

# **EDF Energy Networks consultation – Planning for the future of our networks**

Consultation period: 1 July to 28 September 2008

## **Summary Report: Online consultation and stakeholder workshops**

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## Executive summary

This report deals with engagement activities around EDF Energy's Distribution Price Control Review process. It provides an overview of three stakeholder workshops and summarises the findings of the online consultation "Planning for the future of our networks".

Three workshops were held – two in London and one in Norwich, to which key stakeholders were invited. The workshops gave participants the opportunity to hear EDF Energy's plans and explore some of the issues they raised. There were two regional workshops, which looked at the full ranges issues in the consultation document whilst the third workshop focussed specifically on capacity headroom issues. In total, 69 people attended either one of the workshops.

The online consultation ran from 1 July to 28 September 2008 and was based on a consultation document that summarised EDF Energy's proposed plans. The consultation included 15 questions, covering specific sections of the document but also providing an opportunity to make general comments. 188 people registered for the consultation with 43 participants from various businesses, organisations and government bodies submitting responses.

As regards the interpretation of results, it's important to emphasise the qualitative character of the consultation and the fact that the group of participants were self-selected and no statistical evidence should be drawn from the results.

Overall, the responses are multi-faceted, referring to various subjects rather than showing strong clustering of specific issues or views. In order to fully capture specific points made, it's recommended that individual responses should be read. This summary, however, provides an overview of each of the questions and how submissions have been grouped.

There are a few issues that came up repeatedly across the questions. These include:

- The need to improve customer communication and customer service
- EDF Energy's role regarding investment in new networks
- The need for transparent and equitable charging models
- The need to consider adjustments to regulatory framework to enable EDF Energy Networks to carry out additional activities (e.g. investment ahead of time, provision for High Risk Low Probability (HILP) events).
- The general need for the provision of sufficient capacity.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Context information

As a Distribution Network Operator (DNO), EDF Energy Networks is regulated by Ofgem. EDF Energy Networks is currently undergoing its fifth Distribution Price Control Review (DPCR5), which will determine the amount of money EDF Energy Networks can invest in its distribution networks between 2010 and 2015.

As part of this review, Ofgem has asked all DNOs to consult with their major customers and other influencing bodies. This report provides an overview of the stakeholder workshops, and summarises the findings of the online consultation which EDF Energy Networks carried out between 1 July and 28 September 2008. Full reports of each workshop are available as separate documents.

It's worth noting that EDF Energy Networks also organised individual meetings/phone conversations with stakeholders. These additional activities are not subject of this report.

### 1.2 Stakeholder workshops

Three stakeholder workshops were organised in September. The workshops aimed to address the issues covered in the consultation document, but also to give participants the time to explore these issues directly with EDF Energy managers and with other stakeholders. One of the London workshops was topic specific and dealt only with capacity headroom. The regional workshops in London and Norwich explored the main issues outlined in the consultation document. The following section provides a summary of the main discussions at the meetings.

#### ***Capacity Headroom workshop, London, 3 September 08***

This was a topic specific workshop looking at issues and options around capacity headroom in electrical distribution networks, with a particular focus on London. It was attended by 34 people.

The main purpose of the workshop was to give participants the opportunity to hear the main options that have been developed by EDF Energy for addressing the issue of capacity head room. These three options were described at the outset of the workshop:

- EDF Energy to develop the Network in advance of need
- The use of different funding vehicles
- The development of mini-main substations to provide improved resilience and enable rapid connections

The participants divided into three groups and each spent 30 minutes exploring issues for each option, before rotating groups, to review the previous group's comments and adding their own.

It was clear that most participants felt that there is not enough capacity at the current time, due to the waiting time for new connections particularly for new developments. Concerns expressed also included lack of clarity around funding and cost structures, as well as concerns about lack of skills capacity to deliver new connections.

As such, there was a tendency to support the option of ahead of need investment. This was regarded as the clearest and simplest way of ensuring there is sufficient capacity to meet demand in London. There was recognition, however, that this option falls outside the current regulatory regime and that EDF Energy would

need to receive some return for bearing the risk of developing ahead of need and that this would have cost implications.

Option 2 - which involves costs being shared by developers - did not meet with such approval. The main concern was that this option would lead to the developer bearing some or all of the risk. There was, however, a sense that this approach might work on green field sites.

