



**SINGLE ELECTRICITY MARKET  
COMMITTEE**

**Round 34 of Quarterly Directed Contracts  
Q3 2026 to Q2 2027**

**Information Paper**

**25th February 2026**

**SEM-26-08**

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## 1. Introduction

This paper provides information on the quantities and pricing for the upcoming quarterly Directed Contract (DC) subscription round, Round 34, covering the period Q3 2026 to Q2 2027 inclusive. The Regulatory Authorities (RAs, i.e., CRU and UREGNI) are notifying market participants that zero volumes were output from the DC Market Concentration Model for Round 34. Consequently, zero volumes are offered for this DC round.

## 2. Directed Contract Quantities

DC subscription windows are typically held every quarter, with DCs allocated on a rolling basis up to five quarters ahead.

There are three DC products in the market: Baseload, Mid-Merit and Peak. Suppliers can elect to subscribe for any given product for which they are eligible in any particular quarter from ESB. The definitions of the products are set out in the ESB PG DC Subscription Rules. These are as follows:

- **Baseload Product:** For Trading Periods at the Contract Quantity arising in all hours.
- **Mid-merit Product:** For Trading Periods at the Contract Quantity during the hours beginning at 07:00 and ending at 23:00 on Business Days and for Trading Periods on days that are not Business Days at 80% of the Contract Quantity.
- **Peak Product:** For Trading Periods arising during the hours beginning at 17:00 and ending at 21:00 on all days during October, November, December, January, February and March at the Contract Quantity.

The RAs used the Herfindahl Hirschman Index (HHI) to set DC quantities and use a target HHI level of 1,150 for the period Q3 2026 to Q2 2027.

The DC quantities to be offered by ESB for Q3 2026 to Q2 2027 in Round 34 are set out in Table 1 below.

Quarter	Baseload	Mid-Merit	Peak
Q3 2026	0	0	N/A
Q4 2026	0	0	0
Q1 2027	0	0	0
Q2 2027	0	0	N/A

**Table 1: ESB DCs for Q3 2026 to Q2 2027 in the forthcoming Round 34 Subscription (MW)**

The Market Concentration Model is used by RAs to calculate the quantity of Directed Contracts (DC) required to be offered to eligible suppliers in each DC round. The RAs note that zero Volumes across all modelled quarters were output from the DC Round 34 Market Concentration Model. DC Volumes have been following a downward trend in recent DC Rounds due to the impact of increased interconnection and the increase in renewable capacity that is forecast within the SEM PLEXOS Model. This has consequently contributed to a reduction in the HHI levels prior to allocating DCs across all modelled months and quarters, thus, it resulted in zero volumes output from the Market Concentration Model. Other factors contributing to the reduction in HHI levels prior to allocating DCs is the transition of ESB'S Moneypoint Units in the year 2025.

The RAs had previously notified market participants of their intention to commence a review of the Market Concentration Model ([SEM-24-038](#)) in 2024. The RAs have progressed the review alongside appointed consultants (NERA) in recent months and are preparing to publish a Consultation Paper in the near future .

### **3. Directed Contract Pricing**

The prices of DCs are determined by regression formulae that express the DC CfD Fixed Price in a given quarter and for a given product (Baseload, Mid-merit or Peak) as a function of forward fuel and carbon prices. Section 3 of [SEM-22-017](#) outlined amendments made to the process of calculating DC pricing formulae in DC Round 18. Such amendments are also implemented in DC Round 34.

The pricing formulae are updated every quarter in line with the established rolling approach to DCs as per [SEM-12-026](#) and [SEM-17-081](#).

The CfD Strike Price for each transaction will be set using the published formulae and associated forward fuel prices, as set out in the Subscription Rules [SEM-18-036d](#).

The DC seller, ESB, will apply the approved published fuel and carbon indices to the regression formulae each day throughout the subscription window and notify suppliers who have elected to subscribe for DC products on that day of the calculated CfD Fixed Price. ESB contracts will be priced in euro.

The DC regression formulae for the forthcoming round will take the following form:

$$\text{CfD Fixed Price}_{q,p} = \alpha_{q,p} + \beta_{q,p} * \text{Gas}_q + \delta_{q,p} * \text{Coal}_q + \epsilon_{q,p} * \text{CO2}_q$$

where:

**CfD Fixed Price**<sub>q,p</sub> = DC Fixed Price (in €/MWh) for the relevant quarter (q) and product (p), i.e., Baseload, Mid-merit and Peak.

