

# The Uniform Network Code (UNC) – *the Summary*

## Foreword

For many decades, homes and businesses across the nation have relied on gas as Britain's most dependable form of energy, and over 22 million gas consumers have grown accustomed to instant, trouble-free delivery whenever they turn on a gas tap. Thanks to that continuing dependability, most gas consumers had not noticed the way the gas industry had reinvented itself until the introduction of competition into the domestic market. Full competition has now been firmly established throughout many areas of the gas market and an industry code has been developed to meet the evolving needs and requirements of all parties.

In March 1996, following the introduction of competition, the Network Code became the legal hub around which the transportation of gas operated in Great Britain, and Transco (now National Grid) owned and operated all of the major gas networks across the mainland. This landscape changed in May 2005, with the introduction of a Uniform Network Code (UNC) that facilitated the owning of gas networks by companies other than National Grid.

The UNC defines the rights and responsibilities for users of gas transportation systems, and provides for all system users to have equal access to transportation services. The major concepts underlying the Uniform Network Code are that:

- *Gas transportation services should meet market requirements.*
- *System security and safety should be assured.*
- *Pricing should reflect the real costs of the services concerned.*
- *Robust computer systems should be developed and maintained.*
- *Daily energy balancing should be operated.*
- *Gas Shippers (Shippers) should be incentivised to balance their own supply and demand.*

This summary describes the documents that comprise and are associated with the UNC. However, with an effective modification process in place to enable change, the UNC will continue to develop in response to market requirements. This summary is therefore a snapshot in time and, just like the UNC, should be expected to change and develop over time.

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# **The Uniform Network Code (UNC)**

## **1 Introduction**

A 'Network Code' is a legal document that forms the basis of the arrangements between a Gas Transporter (GT) and the Shippers whose gas it transports. The Network Code, which is the subject of this document, is that involving the major Transporters and is termed the Uniform Network Code (UNC).

A copy of the full Uniform Network Code can be accessed and downloaded from the Joint Office of Gas Transporters web site, [www.gasgovernance.com](http://www.gasgovernance.com).

### **1.1 Uniform Network Code Framework Agreement and Accession Agreement**

By signing this document each Transporter and each Shipper, wishing to use its network, enter into an agreement 'for the purposes of giving effect to and binding themselves by the Uniform Network Code'. The document itself is only a few pages long. It defines certain key terms, records the names and addresses of the parties, and commits them to work both with each other and with all the other parties to the UNC.

For later signatories, the Accession Agreement, which has the same substantive effect, is used to become a party to the UNC.

### **1.2 Individual Network Codes**

An individual Network Code, or 'Short Form Code', is the Network Code published by each GT, as required by its licence. It is called a Short Form Code because it contains no substantive terms and is given substance by appropriate cross-reference to the terms of the UNC. Apart from the name of the GT concerned, the Short Form Codes are identical at present.

Copies are available at: [www.gasgovernance.com](http://www.gasgovernance.com).

### **1.3 The Uniform Network Code Documents**

The Uniform Network Code comprises the:

- Introduction;
- Transportation Principal Document (TPD);
- Offtake Arrangements Document (OAD);
- Modification Rules;
- Transition Document (TD); and
- General Terms.

For ease of reference the documents that comprise the UNC are divided into three Binders (1, 2 and 3), and are then further sub divided into Sections.

## **2 UNC Binder 1**

This Binder contains the following documents:

- a) List of Defined Terms
- b) Introduction
- c) Transition Document

- d) Modification Rules
- e) General Terms.

## **2.1 Modification History**

This appears at the front of Binder 1. This list does not form part of the formal UNC and is published for information purposes only. It provides a history of when each Modification and/or Consent to Modify the UNC came into effect, and also a history of the revisions made to the UNC and the issue dates of each revised version.

## **2.2 List of Defined Terms**

This appears at the front of Binder 1. This list does not form part of the formal UNC and is published for information purposes only. It provides a quick reference guide to the appropriate paragraph references where each defined term can be found.

## **2.3 Table of Contents**

This lists the documents in Binder 1 that form part of the UNC.

## **2.4 The Introduction**

This describes the documents that make up the UNC (see list at 1.3) and sets out the relationship between the UNC and the individual Network Codes.