Option 3 looked at the development of mini-main substations as an alternative approach to distributing power. The mini-main substations would be interconnected and provide increased resilience and the ability to connect rapidly when demand increases. The main concerns revolved around the amount of space needed to be taken from developments or existing buildings for the substations, whether landlords could charge commercial rents for this space, the skills base required to introduce this approach and about transparency of costing.

By the end of the session the participants had a clear understanding of the options, the restrictions on EDF Energy and the challenges of providing sufficient capacity headroom in the City of London.

## **Regional Workshops**

Two regional workshops were held, one in London covering London and the South East and the other in Norwich covering the East of England and East Anglia. The workshops focused on EDF Energy Networks' plans for the period 2010 to 2015. Both workshops followed the same structure. At the outset of the meetings participants were asked to work in small groups to identify their main areas of concern. These were then gathered at the front of the room and grouped. The issues identified were as follows:

- Investment and risk in emerging technologies, and renewables
- EDF Energy's skills base and training
- Customer communications
- Resilience, reliability and future proofing capacity
- Cost of infrastructure
- Preparing for growth
- Challenging growth in a low carbon future
- Protected landscapes and environmental issues.

Reports for each workshop were published on the consultation website [www.edfenergy.com/dpcr5](http://www.edfenergy.com/dpcr5). Based on general feedback and the evaluation forms received, the three workshops were successful and considered valuable by the participants. EDF Energy people that attended also expressed value in hearing and understanding issues from different perspectives.

### **1.3 Online consultation**

The consultation was set up on the website <http://edfenergynetworks.dialoguebydesign.net/>; for invitations. The website address [www.edfenergy.com/dpcr5](http://www.edfenergy.com/dpcr5) was used (the latter was redirected to the former address). Screenshots of the online consultation have been included in Appendix A.

While the website was open to the public, the invitation to this consultation was targeted at key stakeholders in sectors such as construction industry/developers, energy industry, trade associations/

professional bodies, trade unions, transport industry and local, regional and central government. Invitation letters were sent to more than 1,500 contacts on the EDF Energy stakeholder distribution list.

On the consultation website, participants were prompted to register and were then redirected to a page providing the consultation document (and a supplementary glossary) for download. The consultation document, also available as hardcopy on request, was a 50-page document divided into 11 sections. The consultation website presented the consultation document divided in sections (further details see 'chapter 2 Responses by question' of this report), along with corresponding consultation questions.

In the part of the website where document sections were presented, the upper half of the screen displayed an extract of each section; the lower part contained one or more questions and a textbox for participants to enter their response; a character limit of 3,000 characters (about 600 words) per question was set to keep responses focused.

### ***Analysis of responses***

At the end of the consultation phase, all the responses were collated under a variety of group headings. If more than one point was made in a response, then it was grouped under more than one heading. Dialogue by Design endeavours to ensure responses have been collated as accurately as possible.

This report summarises the responses to each question and shows in table form, the grouping headings and the number of people whose responses were assigned to that group heading.

### ***Interpreting the results***

As with any form of open consultation process, it is important to remember, when seeking to interpret the results, that this is a qualitative consultation, not an opinion poll. Its primary purpose is to collect ideas, arguments and views on the consultation document. The numbers of responses arguing in one direction or another should not be interpreted as generally representative of EDF Energy Networks' stakeholders. They indicate only the opinions of those who took part in this consultation process.

## Participation statistics

Tables 1 to 4 display overall participation statistics. Information regarding sector, region and future contact was collected via the registration form. Numbers include registrations up to 5 October 2008.

**Table 1. Number of participants overall**

Count of Registrations	Count of participants who submitted
188*	43**

\* EDF Energy employees were not included in this number

\*\* One participant submitted a response by post (in addition to their online response). This response will be considered separately by EDF Energy.

EDF Energy decided to process responses received after the deadline of 28 September until the cut-off date of 5 October. Responses received after 5 October were passed on to EDF Energy but have not been included in this summary report.

