strengthens the focus on strategic supplier relationships, tier-mapping, diversification, dual/second sourcing for critical categories, joint planning and collaborative contracting models to improve resilience in constrained global markets. The strategy adopts a phased, coordinated delivery approach across ED3 and ED4, explicitly seeking to smooth peaks, avoid cliff-edges and align delivery with market capacity, workforce availability and outage constraints. Transparent tender pipelines published to 2029, with category-specific approaches for cables, transformers/switchgear and overhead line materials. Specific commitment to maximise opportunities for British manufacturers, support UK content, strengthen UK manufacturing capability and promote local employment through procurement activity. However, this is balanced against competition and compliance requirements. Rather than committing to a 100% UK-based solution, the strategy recognises the need to balance economic development ambitions, market volatility (where local availability is preferable and more reliable), but against	

			UK manufacturing and local workforce development where this strengthens resilience and value, while avoiding a fully UK-based sourcing approach that could reduce competition, limit availability or increase costs for customers. Suppliers are broadly confident they can support ED3 growth (4.4/5 in the Services Supply Chain Survey), but confidence is conditional on earlier and more stable workload visibility, access to training and authorisation, and coordinated action on scarce technical skills. Suppliers highlighted shortages of Senior Authorised Person resource as a delivery risk and called for greater sector support to build capacity. Customers, however, continue to place strong emphasis on affordability, efficient delivery and value for money. We have balanced these views by supporting earlier visibility of future work, shared learning, common training expectations and clearer qualification pathways to support contractor forward planning activities. This strengthens sector capability without creating unnecessary duplication of cost for customers.	affordability, availability in the market, and procurement legislation.	
Supply chain sustainability	**In-person Events** (Sustainable Supplier Events Perth & Reading - 115 partners) **Workshops** (GSP Contractor & Manufacturer Workshop)	• Contract Partners, Supply Chain (Tier 1, 2, 3) • OEMs • Manufacturers • DNOs • TOs	There is strong supplier support for climate adaptation requirements, clearer circular economy guidance and improved sustainability reporting (Loop metrics, social value KPIs), though suppliers have requested support for mandatory standardised social value metrics. There is an emphasis on early integration of	Social value metrics embedded in all contracts with minimum weighting criteria for Local Content; commitment to procure average % of plan equipment expenditure from UK manufacturers; circular economy practices expanded within procurement approach; sustainability scoring and environmental compliance embedded in procurement	RB3 — Workforce capability and ethical, sustainable supply-chain stewardship are core expectations

	Surveys (Supplier Insights Survey, Supply Chain Mapping) **Research** (ENA/BEAMA Electricity Networks Sector Growth Plan, Critical Equipment Horizon Scanning, ED3 Procurement Strategy Review) **Webinars** (ED3 Supply Chain Engagement) **ISG Governance** **ED3 Stakeholder Engagement Workshops**	• NESO • Government Bodies • Regulators • ISG • Crown Commercial Service	social value in project scoping with better guidance on quantifying outcomes alongside ethical supply chain standards. Suppliers show strong interest in low-carbon and nature-positive delivery methods. 93% of supply chain stakeholders have shown willingness to engage again showing strong commitment to ED3 mobilisation.	assessment; climate-adaptation-led delivery design adopted; SF6-free transition planning aligned with regulatory requirements; ethical supply chain standards strengthened with enhanced modern slavery guidance; strategic partnership model established underpinned by collaboration, incentives and shared accountability; Common Data Environment being developed for transparency; collaboration with Crown Commercial Service to boost UK manufacturing; regional diversification and dual sourcing to strengthen resilience; environmental and social standards embedded consistent with value-for-money.	
Sustainable supply chains (EAP workstream)	**In-person Events** (Sustainable Supplier Engagement Days Perth & Reading) **Surveys** (Supplier Procurement Code Survey 2024/2025) **Webinars** (How to become a smart sustainable SSEN supplier) **Research** (Double Materiality Assessment) **ED3 Stakeholder Engagement Workshops**	• Other Supply Chain Partners • Contract Partners • External Consultants	Supplier surveys indicated that 45% are willing to sign up to the Sustainable Procurement Code, with 32.5% already signed and 20% still reluctant. Suppliers requested clearer guidance on recycling, circular economy requirements and compliance. There has been strong interest in follow-up on sustainability accreditations like EcoVadis with requests for more direct engagement opportunities including webinars and collaboration sessions. Suppliers need better understanding of SME capacity limitations and support for those early on in their sustainability journey. The proposal of adding climate adaptation requirements to the	Sustainable Supplier Code enhanced with climate resilience metric and mandatory for new contracts from April 2028. Target of 80% suppliers by spend meeting code by 2033 with mandatory Ecovadis rating for contracts over £2m. Social value metrics included in procurement frameworks with 5 mandatory and 10 recommended metrics. Supply chain management investment of [redacted] including annual supplier engagement events, webinars and Sustainable Supplier Awards. Double Materiality Assessment driving action plan development for material value chain impacts. Human Rights and Modern Slavery implementation plan developed. Circular economy principles embedded in procurement processes with targets for recycled content and material recovery pathways. Innovation gateway events committed annually to ensure pathways for supplier sustainability solutions.	RB3 — Workforce capability and ethical, sustainable supply-chain stewardship are core expectations

