# ISG222-SPAR

## REPORTING ON SEPTEMBER 2019

ISSUE 47 – PUBLISHED 18 OCTOBER 2019

## SYSTEM PRICE ANALYSIS REPORT

The System Prices Analysis Report (SPAR) provides a monthly update on price calculations. It is published by the ELEXON Market Operations Team to the Imbalance Settlement Group (ISG), and on the ELEXON Website ahead of the monthly ISG meeting.

This report provides data and analysis specific to System Prices and the Balancing Mechanism[1]. It demonstrates the data used to derive the prices. The data is a combination of II and SF Settlement Runs.

On 1 November 2018, the second part of Modification P305 went live. This reduced the Price Average Reference (PAR) volume to 1MWh, introduced a 'dynamic' LoLP function and increased the Value of Lost Load (VoLL) to £6,000/MWh.

### 1 SYSTEM PRICES AND LENGTH

This report covers the month of September. Where available, data uses the latest Settlement Run (in most cases 'II' or 'SF'). In this report, we distinguish between a 'long' and a 'short' market when analysing System Prices, because the price calculation differs between two scenarios.

When the market is long, System Prices are based predominantly on the System Operator's 'Sell' actions such as accepted Bids. When the market is short, System Prices are based predominantly on the System Operator's 'Buy' actions.

| | System Price (Long) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Month** | **Min** | **Max** | **Median** | **Mean** | **Std Dev** |
| September 2019 | -65.82 | 50.00 | 18.26 | 16.38 | 12.02 |

| | System Price (Short) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Month** | **Min** | **Max** | **Median** | **Mean** | **Std Dev** |
| September 2019 | 22.41 | 100.00 | 54.00 | 53.33 | 10.27 |

**1.1 System Price summary by month (£/MWh)**

**Table 1.1** gives a summary of System Prices for September, with values shown in £/MWh.

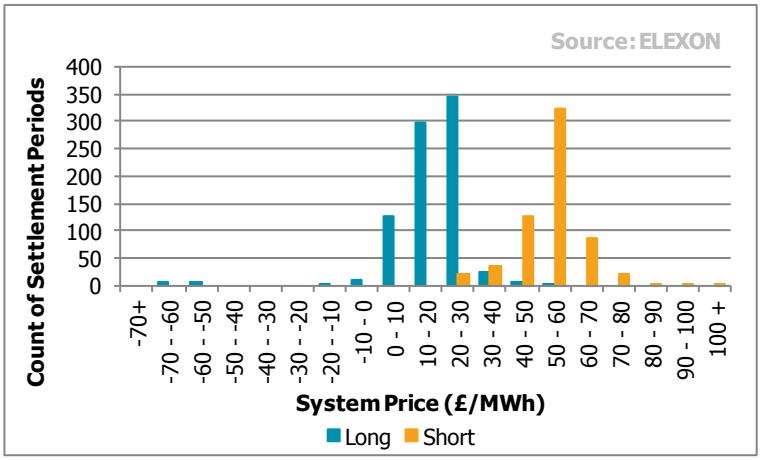
**Graph 1.2** shows the distribution of System Prices across Settlement Periods in September 2019 when the market was long and short.

82% of System Prices were between £10/MWh and £60/MWh, regardless of system length. When the system was long, 93% of prices were between £0/MWh and £30/MWh. When the system was short, 87% of prices were between £40/MWh and £70/MWh.

[1] For further detail of the Imbalance Price calculation, see our imbalance pricing guidance: https://www.elexon.co.uk/operations-settlement/balancing-and-settlement/imbalance-pricing/