While the number of registrations for this consultation was quite satisfactory, the number of people participating was significantly lower than we would normally expect. A number of factors may explain this. Participants who attended a workshop may not have felt the need to also provide views to the online consultation (even though workshop attendees were encouraged to do so). Also, people may have logged on, downloaded the consultation documents and found little to object to or had only a limited stake or interest in the issues raised in the consultation. Those people who chose to comment on the consultation document and process were positive about it.

**Table 2. Number of participants by sector**

Sector	Count of registrations	Count of participants who submitted
Business - Construction industry/developer	39	10
Business - Energy industry	15	1
Business - Other	51	8
Business - Trade association/professional body	7	3
Business - Trade union	1	1
Business - Transport industry	0	0
Educational institution/consultancy	4	2
Environmental or other NGO	3	1
Government - Central/government agency	4	1
Government - Elected representative	1	0
Government - Emergency services	2	1
Government - Local (officer)	35	9
Government - Regional	5	2
Other	21	4
	188	43

Participants who selected 'Other' in the sector list were prompted to provide more specific information regarding their sector. 64 participants entered such information. Sectors that were mentioned several times are Consultancy, Finance/Banking/Investment, Insurance and Law.

**Table 3. Number of participants by region**

Region	Count of registrations	Count of participants who submitted
London	78	14
South East	24	5
East of England	28	8
More than one region	46	16
None	12	0
	188	43

The numbers indicate that, while there was a spread of participants across the three networks, stakeholders from London are strongly represented.

**Table 4. Future contact**

Future Contact	Count of registrations	Count of participants who submitted
Future contact ok	144	34
No future contact	44	9
	188	43

On the registration form, participants could tick a box to opt out of future contact (“We would like to contact you in the future as part of our ongoing work with stakeholders. Please tick this box if you do **not** wish to be contacted on these matters.”)



## 2. Responses to the online consultation by question

### Sections 1 to 3. About EDF Energy and our networks

#### 1. Do you have any general comments you would like to make about our Planning for the Future document?

Unlike the other consultation questions which each provide a specific focus, this first question allows participants to comment on any aspect of the consultation document. It is, therefore, not surprising that the responses are heterogeneous and some of them touch upon subjects that are covered in later sections of the consultation document.

A number of aspects came up repeatedly in response to this question:

- The need for the provision of sufficient capacity in various regions (e.g. Central London, East of England, poorly served areas)
- Overall energy policy including the need to reduce energy usage, distributed generation, cleaner fuels
- Charging structure for network provision
- Request to provide plans that are accurate, transparent and convincing in terms of costs and benefits
- Network Asset Management Plan
- Improved communication with customers

Comments on the consultation process itself include responses welcoming the opportunity to comment, explaining the respondent's interest in the subjects of the consultation and the desire to be involved in future communication with EDF Energy Networks and positive feedback on the consultation document or the consultation itself.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	34
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
A dedicated team of network planners	1
Charging developers for network upgrades	2
Comment on the consultation process	11
Consider distorting influences of previous pricing mechanism	1
EDF Energy should be able to invest speculatively	1
General comments on energy policy	3
Issues for customers in poorly served areas	1
Lack of capacity for meeting demand for new connections	4
Need for clarity over charging	1
Need for more capacity in East of England	2
Need to increase resilience	2
Need to invest in people	1
Need to keep customers informed over loss of supply	2
Network Asset Management Plan	2
New challenges over the next ten years	1
No comment	4
Passing knowledge on	1
Plans need to be accurate/transparent/convincing re costs and benefits	3
Support focus on areas with growing populations	1
Support focus on distributed generation	1
Support the use of cleaner fuels	1

## Section 4. Business environment and key planning assumptions

### **2. What are your views about the assumptions we have made with regard to the key issues that we have identified for the future of the electricity industry?**

Five responses express agreement with the planning assumptions set out in the consultation document. Six responses emphasise the necessity to monitor and take into account economic trends, such as general economic development and some point to potential weaknesses in the assumptions.

Sixteen responses comment on the direction of the energy market, referring to a range of specific aspects such as improving energy efficiency, sustainability, the role of various forms of power generation such as Combined Heat and Power and distributed generation. Some of the responses in this group question specific assumptions made in the consultation document.

