

NOTICE

TECHNICAL RULES FOR REGULATED ELECTRICITY NETWORKS

The Economic Regulation Authority (Authority) is required to assess technical rules that are proposed by a service provider for a covered network. These rules must be approved if they comply with the requirements of chapter 12 of the Electricity Networks Access Code 2004 (Access Code).

The technical rules consist of the standards, procedures and planning criteria governing the construction and operation of an electricity network, and are to deal with all the matters listed in Appendix 6 of the Access Code.

The only network currently covered under the Access Code is owned by Western Power Corporation (Western Power). The relevant network is its South West Interconnected Network (SWIN) in the South West Interconnected System. Western Power submitted its proposed technical rules upon submission of its proposed Access Arrangement and access arrangement information on 24 August 2005. The technical rules submitted by Western Power are available on the Authority's website. It should be noted that public submissions will be invited following the publication of the Authority's decision, as set out in table 1, below.

Technical Rules Committee

To help assess the proposed technical rules, in January 2005 the Authority established a Technical Rules Committee (Committee), which is chaired by a representative of the Coordinator of Energy.

The members of the Committee are listed at <http://www.era.wa.gov.au/electricity/trc.cfm>.

In January 2005 the Committee commenced reviewing draft technical rules submitted by Western Power. Where issues have been raised by members, discussions are helping resolve matters and, to date, none have become "deadlocked", requiring resolution by the Authority. The Committee is required to provide a preliminary report to the Authority outlining its recommendations by 20 business days before the last day by which the Authority must make its draft decision. The preliminary report's due date is expected to be mid-November.

Assessment of technical rules

The Authority is required to assess the technical rules proposed by a service provider and determine whether to:

- a) approve the technical rules proposed by the service provider; or
- b) amend the service provider's proposals by drafting its own.

The Authority may amend rules proposed by a service provider only to the extent that those amendments are necessary to ensure the rules comply with the requirements of chapter 12 of the Access Code.

A number of restrictive timeframes apply to the assessment process of proposed technical rules. These are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Timeframes for assessment of technical rules

Assessment Stage	Section of Code	Deadlines (Business Days)
Service provider to submit proposed technical rules	12.10	At the same time as the submission of its first access arrangement
Technical Rules Committee - preliminary report to the Authority	12.11(b)(i)	20 days before the last day by which the Authority must make its draft decision
Authority to publish draft technical rules	12.11(c)	12 days after it makes a draft decision
Authority to invite public submissions on draft technical rules	12.11(d)	15 days after the invitation is published
Technical Rules Committee - final report to the Authority	12.11(b)(ii)	30 days before the last day by which the Authority must make its final decision
Authority to approve and publish final technical rules and specify start date	12.11(e) & 12.15	At least 30 days after the approval of technical rules is published

Next steps

The Committee is currently reviewing and advising the Authority on the technical rules proposed by Western Power. Following publication of its draft decision, the Authority will invite public submissions on the draft technical rules, offering 15 business days for comment. The Authority will then consider any submissions received and publish final technical rules.

Further information in relation to this assessment process is available from Mr Alistair Butcher, Acting Director – Electricity Access, on (08) 9213 1900.

LYNDON ROWE
CHAIRMAN

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MEDIA CONTACT: Mr Paul Byrne, Byrne & Byrne Corporate Communications
Telephone: (08) 9385-9941 or 0417 922 452