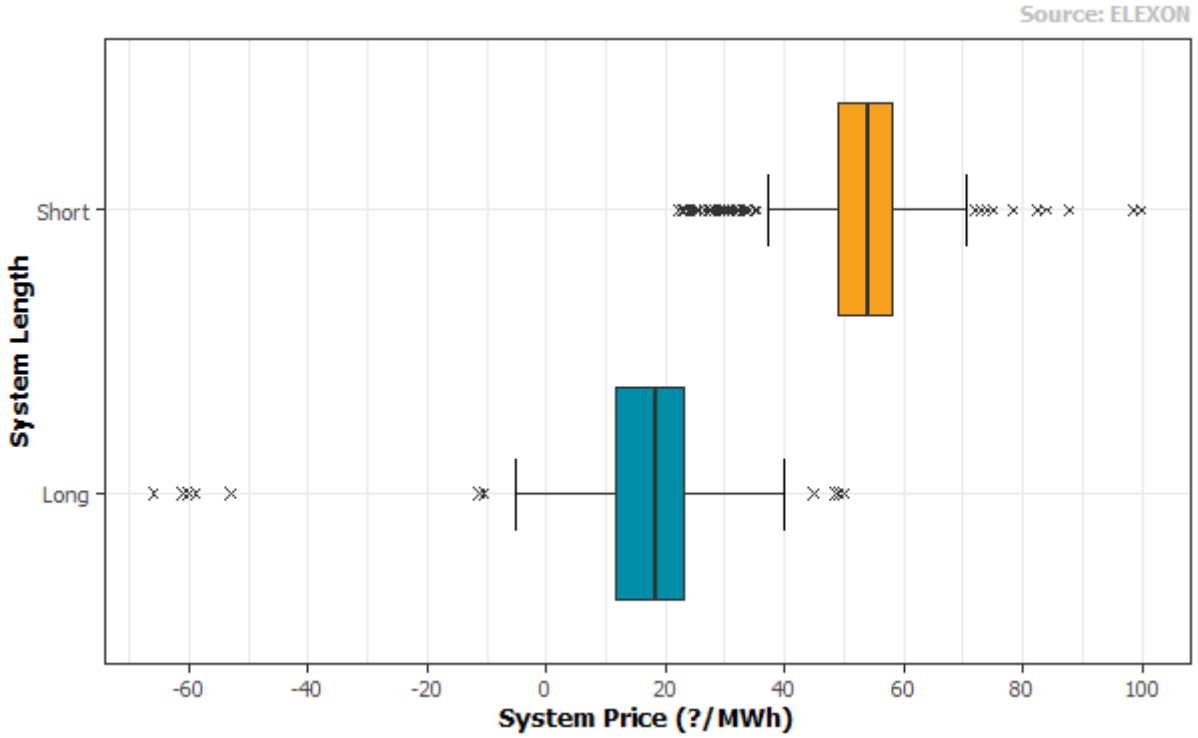
System Prices were £100/MWh or more on two occasions in September 2019, compared to once in August. The highest System Price of the month, £100/MWh, occurred in Settlement Period 41 on 5 September and Settlement Period 27 on 30 September 2019. The price in both Settlement Periods was set by Offers from the same Pumped Storage BMU, all priced at £100/MWh.

There were 24 Settlement Periods where the System Price was less than £0/MWh in September, with the lowest System Price of -£65.82/MWh occurring in Settlement Period 45 on 2 September. The price was set by three Bids from a Wind BMU, all priced at -£65.82/MWh.




**1.2 Frequency of System Price spread over the last month**

**Graph 1.3** displays the spread of System Prices in September 2019 as a box plot diagram, split between a short and long system. The middle line in each box represents the median System Price of the month, which is £54.00/MWh for short Settlement Periods and £18.26/MWh for long Settlement Periods. Each box edge represents the Lower and Upper quartiles (25th and 75th percentile respectively), with the Interquartile Range (difference between the Upper and Lower quartiles) being £9/MWh for short System Prices and £11.45/MWh for long System Prices.




**1.3 System Price spread over the last month**

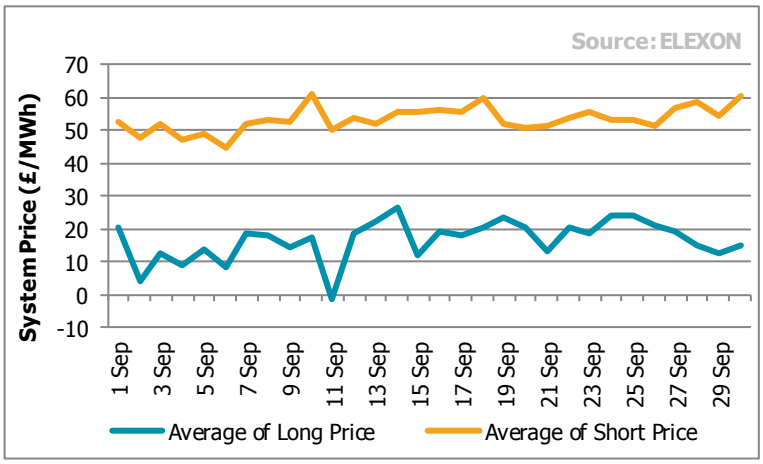
Outliers are shown on the graph as crosses, and have been defined as being greater than 1.5 times the Interquartile Range (IQR) away from the Upper and Lower quartiles. Under this definition, 19 long and 58 short System Prices in September were outliers. Of the 19 long outliers, 14 were less than the lower outlier boundary.