Furthermore, it is suggested that EDF Energy should take a proactive role regarding sustainability, energy efficiency or investment, that the EPN load growth may need to be re-assessed, and that emphasis needs to be put on maintaining a viable infrastructure.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	25
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Agree with assumptions	5
Consider economic trends	6
Cost of replacing aging assets	2
Costs for reinforcements	1
Direction of the energy market	16
EDF Energy should take a proactive role	6
EPN Load growth may need reassessment	3
Provide references on which assumptions are based	1
Skills and material requirements	1

### **3. Do you have any comments on how we could manage issues around the volatility of raw material prices?**

Eight responses suggest a purchasing approach that includes forward planning and mid or long-term price agreements. Two responses suggest reusing and recycling redundant equipment. There is also a view expressed that a diversification of fuel sources will be helpful in dealing with the volatility of raw material prices.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	17
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Commodity trading not a role for EDF Energy	1
Diversification of energy supply	1
Forward planning and mid/long term price agreements	8
No comment	6
Reuse and recycling of redundant equipment	2
Specific request for engagement	1

## Section 5. Providing a safe, secure and efficient network

### 4. To what extent should we increase our investment to further protect your power supply?

Several responses emphasise the importance of replacing and developing the network in order to ensure security of supply and resilience. Two responses reinforce the need for capacity headroom in Central London.

Further comments deal with charging structure, cost models and cost transparency, regulatory aspects for investment, remote network monitoring and aspects specific to the SPN.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	23
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Bearing the cost of flood protection measures	1
Charging developers for network reinforcement	2
Consider flood risk as primary factor for asset management	1
EDF should be able to invest speculatively	1
Improve remote network monitoring	1
Measuring and quantifying resilience of the network	3
Need clear and transparent info re cost/investment effects	2
Need for more capacity head room	2
Need to increase network resilience	2
No comment	4
Providing more resilience to remote customers	1
Support SPN summary	1
The network must be replaced or developed to ensure security of supply	6

### 5. To what extent do you think we should broaden our measures of Quality of Service to include additional customers, for example our remote customers?

Five responses support the need for improving the quality of service in remote areas. Additional aspects mentioned are the necessity for a better complaints procedure, the view that customers in remote areas may have to accept lower quality of service and the suggestion that utilities need to improve coordination of street works.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	17
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Coordination of street works between utilities	1
Need for better complaints procedures	1
No comment	8
Remote areas need to accept lower quality of service	1
Specific suggestion re consultation document	2
Support the need for improving quality of service in remote areas	5

## **6. To what extent should we change our investment plans for fluid-filled cable decommissioning?**

Three respondents support the decommissioning of fluid-filled cables. A number of further specific aspects are mentioned in the responses to this question – these are listed in the table below.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	15
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
As required by the Environment Agency	1
Consider advantages of fluid-filled cables	1
Need for research around replacement joints	1
No comment	7
Providing it is a clear business priority	1
Specific request for engagement	1
Specific sites of concern	1
Support for decommissioning of fluid-filled cables	3
Support option 2	1

## **7. To what extent should we change our investment plans for the undergrounding of cables in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty?**

Eight responses support the proposed plan for continued undergrounding. One response states that this activity should not be carried out at the expense of asset replacement or development needs.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	16
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
As required by landscape interests	1
Conduct consultation to prioritise	1
No comment	5
Not at the expense of asset replacement or developments	1
Specific suggestion re consultation document	1
Support for proposed plan	8

## **8. Do you have any general comments on our proposals contained in Section 5? (See the summary above for a list of topics covered in this section)**

The list of topics provided alongside this question is:

- EDF Energy Networks asset base
- What we are doing to maintain the performance of our assets
- How regional development is reflected in our network plans
- How we propose to improve the resilience of our network against storms
- How we plan to improve network reliability and reduce customer interruptions
- How we are minimising the level of disruption to the public caused by working on our network
- How we are making it easier for customers to connect to our network
- How we are improving customer service
- How we are ensuring that the public is kept safe around our network
- What we are doing to minimise the impact of our plans on the environment
- How we have improved relationships with our contractors
- The pricing implications of our plans.

