

Connection Process Performance Update

This update includes performance metrics for Cluster 1 and Cluster 2, as well as connection and BTF projects for the period September 2023 to March 2026. This period was selected to align with the implementation of the Cluster Assessment process in September 2023 and the completion of Cluster 2 in February 2026. More information on the AESO Connection Process is available on our website at <https://www.aeso.ca/grid/connecting-to-the-grid/>. The AESO last reported Connection Process Performance Metrics in May 2022.¹

Cluster Assessment Projects

The AESO publishes target timelines on the AESO website for Stages 0, 1 and 2 prior to the start of each cluster. Cluster 1 and 2 published targets and actual timelines are reported in the table below.

Cluster Assessment Performance Metrics

Cluster No.	Stage No.	Target (weeks)	Actual Duration (weeks)	Sample size (No. of Projects)
Cluster 1	Stage 0	6	7	147
	Stage 1	16	18	133
	Stage 2	21	42*	112
	Total Stages 0-2	43	67*	n/a
Cluster 2**	Stage 0	11	12	103
	Stage 1	28	28	96
	Stage 2	35	32	63
	Total Stages 0-2	74	72	n/a

*After publishing the Cluster 1 schedule, the AESO extended the duration of Stage 2 by 9 weeks to provide additional time to complete the Detailed Assessment Packages, and an additional 12 weeks to allow market participants to gain a better understanding of the Restructured Energy Market (REM) and other potential framework changes before advancing in the AESO Connection Process.

**The target timelines for Cluster 2 were adjusted based on experience in Cluster 1.

In general projects in the Cluster Assessment Process progress through stages 0, 1 and 2 faster than connection and BTF projects in the Independent Assessment process (see below).

Connection and BTF Projects

Target and maximum timelines for connection and behind-the-fence (BTF) projects were established in [ID #2018-018T Provision of System Access Service and the AESO Connection Process](#).

Average stage durations for connection and BTF projects are reported in the table below. Values for Stages 0, 1 and 2 include projects that progressed in the Independent Assessment process (i.e. load, generation and energy storage projects that did not meet the criteria to be included in the Cluster Assessment process or that were initiated prior to the start of the Cluster Assessment

¹ See slide 21 of the stakeholder presentation "Connection Process Streamlining Industry Information Session May 19, 2022" available at <https://aesoengage.aeso.ca/31713/widgets/131604/documents/86941>

process). Values for Stages 3/4 and 3 include projects that progressed through the Independent Assessment process or Cluster 1, and projects that were initiated prior to the start of the Cluster Assessment process.

Connection and BTF Project Performance Metrics

Project Type	Stage No.	Target (weeks)	Maximum (weeks)	Actual Average Duration (weeks)*	Sample size (No. of Projects)	% of Projects that exceed Target	% of Projects that exceed Maximum
BTF	Stage 0	2	n/a	5	42	55%	n/a
	Stage 1	8	16	31	39	90%	62%
	Stage 2	14	28	39	40	68%	53%
	Total Stages 0-2	24	46	75			
	Stage 3/4	26	52	89	54	74%	59%
Connection	Stage 0	2	n/a	4	60	55%	n/a
	Stage 1	8	18	27	83	98%	70%
	Stage 2	14	40	56	38	95%	74%
	Total Stages 0-2	24	60	86			
	Stage 3	32	70	134	35	94%	83%

*Actual average stage durations reflect the time it takes the AESO, the market participant and the applicable legal owners of transmission facilities to complete required deliverables.

As shown above, the vast majority of projects exceed the established targets and maximums set out in ID #2018-018T. Project timelines continue to exceed established targets for the following reasons:

- Project complexity has continued to increase (e.g., data centres, hybrid assets, energy storage, inverter based-resources, and electrification of industrial loads)
- Consistently high project volumes (range 200 to 300 in-flight projects since 2018)
- Proponents requesting stage extensions to secure financing, bi-lateral offtake agreements, or better understand the Restructured Energy Market, regulatory changes, and the Alberta electricity framework transition
- AESO resource imbalances and high project backlog due to project volumes that exceed resource capacity.
- Targets and maximum timelines have not changed materially for more than 10 years and targets have never reflected average project execution timelines.