

Tech Talk

Connection Standards newsletter – July 2009

Contents

- A change in the way we meter
- Embedded generation
- Contact our connections technical advisors online
- Dedicated phone numbers for RECs

To all Registered Electrical Contractors

The aim of *Tech Talk* is to provide information to assist you, your employees, CitiPower and Powercor to provide an improved service to our mutual customers.

To achieve this you should read the document yourself and copy and/or pass it onto your employees for their information.

A change in the way we meter

Later this year, CitiPower and Powercor will commence a meter change program affecting a majority of our customers (<160MWh pa). This meter change marks the beginning of the remote meter reading revolution that is gaining momentum across the globe.

The Victorian Government has mandated this change of metering across the state, so whether you or your customers are in the CitiPower, Powercor, Jemena, United Energy or SP AusNet regions, they will be impacted. The meter changes are scheduled to commence towards the end of the year, with all meters in the program being changed by the end of 2013.

What will change?

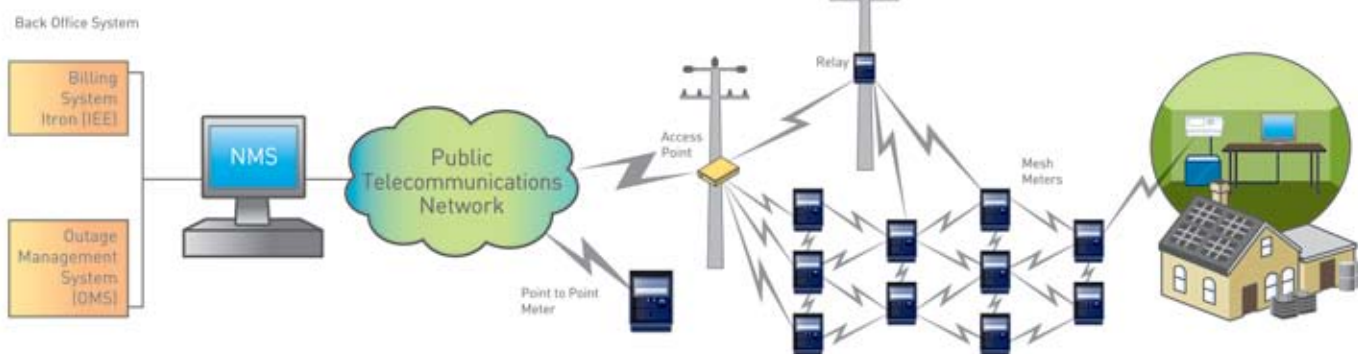
All meters will be replaced with an “electronic smart meter”. The meter change will involve an interruption to the customer’s supply.

Meters will have two way communications via a mesh radio network, and the meter itself will be a “smart” device, allowing it to perform a multitude of functions, including remote reads, interval reads, remote connection,

remote disconnection, outage detection, quality of supply recording, supply capacity control, tamper detection, load control and an interface to a customer’s home area network.

In upcoming editions of *Tech Talk* we will discuss the various functions of the new meters and the benefits to the customer, the electricity network and the environment.

AMI Infrastructure



Embedded Generation

CitiPower and Powercor recognise that many environmentally conscious customers wish to play their part in the reduction of the nation's greenhouse gas emissions, much of which are attributable to large coal-burning power stations.

One way that some customers seek to contribute is by the installation of small renewable electricity generating sources at their residences or premises. In order to obtain maximum utilisation of such sources, these customers often wish to connect their generating sources to the CitiPower/Powercor grid via a grid interactive inverter.

CitiPower and Powercor are supportive of such initiatives and will allow these installations to be interconnected with the grid provided that:

- Reliability and quality of the grid supply to other customers is not adversely affected
- The safety of other customers and of CitiPower and Powercor employees and contractors is not put at risk.

Regulation/Codes

The installation of Embedded Generators is covered by the Electricity Safety (Installations) Regulations 1999 Clause 406 1.e (e) wiring systems, switchgear, control gear and accessories installed to provide control and protection of standby generation or cogeneration electricity supply systems. The regulations define embedded generators and their associated wiring as prescribed electrical installation work.

This means that a CES & EWR must be submitted for the installation and the SIR clause 6.8 requires:

- 1 A grid interactive energy supply proposal is submitted to the DB for their approval.
This is done via an application (scan a copy and attach).
- 2 The relevant DB's representative shall test and commission the installation.

This means that the customer must submit a grid connection application form for the installation..



Process

The customer, usually with the assistance of the installer, is required to submit an application form which is available on the CitiPower/Powercor web site.

A EWR and CES are to be submitted to the customer's Retailer – be aware that not all Retailers support the solar arrangement.

A CitiPower or Powercor LEI will attend (scope) the site and issue instructions to the Connections staff in relation to the metering required on site. In some cases where Climate Saver or Off Peak metering is on site, the LEI may also instruct the installer's REC of the need to carry out works on customer owned meter boards.