The responses reflect the variety of aspects covered in section 5; the table below shows the different issues raised. A subset of responses express support for engagement activities or the desire for improved communication between EDF Energy and particular stakeholder groups, e.g. developers and contractors.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	19
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Concerns over service delivery	4
Concerns over staff safety	1
Improve communication with contractors	1
Improve communication with developers	3
Improve communications around local risk	1
Improve support for vulnerable customers	1
Need prioritised replacement programme	1
Need to consider the Traffic Management Act	1
No comment	5
Reduce carbon emissions	1
Reference to specific sites	2
Resilience to storms, continued investment	1
Specific request for engagement	1
Support for engagement activities	3
Support for Substation Watch scheme	1
Support options for shared cable tunnels	2

## Section 6. Planning for uncertainty

### ***9. We believe that increasing network resilience for High Impact Low Probability events is a key issue that currently lies outside our current regulatory plans; to what extent should this be core to our DNO investment plans in future?***

Eight responses endorse the idea of making increasing network resilience for High Impact Low Probability (HILP) events part of EDF Energy's DNO investment plans.

Further responses highlight the importance of risk assessment/prioritisation and a transparent cost-benefit analysis. There are also responses suggesting priorities different from managing HILP.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	19
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Additional aspects to consider for investment decisions	1
EDF Energy should be able to make speculative investment in the city	1
Need clarity over costs and return	3
No comment	2
Offers of support in emergency situations	2
Policy should be based on risk assessment/prioritisation	3
Priority should be to improve network in remote areas	1
This should be a core part of investment plans	8
Work needed on asset management and monitoring	1

## Section 7. Protecting the future of the UK economy

### 10. What impact do you think the current arrangements for the provision of new electricity infrastructure is having on economic growth?

Five responses support the idea of changing the regulatory framework to allow investment into the network ahead of demand; such a change is seen as a factor necessary for or contributing to future economic growth.

There are also views that the current arrangements are acceptable or do not have an impact on economic growth. Another aspect mentioned is the current practice of how developments are financed, in particular the burden of investment that is placed on developers. In addition, it is suggested to start cooperation with relevant parties (e.g. developers, local authorities) at an early planning stage.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	16
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Current arrangement is fine	1
Feedback on workshop	1
Need fair market rents for mini-substations	1
Need for cooperation at the early planning stage	2
Need to change payment models	1
Need to consider potential growth outside London	1
Need to enable speculative growth in the network	5
No impact	2
Opening up frameworks during DPCR5	1
Putting burden of investment on developers is barrier to growth	3
Should be a requirement to provide extra capacity	1
Timescale and cost of delivery are problematic	1

### 11. What changes to the charging methodology for new connections would you like to see?

Different views and preferences were expressed in response to this question. Three participants would like EDF Energy to consider more flexible funding models. Transparent costing models are requested in five responses. Two responses express a preference for standard connection charges. There are also three responses saying that developers should not be charged prior to development and one response is opposed to ongoing reservation charges which developers have to pay.

Four responses state that the connections service needs to be improved.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	16
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Allow DNOs to finance new connections upfront	1
Consider more flexible funding models	3
Costing models: need to be transparent and equitable	5
Costing models: should accommodate supply of energy	1
Ensure efficiency of connections service	4
No changes	1
No comment	2
Prefer a standard connection charge	2
Question upfront payments	3
Specific suggestion	1
Stop charging ongoing reservation charges	1

## Section 8. Building for a sustainable future

### **12. To what extent should network operators be targeted to reduce their direct impact on the environment?**

Six participants believe that EDF Energy has a specific responsibility as an energy company, e.g. in terms of encouraging their customers to reduce energy consumption. Another view expressed repeatedly is that the reduction of environmental impact is good business practice.

Two responses express support for EDF Energy's measures to reduce its environmental impact.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	13
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Good business practice	4
In line with government requirements	1
No comment	1
Recognising limited responsibility of DNOs	1
Specific responsibility because you are an energy company	6
Specific suggestions	3
Support EDF Energy measures	2

### **13. To what extent should network operators be given incentives to address the skills gap and to build a sustainable industry?**

Eight respondents find that more investment is needed to address the skills gap. Two responses support incentives for DNOs to deal with this issue.

