

Purpose

This policy sets out how Waipā Networks Limited (Waipā Networks) will queue and manage connection applications and apply the clock stop/start mechanism required by the Electricity Industry Participation Code 2010 (Code). It forms part of Waipā Networks' connection and operating standards and must be read together with the Code and Waipā Networks' Connections Policy, Network Connection Standards, and applicable commercial and operational requirements.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- provide a clear and consistent connection process;
- improve the efficiency of application planning, preparation, and assessment;
- prioritise ready projects and prevent slow-moving projects from inefficiently consuming constrained network capacity or delivery resources; and
- provide transparency and accountability for Waipā Networks and applicants.

Scope

This policy applies from submission of a complete initial application until the project is commissioned or removed from the network connections pipeline. It covers new connections, relocation of a connection, and increases to the capacity of an existing connection. It does not cover decommissioning or reductions in existing connection capacity.

It applies to distributed generation projects from 1 December 2026 and to load projects from 1 June 2027.

The Policy

1.1 Policy principles

Waipā Networks will administer connection applications consistently, transparently, efficiently, and in accordance with the Code. Project priority reflects readiness and progress of an application, but does not displace Waipā Networks' obligation to consider safety, network security, technical feasibility, commercial requirements, and efficient delivery.

1.2 Application categories

Connection applications are categorised as follows:

Type	Size	Code process	Policy elements
Distributed generation	10 kW or less	Processes 1 and 1A	None
Distributed generation	Above 10 kW and below 300 kW	Process 2	Clock stop/start; priority position
Distributed generation	300 kW or more	Process 3	Clock stop/start; priority position; milestones; publication

Type	Size	Code process	Policy elements
Load	Above 69 kVA and below 500 kVA	Process 4	Clock stop/start; priority position
Load	500 kVA or more	Process 5	Clock stop/start; priority position; milestones; publication

A hybrid project involving distributed generation and load at the same installation control point (ICP) must be submitted as one application. The element with the higher connection capacity determines the application category. Both elements must progress together.

1.3 Terminology

- Small distributed generation means a project or application with total maximum export power of 10 kW or less.
- Medium distributed generation means a project or application with total maximum export power above 10 kW and below 300 kW.
- Large distributed generation means a project or application with total maximum export power of 300 kW or more.
- Medium load means a project or application above 69 kVA and below 500 kVA.
- Large load means a project or application at 500 kVA or above.

Unless this policy states otherwise, terms have the meanings given in the Code.

1.4 Project stages

The Code sets out the application stages required for each category of applications.

Application category	Code process	Initial Application	Interim Application	Final Application
DG 10kW or less	Process 1 & 1A	One-stage application. Policy elements in this document do not apply (refer to section 1.2).		
DG above 10 kW and below 300 kW	Process 2	Required	Not applicable	Normally required; may be omitted where permitted by the Code
DG 300 kW or more	Process 3	Required	Normally required; may be omitted where permitted by the Code	Normally required; may be omitted where permitted by the Code
Load above 69 kVA and below 500 kVA	Process 4	Required	Not applicable	Normally required; may be omitted by agreement under the Code
Load 500 kVA or more	Process 5	Required	Normally required; may be omitted where permitted by the Code	Normally required; may be omitted by agreement under the Code

Waipā Networks will manage applicable projects through the stages and transition points below. One or more stages may not be required or may be skipped, depending on project size, scope, and the completeness of information provided.

Stage	Enters when	Progresses when	Removed when
Initial application	The applicant submits a complete initial application.	The applicant submits a complete interim application, or a complete final application where no interim application is required.	Waipā Networks declines the initial application; the applicant misses the Code timeframe and no extension is agreed; or the applicant withdraws.
Interim application	The applicant submits a complete interim application.	The applicant submits a complete final application.	Waipā Networks declines the interim application; the applicant misses the Code timeframe and no extension is agreed; or the applicant withdraws.
Final application	The applicant submits a complete final application.	Waipā Networks approves the final application.	Waipā Networks declines the final application, or the applicant withdraws.
Construction (negotiation)	Waipā Networks approves the final application.	The parties enter a connection contract; for large distributed generation on regulated terms, they sign a milestone agreement; or medium distributed generation on regulated terms proceeds in accordance with the Code.	The applicant withdraws; or, for large distributed generation on regulated terms, the parties do not sign a milestone agreement within Code timeframes.
Construction (delivery)	A connection contract or applicable milestone arrangement is in place.	The connection is commissioned.	Waipā Networks lapses final approval after consistent milestone failure or failure to renegotiate; the project misses the Code connection timeframe and no extension is agreed; or the applicant withdraws.
Connected	The connection is commissioned.	Not applicable.	Six months after commissioning.

