

Change is coming for energy generators

Learn more with EnergyForce's Martin Bleasby

Martin Bleasby is a Senior Manager at EnergyForce, a provider of long-term energy efficiency solutions, energy generation products and expert advice. Martin has over 20 years' experience in delivering sustainable energy solutions and supporting businesses in keeping their energy assets operating at peak efficiency.



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From wind to solar to combined heat and power, many energy generators need to make a mandatory system change to their assets by 2022. The Accelerated Loss of Mains Change Programme (ALoMCP) is a funding scheme that helps generators to make this change. We spent five minutes with Martin Bleasby who has already steered dozens of generators through the change process.

WHAT IS LOSS OF MAINS CHANGE ALL ABOUT AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR GENERATORS?

First and foremost, this change is a legal requirement that must be made by September 2022. But more importantly, if you do it early enough the change is effectively free through the ALoMCP funding.

By becoming compliant, generators are playing their role in delivering a safe and sustainable energy network to all of the UK and protecting employees and stakeholders from potential enforcement measures for non-compliance. It's an absolute no brainer.

WHO NEEDS TO MAKE THE CHANGE?

The range of individuals and businesses that generate electricity is huge. Farmers and the agricultural sector are definitely important as, for many, renewable energy generation is now a

secondary source of income. Industrial and manufacturing organisations also often have solar PV installation on their roofs to offset their energy usage costs, as do schools and hospitals. There really is a vast scope of people who need to know that it's time to make this change.

WHAT DOES THE FUNDING COVER AND IS IT EASY TO APPLY?

The funding application process itself is very straightforward. Our Distribution Network Operator, Northern Powergrid, is easy to work with and very quick to process and issue the funding. What's more, the next funding window closes in November 2020 so right now Northern Powergrid is encouraging as many generators in its region to make the change and apply while the support is still available.

All of our customers have received the full funding to make the Loss of Mains change, meaning that no one is out of pocket and right now this is anything from £1500 to over £20k available depending on the changes you need to make to be compliant.

The funding also opens up an opportunity for generators to have an external company check the safety and operation of their assets. We have found that these health checks are supporting generators to improve the efficiency of their assets. It's a win-win scenario. The generator is making a legally required change, whilst also getting a health check on its assets, all effectively for free.

HOW ARE YOU HELPING GENERATORS APPLY AND MAKE THE CHANGE?

For most people, filling out paperwork is a chore that is put off until the last minute. It doesn't come naturally, and no one enjoys doing it. But we've now done so many ALoMCP applications on behalf of generators that this is a simple process. EnergyForce will run the whole process from start to finish so that for many generators, it's as easy as a phone call on their side.

We've processed applications from everything from large scale solar installations to small manufacturing installations and combined heat & power (CHP). We first check that the assets are eligible, then we apply for the funding, make the change and give the assets a safety and efficiency check.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU OFFER GENERATORS ABOUT THE ALOMCP?

I would say do it now. It's free, it's easy to apply and you're going to have to do it anyway. We don't know if this funding will last forever, or even until the end of this year. We also don't know how many companies are going to wait until the last minute and then scramble to become compliant. It's far better to get it done now rather than wait.

Northern Powergrid is the Distribution Network Operator for the North East, Yorkshire and northern Lincolnshire. They are the organisation responsible for managing local ALoMCP funding and ensuring changes are made.

If you want to know how to apply for the ALoMCP, or for more information about the regulatory change, please get in touch via: G59protectionsettings@northernpowergrid.com.

If you are outside of our region, please contact your relevant Distribution Network Operator.