



Irish Retail Electricity Market

Market Change Assurance Strategy

Prepared by: Version 1 Retail Electricity Market Assurance Team | 31 August 2023

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Reference Documents

Title	Description
Risk Matrix Strategy: System Safety Program Requirements -30/03/1984 (MIL-STD-882C)	MIL-STD-882C is the document reference that originally defined the 5x5 risk matrix concept that has been adapted for the analytical assessment of assurance technique outputs within in Appendix 4.

1. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the strategy and process that Version 1 (the Assurance Body) will apply when providing Assurance for changes being introduced to the Irish Retail Electricity Market, referred to as Market Change Assurance.

A separate document details the strategy and process that is applicable for Supplier focused assurance (i.e. New suppliers entering the Irish Retail Electricity Market, Suppliers Requalifying into new Electricity Market Segments or making a Material Change to their systems and/or operational processes).

1.1. Background

To mitigate potential risks and disruption to the Retail Electricity Market that was established in 2005, the Commission of Utilities (CRU) requires an independent assurance service in coordination with the Retail Market Design Service (RMDS). Version 1 have been acting as the Assurance Body for the Rol Retail Electricity Market since November 2022.

1.2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the high-level framework for the application of assurance services relating specifically to changes being introduced to the Irish Retail Electricity Market design, infrastructure or key operational processes, that will affect all Suppliers (categorised as Large or Small).

This document provides coverage for both the Strategy and Process followed for Market Change Assurance.

1.3. Scope

Market Change Assurance is applicable to all suppliers within the Large and Small Supplier categories in addition to ESB Networks (DSO) and Eirgrid (TSO). For ease of definition any supplier that has the ability (whether presently active or inactive) to send or receive market message via the Electronic Market Message Application (EMMA) hosted on the TIBCO infrastructure.

For the purpose of the Market Assurance strategy and process there is no differentiation made between the Large and Small Supplier classifications.

1.4. Market Change Assurance Triggers

There are two main triggers when market change assurance is required, a market release or a change to central market systems / infrastructure.

- Market releases, will include impacts as defined in the applicable Market Change Requests (MCRs) encompassing scope of change to:
 - Design Documentation
 - Business Processes
 - DSO Backend System Change
 - Market Participant (MP) Backend System Change
 - TIBCO / Supplier EMMA
 - Schema Changes
 - Webforms
 - Webservice
 - Extranet Market Website

- Changes to Central Market Systems, will include projects not defined by MCRs with impacts defined by the Project Initiation Document (PID), for example:
 - TIBCO/EMMA upgrades
 - Market systems infrastructure changes

The Assurance process as outlined in the following sections will apply to either trigger.

2. Objectives

2.1. The focus and objective of Market Change Assurance

The principal objective of Market Change Assurance is to:

- provide confidence to all Market Participants and CRU in the continued reliable operation of the Retail Market Systems following the introduction of a market release or market change; and
- provide confidence that the introduction of the new changes will not detrimentally impact the market in a material way.

2.2. The guiding principles of Market Change Assurance Strategy

The guiding principles underpinning this Assurance Approach can be condensed into the following;

- Assurance activities should not place an unnecessary burden on a participant;
- Assurance process must be appropriate to the change being implemented;
- Market assurance outcomes should be evidence based;
- There should be transparency on the activities being performed; and
- The approach and outcomes provide confidence for the Market to proceed with the implementation of the release into production.

Version 1 is therefore providing assurance that when Market Participants and ESB Networks implement the relevant changes as outlined in the Market Release or Market Change, the market will not be negatively impacted to any material extent.

3. ASSURANCE APPROACH

3.1. Summary of Market Assurance Approach

The assurance approach contains seven distinct stages, which typically occur in sequence. It should be noted however depending on the level of change being introduced by the Market Release or Market Change, that the level of review or depth of probing may differ within certain stages.

A market release will generally follow the full Market Assurance Approach outlined below however on ad-hoc occasions or for minor releases a more appropriate priority assurance approach (please see Section 3.4) can be adopted.

Appendix 1 (section 5.1) details the process flow providing an overview of how the steps and stages progress through the lifecycle of a Market Release or Change. Section 3.3 below details the activities and desired outputs from each of the stages listed below.



Figure 1 - Outline approach to Market Assurance

The key stages of our approach are **summarised** as follows;

- 1) **Assurance control** – the overall project governance that the Assurance Body will follow including plans, communication strategy and reporting back to market either through step completion

documentation (outlined in [Section 4.3](#)), IGG meeting presentations or an ad-hoc targeted intervention.

