

Scaling Data Sharing and its Governance: EnergyDataNewCo Ltd

A proposal for industry co-ownership of the energy data coordination layer

Discussion paper

Prepared by: IB1

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Audience

The primary audiences for this document are C-Suite energy sector leaders engaged in data strategy, and policymakers engaged in the design and implementation of data sharing governance. The focus of this document is data sharing governance and the implementation of trust frameworks.

Definitions

Scheme	https://ib1.org/definitions/scheme
Trust Framework	https://ib1.org/definitions/trust-framework/
Assurance	https://ib1.org/assurance
Data sensitivity classes	https://ib1.org/data-sensitivity-classes/

About Icebreaker One

Icebreaker One (IB1) is a global not-for-profit public benefit company (registered in England & Wales, No. 12156788) whose mission is to make data work harder to deliver net zero. IB1 creates and runs Trust Frameworks and Schemes across energy, water, finance and supply chains, working with industry, government and regulators to reduce barriers and costs to finding, accessing, using and sharing data.

¹ <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Background

This document summarises the case for establishing EnergyDataNewCo Limited, a sector-owned Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to govern the energy sector's data coordination layer. It is prepared for C-Suite energy leaders and policy leads engaged in the design of data sharing governance, including the DESNZ coordination consultation and the implementation of the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. Its focus is specifically on the governance of data and data sharing. Analysis underpinning the proposal has been developed independently by Icebreaker One and tested via the Open Energy programme.

Since 2020, Open Energy has been developed as a collaborative programme with and for the energy sector. Initially funded by UKRI and BEIS, and supported by SSEN, National Grid, Arup, Elexon, and many others. The programme has:

- Convened over 500 stakeholders from 100+ organisations across Steering Groups, Advisory Groups, public webinars and open consultations. This has included Ofgem, DESNZ, Citizens Advice, ENA, Energy Systems Catapult, Elexon, UK Power Networks, Northern Powergrid, SSEN, Zühlke, AWS, techUK, the ODI, Carbon Trust, the World Energy Council and the University of Birmingham
- Produced a live Energy Sector Trust Framework - in production with NGED and SSEN, operating the Assured Open Data scheme as the sector's common framework for data classification and assurance
- Developed the RIIIO-2 licensee open data classification and controls position paper in collaboration with DNOs, establishing common standards for how licensees publish and assure open data
- Operated openenergy.org.uk as the sector's open data discovery layer, covering open, shared and closed data classifications
- Served as governance design partner to both the DSI programme and the RECCo consumer consent programme

Addressing a complex governance gap

As digitalisation initiatives advance across the energy sector, individual programmes are progressing but the cross-programme coordination layer, the rules, standards, credentials and access controls that make data flow possible across all of them, has no durable legal home.

The data domain coordinator model extends the powers and obligations of NESO, RECCo and Elexon to include data coordination functions within each body's granted mandate. This model does not yet address cross-domain coordination, and by design cannot: each coordinator has a primary function, specific interests, and existing market position. This complicates the structural independence required for a cross-domain coordination layer to be fair, transparent and credible to all participants.

The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 creates the powers to establish Smart Data schemes by regulation, including provision for the governance, standards, monitoring

and enforcement of the bodies that operate them. Every scheme brought forward under these powers will need what Open Banking needed: a neutral operator with transparent multi-stakeholder governance, defined data rights, open standards and clear liability. These are capabilities that IB1 has built and currently operates.

Proposed model: EnergyDataNewCo Limited

EnergyDataNewCo Limited is proposed as an independent company, a mission-locked Special Purpose Vehicle, that holds (or subcontracts) and coordinates trust framework connections in a federated ecosystem, and provides the sector's neutral data coordination function. The body would be directly accountable to DESNZ and/or Ofgem.

Feature	Detail
Legal form	Company limited by guarantee; mission lock in articles of association
What it holds	Energy Sector Trust Framework; Scheme rules; IP; Assured Open Data Scheme; Oversight, development and coordination of sector-wide Schemes
Board	Transmission, distribution, supply, codes, consumer protection, technology sector (to address questions on public digital infrastructure and national security needs); IB1 as secretariat. Representative of stakeholders across the market.
Regulator role	Ofgem and DESNZ as silent observers - not directors
Funded by	Industry membership (tiered Membership based on organisational size to ensure full market accessibility). Propose a 3-5Y market initiation funding event collectively invested by key actors.
IB1 role	Delegated secretariat and operational lead with a Board seat to aid with leadership and accountability coordination.

An EnergyDataNewCo SPV would

- provide energy sector organisations with formal co-ownership of, and governance rights over, the interoperability layer, converting sector engagement into a durable legal stake in the infrastructure.
- provide DESNZ/Ofgem with a body they can formally recognise and hold accountable for the data coordination function, and would give NESO, RECCo and Elexon defined, stable relationships with a neutral cross-domain coordination body.

EnergyDataNewCo Limited could formalise the existing 'Open Energy programme' into a body that DESNZ/Ofgem can hold to account, and formally recognise as the cross-domain coordination vehicle, providing the governance home identified as necessary in the Digitalisation Vision.

Next steps

IB1 to convene a working group including but not limited to DESNZ, Ofgem, and parties with proposed Board seats (e.g. RECCo, SECCo, NESO, Elexon) to validate the analysis and develop the EnergyDataNewCo Limited proposal ahead of the coordination consultations.

IB1 Open Energy Steering Group - overview

