Schedule 9 Statement

SP DISTRIBUTION LIMITED

Statement on Preservation of Amenity in accordance with Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989

Statement on Preservation of Amenity & Fisheries in Scotland in Accordance with Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989

1 Introduction

SP Distribution Limited ("SP Distribution"), part of the ScottishPower group, holds an electricity distribution licence and owns a distribution network situated mainly in Central and Southern Scotland. It has a duty under Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 to have regard to the preservation of amenity.

This requires the relevant licence holder when formulating proposals relating to the construction or extension of electric lines or the carrying out of other works in connection with the supply of electricity - to take account of the effects the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside, on any flora, fauna, buildings or objects of historical interest and sites and structures of archaeological interest. It is also required to take reasonable steps to mitigate the effects of its proposals on amenity.

This Statement sets out how SP Distribution will carry out its duties under paragraphs 1(1) and 1(3) of Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989, as amended by the Utilities Act 2000.

2 Background

Electricity distribution networks, which in Scotland operate at voltages up to 33,000 volts, are used to convey electricity from the transmission grid and to convert it to the voltages used by homes and businesses.

SP Distribution has responsibility for the electricity distribution network in Central and Southern Scotland. This area includes sites of national and international nature conservation, many protected historic and archaeological sites and buildings, as well as dense housing and some heavily industrialised areas, particularly bordering on the Firth of Forth and the River Clyde. Its network also extends to Berwick-Upon-Tweed, in Northumberland.

SP Distribution has a statutory duty to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity distribution. In order to develop and maintain its network, SP Distribution needs to carry out extensive and continual capital spending, including upgrading existing electrical infrastructure. Distributing electricity via overhead lines is normally significantly cheaper than by underground cable, particularly in rural areas. Also, overhead lines are more accessible for maintenance purposes and for rectifying faults when these occur.

In designing overhead lines, we take account of resilience against storms. Accordingly, we seek to site away from trees, which can cause damage to lines and interruptions to supply during severe weather. Where there is no alternative route, we will try to achieve adequate tree clearance in order to reduce the scope for faults during severe weather conditions.

We recognise that our installations, whether overhead or underground, can have an effect on the environment, and seek to minimise this through careful planning and execution of our projects.

This statement deals only with those environmental obligations falling under Schedule 9 of the Act. SP Distribution has a number of other environmental requirements and has a range of policies and procedures to meet these that are not covered here. Additional information on the environmental performance of the businesses in the ScottishPower group is reported annually within its corporate environmental report.

3 The Schedule 9 Requirements

The obligations on SP Distribution when formulating 'relevant proposals' are that it:

> "(a) shall have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geographical or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and
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> (b) shall do what [it] reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects." (Electricity Act, 1989, Schedule 9 (1(1)).

Under Schedule 9 'relevant proposals', in the case of electricity distribution, mean any proposals:

> "… b) for the installation (whether above or below ground) of an electric line; or
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> (c) for the execution of any other works for or in connection with the transmission or supply of electricity." (Schedule 9, 1(3))

In addition, in respect of Scotland, the Act prescribes that:

"… A licence holder… shall avoid, so far as is possible, causing injury to fisheries or to the stock of fish in any waters." (Schedule 9 3(3))

SP Distribution's guidelines for meeting its Schedule 9 obligations are set out overleaf.

SP DISTRIBUTION'S SCHEDULE 9 GUIDELINES

Where any of our operations or any proposed developments or projects comprise a "relevant proposal" we will observe the following guidelines.

1. Established Need

We will seek to construct new lines or substations only where the existing distribution network cannot be upgraded to meet security of supply requirements, or where an increase in demand for electricity transportation capacity is foreseen which cannot be satisfied by other means or where new connections to customers are required.

2. Designated Areas for Amenity

We will pay due regard to the need to preserve and maintain amenity, particularly within the areas of the greatest landscape, wildlife or cultural amenity, such as National Parks, National Scenic Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other national or international designated areas.

For new distribution infrastructure we will investigate the possibility of alternative routes or sites outwith such designated areas. For existing networks and where there is a requirement for infrastructure inside the designated area we will seek to minimise the impact of its presence through the sensitive routing and siting of structures. In such cases we will consult with those groups most likely to be affected at an early stage.

3. Seek to Minimise the Impact of New Distribution Infrastructure

We will seek to minimise the effects of new distribution infrastructure at or near both designated sites and also other sites valued for their general amenity such as areas of archaeological interest, battlefields, local nature reserves, playing fields and water bodies. We will take into account the significance of sites valued for their amenity through consultation with statutory bodies and local authorities.

4. Mitigate the Adverse Effects of Works

Where works are likely to have an adverse effect on amenity, we will carry out our activities in a responsible manner to reduce the impact of these activities to the practicable minimum.

5. Environmental Assessments

We will carry out environmental assessments in accordance with relevant legislation prior to developing proposals for new lines or plant.

6. Protection of Fisheries

In the preparation of plans and programmes we shall seek to avoid, so far as is possible, causing injury to fisheries or to the stock of fish in any waters.

7. Training and Awareness

We will promote environmental awareness amongst staff through appropriate training and dissemination of information. We will also make contractors aware of the relevant parts of this statement and take steps to audit their compliance with it.

8. Review of the Schedule 9 statement

We intend to review our Schedule 9 statement at least every 5 years.