## **2.5 The Transition Document (TD)**

This document includes its own Table of Contents, and defines those aspects of the UNC where interim arrangements were agreed prior to its introduction, and also on-going transitions in the regime. The Transition Document takes precedence over the equivalent sections of the TPD for the dates specified in individual clauses or sections of the Transition Document. It is divided into the following parts:

- Part I – General
- Part II – Transportation Principal Document
  - Part IIA – General
  - Part IIB – Relevant Transporters
  - Part IIC – Transitional Rules
  - Part IID – Flexibility Bidding
- Part III – Offtake Arrangements Document
- Part IV – Modification Rules.

## **2.6 Modification Rules (MRs)**

The UNC and each of the individual network codes may need to change over time as experience is gained and as business conditions vary. GT licences require the Transporters to define and operate a mechanism to control the process of change – the Modification Rules. The Modification Rules set out clear governance arrangements for the management of the change process. This section also details the purpose and composition of the Modification Panel and defines how proposals to modify the UNC should be treated. The Modification Rules in the UNC enable:

- Shippers, one third party (energywatch) and the Transporters to make proposals for change
- All interested parties to make representations regarding proposed changes
- Transporters to approach Ofgem so that its governing body (the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority) may make a decision on whether or not any proposal should be implemented.

## **2.7 The General Terms**

This is split into three subsections.

### **2.7.1 Section A Dispute Resolution**

This section covers the concepts of Expert Determination and Mediation.

### **2.7.2 Section B General**

This section covers high level references associated with the UNC; Parties to the UNC (description, effect of Code on each party); Force Majeure (meaning, effect, and information); the establishment and functions of the UNC Committee and Sub-Committees; Notices and Communications (methods, delivery and reception); Assignment of rights, including waiver, rights of third parties, language, jurisdiction and governing law.

### **2.7.3 Section C Interpretation**

This section covers specific fully defined terms (in addition to the list provided at the front of Binder 1) and their interpretation, including references to various Acts, Licences, time and dates, System clearing contract, Transportation constraint, costs and expenses, Demand, Condition A11 (18) Approval, and other miscellaneous references. It also includes technical interpretations (units and other terms, calorific value, conversions, and therms).

## **3 UNC Binder 2**

This Binder contains the Transportation Principal Document (TPD), which is subdivided into Sections A to Z.

### **3.1 The Transportation Principal Document (TPD)**

The TPD sets out the transportation arrangements between Transporters and Shippers and certain similar arrangements between upstream Transporters and Distribution Network Operator (DNO) Users. It contains over twenty sections covering several hundred pages, which define in precise legal detail the UNC. Some sections cover topics that are common to many contracts, e.g. confidentiality obligations, mechanisms for resolving disputes, and provisions to limit the legal liability of the signatory parties. Other sections cover topics which are specific to gas transportation. This document includes its own Table of Contents.

- Section A System Classification
- Section B System Use and Capacity
- Section C Nominations
- Section D Operational Balancing and Trading Arrangements
- Section E Daily Quantities, Imbalances and Reconciliation
- Section F System Clearing, Balancing Charges and Neutrality
- Section G Supply Points
- Section H Demand Estimation and Demand Forecasting
- Section I Entry Requirements
- Section J Exit Requirements
- Section K Operating Margins

- Section L Maintenance and Operational Planning
- Section M Supply Point Metering
- Section N Shrinkage
- Section O System Planning
- Section P (Unused at present)
- Section Q Emergencies
- Section R Storage
- Section S Invoicing and Payment
- Section T (Unused at present)
- Section U UK Link
- Section V General
- Section W (Unused at present)
- Section X Energy Balancing Credit Management
- Section Y (Unused at present)
- Section Z National Grid LNG Storage Facilities

### ***3.1.1 Section A System Classification***

This section classifies and defines the different Systems: National Transmission System (NTS) and the Local Distribution Zones (LDZs), the Exit Zones, the System Points, including the Scottish Independent Networks (SINs). It also describes System Entry and Exit Points and Supply Points.

### ***3.1.2 Section B System Use and Capacity***

This section contains information relating to the use of the System, and to NTS Entry Capacity (different types of Entry Capacity, auctions, availability, allocation, constraint management, curtailment of Interruptible NTS Entry Capacity, surrender, different types of charges, neutrality arrangements); NTS Exit Capacity (registration at different points, different types of charges, surrender, Firm Capacity Application); Supply Point and LDZ Capacity (different types of registration and charges); Capacity Transfer; NTS Offtake Capacity (Statement, registration, charges).