1.5 Clock stop/start mechanism

The specified maximum timeframe is the maximum time in the Code for Waipā Networks to decide an initial, interim, or final application, or for an applicant to submit an interim or final application.

The clock is the elapsed number of business days since the relevant Code obligation was triggered, less the elapsed number of business days during which the clock was stopped.

Waipā Networks will record the dates on which each clock is started, stopped, and restarted; calculate elapsed clock business days; and make that information readily available to the applicant on request.

If Waipā Networks gives written notice that a clock is started, stopped, or restarted after 5.00 pm on a business day, or at any time on a non-business day, the action is deemed to occur on the following business day. A project cannot advance to the next stage while its clock is stopped.

1.6 Waipā Networks' obligations

Waipā Networks may stop the clock by written notice if it reasonably considers that it cannot decide the application because of a factor outside its control, including awaiting third-party information or a force majeure event.

If it is later determined that Waipā Networks could not reasonably stop the clock until a later date, the clock is deemed to have stopped on that later date. If the clock could not reasonably be stopped at all, it is deemed not to have stopped.

Waipā Networks will restart the clock by written notice as soon as it reasonably considers that the relevant factor is no longer preventing it from deciding the application or is no longer outside its control. If it is later determined that Waipā Networks should reasonably have restarted the clock earlier, it is deemed to have restarted on that earlier date.

1.7 Applicant obligations

These obligations apply to most applicants. They do not apply to small applications: distributed generation of 10 kW or less, or load applications of 69 kVA or less.

After an applicant requests a clock stop, Waipā Networks will stop the clock by written notice as soon as it reasonably considers that the applicant cannot submit its application because of a factor outside the applicant's control, including awaiting third-party information or a force majeure event.

If the parties agree, or the relevant dispute process determines, that Waipā Networks should reasonably have stopped the clock earlier, it is deemed to have stopped on that earlier date.

The applicant must notify Waipā Networks in writing as soon as it becomes aware that the relevant factor is no longer preventing submission or is no longer outside the applicant's control. Waipā Networks will restart the clock by written notice as soon as it receives that notice.

If the parties agree, or the relevant dispute process determines, that the applicant should have notified Waipā Networks earlier, the clock is deemed to have restarted on that earlier date.

1.8 Priority position

Waipā Networks will assign a priority position when an applicant submits a complete initial application. For projects already in the pipeline before this policy takes effect, Waipā Networks may either assign a position under this policy or continue the previous arrangement.

Waipā Networks will assign priority firstly by project stage, with projects in more advanced stages receiving higher priority, and secondly by order of arrival within the same stage. During construction delivery, Waipā Networks may reduce a large project's priority where the applicant misses a milestone, subject to this policy.

When a project changes stage or its priority is otherwise updated, Waipā Networks will update other affected priority positions where necessary.

During the initial and interim application stages, Waipā Networks will take priority positions into account when allocating resources, while retaining the ability to consider practical and efficiency factors.

During the final application stage, Waipā Networks will take priority positions into account when allocating resources and will grant network access terms in accordance with priority position, provided the project meets Waipā Networks' operational and commercial standards and policies.

During construction negotiation and delivery, Waipā Networks will take priority positions into account when agreeing or amending contractual terms affecting resource allocation and when allocating discretionary delivery resources, while retaining the ability to consider practical and efficiency factors.

1.9 Milestones for large projects

As per 1.3, large projects refer to large distributed generation projects with maximum export power of 300 kW or more (Process 3), and large load projects with connection capacity of 500 kVA or more (Process 5). The default milestones and criteria are set out below.