- 2) **Assess** – the approach to reviewing the MCRs and related documentation (MPDs, MPIDs etc) included in the change and assessing the effective impact on the market. During this stage the Assurance Approach techniques that will be required are assessed for a particular MCR in addition to the indicative high level IPT scenarios (if applicable) that will apply.
- 3) **Define** – defining our Assurance approach for the Market Release or Market Change for approval by IGG and the CRU, through the creation of the Assurance Approach document. Where the MCRs have been defined as eligible for a priority assurance release (as approved at IGG), a streamlined release plan and timeline will only be developed.
- 4) **Self-Assessment (Participant Questionnaire)** – the first assurance assessment technique, is to gather information on the project approach, plan, testing strategy and performance from MPs, ESB Networks and Eirgrid's (where impacted). Participant Questionnaires are provided by the Assurance Body for completion and return together with evidence (where requested) in support of their response.
- 5) **Formal Assessment** – this is typically focused on the ESB Networks project, who are developing and implementing the change on the DSO Market Systems. However, this stage could also impact a Supplier who did not meet the required exit criteria from the Self-Assessment stage. This stage primarily comprises:
 - a. Deeper investigation of the responses to the Self-Assessment questionnaire especially where a higher risk has been identified; and
 - b. Additional areas of focus on the core elements of the system development project lifecycle.

A formal assessment will involve a meeting with the Assurance Body and the development of a formal outcome report for CRU approval.

- 6) **Interparticipant Testing (IPT)** – IPT provides an opportunity for market testing in a simulated live environment. IPT is seeking to ensure the changes made between the DSO and Market Participant Suppliers are working as expected before they are released into production. Essentially, this is the final opportunity for the market to test the changes made to their systems before Go-Live.
- 7) **Cut-over readiness** – this stage is focused on the ability and confidence to proceed with Go-Live and the cut-over weekend. This stage also assures the confidence in the post go-live support model and contingency plans. From a Market Participant Supplier perspective, a self-declaration will be returned to the Assurance Body showing the confidence and approval of the Market Participants ability to proceed with the changes being implemented.

Following these key stages, the Assurance Body will then develop a final assurance assessment report for approval by CRU. This report provides an outline of the assurance work performed, resultant outcomes, suggestions for changes to be implemented in future projects together with a recommendation regarding the progression to Go-Live and Cutover.

3.2. Specific Assurance techniques employed

When considering the specific approach to the Market Release or Market Change, the following table will be included in the Approach document to outline the key assurance steps that will be taken and which steps will be applicable across Market Participants, ESB Networks and Eirgrid. Table 1 below details the assurance activities that will be undertaken for a Market Release:

	Control	Assess	Define	Self-Assessment	Formal Assessment	IPT	Cut Over
Overall	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-
	ESB Networks (DSO)			Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
	Eirgrid (TSO)			Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
	Market Participant (Large)			Yes/No	Yes/ No/ If required ¹	Yes/No	Yes/No
	Market Participant (Small)			Yes/No	Yes/No If required ¹	Yes/No	Yes/No

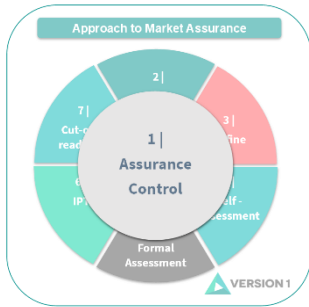
Table 1 - Summary of typical assurance activities performed for a Market Release

Depending on the scope of the Market Release or Change as assessed by the Assurance Body the definition of the assurance activities to be performed will ensure that guiding assurance principles are maintained.

3.3. Market Assurance Approach

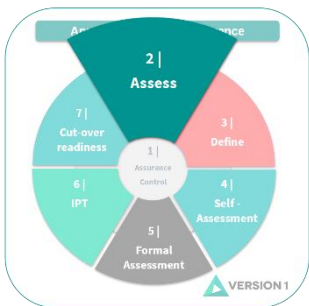
All Market Release and Changes will complete the first three steps, control, assess and define.

3.3.1. Control



The assurance control refers to the overall project governance that the Assurance Body will follow including plans, communication strategy and reporting back to market either through step completion documentation, IGG meeting presentations or ad-hoc targeted interventions. [Appendix 2 Roles and Responsibilities](#) provides an overview of the stakeholders involved as participants in this strategy document aligned to the key stages. In addition to these milestone touch points, the Assurance Body will have weekly meetings with RMDS outlining progress and monthly updates to IGG.

3.3.2. Assess



The assess step includes reviewing the relevant Market Change documentation: Market Change Requests (MCRs), Market Process Design (MPDs), Market Message Implementation Guides (MMIGs) and any other relevant documentation.

[Section 4.2](#) provides an overview of how the Assurance Body will define the assurance approach and IPT testing scenario's when the MCRs are being assessed for approval by IGG. A summary table detailing the assurance

¹ A Formal Assessment could be triggered where, in the Assurance Body opinion, the outcomes from the Self-Assessment fall below a satisfactory level, i.e. comfort has not been ascertained from the quality of response and evidence received by a Market Participant during the Self-Assessment phase.

techniques that will be conducted and high level detail of IPT assurance techniques and areas will be included in MCRs (per the table in [section 4.2](#)).