			Sustainable Supplier Code received very positive feedback. Suppliers ranked SBTi guidance as area most needing support, but there was 100% stakeholder support for circular asset management principles. Progress towards SBT alignment remains limited across supply chain requiring further engagement. Suppliers expressed interest in climate risk interdependency workshops.		
Digitalisation, AI and future skills **• Digital capability and data literacy** **• AI-enabled delivery and automation** **• Future workforce skills requirements** **• System integration and digital productivity**	**Workshops** (Future Ways of Working Employee Output Session, ENSGP Skills and Workforce Workstream, ED3 Engagement Workshops) **Surveys** (GPTW Survey) **Research** (People Workforce Vision, Business Priorities Research) **Case Study** (Digital Skills Work with Oxford University) **Governance and Assurance** (ISG) **Industry Engagement** (Energy & Utility Skills, DESNZ, DNOs and TOs)	• Current Employees • Future Workforce • Trade Unions • Supply Chain Partners • Delivery Partners • DNOs and TOs • Energy & Utility Skills • Government Bodies • Regulators • ISG • Industry Partners	Stakeholders consistently highlighted that future network delivery will require a broader mix of operational, engineering, digital and analytical skills alongside traditional craft roles. Large business energy users placed greater emphasis than domestic customers on smarter, more secure network operation, cyber security, technology and future skills. This reflects their reliance on electricity, data and digital systems for business continuity, and supports investment in digital capability where it improves resilience, efficiency and service. Employees emphasised that credible transformation depends on strengthening systems, data, training and change leadership before introducing role redesign or greater automation. They called for integrated systems, clearer accountability, reduced handovers, structured reskilling pathways and automation that removes low-value administration without undermining professional judgement, safety or wellbeing. GPTW feedback identified fragmented and non-integrated systems as barriers to productivity and called for robust IT, end-user involvement, digital and AI	The strategy strengthens investment in digital capability, operational technology, data and analytics, AI-enabled decision support, cyber resilience, advanced planning and programme leadership skills. Digitalisation and automation are being used to increase productivity and delivery capacity without requiring proportional workforce growth. This includes investments in advanced planning and scheduling, workforce optimisation, outage planning, field technology and AI-enabled decision support. The strategy develops future-skills and reskilling pathways while retaining clear human accountability, governance and safety assurance. Workforce impacts will be considered for major innovation and business-change initiatives, supported by early capability planning and targeted retraining. Integrated digital platforms support programme controls, workforce management, asset information, forecasting and performance reporting. Technology-enabled learning is also being developed, including digital training materials, AI-ID for service-cable location and VR-based training and assessment for LV jointers.	RN7 — Delivery capability, including workforce, supply-chain and digital capacity, is a primary constraint on pace.

