



## **FACT SHEET: Operating Protocol for Major Customers**

February 2014 – Version 1.0

### **Purpose**

Due to the fact that the operation of Major Customer facilities typically results in greater impacts on Ergon Energy's electricity distribution network than is the case for small customers, Ergon Energy requires such Major Customers to enter into an Operating Protocol with Ergon Energy, which supplements the relevant Connection Agreement under which Ergon Energy permits the Major Customer to connect to Ergon Energy's electricity distribution network and transfer electricity across the Connection Point.

As such, the Operating Protocol is designed to be read in conjunction with the Connection Agreement, as well as being a stand-alone, dynamic document. The Operating Protocol may be finalised between representatives of Ergon Energy and the Major Customer before or after the time of connection to Ergon Energy's electricity distribution network.

Such an Operating Protocol sets out the basis for mutually agreed and uniform procedures relating to the Connection Point, including in relation to planned and unplanned outages and switching procedures. A party may depart from the Operating Protocol if necessary to meet its obligations under relevant laws.

As relevant operational practices may evolve over time, amendments are typically required to the Operating Protocol to reflect such changes in practices.

### **Contents of an Operating Protocol**

Broadly, an Operating Protocol is intended to cover situations where a party's actions on its side of the Connection Point require the cooperation of both parties, for example, in relation to:

- planned outages, repairs and maintenance;
- unplanned outages, repairs and maintenance; and
- switching procedures,

of each party's respective facilities.

Depending upon the specific terms of the Operating Protocol, the Operating Protocol may provide for the following:

- liaison procedures between the parties in respect of planned and unplanned outages affecting the Connection Point;
- minimum periods to notify the other party of the commencement of planned outages;
- obligations to notify the other party of unplanned outages as soon as reasonably practicable;
- switching procedures;
- methods of notification e.g. electronic notification, telephone, fax;
- agreed methods of maximising supply to the Major Customer during sub-optimal operating conditions;
- each party's contact details for day-to-day management of operational matters; and

- other circumstances where Ergon Energy and the Major Customer may need to liaise in respect of basic operational matters.

The Operating Protocol must set out a requirement for advance notification of any planned outages and coordination of such planned outages.

## **Minimum Requirements for Switching Procedures**

The minimum requirements for switching procedures are as follows:

- **Major Customer:**
  - system switching on its side of the Connection Point at or near the Connection Point;
  - internal network emergency repairs and maintenance; and
  - internal network decommissioning;
- **Ergon Energy:**
  - planning, coordination and switching for both planned and unplanned outages to the electricity distribution network where these outages may impact upon supply to the Major Customer;
  - access and maintenance procedures;
  - emergency repair;
  - voltage control; and
  - information about relevant auto-reclose settings;
- **Joint functions:**
  - communication between the parties' operators;
  - protection system testing;
  - inter-trip testing; and
  - uncommitted network capacity.

## **For Further Information**

Major Customers may contact their Project Sponsor to obtain further specific information.