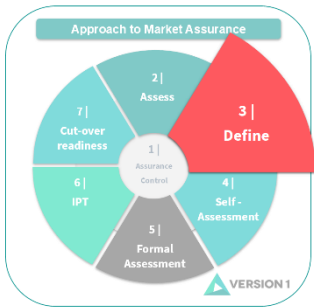
When required an impact assessment will then be created defining the Assurance Approach that will encompass risk assessments, project governance, assurance techniques, assurance stage exit criteria, timelines and communication strategy. Section 5.6 [Appendix 6 – Assurance Timeline format](#) contains the standardised timeline template that will be included as a section within the Assurance Approach.

3.3.3. Define

The primary deliverable from this stage is the development of an Assurance Approach document for approval by CRU and IGG. This document will outline in more detail the assurance techniques that will be used, together with the timelines, the assumptions and risks etc. It may also include new Assurance techniques that apply to the area of change, the Assurance Body deems appropriate to perform their role i.e. the approach the Assurance Body aims to take, and any specifics based on the MCRs being introduced.

For the avoidance of doubt an Assurance Approach document will be prepared when during the Assurance Body’s assessment (in stage 2), a decision has been made that Assurance will be required and that the priority assurance approach will not be applicable.

Section 3.4 provides more context of the priority assurance approach. However, in terms of the Define Stage, where the Assurance Body has determined that a priority assurance approach is applicable then an Assurance Approach document will **not** be produced rather it will be taken that the Assurance Body will follow the strategy as stated in this document i.e. following stages 4 through 7.

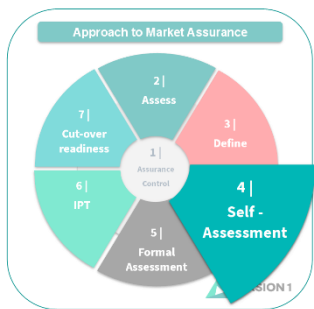


3.3.4. Self-Assessment

The Assurance Body will pose a series of questions to Market Participants (Small & Large Suppliers), ESB Networks (DSO) and Eirgrid (TSO), (depending on the Assurance Approach coverage). Four specific assessments will be prepared and tailored against the relevant project impacts. Whilst four documents will be prepared, the structure is similar in terms of high-level areas probed and follows a similar path to that of a maturity assessment. Version 1 will review the responses to the questions posed and decide upon a risk score. This score is decided against our level of comfort from the response we received and is displayed through a 5x5 risk matrix and can be seen in Section 5.4 [Appendix 4 – Risk Approach](#).

The Assurance Body will expect to see a satisfactory level of response to the questions posed together with the quality of evidence in support of the response (if required). Questions are aligned to several criteria within the usual system development lifecycle. Section 5.5 Appendix 5 – MP Self-Assessment Questionnaire. outlines the areas covered within this self-assessment and the expected exit criteria.

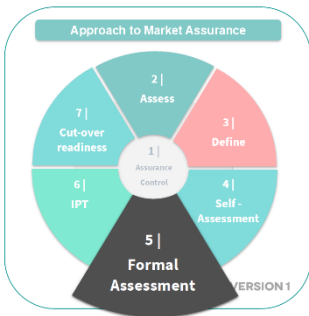
Where the Assurance Body believes there is an issue with a response or indeed are seeking further clarifications, they will primarily seek to resolve any



issues with the Participant directly, thereby providing an opportunity to resolve the issue efficiently.

The Assurance Body, upon completing the review of the responses and assessment determination, will then prepare a Self-Assessment Finding Report for CRU approval. This report will outline the work completed, the findings from the assessment and a recommendation for progression to the next stage. This is a decision point in the process flow contained in Section 5.1 [Appendix 1 - Market Assurance Release or Change process flow](#). Upon approval, the Assurance Body will then provide an anonymised version for circulation to IGG members.

3.3.5. Formal Assessment



A Formal Assessment will be undertaken when included within the Assurance Approach or deemed required subsequent to the Self-Assessment stage outcome. The assessment will consist of a formal review of ESB Networks project team or the Suppliers processes, systems and records within the areas defined in table 2 below.

The formal assessment will entail a meeting where the Assurance Body will undertake a review of core project outputs to date, witnessing and undertaking a level of substantive testing.

The following is the list of the main areas which the Assurance Body will follow when undertaking a Formal Assessment:

Title	Description
Project control and governance	Focusing on the governance of the project and the control over progress and performance e.g. documentation control, approvals, risk management, KPI analysis etc.
Scope	Focusing on the scope of the project, the impact assessment undertaken and confirmation that the project has been instigated with the stated objectives of the particular Market Release project changes in mind.
Delivery approach	Focusing on evidence to show how effective the delivery approach is for the project to provide confidence that it will be delivered in line with the expectation of the market timelines
Design	Seeking comfort that the design changes are in line with expectation from the MCR releases and, where relevant validation from their Solution SME's.
Testing	Seeking to ensure a strong strategy is in place, that the test coverage is reasonable, robust tests created, that the necessary management mechanisms are in place to support effective means of resolving defects.