**α**<sub>q,p</sub> = formula constant, which may vary by quarter (q) and product (p).

**β**<sub>q,p</sub>, **δ**<sub>q,p</sub>, and **ε**<sub>q,p</sub> = formula coefficients, which may vary by quarter (q) and product (p).

**Gas**<sub>q</sub> = the price (in pence sterling per therm) for quarterly Intercontinental Exchange Natural Gas Futures for the relevant quarter. As stated in [SEM-21-005](#), the RAs notified industry of updates to the calculation of quarterly “ICE UK Natural Gas Futures – NBP” ÷ (GBP/EURO Exchange Rate).

**Coal**<sub>q</sub> = the price (in US dollars per tonne) for quarterly ARA Coal Futures. As noted in [SEM-21-005](#), the RAs noted updates to the calculation of quarterly “Rotterdam Coal Futures – ARA” ÷ (USD/EURO Exchange Rate).

**CO2**<sub>q</sub> = the settle price (in Euro per tonne of Carbon Dioxide) for the December month Intercontinental Exchange ECX EUA Carbon futures as reported as “ICE ECX EUA Futures – EUX – (monthly)” for the given calendar year. The December price for a given year will apply to all quarters falling within that year. As noted in [SEM-21-005](#), the commodity data provider, ICE, transitioned from a public to a fee-based subscription for access to Carbon data.

The values of the constants and the independent variable coefficients are set out in the following table.

<b>Coefficients</b>					
<b>Multiply Gas coefficient by euro/therm Gas price, Coal coefficient by euro/tonne Coal price, and CO<sub>2</sub> coefficient by euro/tonne CO<sub>2</sub> price.</b>					
<b>Contract (p)</b>	<b>Quarter (q)</b>	<b>Constant (<math>\alpha_{q,p}</math>)</b>	<b>Gas (<math>\beta_{q,p}</math>)</b>	<b>Coal (<math>\delta_{q,p}</math>)</b>	<b>CO<sub>2</sub> (<math>\epsilon_{q,p}</math>)</b>
Baseload	Q3 26	12.46	70.026	0.0000	0.3802
Midmerit 1	Q3 26	14.22	73.862	0.0000	0.4026
Baseload	Q4 26	17.92	61.353	0.0000	0.3528
Midmerit 1	Q4 26	21.78	66.624	0.0000	0.3850
Peak	Q4 26	31.92	75.040	0.0000	0.4394
Baseload	Q1 27	23.23	63.286	0.0000	0.3509
Midmerit 1	Q1 27	27.73	67.664	0.0000	0.3771
Peak	Q1 27	45.85	76.811	0.0000	0.4340
Baseload	Q2 27	15.89	66.078	0.0000	0.3642
Midmerit 1	Q2 27	16.99	68.316	0.0000	0.3767

#### 4. Subscription Rules

The Subscription Rules ([SEM-18-036d](#)) for the DCs have been made evergreen. To allow this, two items which require updating will be included in the Information Paper published by the RAs prior to each quarterly DC Round. These are the details of the matrix of ESTSEM p,q prices for the purpose of credit cover calculations and Bank Holidays.

#### Prices for Credit Cover calculations

The matrix of ESTSEM p,q prices for the purpose of credit cover calculations based on closing fuel and carbon prices from 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026 are as follows<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> The RAs note that the prices calculated are based on the most recently validated 2024-2032 SEM PLEXOS Model([SEM-25-010](#)) and incorporates the 2024 All-Island Resource Adequacy Assessment (NRAA) inputs.

	ESTSEM p,q		
	Baseload € per MWh	Mid-Merit € per MWh	Peak € per MWh
Q3 26	100.31	107.01	
Q4 26	98.86	109.82	131.53
Q1 27	108.72	119.29	150.26
Q2 27	92.23	95.93	

## 5. Directed Contract Round 35

Per Information Paper ([SEM-25-054](#)), the Primary Subscription Window of Directed Contract Round 35 is currently scheduled to be held over six days, across two consecutive weeks:

- Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> - Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2026; and
- Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> - Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

The associated Supplemental Subscription Window is scheduled to take place on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June. Should there be a need to amend the above dates, the RAs will notify stakeholders in advance.

## 6. Public/Bank Holidays 2026/2027

The following dates are those known at the time of execution to be bank and public holidays (in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland) between Q3 2026 and Q2 2027:

13 July 2026
03 August 2026
31 August 2026
26 October 2026
25 December 2026

26 December 2026
28 December 2026
01 January 2027
17 March 2027
26 March 2027
29 March 2027
03 May 2027
31 May 2027
07 June 2027