1. Pre-feasibility

Applicants consider the feasibility of their project and begin discussions with the connecting Network Service Provider (NSP), landowners and relevant government authorities. NSPs generally refer to this phase as preliminary enquiry or pre-feasibility.
Applicants have considered factors such as the location, size, network constraints, infrastructure requirements, loss factors, competing or dependent projects.

Inputs
- Engagement between NSP and Applicant.
- NSP and AEMO information (e.g. Annual Planning Report, Integrated System Plan etc.).

Process
- Applicants commence preliminary discussions with NSP.
- NSP manages the connection process and provides information as requested.
- For complex connections or novel configurations, optionally the NSP or Proponent may consult AEMO.

Outputs
- Preparation of a connection Enquiry.

2. Enquiry

The Applicant submits a connection enquiry to the connecting NSP to:
- Help determine the most suitable point of connection;
- Confirm the information required to be submitted with the connection application.
- Establish the scope and estimate of any required connection assets.

Inputs
- NSP receipt of connection enquiry from Applicant, including description of the proposed installation (5.3.2 or 5.3A.5).

Process
- NSP reviews information submitted with the connection enquiry
- NSP undertakes a Preliminary Impact Assessment (PIA) and consults AEMO.
- Commence engagement with other asset owners or affected parties (including joint-planning with other NSPs, non-contestable service providers).

Outputs
- NSP provides preliminary enquiry response / detailed enquiry response to the Applicant.
- Provision of transmission network data from AEMO (upon request) if the Applicant has a participant status of “intending” or “generator”.

3. Application

The Applicant submits an application to connect to the NSP, inclusive of information stipulated in the enquiry response. Technical performance and grid integration requirements are established in this phase. The timeframe can vary depending on the quality and completeness of the application. During this phase (and at least 3 months prior to planned commissioning) the Applicant commences the Market Registration process.

Inputs
- Completed connection application (5.3.1A, 5.3.4) including performance standards and supporting information.
- Description of the proposed installation, including associated computer model and other information.

Process
- NSP receives and reviews application and supporting information and undertakes technical studies (including full assessment if required).
- NSP consults AEMO in relation to any negotiated standards which are AEMO advisory matters.
- NSP consults AEMO in relation to any proposed system strength remediation (if applicable).
- Following provision of updated information from detailed design, confirm the ability to meet performance requirements (2.2.1(e)(3)) for registration purposes.

Outputs
- AEMO responds to the NSP according to 5.3.4A and 5.3.4B, and the NSP responds to the Applicant.
- Following completion of this phase – finalised connection agreement and 5.3.7(g) notification to AEMO.

Additional note
A revised assessment may be required following detailed design if there are changes to proposed plant, performance standards, network, committed projects or Rules requirements.

4. Completion

This phase involves finalisation of market registration and commissioning of the facility, involving both AEMO and the NSP. The purpose of the commissioning phase is to confirm the ability to meet the proposed performance standards and validate model information used for planning and operational performance.

Inputs
- Completion of construction.
- Market Registration complete.
- Commissioning test procedure and commissioning test schedule.

Process
- The NSP and AEMO review commissioning test results at successive hold points to confirm alignment between modelled and tested performance and successful commissioning of the facility.

Outputs
- Hold point approvals, approval for commercial operation
- Post-commissioning, acceptance of updated (R2) data and models.

Additional note
Post commissioning the proponent should provide validated models and R2 data, as well as develop and implement a compliance monitoring program. Other ongoing obligations include informing AEMO of availability and maintaining business and operational contact information.