Cutover and post go live support	Focusing on the plans for cut-over, hyper care, contingency plans and that reasonable arrangements are in place for a support model post go-live.
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Table 2 - Summary of Formal Assessment areas of focus

In a similar vein to the Self-Assessment, a risk-based scoring approach is used following a Quantitative Methodology. The details of this approach can be seen in Section 5.4 [Appendix 4 - Risk Approach](#).

Once the Assurance Body concludes their Assessment, a Formal Assessment Findings report is prepared for CRU approval. This report will outline the approach taken, our finding and results from each assessment stage, any material issues for consideration together with our recommended next steps (denoted as a decision point in the process flow [Appendix 1](#)).

3.3.6. Inter Participant Testing (IPT)

Inter Participant Testing is performed to primarily gain confidence that upon cut over the changes being introduced will operate as expected in a simulated live environment and will not adversely affect the Retail Market. The process is seeking to get as close to a live environment as is reasonably possible and to provide Market Participants with the opportunity to conduct testing of their system changes in regards Market process and schema changes, as a final step before progressing to production. It is incumbent on Market Participants ensure they have made the necessary updates and validation to their processes and systems to ensure that the changes introduced have been successfully implemented.

The following areas and activities will be included in the Assurance Approach document and/or timeline:

3.3.6.1. IPT Plan

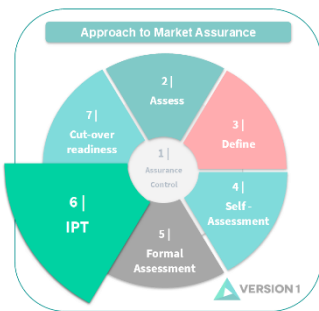
RMDS will provide an IPT plan this will detail key activities and tasks for the completion of the IPT phase. The attributes contained within the plan for each task will include start/end dates, applicable resources and a status.

3.3.6.2. IPT Test Scenarios

The scenarios that will be tested for the Market Release or Change will be developed by the Assurance Body and provided to all Market Participant Suppliers and ESB Networks via the IPT workbooks that will be developed and issued by RMDS in line with the IPT plan.

3.3.6.3. IPT Test Population

Depending on the Market Release or Change, during the Assess and Define stage a decision will be made in regards the test population for the IPT phase. Depending on the type of Release or Change and the impact assessment the IPT participation will be defined in the Assurance Approach. It will usually be expected that for most Major or Schema releases IPT will be mandatory for all Suppliers (within the



Large and Small Supplier categories), together with ESB Networks and the TSO (where required).

3.3.6.4. IPT criteria for entry

For IPT to be a success the following conditions will be required before testing commences:

- A test environment is available for the relevant Market Participants;
- IPT plan has been prepared, reviewed by RMDS and cascaded to the relevant Market Participants;
- Agreed test scenarios have been developed by Version 1 as incorporated into the IPT workbook, reviewed by RMDS and cascaded to the relevant Market Participants;
- Test data has been developed for use for the IPT tests;
- That there are no material defects from the ESBN internal testing which would materially affect the performance of the IPT tests.
- That the required resources to support IPT have been identified and are available;

That the relevant Market Participants have declared that their systems can undertake IPT testing, and that they have successfully passed any preceding Assurance stages to our level of satisfaction.

3.3.6.5. IPT Evidence required – exit criteria

In order that the IPT phase has been completed, the Assurance body will require the review and satisfaction with:

- Confirmation from all MPs (selected to conduct the testing), ESB Networks and Eirgrid (where required) that all tests have been undertaken and completed successfully;
- Each IPT test will require evidence to be provided by MPs (according to the IPT workbook schedule), ESB Networks and Eirgrid (where required), as detailed below that will be reviewed by the Assurance Body to ascertain whether the output is deemed to be satisfactory;
- There are no defects raised during IPT that remain open and considered material;
- All MPs, ESB Networks and Eirgrid (where required) have completed the IPT declaration.

The Assurance Body will primarily use screen shot evidence of outputs from the Market Participants back-end systems (or Webforms if no back-end system is used) together with XML outputs showing the Market Message details. Additionally screen shots may also be required from associated market systems e.g., Market Extranet, Meter Data Management, Secure Meters Liberty Client keypad system.

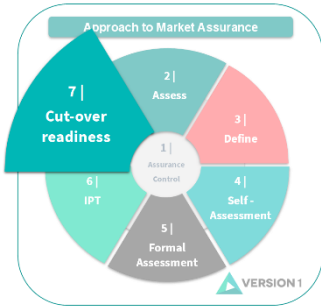
RMDS will collate the evidence as provided by the Market Participants, ESB Networks and Eirgrid (where required) and provide to the Assurance Body.