The prices of long outliers ranged from -£65.82/MWh (the lowest System Price of the month) to £50/MWh. The prices of short outliers ranged from £22.41/MWh to £100/MWh.

**Graph 1.4** shows daily average System Prices over the last month. In September, the average System Price was £16.38/MWh when the system was long and £53.33/MWh when the system was short.

The highest daily average price when the system was short was £61.06/MWh, and occurred on 10 September. The system was short for 10 Settlement Periods on this day.

The lowest daily average price when the system was long was -£1.34/MWh on 11 September. The system was long in 32 Settlement Periods on this day.

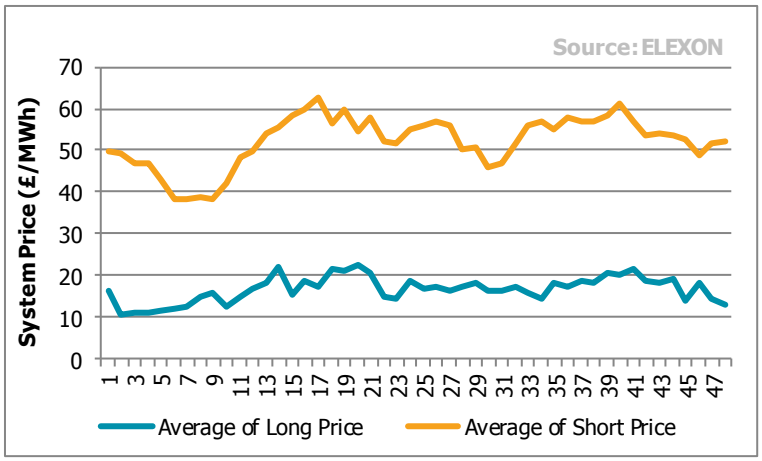



**1.4 Daily average System Price over the last month**

**Graph 1.5** shows the variation of average System Prices across the day. Short prices were highest in Settlement Period 17, with long prices lowest in Settlement Period 2.

The lowest average System Price, regardless of market length, occurred during Settlement Period 7 when the System Price was £16.76/MWh.

The daily average long Settlement Period System Prices ranged between £10.59/MWh and £22.40/MWh. Average short Settlement Period prices varied from £38.11/MWh to £62.51/MWh.



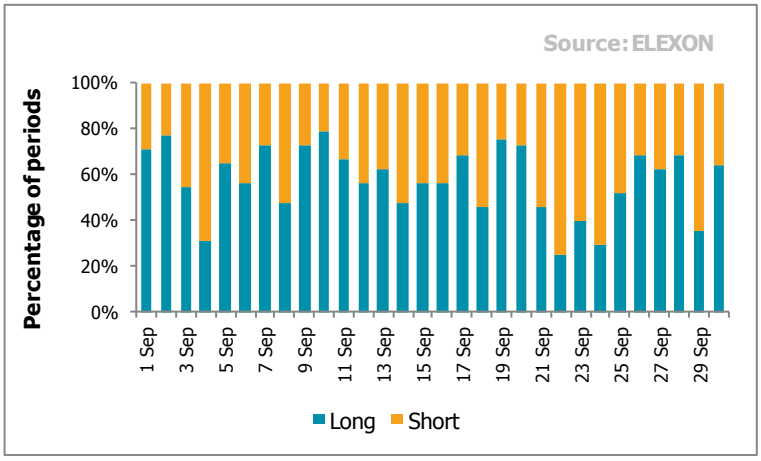

**1.5 Average System Price by Settlement Period over the last month**

Negative System Prices contributed to September 2019 having the lowest monthly average System Price, £32.08/MWh, since May 2016. Since the introduction of the Single Imbalance Price, 2019 has had the highest number of negative System Prices (96) and the lowest number of System Prices over £100/MWh (133) in the first three quarters of the year. This is discussed in more detail in one of the articles in this month's BSC Operations Headline report, which is available on the ELEXON website.