Default milestone	Default criterion
Final design	The applicant has finalised all necessary project design plans.
Property rights	The applicant has secured all necessary property rights.
Environmental approvals	The applicant has secured all necessary environmental approvals.
Overseas Investment Office approval	The applicant has secured all necessary Overseas Investment Office approvals.
Electricity Authority and System Operator approvals	The applicant has secured all necessary Electricity Authority and System Operator approvals.
Supplier and construction contracts	The applicant has secured all necessary supply and construction arrangements.
Finance	The applicant has secured all necessary finance arrangements.
Final investment decision	The applicant has formally decided to proceed.
Construction	The applicant has commenced project construction.
Commissioning	The applicant has completed commissioning and can operate at maximum export power or load capacity.

For each default milestone, Waipā Networks and the applicant will record in the connection contract or a separate milestone agreement whether it applies; any details or amendments to the criterion and evidence of satisfaction; any interim milestone and criterion; and the timeframe for each milestone.

Waipā Networks will not include a milestone outside the table above unless it can demonstrate that the milestone, criterion, and timeframe are necessary to keep the wider connection process efficient and equitable. Waipā Networks and the applicant will act reasonably when negotiating whether a default or additional milestone applies and its details.

In doing so, the parties will consider, where necessary, the project's nature and expected duration; the applicant's conduct in earlier stages and development record; interaction with the contract, milestone agreement, and other obligations; and other projects competing for Waipā Networks' resources or preferential network access terms.

Where Waipā Networks' obligations may affect an applicant milestone, Waipā Networks will complete its relevant actions and provide required information in a timely manner. Where an applicant misses, or is likely to miss, a milestone, Waipā Networks and the applicant may mutually agree to amend its timeframe or criterion.

As a condition of agreeing to an amendment, Waipā Networks may require a reduction in priority position, with corresponding amendments to contractual obligations, and/or amendment of the network access terms on which final approval was granted.

If an applicant fails to renegotiate a missed milestone, Waipā Networks may lapse final approval by written notice. An applicant may be treated as having failed to renegotiate if it does not engage within five business days after Waipā Networks gives written notice of the missed deadline, or does not agree an amendment within 15 business days after that notice.

Waipā Networks will act reasonably when deciding whether to amend a milestone, impose conditions on an amendment, or lapse final approval. It may consider previous renegotiations; performance against other milestones; proximity to completion; importance to timely delivery; time available to renegotiate; the length of extension or extent of criterion change; evidence of gaming or lack of intent; reasons for delay and degree of control; and impacts on other projects' access to resources or network access terms.

If amended access terms or lapsed final approval make more preferential terms available to projects approved later, Waipā Networks will offer those improved terms to affected projects in priority order. If final approval lapses, the applicant may reapply by submitting a new initial application.

1.10 Information publication

Waipā Networks will publish on its website the number of large distributed generation projects, the number of large load projects, the total maximum export power of large distributed generation projects, and the total load capacity of large load projects.

Waipā Networks will present this information as aggregate totals and break it down by fuel type for generation or load type for load, and by project stage.

For each large distributed generation or large load project, Waipā Networks will publish its priority position, maximum export power or load capacity, fuel or load type, project stage, location by zone substation or feeder, date it entered its current stage, and clock status.

Waipā Networks will update its published pipeline information before the final day of each calendar month, except December, when it will update on 22 December or the next business day if 22 December is not a business day. Waipā Networks will also update information within five business

days of a material change to priority positions and will display the date on which the information was last updated.

1.11 Dispute resolution

Disputes about this policy or the clock stop/start mechanism will be addressed, as applicable, under Schedule 6.3 of the Code, the Electricity Authority's process for reporting a possible Code breach, and any dispute resolution provisions in a signed connection contract. Waipā Networks will also apply any mandatory good-faith process in the Code for applicants who are not participants.

1.12 Non-discrimination

When queueing and managing projects under this policy, Waipā Networks will not discriminate based on the ownership of, or beneficial interests in, an applicant, including whether Waipā Networks has an ownership or beneficial interest in that applicant. This applies to all aspects of the connection process, including application assessment, clock stop/start decisions, priority positions, allocation of resources, network access terms, and the setting or renegotiation of milestones.