The Assurance Body will also seek to understand and review any issues from a technical perspective that occurred during IPT i.e., that delayed the progression of testing. The review of these issues will primarily focus on the impact from a Market Release or Change deployment perspective.

3.3.7. Readiness for Cut Over

In readiness for cut-over, a variety of Assurance techniques will be performed to test the ability of the project to perform a successful cut-over. From an Assurance perspective the following core activities that will typically be carried out depending on the impact assessment of the Market Release or Change will be:

1. Self Declaration Form: All Market Participants that will be impacted by the Market Release or Change will be asked to sign a self-declaration form. This declaration seeks comfort that:
 2. “the systems and procedures that have been, or will be, modified or otherwise impacted as a result of the changes will, at the time of implementation, continue to fully meet the applicable market design obligations, work together correctly and accurately, have been completely and successfully tested and will not degrade the MPs ability to inter-operate with the Market.”
 3. A review of ESB Networks cut-over plan and post go live support arrangements during the Formal Assessment stage;
 4. Comfort that all Market Participants have a cut-over plan and where necessary post go-live support; and
 5. The successful completion by the project and all market participants of a predefined number of dress rehearsals as will be outlined in the Project Initiation Document (PID).
6. From the combination of the above, the Assurance Body will assess the readiness of the Market Release or Change for a successful cut-over.



3.4. Priority assurance process

The priority assurance process has been designed to assist primarily with Minor Market Releases, to ensure that both assurance requirements are met, despite an aggressive timeline for delivery of these MCR(s). The Assurance Body is seeking to ensure that faster timelines for completion do not translate into a barrier to the timely cut over of the market release.

Priority assurance does not mean that an assessment of the impact is not completed, nor does it mean that CRU and IGG do not get a chance to approve the Assurance Approach. We do this at the same time as the MCR is approved. The definition of the assurance techniques at MCR approval stage is therefore the key to streamlining the approval of the release assurance approach.

It will mean that from an assurance perspective the Assurance Body has more time to undertake the activities it needs to perform for the minor change within the available timescales.

Section 4.2 and 4.3 below detail the governance and reporting requirements for the priority assurance process.

4. ASSURANCE GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING

4.1. Approval of Assurance Strategy

The Assurance Strategy and any subsequent reversioning will initially require CRU approval, before being brought to an IGG meeting for approval.

4.2. Assurance Approach for individual MCRs approved at IGG

As detailed above, the Assurance Body will provide an overview of the assurance techniques that will be required for an individual MCR in addition to the indicative IPT requirements.

The following table will be included in each MCR to define the Assurance approach techniques and IPT scenarios (if applicable) for consideration and approval at a IGG Meeting:

Stage	Assurance Requirement	Priority Eligible	Suppliers	ESBN (DSO)	Eirgrid (TSO)	
2&3	Priority assurance eligible	Y/N				
4	Self-Assessment		Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	
5	Formal Assessment		Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	
6	IPT		Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	
7	Cut Over Declaration		Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	
Stage	IPT - Scenario	Test participants	Market Segment(s)	MPDs	MMs	Number of tests
6	e.g. CoS, CoLE, CoM	e.g. All, Selected, Small / Large				
	e.g. CoS, CoLE, CoM					
	Additional rows to be added as required					

Table 3 - MCR Assurance Approach table to be included within Part 1 of each MCR

The Assurance Body will review each Retail Market Discussion Request (DR) and Market Change Request (MCR) at each forum being consulted. The above table will then be incorporated into the MCR document issued by RMDS to be made available when approval is being considered at IGG. Should a MCR be subsequently reversioned, then the Assurance Body will analyse the impact(s) of the reversioning and review whether the assurance approach and/or IPT requirements approved for the MCR initially should be changed.

4.3. Document / Reports and Communication requirements

The following table outlines the key stakeholders involved in the development and approval of the key Assurance documents. The RACI matrices for Market Releases or Changes are defined as Major or Minor are outlined below. The definitions for the acronyms are as follows:

- who is responsible (D) for the development of the deliverable documents,
- the stakeholders who will approve (A) these deliverables,
- the stakeholders who will review and provide feedback (R) to the owners of the deliverable documents; and

- those stakeholders who will primarily get sight (I) of the deliverable document for information purposes.