Three participants do not think that incentives are appropriate. Further aspects that were mentioned are the concern about the ethics of recruiting staff from abroad and the concern about the loss of skills within EDF Energy due to continued restructuring.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	15
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Concern about ethics of recruiting skills from overseas	1
Concern around the loss of skills	1
Incentives should not be required	3
No comment	1
Potential for working together on skills development	1
Specific suggestion	1
Support for giving incentives to DNOs to address the skills gap	2
Support for more investment in addressing the skills gap	8

## Section 9. Providing good value for money

### 14. Do you have any general comments on this section?

Four participants air concern about the quality of EDF Energy's customer service. Further issues raised are the transparency and fairness of costs, EDF Energy's capacity to deliver connections and diversions. There is also a response favouring the market entry of more Independent Distribution Network Operators (IDNO's), a response supporting EDF Energy's move to long-term framework contracts and the suggestion to work closely with sub-contractors.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	13
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Concern over skills and capacity to deliver	1
Fragmented and poor customer service	4
Need clarity over costs and return	3
Need for more IDNOs for a more competitive market	1
Need for transparency in costs	2
Provide supply connections for renewable energy generators	1
Support long-term framework contracts	1
Work closely with sub-contractors	1

## Section 10. Investing for the future

### 15. To what extent should the current funding arrangements for research into new technologies be extended to their deployment?

Five responses endorse the idea of extending funding to pilot deployment. Another four responses support funding for research in general. Further responses suggest sharing risk of research funding between Government, R&D organisations and DNO's, re-introducing a central overarching research facility and investing in smart metering respectively. One response states that piloting is already possibly under current arrangements and that deployment as such should not be considered as part of research.

Number of participants who responded to this question:	12
<b>Group Heading</b>	<b>Count of responses</b>
Funding should extend to pilot deployment	5
No comment	1
Piloting is already possible - deployment should be kept separate	1
Shared funding for research with government	1
Should be a central research fund	1
Support funding for research generally	4
Support investment in smart metering	1