			training, improved data platforms and analytics capability. The ISG highlighted the growing role of robotics, AI and digital monitoring, and supported digital-first delivery, modernised training and investment in future-facing skills. Stakeholders also stressed the need for responsible use of AI, trusted data and continued human accountability.		
Wayleaves, consents and delivery approvals • **Land rights and third-party consents** • **Process consistency and transparency** • **Clear ownership and escalation** • **Early identification of consenting risk**	**Webinars** (Land Rights Webinar) **Online Forums** (Housing Developer, ICP/IDNO and Connections Forums) **Workshops** (ED3 Stakeholder Engagement Workshops) **Delivery Partner Engagement** (GSP Contractor and Delivery Partner Sessions)	• Housing developers • Industrial and commercial customers • ICPs and IDNOs • Local authorities and parish councils • Community energy organisations • Consultants • Distributed generation customers • EV installers and manufacturers • NESO and delivery partners	Stakeholders identified land rights and consents as a significant constraint on delivery timescales. They reported poor visibility of progress, unclear or inconsistent requirements, rework caused by late documentation changes, and limited escalation routes when issues arose. Stakeholders asked for clearer requirements at the outset, standardised processes, defined service levels, earlier identification of land-rights risks and improved coordination between project teams, wayleaves teams, legal advisers and external parties. They stressed that confidence in ED3 delivery depends on transparent communication, clear accountability and earlier certainty over consenting requirements.	The delivery approach incorporates earlier identification of land and consenting requirements, clearer ownership and escalation protocols, standardised processes and active management of critical approvals. Consenting and land-rights dependencies will be considered earlier in programme planning and design maturity assessments, with forward programme visibility used to identify resource needs and risks. This supports earlier intervention, reduces late-stage rework and improves confidence in programme sequencing and delivery dates.	RN7: Delivery capability and the coordination of critical delivery dependencies are primary constraints on pace.
Customer disruption and interruptions, coordination with other utilities and Local Authorities (LV workstream)	**Focus Groups** (Consumer Priorities Qualitative) **Online Forums** (Housing Developer Forum, DER Forum, Equal LCT) **Research** (ENA Unlooping Research)	• Housing Developers • Local Authorities • DER Operators • Consultants • Domestic Customers • Business customers	85% of stakeholders want early visibility of LV upgrade programmes and the Fair Future Panel feedback reinforced that customers are more accepting of disruption where the long-term benefit is clearly explained, works are coordinated, and support is visible for customers most affected.	Strategy commits to enabling 463,000 homes to connect LCTs in ED3 across both licence areas. Connection response times: 24hrs for 80% standard heat pump applications, 2 days for 90% of all requests - exceeding Warm Homes Plan requirements. Full visibility of forward programmes for all stakeholders committed by April 2030. Coordination with other parties embedded in programmatic approach and pilots. External IT investment for visibility of future work programmes via LAEP+(LENZA)	ET4 — Place-based coordination, local participation and whole-system planning

	ED3 Stakeholder Engagement Workshops **Roundtables** (Utility Week) **Local Authority Advisory Board**	• Community Energy Groups • Other Utilities	There have been strong calls for coordination within the delivery of these with stakeholders suggesting facilitating easier easements, upgrading existing infrastructure alongside new works, collaborating with other network upgrades, coordinating with other utilities, and using directional drilling. Customers expect works to be done once, done fairly, and providing future-proofed benefit. DNO's are seen as best-placed communicators (followed by LAs) to manage this. Acceptance increases significantly when mitigations are explained (advance notice, reinstatement standards), and preferred channels for doing so are letters/leaflets backed by TV/social media for awareness.	tool providing street-level view of LCT forecasts and draft programme. Dedicated community liaison teams (8 FTEs) established to engage with stakeholders and support end-to-end customer journey. Customer engagement portal developed including knowledge library, Connections Readiness Indicator, and customer journey explanation.	