Stage	Document / Report ²	Delivery	Stakeholder					
			Assurance Body	RMDS	CRU	IGG	DSO (ESBN)	MPs
1	Progress updates and reports	Weekly	D	R	R	-	-	-
		Monthly	D	R	R	R	R	R
		Ad Hoc	D	R	R	R	R	R
2&3	Market Change Request (MCR)	Ad Hoc	D ³	D	A	A	A	A
2&3	Assurance Plan & Timeline ⁴	Milestone	D	R	A	I	I	I
	Assurance Approach		D	R	A	A	A	A
4	Self-Assessment Questionnaire	Approved Timeline	D	R	-	-	I	I
	Self-Assessment findings report	Milestone	D	R	A	-	-	I ⁵
	Self-Assessment findings report (Anonymised)		D	R	A	-	I	I
5	Formal Assessment findings report	Milestone	D	R	A	-	-	-
6	IPT Workbook	Approved Timeline	D	D	-	-	-	I
	IPT findings report	Milestone	D	R	A	-	-	-
7	Cutover self-declaration	Approved Timeline	D	R	I	-	I	I
	Final Assurance Outcome report	Milestone	D	R	A	-	-	N

Table 4 - RACI matrix aligned against documentation deliverables for a Market Release or Change

The deliverable document for stage 2/3 will be dependent on the classification of the Market Release or Change, together with the assurance approach when the MCR was defined and approved at IGG. For Minor releases the summary assurance plan, exit criteria and timeline (to align with the project delivery timeline) will be distributed for information as per table 3 above.

² Document/reports will be dependent on the inclusion of Assurance phases as dictated by the approved individual MCR Assurance Approach in addition to the classification of the release

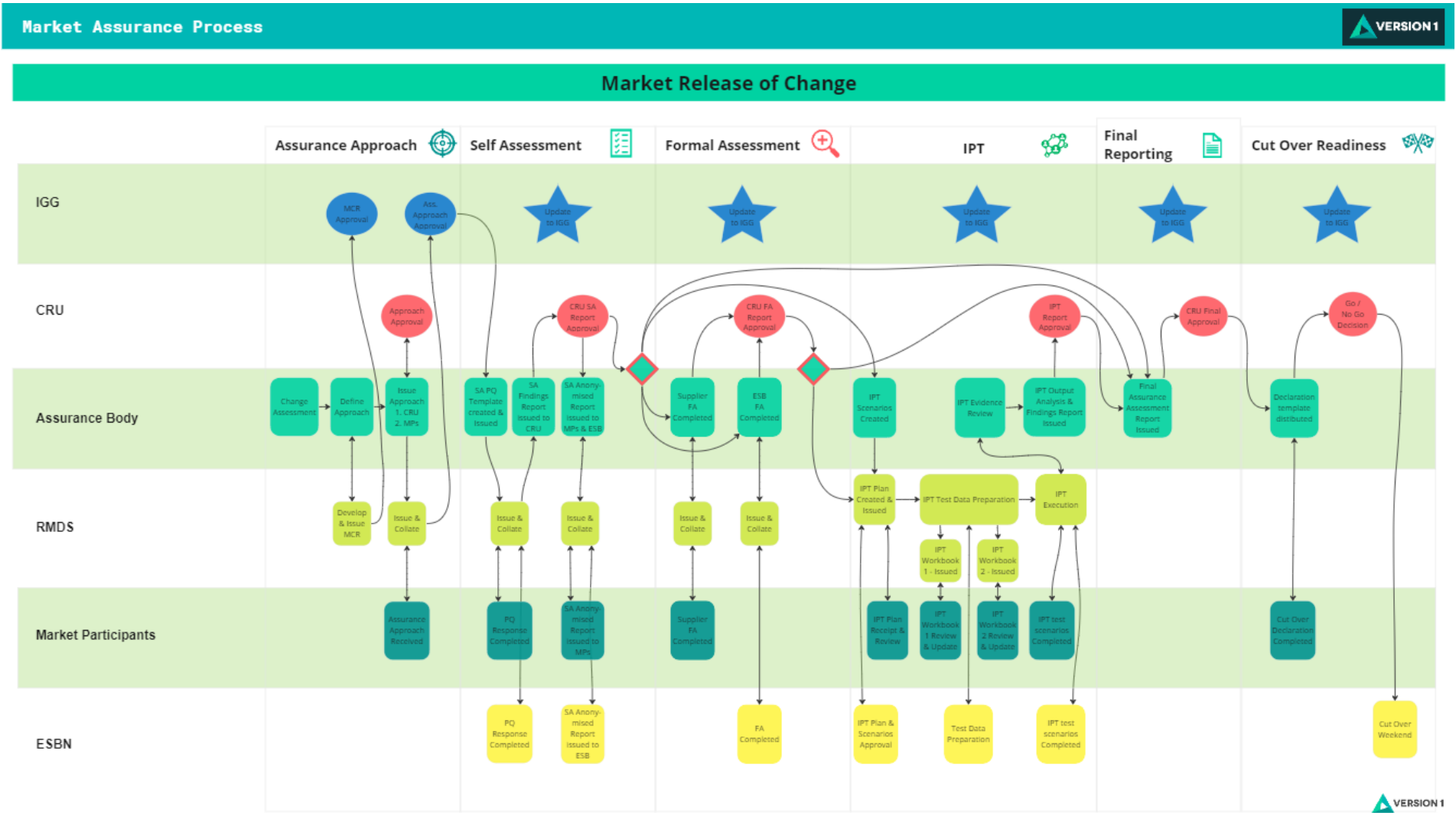
³ Development limited to the outputs of the MCR Assurance Approach table (as per table 4 above)