### ***3.1.3 Section C Nominations***

This section relates to the daily nomination of quantities of gas for delivery to and offtaken from the Total System, enabling the operation of the NTS and Operational Balancing. It includes topics such as the nomination timetable and calorific value information, and information on Output and Input Nominations, Renominations, and Trade Nominations.

### ***3.1.4 Section D Operational Balancing and Trading Arrangements***

This section concerns the arrangements made to maintain the balance between the quantities of gas delivered to and offtaken from the Total System, including operational balancing requirements, decisions and actions. Trading arrangements are also covered, (market transactions and contract renominations, contingencies, and multi-day balancing actions, etc.). *Annex D-1* sets out terms and condition relating to the Trading System to be incorporated into the Trading System Arrangements.

### ***3.1.5 Section E Daily Quantities, Imbalances and Reconciliation***

This section relates to the determination of the daily quantities input and offtaken from the Total System by each Shipper and the associated charges, together with the determination of daily imbalances, any overrun and ratchet charges, and any scheduling charges. It deals with such topics as Entry/Exit Allocation Agents, unclaimed entry allocation, gas illegally taken, and unauthorised gas flows. It describes the calculation of a Shipper's Daily Imbalance and how Non Daily Metered (NDM), Daily Metered (DM) and CSEP Reconciliation are carried out, as well as aggregate NDM and suppressed reconciliation. Annual Quantity (AQ) revision and reconciliation is also included.

### **3.1.6 Section F System Clearing, Balancing Charges and Neutrality**

This section is concerned with the clearing of each Shipper's daily imbalances, the calculation and payment of daily imbalance charges and scheduling charges; the calculation and payment of balancing neutrality charges; the clearing of each Shipper's reconciliation quantities; and the calculation and payment of reconciliation neutrality charges.

### **3.1.7 Section G Supply Points**

This section covers the structural rules associated with Supply Points; their registration (nomination, offer, confirmation, withdrawal and isolation); DM Supply Point capacity and offtake rates; Interruptible Supply Points; and New Supply Meter Points and other siteworks. *Annex G-1* relates to revisions to the Supply Point Register not requiring reconfirmation, and *Annex G-2* contains an example of the Mandatory Allocation Agency Terms Agreement.

### **3.1.8 Section H Demand Estimation and Demand Forecasting**

This section concerns the estimation and forecasting of demand for gas at NDM Supply Point Components. It includes information relating to End User Categories and Demand Models (composite weather variable, seasonal normal demand, NDM sampling), and the determination of Supply Meter Point demand (formulae, annual load profile, weather correction factor, scaling factor, etc.). It also covers NDM Annual Quantities (including the formula), NDM capacity (including formulae), and daily demand forecasting.

### **3.1.9 Section I Entry Requirements**

This section relates to the delivery of gas to the Total System at System Entry Points. It includes information relating to Network Entry Agreements, Network Entry Provisions (availability, amendment, gas entry conditions, measurement provisions and Local Operating Procedures), and to the delivery of the gas (compliance, non-compliant gas, special delivery arrangements, acceptance, Individual System Entry Point (ISEP) capability, restricted delivery and rates of delivery).

### **3.1.10 Section J Exit Requirements**

This section contains information relating to the offtake of gas from a System at System Exit Points, including Inter-System Offtakes and Connected System Exit Points (CSEPs) and sets out the Network Exit Provisions and offtake requirements (availability, compliance, non-availability, etc.) together with Shipper offtake obligations in respect of different types/points of offtake. It also sets out special provisions for NExA (Network Exit Agreement) Supply Meter Points, CSEPs and Inter-System Offtakes.

### **3.1.11 Section K Operating Margins**

This section concerns the Operating Margins Requirements, i.e. the requirements for gas to be delivered to the NTS for the purposes of (a) operational balancing and (b) in an emergency (in order to maintain safe pressures within the NTS during the period in which the NTS is run down). It also covers capacity transfers, procurement and injection, and the recovery of Operating Margins costs.