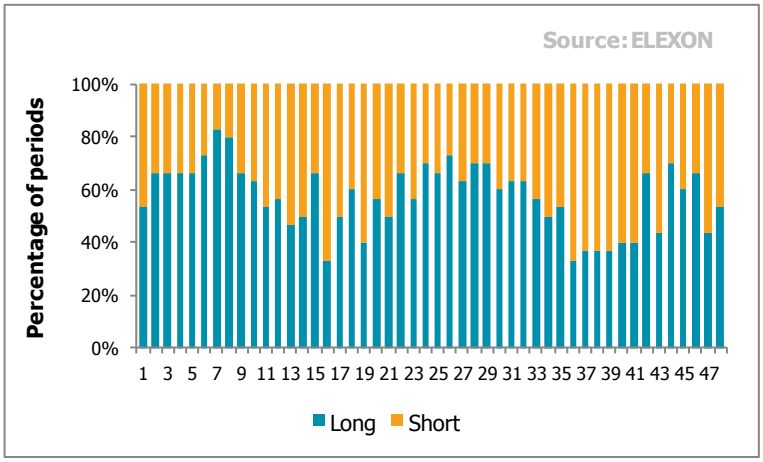
**Graph 1.6** shows system length by day, and **Graph 1.7** shows system length by Settlement Period for September. The system was long for 58% of Settlement Periods in September.

On 10 September, the system was long for 38 Settlement Periods. The average Net Imbalance Volume (NIV) on this day was -179MWh. The longest NIV on this day (-649MWh) occurred in Settlement Period 31.

As well as having the lowest average System Price regardless of market length, Settlement Period 7 also had the highest number of long Settlement Periods, with 83% of them being long this month.




**1.6 Daily system length by day over the last month**




**1.7 System Length by Settlement Period**

## 2 PARAMETERS

In this section, we consider a number of different parameters on the price. We consider:

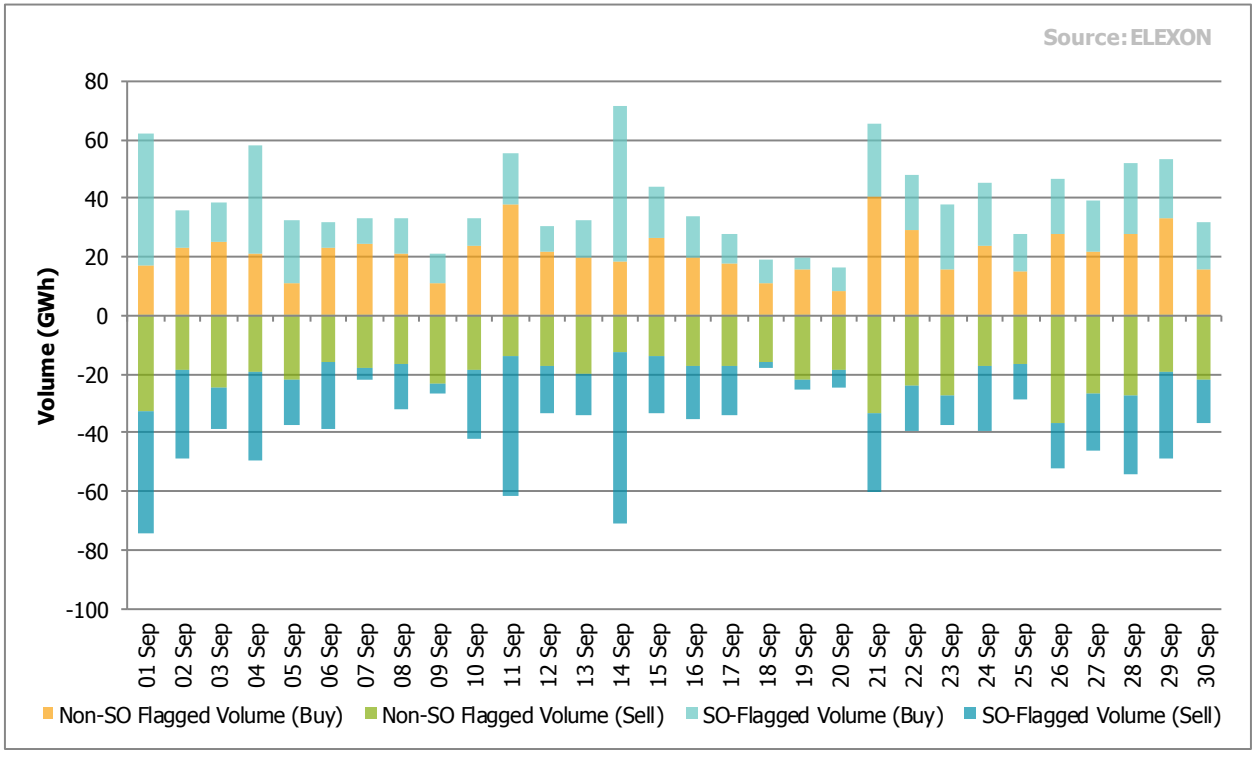
- The impact of Flagging balancing actions;
- The impact of the Replacement Price
- The impact of NIV Tagging;
- The impact of PAR Tagging;
- The impact of DMAT and Arbitrage Tagging; and
- How these mechanisms affect which balancing actions feed into the price.

