**WATER SECTOR GUIDANCE**

**CHANGE PROPOSAL FORM**

Please complete the form below to submit a change proposal to the Water Adoption Panel.

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| **Name of Proposed Change:**  **Control, and Rationalisation, of Process Stage Forms** |
| **Section 1 - Proposed Change**   1. *Please outline the details (including any relevant supporting documentation) of the proposed change.*   The water adoption procedures outlines the (various) process stages and the minimum information that has to be provided to progress a stage. Companies themselves have various, local to them, forms associated with these stages and can publish guidance linked to their forms.  Issues arise, often delaying SLPs progressing work, when either companies change their forms or their associated guidance. Delays can also happen when companies change their own acceptance criteria as to what constitutes a permissible submission.  To avoid any such difficulties arising, and adversely impacting on SLPs, this change request is to establish the forms company use as controlled documents where by changes, to the forms themselves or the associated guidance, only happen after adequate notice and engagement with SLPs.  In requesting this change the Panel is also asked to consider whether, after a year of usage against the water adoption procedures, it is now timely to review the various company forms with a view towards establishing if cross company, consolidated forms, could be introduced.   1. *Has the proposed change been considered previously (including during any prior consultation process)? If so, please provide details.*   No   1. *Does the proposed change need to be considered by a specific date? If so, please explain why?*   No. But SLPs have already encountered delays and frustrations because companies have changed their documentation, or information requirements. Hence it is now timely to bring greater discipline to process stage forms becoming ‘controlled documents’.   1. *Does the proposed change raise any health and safety issues? If so, please provide details.*   No specific health and safety considerations.   1. *Please provide any further information relevant to the change proposal.*   Exchange of information, invariably through forms, is key to the smooth progression of self-lay work. Whilst companies, no doubt, have sound reason for making form changes, or to what information needs to be provided on a form, the introduction of, what can be almost ‘overnight’ changes has a material impact on SLPs. Hence the looseness of the water adoption procedures merely stating that a process stage (as defined in the Minimum Information appendix) just requires “satisfactory completion of the relevant Water Company form” needs addressing.  Although companies may claim that their forms, and any associated guidance information, is already provided on their websites experience indicates that updates to these are not always done in ways which follow the water adoption arrangement principles. This can place SLPs at a material disadvantage. |
| **Section 2 - Scope of the Proposed Change**   1. *Which section(s) of the Water Sector Guidance and Model Adoption Agreement does the proposed change concern? Please provide specific references to the relevant documentation.*   This change could be applied in a number of places in the water adoption procedures (so the Panel is encouraged to decide which approach fits best).  Options are to:-   * + - 1. Add it into the Minimum Information Appendix; or,       2. Introduce a ‘local practice’ relating to company specific forms; or,       3. Add an appendix to the company specific (DCS) Design and Construction Specification.   The favoured approach being to:-   1. Cover the additional requirements in the Water Sector Guidance; and, 2. Get companies to specify the forms they are using, with version numbers and any associated guidance, as an appendix to their DCS. 3. *What consequential amendments to the Water Sector Guidance and Model Adoption Agreement would be required as a result of the proposed change? Please provide specific references.*   Section 6 of the Water Sector Guidance, covering Minimum Information and Forms, currently reads:- *“Appendix E contains a table setting out the Minimum Information required throughout the self-lay process”.*  To this is to be added:- The reference numbers of the forms a company currently uses to collect the required minimum information, together with any form specific guidance they use, is to be listed in (a new) Appendix 2 to a company’s Design and Construction Specification.  Additionally the Design and Construction Specification template is to be updated to include a new Appendix 2 – headed “Company Specific Forms and Associated Guidance”.  Whilst this appendix is for water companies themselves to complete the template text shall say:- “Water Company to insert here a schedule of all forms that they use to collect information on each of the water adoption process stages. The schedule to provide the version number, together with date of introduction, of the form currently being used and any associated guidance information”.  In addition to the better management of company specific forms it would help SLPs if the various company specific forms could be rationalised. Hence the Adoption Panel is asked to consider initiating a review into the practicality of introducing common, across company, forms. |
| **Section 3 - Rationale for the proposed change**   1. *What is the nature and effect of the current position/existing arrangements?*   Whilst it is in all parties interest to provide the required minimum information in ways which allows self-lay projects to proceed experience indicates that (some) companies can make significant changes to forms, or what is locally acceptable when forms are completed, with little notice. Hence improving form management discipline benefits all parties and avoids SLPs in potential reworks and delays.  It would also improve the process for SLP customers if all companies were to use the same forms with the same input requirements.   1. *What is the nature and effect of the proposed change?*   To define process stage forms in a way that enables them to be controlled and evolve in ways which follow established best practice and which satisfy the Adoption Code fair and proportionate principle.   1. *Why is the proposed change necessary?*   Because SLPs have experienced companies changing their forms, or how they require forms to be completed, with little or no notice.   1. *What is the desired outcome of the proposed change?*   For process stage forms to be controlled and facilitating SLP custom engagement in any changes.  Plus the initiating of a review to consider form rationalisation. |
| **Section 4 – Impact on the Principles and Objectives of the Code**   1. *Outline, how and why the proposed change maintains consistency with the principles and objectives of the Code for Adoption Agreements, and any relevant statutory or regulatory requirements?*   By bringing **Customer Focus** to the fore when changes to company forms, and/or associated guidance are under consideration. Thereby promoting the participation of SLP Customers in the development and maintenance of the minimum information documentation.  Introducing being **Fair and Proportionate** in the way changes are made to minimum information exchange documents.  Aiding **Efficiency** by giving SLPs adequate notice of (form) changes and thereby promoting efficient and effective processes.  Enhancing **Predictability and Transparency** by having arrangements which are, from a customer perspective, much more predictable and transparent. Thereby providing customers with greater certainty as to what they can expect at each step in the water adoption process. Also ensuring that any changes to the arrangements under the Code are adequately signposted to Customers in advance of the change. |
| **Section 5 – Impact on Customers and Water Companies**   1. *What is the impact of the proposed change (be it positive and/or negative) on Customers?*   Change will benefit both companies and customers as it will give them a framework covering how minimum information collection changes, either to forms or the response detail needing to be provided, gets introduced.  Also common forms would enhance the process for SLP customers and should aid greater cross company consistency.   1. *Is there any evidence of customer concern relating to the proposed change? If so, please provide details.*   No. This change would be welcomed by SLPs, especially those who have already experienced delays caused by form and information collection changes and also local company differences.   1. *What is the impact of the proposed change (be it positive and/or negative) on Water Companies?*   By applying some discipline to the introduction of form updating they should be able to better appreciate the impact on their SLP customers and, as a result, be able to achieve implementation with minimal customer adverse reaction.   1. *Estimate how much notice Customers and Water Companies may reasonably require to be able to meet any new requirements arising from the proposed change.*   Customers require no notice of this change regarding control of existing forms (and, even without formal implementation, companies are urged to follow the requested change as it represents best practice).  However the introduction of common, across company forms, would need to be planned.   1. *What is the suggested implementation date of the proposed change?*   From as early a date as is practically possible. |
| **Section 6 – Stakeholder Engagement**   1. *Please outline any informal/formal consultation undertaken with relevant stakeholders likely to be affected by the proposed change, including details of any responses provided by stakeholders.*   The issue has been raised with those companies who have sought to bring forward local changes (outside of the water adoption arrangements). Hence this request for Water Guidance change should not be a surprise!  The proposal regarding standardised cross company forms aligns well with the Code principles and should be something all companies would surely support. |
| **Section 7 – Applicant’s Details** |
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