A bi-directional meter is fitted and the installation tested and commissioned by a CitiPower/ Powercor LEI.

Victorian Electricity Market data is updated by CitiPower/Powercor to ensure the Retailer is informed of the changes and to allow correct customer billing. The Retailer is charged the costs associated with the DB connecting the inverter to the grid.

Appointments

For the majority of solar installations (new connections) or conversions (addition and alteration of existing metering) a REC is not required to be present on site in order for CitiPower/Powercor to perform the works. CitiPower/Powercor will only contact the REC to arrange an appointment for cases where access arrangements or further works are required to be performed. A suitable time and date will be arranged with the REC to complete the solar installation/conversion. CitiPower/Powercor will endeavour to complete new solar installations within 10 business days and conversions within 20 business days.

Meter Boards

The SECV and MEU's installed timber boards up until 1992. CitiPower/Powercor continues to own and maintain these timber boards. After 1992 customers were required to install composite meter panels which they own and have the ongoing responsibility for. Some meter boards may not be suitable to have a meter change due to damage or deterioration. If the board is owned by CitiPower/Powercor and needs replacing, this may lengthen the process and may be at the customer's cost if they have been negligent in maintaining the meter box enclosure or meter position in a sound condition. To assist you, the accompanying photos provide examples of meter boards that are not suitable for service. We are happy for you to send photos of meter boards in advance and can assist in providing advice as to their suitability. Send photos to Cta.question@citipower.com.au for the CitiPower area and Cta.question@powercor.com.au for the Powercor area.

Upgrades to customer-owned meter panels cannot be done by CitiPower/Powercor metering staff. The customer's Registered Electrical Contractor will have to carry out this work at the customer's cost.



Fees/Charges

Fees will apply for the connection of the inverter to the grid and will be sent to the Retailer.

The fees cover the cost associated with:

- Registration and recording of the application
- Assessment and approval of the proposed inverter
- The meter replacement with a bi-directional meter
- Inspection and testing of the embedded generator system
- Addition of the embedded generator to the mapping system.

Network Tariffs

Customers will remain on their current tariff assignment if there is no other change to the connection characteristics apart from the installation of an embedded generator.

An existing customer who requests a change to their connection characteristics, such that a change of metering is required other than what is required for the embedded generator, will be reassigned to the network tariff as appropriate.

Meter Solutions

A meter change is required for every connection of an embedded generator.

The metering request comes from the customer's Retailer. Currently Retailers only require NET metering which is provided as requested.

Continued on page 4

Feed in Tariffs

The Victorian Government has indicated that they are to introduce a feed in tariff. Details of this are available on the Department of Primary Industries web site.

When it is introduced, for customers to benefit it is important that the installation has been metered correctly and safely, and that the industry registration process has been followed.

Incorrect Process Being Followed

The majority of installers and RECs are complying with all the industry requirements and are supporting their customers in having their systems connected to the grid in a safe manner and ensuring excess net exported energy is correctly metered and settling in the market.

There are however a small number of occurrences where installations have been carried out without the knowledge of CitiPower/Powercor or the Retailer. Where these installations are found by CitiPower/Powercor personnel they will be locked in the off position and a Defect Notice issued to the customer.

To address the Defect Notice, the customer will have to arrange for an application form and a CES to be submitted, and the normal process followed. This is unfortunate for customers who have been placed in this situation, as the customer in good faith believed that their installer was following the correct processes.

Contact our connections technical advisors online

CitiPower and Powercor now have a new mailbox for contacting our Connections Technical Advisors (inspectors). So why call the Contact Centre when you can send us an email direct and receive speedy service online?

The Connections Technical Advisors have wireless connected laptops and are able to access their emails and messages while out of the office, enhancing the service levels offered to you. Depending on the time of enquiry they endeavour to respond on the same, or next business day. Contractors and suppliers can also contact the advisors on 1300 132 894 between 8am and 9.30am Monday to Friday, except on public holidays.

Contact us at:

Cta.question@citipower.com.au or
Cta.question@powercor.com.au

Dedicated phone number for RECs

Many RECs are unaware that CitiPower and Powercor now have dedicated phone numbers for you to contact us. These special phone numbers were set up as a direct response to feedback received from RECs.

For CitiPower the dedicated REC phone number is
1300 132 894

For Powercor the dedicated REC phone number is
1300 360 410

Tech Talk

Tech Talk is published on a needs basis with the aim of providing relevant information for Registered Electrical Contractors as part of CitiPower and Powercor's commitment to provide industry best practice service to our mutual customers.

Contact us if...

- You are a registered electrical contractor or associated industry participant and you don't currently receive a copy of *Tech Talk*, but would like to
- You currently receive *Tech Talk* and will change or have changed your address
- You would prefer to have *Tech Talk* e-mailed to you.

Please advise

Tina Totikidis –

Powerful Customer Service Co-ordinator,
on **03 9683 4495** or email

ttotikidis@powercor.com.au