⁴ Summary approach, plan, timeline and exit criteria combining the Assurance approach (preapproved at IGG) for each MCR

⁵ Suppliers can request detail of their individual performance

5. APPENDICES

5.1. Appendix 1 - Market Assurance Release or Change process flow



5.2. Appendix 2 – Roles and Responsibilities

Title	Role	Description	Responsibility
Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU)	Regulatory Authority	The CRU is responsible for the regulation of all utilities, including the electricity market, in Ireland.	Responsible for the review and approval of the Market Assurance strategy and process document.
EirGrid	Transmission System Operator (TSO)	Independent TSO for the Irish electricity market and the Market Operator in the wholesale electricity trading system.	Responsible for ensuring adequate knowledge of the approved strategy and process, and ensuring relevant stapes and stages are adhered to.
ESB Networks (ESBN)	Distribution System Operator (DSO)	Responsible for the build, development, operation and maintenance of the Irish electricity network.	Responsible for ensuring adequate knowledge of the approved strategy and process, and ensuring relevant stapes and stages are adhered to.
IGG	Industry Governance Group	Oversees the ongoing operation of the Irish Retail Electricity Market. Chaired by the CRU and consists of representation from Suppliers, RMDS, DSO, MRSO and EirGrid.	Responsible for the review and approval of the Market Assurance strategy and process document.
Market Participants (MPs)	Suppliers (Small and Large)	Any participant in the SEM who has a license to supply electricity in accordance with the applicable governing rules.	Responsible for ensuring adequate knowledge of the approved strategy and process, and ensuring relevant stapes and stages are adhered to.
RMDS	Retail Market Design Service	A ringfenced function within ESBN, responsible for all aspects of the retail market design. The role of RMDS involves the cost effective support for and delivery of quality systems that will help achieve the CRU's objectives of encouraging competition in supply markets and quality of service to all customers.	Responsible for the review and feedback of the Market Assurance strategy and process document. Responsible for ensuring the approved strategy and process is adhered to.

Version 1	Assurance Body	Responsibility to provide confidence to all Market Participants and CRU in the continued operability of the Retail Market Systems following the introduction of a Market Release or Market Change. In addition, provide confidence that the introduction of the new change(s) will not detrimentally impact the market in a material way.	Responsible for the development of the Market Assurance Strategy and process document.
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5.3. Appendix 3 – Glossary

The glossary used within this document can be found on the RMDS website here: [Glossary of Terms | RMDS \(rmdservice.com\)](https://www.rmdservice.com/Glossary-of-Terms)

5.4. Appendix 4 – Risk approach

The Assurance Body when conducting the Market Participant Self-Assessment Questionnaire (Stage 3) and during a Formal Assessment (Stage 4) aligned its approach around a maturity model. This model we have developed probes seven core areas of projects as outlined below in Figure 2. Version 1 have developed this model from our considerable experience in delivering IT projects. The depth and probing of our questions will align to the scale of the change being implemented. However, our approach is essentially aligned with the following 5 steps;

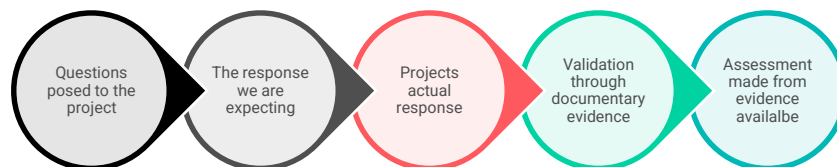


Figure 2 – Five Stage Formal Assessment Assurance Process.

- 1) **Posing questions to the project team** – Version 1 has developed a suite of key questions that allow us to probe projects more deeply to gain an understanding of the performance, progress, and governance of each core tenant of the project.
 - **Awareness** – focusing on how aware a Market Participant is about the project.
 - **Project control** – focusing on the governance of the project and the control over progress and performance.
 - **Scope** – focusing on the scope of the project to confirm it was in line with the stated objectives as defined by the market.
 - **Delivery approach** – seeking assurances and evidence to show how effective the delivery approach is for this project.
 - **Design** – seeking comfort that the solution has been designed effectively and in a robust manner.
 - **Testing** – seeking to ensure coverage has been adequate, robust management mechanisms in place, a strong strategy, and effective ways of resolving defects.
 - **Communications** – focusing more on Market Participants who are necessary for the effective completion of the project.
 - **Cutover and post go live support (PGLS)** – focus being on the plans for cut-over, hyper care arrangements and support models following Go-Live.
- 2) **Our expected response** – Version 1 has delivered a sizeable number of IT projects over its history, and we have developed a strong knowledge of what the desired results look like. We outline what our expectation is in terms of response by way of a benchmark to score against.