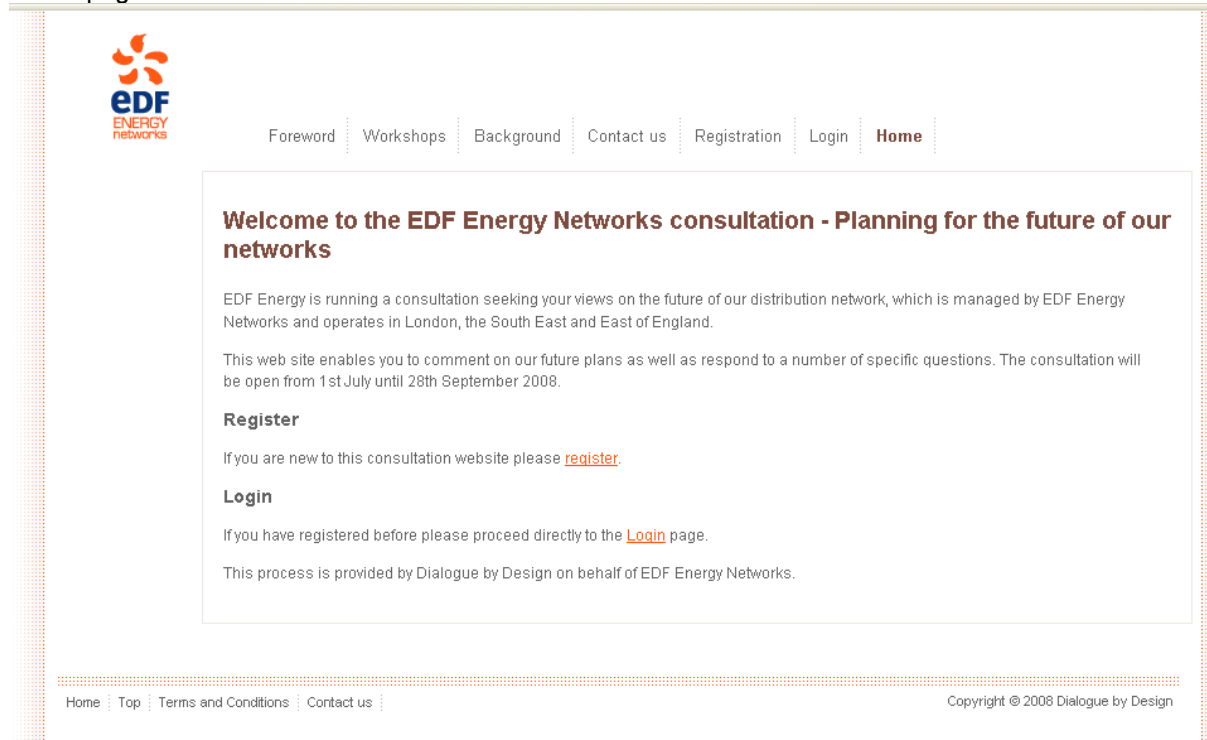
### 3. Next steps

Although the stakeholder consultation process is now closed, the fifth Distribution Price Review will continue during 2009. As of October 2008, the planning for the next steps of the process is as follows:

- October 2008: Review phase on the consultation website, allowing participants to view all consultation submissions received
- End of November 2008: EDF Energy will also be publishing a “Consultation response” document explaining how it will be taking stakeholders comments forward into its plans (registered participants will be notified).
- January 2009: The next important stage of this process is for all DNOs to resubmit their revised business plans to Ofgem during January incorporating stakeholder views and changing business requirements.

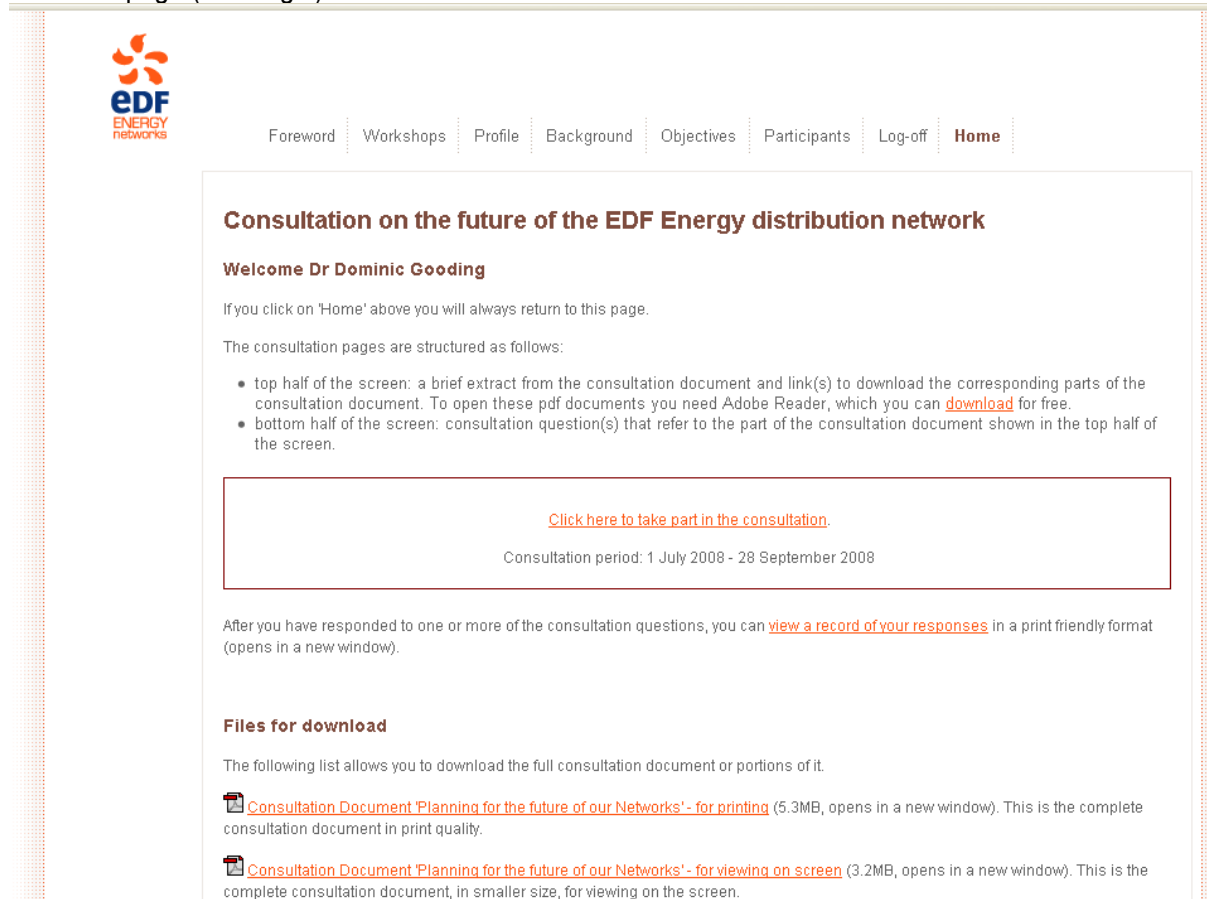
## Appendix A. Screenshots of the online consultation