ED3 Outcome – Smarter Networks

Policy Area (theme)	Type of Engagement Undertaken	Stakeholder Groups	Summary Feedback	Impact on Business Plan	Alignment to Key Messages
Deliverability, securing the supply chain and workforce requirements (Connections and LV workstreams)	**Online Forums** (DER Forum, ICP/IDNO Forum) **Surveys** (Consumer Priorities Quantitative) **Focus Groups** (Consumer Priorities Qualitative) **Roundtables** **ED3 Stakeholder Engagement Workshops**	• DER Operators • ICPs/IDNOs • Consultants • Supply Chain Partners • Contractors • Local Authorities • Industry Bodies	Top priorities from DER forum stakeholders were to accelerate delivery, invest ahead of need, and improve delivery models to support stretched delivery capacity. Supply chain engagement emphasised the need for standardisation and digitised work planning processes. Stakeholders want early visibility of programme scope and geographic priorities to mitigate against key risks such as slow progress, difficulties predicting upgrade needs, and an underestimation of required reinforcement scale. Internally this needs to be coupled with a step change in training and workforce development.	Our blended delivery model combines internal capability with strategic delivery partners, supported by early supplier engagement, greater standardisation and programme-based delivery. Capacity will build progressively through ED3, alongside continued investment in apprenticeships, training and digital capabilities	RN7 — Delivery capability - workforce, supply chain and digital capacity - is the primary constraint on pace
Advanced Construction and Cabling Techniques (Innovation workstream)	**Webinars** (FORTRESS Show & Tell, FARM Webinar, Equal LCT, Closing the Loop) **In-person Events** (Energy Innovation Summit) **Bilaterals** (Ofgem DNO Innovation Forum) **Research** (Consumer Priorities Research)	• DNOs • Healthcare Sector • Government • Emergency Response • Supply Chain Partners • Academia • Research Bodies • Local Authorities • Community Energy • Consultants • Transmission	Stakeholders have a perception of traditional network extension and reinforcement as slow, disruptive and expensive, calling for faster, lower-impact delivery methods. Low-dig or no-dig approaches were ranked as top priorities, with improved insight into cable condition and health tied second. Insights from our FORTRESS project feedback webinar highlighted the need to focus on decarbonising protected sites (hospitals, airports) as heat electrifies, and a NHS Tayside case study demonstrated these network impacts and how further flexibility options can avoid costly reinforcement.	LV Reinforcement portfolio of projects developed incorporating FORTRESS, SeaChange FARM, and RIDES learnings. SIF Alpha applications being progressed with deeper stakeholder engagement. Circular Economy captured as required project in innovation tracker with potential project being scoped following ENA Basecamp. Sustainability factors upweighted in Business Plan to support existing and future sustainable nature-based and waste reduction project portfolio. Innovation funding being assessed to support Major Connections Team aims around new digital tools and self-service methods. Close working with Sustainability team to identify innovative projects supporting their ED3 aspirations.	SN3 — Innovation must move beyond pilots to measurable value at scale

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	ED3 Stakeholder Engagement Workshops	• Installers • Contractors	Coordinated planning was emphasised as essential for resilience and cost reduction, with developers suggesting advanced construction and cabling techniques such as simplified easements, coordinating upgrades with other works, and considering directional drilling to reduce disruption.		
Proactive vs reactive unlooping for LCT enablement, accuracy of forecasting and network visibility (LV workstream)	**Webinars** (Equal LCT, Have Your Say) **Online Forums** (LA Forum, DER Forum, ICP/IDNO Forum, Housing Developer Forum) **Surveys** (Consumer Priorities Quantitative) **Focus Groups** (Consumer Priorities Qualitative) **Research** (ENA Unlooping Collaborative DNO Research, Fair Future Panel) **ED3 Stakeholder Engagement Workshops**	• Domestic Customers • Local Authorities • Housing Associations • Community Energy • ICPs/IDNOs • Housing Developers • DER Operators • Consultants • Consumer Groups • Academia • Suppliers	The Fair Future Panel recognised the need to prepare the network for future low-carbon technology uptake, but viewed this as highly fairness-sensitive. Support depended on clear evidence of need, protection for customers least able to benefit, and confidence that proactive works would avoid higher costs or disruption later. Among wider stakeholder groups, there was a strong consensus for proactive LV upgrades: 77% support proactive upgrades even where homes don't currently need LCTs (Equal LCT); 100% of housing developers agree proactive improvements are necessary; 66-68% acceptance for both reactive and proactive unlooping (ENA research). Low awareness of unlooping (only 8% pre-survey) highlights education gap. Key enablers for acceptance: trust in DNO, clear communication, advance notice, support for vulnerable customers, and 'one-off upgrade' framing. Concerns centre on disruption (digging, access, reinstatement), not the principle itself. Customers expect DNOs to show leadership and coordinate street-by-street works efficiently.	Trials being undertaken in years 4&5 requirement to balance this with affordability - being proactive is short term pain for long term gain. Proactive programmatic approach embedded as core LV strategy with 77% stakeholder support. ENA research insights on communication incorporated - plain-English comms, tailored vulnerable customer support, and advance notice commitments included. Strategy targets 463,000 homes enabled to connect LCTs in ED3. Prioritisation framework developed considering asset condition, fault history, and socio-demographics to ensure Just Transition. From 2028, provide a 24-hour response for 80% of standard heat pump applications, two days for 90%, and within two days for all LV LCT connection requests.	ET5 — Unlooping and targeted local reinforcement as critical enablers of electrification