- 3) **The projects actual response** – this is where the project would respond to the questions posed by Version 1 during the meeting, providing a more in-depth explanation. Typically, the project would elaborate on their responses and evidence which had been included in the PQ assessment. Further, where an area of concern was identified at the PQ assessment phase, these would also be probed in more depth by the Assurance Body.
- 4) **Validation** – this step is about confirming the responses back to evidence whether it is further project documentation or indeed from visual confirmation of their management systems e.g., the Test Management systems.
- 5) **Assessment** – finally Version 1 will assess the responses and evidence gathered and decide on an overall risk score based on our experience of delivering numerous projects and Assurance assignments.

The risk score is based upon a Quantitative Methodology defined by the US Dept of Defence in 1984 (MIL-STD-882B System Safety Program Requirements). Version 1 have a adapted and defined a 5x5 risk matrix from this methodology, which contains two dimensions to the scoring, namely;

- The **severity of the risk** – how significant the risk will be in achieving the overall goals of the project (impact), and
- The **likelihood of the risk** materialising.

Each of these dimensions are assigned a score weighting from 1 to 5 and when combined, provide an overall risk score. The matrix below outlines the various combinations of scores.

		Impact					
		1	2	3	4	5	
Risk	1	1	2	3	4	5	Rare
	2	2	4	6	8	10	Unlikely
	3	3	6	9	12	15	Possible
	4	4	8	12	16	20	Likely
	5	5	10	15	20	25	Very Likely
		Negligible	Small	Moderate	High	Very High	

Figure 3 - Risk matrix

5.5. Appendix 5 – MP Self-Assessment Questionnaire.

Table showing the high-level questions asked and the respective exit criteria.

Whilst the Assurance Body has outlined an expected response below, we are also aware that, depending on the type of systems used e.g. an alternate main operational back end systems or Webforms, the level of documentation and impact will differ.

Area	Description	Expected response
Project control and governance	Focusing on the awareness of the Market Release or Change, the governance mechanisms established to support the project and the confidence to achieve the expected results aligned with the Market delivery timelines	The Assurance Body would expect to see; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A defined project governance approach e.g. (PID) established, RAID log, approval approach etc. • Project plan in line with key market timelines. • Project KPI mechanisms to understand progress.
Scope	Focusing on the size of the project, the impact assessment undertaken and confirmation that the project has been instigated with the stated objectives of the Market Release or Changes in mind.	The Assurance Body would expect to see an impact assessment created outlining an understanding of the changes from the Release or Change, and how they will impact upon their back-end market systems (where applicable).
Delivery approach	Focusing on evidence to show how effective the delivery approach is for the project to provide confidence that it will be delivered in line with the expectation of the market timelines	The Assurance Body would expect to see the delivery plan that will align to the key milestones of the Release or Change. The project plan above would be what is expected.
Design	Seeking comfort that the design changes are in line with expectation from the MCR releases and, where relevant validation from their Solution SME's.	The Assurance Body would expect to see where a back-end system change was being undertaken, a clear approach on how the design was identified and selected.
Testing	Seeking to ensure a strong strategy is in place, that the test coverage is reasonable, robust tests created, that the necessary management mechanisms are in place to support effective means of resolving defects.	The Assurance Body would expect to see; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear test strategy • A strong test management framework • Robust coverage of testing • Clear exit criteria • Strong path for defect resolution
Cutover and post go live support	Focusing on the plans for cut-over, hyper care, contingency plans and that reasonable arrangements are in place for a support model post go-live.	The Assurance Body will issue a declaration for Market Participants to approve and return.

Table 5 - Market Participant Self-Assessment Questionnaire

5.6. Appendix 6 – Assurance Timeline format

The following outlines our proposed Assurance timeline structure for inclusion within the Market Release Assurance Approach. Timelines will be adjusted and updated where necessary as projects progress and change as a result of any unexpected outcomes.

Key stage	Date
Assurance approach approved by CRU	
Assurance approach approved by IGG	
Market Participant Self-Assessment Questionnaire released	
Market Participant Self-Assessment Questionnaire response	
Self-Assessment Findings Report issued to CRU	
Anonymised Self-Assessment Findings Report issued	
RMDS Issues IPT plan	
Supplier Formal Assessments performed	
Supplier Formal Assessment Finding report issued to CRU	
ESB Networks Formal Assessment performed	
ESB Networks Formal Assessment Finding report issued to CRU	
Inter-Participant Testing Preparation	
Inter-Participant Testing (IPT) Execution phase	
IPT Findings Report issued to CRU	
Final Assurance Assessment Outcome Report issued to CRU	
CRU go/no-go decision	
Cut over	
Go-Live	

Table 6 - Assurance Approach timeline



Thank you

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