### Home page



The screenshot shows the home page of the EDF Energy Networks consultation. At the top left is the EDF Energy Networks logo. A navigation menu includes links for Foreword, Workshops, Background, Contact us, Registration, Login, and Home. The main heading is "Welcome to the EDF Energy Networks consultation - Planning for the future of our networks". Below this, a paragraph states that EDF Energy is running a consultation on the future of its distribution network in London, the South East, and East of England. It mentions that the website allows users to comment and answer questions, with the consultation open from July 1st to September 28th, 2008. There are sections for "Register" and "Login" with instructions and links. A footer contains "Home | Top | Terms and Conditions | Contact us" and "Copyright © 2008 Dialogue by Design".


### Welcome page (after login)



The screenshot shows the welcome page after a user has logged in. The EDF Energy Networks logo is at the top left. The navigation menu includes links for Foreword, Workshops, Profile, Background, Objectives, Participants, Log-off, and Home. The main heading is "Consultation on the future of the EDF Energy distribution network". Below this is a "Welcome Dr Dominic Gooding" message. A paragraph explains that clicking on 'Home' returns the user to this page. It then describes the structure of the consultation pages: the top half contains a brief extract from the consultation document and links to download parts, while the bottom half contains consultation questions. A prominent red-bordered box contains a link "Click here to take part in the consultation." and the text "Consultation period: 1 July 2008 - 28 September 2008". Below this, a paragraph states that after responding to questions, users can "view a record of your responses" in a print-friendly format. A "Files for download" section lists two documents: "Consultation Document 'Planning for the future of our Networks' - for printing" (5.3MB) and "Consultation Document 'Planning for the future of our Networks' - for viewing on screen" (3.2MB).

Page showing extract for sections 1 to 3 in upper half of screen, and corresponding question in lower section.

Upper screen section:




[Foreword](#) | [Workshops](#) | [Profile](#) | [Background](#) | [Objectives](#) | [Participants](#) | [Log-off](#) | [Home](#)

- › Sections 1 to 3. About EDF Energy and our networks
- › Section 4. Business environment and key planning assumptions
- › Section 5. Providing a safe, secure and efficient network
- › Section 6. Planning for uncertainty
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- › Section 8. Building for a sustainable future
- › Section 9. Providing good value for money
- › Section 10. Investing for the future

## Sections 1 to 3. About EDF Energy and our networks

- › [Section 1. About EDF Energy and our networks](#) (opens in a new window)
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EDF Energy is one of the UK's largest energy companies and we provide three services to our customers, namely energy generation, energy distribution and energy supply. This consultation document deals **solely** with the distribution side of our business which is managed by EDF Energy Networks. EDF Energy Networks owns, operates and manages the three licensed distribution networks in London, the South East and the East of England. Approximately eight million connected customers depend on us for their power. We take electricity at very high voltages from the National Grid and transform it down to voltages suitable for commercial and domestic use.

Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) are natural monopolies therefore the industry regulator, Ofgem, protects customers' interests by regulating the companies through five-year price control periods, which include curbs on expenditure as well incentives to be efficient and technically innovative. The review process for the next price control period, which will determine the amount of money we can invest in our networks between 2010-2015, has now begun.

Central to the distribution price control process is an understanding of what service improvements customers want and what value they place on them. To gain a greater insight into customer preferences Ofgem is undertaking its own survey looking at customers' 'Willingness to Pay'. This information will be used by Ofgem to help them determine the level of investment that they allow DNOs for future service improvements.

As part of the formal review process we are seeking your comments through this consultation to ensure we understand your requirements and priorities whilst developing our network plans. As a regulated industry we are required to operate and maintain the network efficiently. therefore it is important that we ensure that our future

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