### **3.1.12 Section L Maintenance and Operational Planning**

This section relates to the requirements that are necessary to support the operational planning associated with the NTS Maintenance Programme. It describes the information gathering process, the information required from each Shipper, and the contents of the Maintenance Programme that National Grid NTS is required to publish. It also covers system maintenance of the NTS under the Maintenance Programme.

### **3.1.13 Section M Supply Point Metering**

This section contains the provisions for the metering of the offtake of gas from the Total System at Supply Meter Points. It covers the installation and reading of Supply Point Meters and associated activities, including the provision of daily read meter readings to Shippers.

### **3.1.14 Section N Shrinkage**

This section covers all aspects of NTS and LDZ Shrinkage (gas in a System which is used by a Transporter in connection with the operation of, or which is unaccounted for as offtaken from, a System) including the determination of Shrinkage and its accounting.

### **3.1.15 Section O System Planning**

National Grid NTS publishes assumptions and information regarding supply and demand for gas in respect of the Total System and its use. Each Transporter also publishes information regarding supply and demand for gas in respect of the relevant System and its use. This section sets out the requirements for Shippers to provide information to the Transporters to enable publication, and defines the criteria (consultation processes, sources, confidentiality, content, etc.) surrounding the gathering of the information required to produce these documents. The documents, published each year, are:

- Transporting Britain's Energy
- Ten Year Statement
- Gas Safety (Management) Regulations Safety Case Storage Volume.

### **3.1.16 Section P**

This section is not currently in use.

### **3.1.17 Section Q Emergencies**

This section relates to Gas Supply Emergencies, the Safety Monitor and the Firm Gas Monitor, and to Emergency and Storage Curtailment. It defines different types of gas supply emergency, Emergency Steps, and Emergency Procedures and Priority Consumers, and sets out the requirements for Transporters and Shippers to work in a cooperative manner. It describes the Shipper's responsibilities in terms of the Emergency Preparedness levels expected at different types of Supply Point and the actions that a Transporter and a Shipper must take when a Gas Supply Emergency occurs (supply and demand control, Supply-side and Demand-side steps, return to normal operation). It also covers the Consequences of an Emergency (suspensions of certain Code provisions, clearing of balances, etc.).

It describes the information and notification requirements in respect of the Safety Monitor and the Firm Gas Monitor, together with the actions that National Grid NTS may take to prevent Monitor breaches.

Emergency Curtailment trade arrangements and adjustments are also covered, as are Storage Curtailment compensation arrangements.

### **3.1.18 Section R Storage**

This section sets out provisions (see also *Sections I and J*) as to the terms on which Shippers may offtake gas from the Total System for injection to Storage Facilities, and deliver gas withdrawn from Storage/LNG Importation Facilities to the Total System. It defines Storage Facilities, LNG Importation Facilities and National Grid LNG Storage, the related services and terms relating to Storage Facilities, as well as Storage Connection Agreements. It covers the Offtake of gas at Storage Connection Points (including Interruption) and also Constrained Storage (Constrained Storage Renominations, the effect of nomination, and minimum inventory requirements).

### **3.1.19 Section S Invoicing and Payment**

This section sets out the arrangements for invoicing and payments. It details invoice types, together with the information that is specified on an invoice, the timing, and the making of adjustments. It also covers late payment, deductions/withholdings etc., as well as the querying of invoices. *Annex S-1* lists invoice types and the specific items of which each may be composed. *Annex S-2* provides a table on Invoice Query Batch/sample size. *Annex S-3* provides a table on Query Standards.

### **3.1.20 Section T**

This section is not currently in use.

### **3.1.21 Section U UK Link**

This section concerns the arrangements that relate to the information exchange system known as UK Link and it covers access/use, equipment and operational requirements, licensed software, and forms of communication, including the Active Notification System (ANS) and User Trade Communications. Details concerning contingency arrangements and the failure of UK Link are also covered, as is the process by which Modifications to UK Link may be proposed, made and notified.

### **3.1.22 Section V General**

This section includes information concerning User Admission, and Discontinuing Users and Termination. It also covers User Agents and the Transporter Agency, the Transporter as User, Ancillary Agreements, Non-Code Transportation Arrangements, Code Credit Limits, Information and Confidentiality, Liability and related Issues, Neutrality and Aggregate NDM Reconciliation Auditor and Operations Reporting, Compensation. *Annex V-1* and *Annex V-2* contain tables relating to Operational Market Data and SO Commodity Charge Information, and *Annex V-3* covers Transportation Revenue Information.

### **3.1.23 Section W**

This section is not currently in use.

### **3.1.24 Section X Energy Balancing Credit Management**

This section concerns the provisions in place to limit the extent of the liability that would be incurred by all Shippers if a Shipper fails to make payment of any Energy Balancing Charge when it is due. It covers the workings of the Energy Balancing Credit Committee and establishes the principles relating to Security, Energy Balancing Indebtedness and Cash Calls, as well as payment of Energy Balancing Invoices. It also includes the Appointment of a Receiver.

### **3.1.25 Section Y**

This section is not currently in use.

### **3.1.26 Section Z National Grid LNG Storage Facilities**

This section relates to the use of a National Grid LNG Storage Facility. It covers storage capacity (including application for), storage transfers, injections and withdrawals, storage charges (overrun, scheduling and management) and credit limits. It also includes Storage Termination, and National Grid LNG storage assignment.

## **4 UNC Binder 3**

This Binder contains the Offtake Arrangements Document (OAD), which is subdivided into Sections A to N, together with an Appendix.

### **4.1 The Offtake Arrangements Document (OAD)**

This document sets out arrangements between Transporters relating to the connection and operation of their Systems at Offtakes and other matters. It defines the operational and technical arrangements at connections between the National Transmission System (NTS) and Distribution Networks, and between Distribution Networks. The OAD includes provisions for bilateral Supplemental Agreements, which contain site-specific details for each offtake, covering such details as who owns particular connection assets, the measurement standards that must be maintained, etc. The OAD includes its own Table of Contents and comprises 14 sections (A – N), together with an appendix. The sections cover:

- Section A Scope and Classification
- Section B Connection Facilities
- Section C Safety and Emergency
- Section D Measurements
- Section E Telemetry, etc.
- Section F Determination of Calorific Value
- Section G Maintenance
- Section H NTS Long Term Demand Forecasting
- Section I NTS Operational Flows
- Section J LDZ/LDZ Offtakes – Planning and Operational Flows
- Section K LDZ System Entry Points
- Section L Cost Recovery and Invoicing
- Section M Information Flows
- Section N General
- Appendix 1 - Part 1 – Form of Supplemental Agreement (NTS/LDZ Offtake)

#### **4.1.1 Section A Scope and Classification**

This section sets out provisions (in addition to those of *TPD Section A*) relating to the classification of Systems and System Points for the purposes of the OAD, the basis on which specific details relating to particular System Points are to be recorded, and the basis on which gas flows between Systems are to be treated for certain purposes under the OAD.

#### **4.1.2 Section B Connection Facilities**

This section sets out the basis on which land comprising the Offtake Site for each Offtake is or is to be owned or occupied by the parties; the requirements relating to the installation, retention, modification, relocation, compatibility and decommissioning of Connection Facilities at each Offtake Site; and the basis on which one party may have access to land at the Offtake Site owned or occupied by another party. *Annex B-1* depicts a generic diagram of an Offtake. *Annex B-2 (Parts 1 and 2)* relates to site services.

#### **4.1.3 Section C Safety and Emergency**

This section sets out requirements in relation to gas supply emergencies; the adoption, review and revision of the Safe Control of Operations (SCO) Interface Procedure; site emergency procedures established by each party at each Offtake Site; and the General Site Safety and Environmental Requirements (GSSERs) to be established by each party at each Offtake Site.

#### **4.1.4 Section D Measurements**

This section sets out the requirements for the installation, operation and maintenance of Measurement Equipment for the purposes of measuring gas flows from the upstream System to the downstream System at an Offtake, and certain related issues. *Annex D-1 (Parts 1 and 2)* contains tables relating to Measured Data and Permitted Ranges at NTS/LDZ Offtakes, and at LDZ/LDZ Offtakes. *Annex D-2* relates to best practice recommendations and standards.

#### **4.1.5 Section E Telemetry, etc**

This section sets out National Grid NTS' requirements for telemetry in relation to NTS/LDZ Offtakes, and the requirements of the upstream Distribution Network Owner (DNO) for provision of daily reads in relation to LDZ/LDZ Offtakes. *Annex E-1* concerns Points of Telemetry and incorporates five tables relating to analogues, states, controls, and counters. *Annex E-2* relates to resilience of Telemetry connection facilities. *Annex E-3* relates to compatibility requirements. *Annex E-4* concerns Daily Read Facilities and includes two tables on data transfer and provision.

#### **4.1.6 Section F Determination of Calorific Value (CV)**

This section sets out provisions for the avoidance or minimisation of CV shrinkage, terms for the provision by one party to another of data for the purposes of determining daily CVs, and the basis on which National Grid NTS will (until 31 March 2007) determine daily CVs on behalf of each DNO.

#### **4.1.7 Section G Maintenance**

This section sets out the basis on which, and the extent to which, the maintenance of the NTS and each LDZ will (as between the parties) be planned and coordinated, and certain related issues. *Annex G-1* covers minimum details required for the Maintenance Programme, and *Annex G-2* provides the timetable for maintenance programming for both the NTS/LDZ Offtakes and LDZ/LDZ Offtakes.

#### **4.1.8 Section H NTS Long Term Demand Forecasting**

This section sets out the requirements for National Grid NTS and each DNO to exchange information relating to historic and forecast development of demand in relation to each DNO's LDZ(s). *Annex H-1* contains tables relating to information specification.

#### **4.1.9 Section I NTS Operational Flows**

This section sets out requirements (for the purposes of TPD Section J4) as to the submission of Offtake Profile Notices in relation to NTS/LDZ Offtakes, together with certain other details required in relation to NTS/LDZ Offtakes. It also sets out provisions as to pressure at NTS/LDZ Offtakes, the basis (as between National Grid NTS and the DNOs) on which interruption rights under TPD Section G will be exercised, and other operational provisions relating to LDZs and NTS/LDZ Offtakes.

#### **4.1.10 Section J LDZ/LDZ Offtakes – Planning and Operational Flows**

This section sets out the basis on which, in relation to an LDZ/LDZ Offtake, the parties will exchange planning information. It also covers the establishment of Offtake Parameter Values and the submission of Offtake Profile Notices. *Annex J-1* contains an example of a 'Form of Submission for Planning Data', and *Annex J-2* contains an example of a 'Form of Offtake Parameter Statement'.

#### **4.1.11 Section K LDZ System Entry Points**

This section sets out terms agreed by the Parties to apply in relation to certain defined LDZ System Entry Points (see paragraph K1.1.2 for further clarification).

#### **4.1.12 Section L Cost Recovery and Invoicing**

This section sets out the basis on which the costs incurred by a Party are to be determined for the purposes of any provision of this Document (OAD) obliging another Party to bear or reimburse such costs, and the arrangements by which any amounts payable by a Party under this Document (OAD) are to be invoiced and paid.

#### **4.1.13 Section M Information Flows**

This section relates to the 'Offtake Communications Document' and the requirements for information flows. (The 'Offtake Communications Document' is available at [www.gasgovernance.com](http://www.gasgovernance.com)).

#### **4.1.14 Section N General**

In relation to the OAD, this section sets out provisions as to the interpretation of references to a Party, the basis on which a person may become or cease to be a Party, confidentiality as between Parties, the liability of Parties, dispute resolution, and other matters of a general nature. It covers Supplemental Agreements and specifies the documents that are Offtake Subsidiary Documents. It also covers the establishment of the Offtake Committee and its workings.

#### **4.1.15 Appendix 1**

Part 1 – This section provides an example of a ‘Form of Supplemental Agreement (NTS/LDZ Offtake)’.

Part 2 – This section provides an example of a ‘Form of Supplemental Agreement (LDZ/LDZ Offtake)’.

## **5 UK Link Manual**

Section U of the Transportation Principal Document (TPD) defines how Transporters and Shippers communicate their business transactions to one another. This is generally done via UK Link, the computer system originally developed by British Gas plc, and to which all major gas market players have access.

The complete definition of the UNC requires a statement of the legal principles that govern it, plus the technical details of how these principles are implemented. For example, there are legal principles covering the operation of the computer network, and the hardware/software used to implement that network must also be documented. However, it is not appropriate to combine both legal and technical information into the TPD. Therefore the technical data has been documented separately with cross-references from the TPD. For ease of use, these cross-references are to the 'UK Link Manual'.

‘UK Link Manual’ is an umbrella term for the collection of documents that describe how UK Link works in practice and how it supports communication between Transporters and Shippers. To aid referencing from the UNC, the UK Link Overview Manual has also been produced. This contains the most commonly required information and acts as a route map into the remaining documents that form the UK Link Manual.

### **5.1 Structure of the UK Link Manual**

This collection of documents describes how a UK Link User can access the facilities of UK Link and the supporting standards, policies and procedures associated with it. The documents concerned are:

- UK Link Overview Manual (7 sections; 7 appendices)
- Gemini Training Manual
- SPA Self-Study Guide
- Metering Self-Study Guide
- Procedures Documentation for Shippers
- Shipper Interface Document (SID) – File Layouts and Formats
- Supply Point Administration Shipper Interface Document: Current File Formats
- Contingency Manual
- Supplement Document Manual

#### **5.1.1 The Supplement Document Manual**

This includes:

- UK Link Security Policy
- UK Link IS Service Definition
- UK Link Standards Guide
- Control File Transfer Mechanism (CFTM) User Guide
- Shipper Information Service (SIS) User Guide
- Active Notification User (ANS) Guide.

These documents are available at [www.xoserveextranet.com/uklinkdocs](http://www.xoserveextranet.com/uklinkdocs), once an individual login ID and password has been set up (you will need to contact xoserve to request access).

## **6 Modifying the UNC - the UNC Modification Rules**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The Modification Rules facilitate the process of making changes to the UNC. They have been designed to allow due consideration to be given to all Proposals either to change the UNC or to review it, and to allow Users and other relevant parties the opportunity to make representations in respect of each Proposal.

Consent must be obtained from Ofgem before implementation of a modification can take place. As a further safeguard against implementation of inappropriate modifications there is a right of appeal, in some circumstances, against Ofgem's decisions.

### **6.2 Proposals**

Proposals can be raised to modify or review the UNC, and any Modification Proposal or Review Proposal should be in writing, state which part of the UNC it refers to, and outline the purpose of the Proposal.

Modification Proposals will normally follow the standard process set out in the UNC Modification Rules. These provide for all proposals to be published and consulted upon, such that all interested parties are given an opportunity to consider and comment on the merits of a proposal. However, the standard process can be by-passed (subject to Ofgem's agreement) either in part or in whole when an urgent change is proposed.

### **6.3 The Modification Panel**

Proposals to modify the UNC are channelled through the Modification Panel, which is responsible for deciding when Proposals should be formally issued for consultation and whether to recommend to Ofgem that Proposals should be implemented. Five voting members from the Transporters, and five voting members representing Shippers generally attend Panel meetings. Ofgem, Terminal Operators, Suppliers, Independent (i.e. non UNC) Transporters and energywatch representatives are also entitled to attend, and the Transporters provide a non-voting Chairman and Secretary.

### **6.4 The Process**

Unless regarded as 'urgent' each Modification Proposal will be considered by the Panel, which may decide either that the Proposal should proceed directly to consultation, or that it should be further developed.

When a Proposal is to be developed, the Panel will agree whether a specific group should be formed to consider the Proposal, or if it should be considered by one of the standing Workstreams. The Panel also sets the timescale by when development work should be complete and a final report presented to the Panel. The Panel will consider this report and decide whether further development is required, or if the Proposal should be issued for consultation.

When the Panel determines that consultation should begin, the Transporters prepare a Draft Modification Report (DMR), which is then issued seeking representations from all interested parties. Following receipt of representations the Transporters then produce a Final Modification Report (FMR), which reflects the issues raised in the representations. In light of the FMR, the Panel makes a recommendation as to whether the Proposal should be implemented.

Since the Modification Panel can vary timescales there is no fixed period within which Proposals are to be dealt with. However, for a Proposal passing through the standard process it will normally take between six

and twelve months before approval is given to amend the UNC. The time taken is largely dependent on the complexity of the Proposal.

## **9 Conclusion**

We hope that this document has proved a useful tool in providing you with a high level summary of the documents that comprise the UNC. Any comments on this document and suggestions for improvement would be welcome, and can be sent to [enquiries@gasgovernance.com](mailto:enquiries@gasgovernance.com).

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