**Flagging**

The Imbalance Price calculation aims to distinguish between 'energy' and 'system' balancing actions. Energy balancing actions are those related to the overall energy imbalance on the system (the 'Net Imbalance Volume'). It is these 'energy' balancing actions which the Imbalance Price should reflect. System balancing actions relate to non-energy, system management actions (e.g. locational constraints).

Some actions are 'Flagged'. This means that they have been identified as potentially being 'system related', but rather than removing them completely from the price calculation (i.e. Tagging them) they may be re-priced, depending on their position in relation to the rest of the stack (a process called Classification). The System Operator (SO) flags actions when they are taken to resolve a locational constraint on the transmission network (SO-Flagging), or to correct short-term increases or decreases in generation/demand (CADL Flagging).

**Graph 2.1** shows the volumes of Buy and Sell actions in September 2019 that have been Flagged by the SO as being constraint related. On 14 September, 74% of Buy volume and 82% of Sell volume was SO-Flagged.




**2.1 Daily volume of SO-Flagged/non-Flagged actions over the last month**

49% of Sell balancing action volume taken in September had an SO-Flag, compared with 56% last month. 51% of SO-Flagged Sell actions came from Balancing Service Adjustment Actions (BSAAs), 24% from Wind BMUs and 16% from CCGT BMUs. The average initial price (i.e. before any re-pricing) of a SO-Flagged Sell action was -£39.49/MWh.

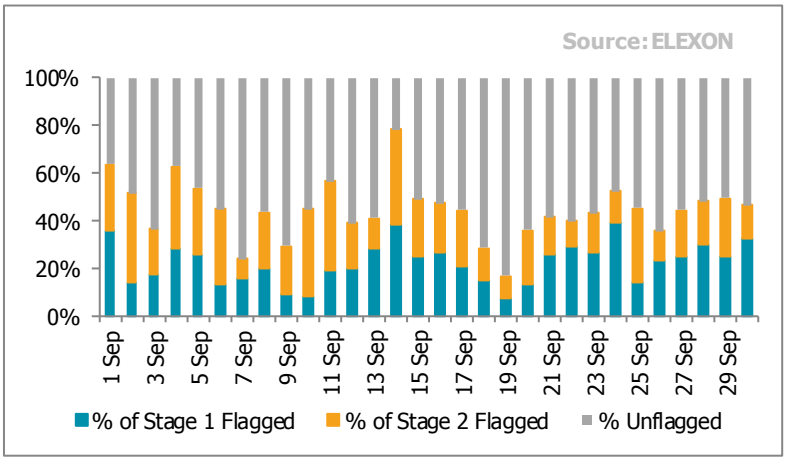
45% of Buy balancing action volume taken in September had an SO-Flag, compared to 47% in August. 58% of SO-Flagged Buy actions came from CCGT BMUs and 41% from BSAAs. The average initial price of a SO-Flagged Buy action was £64.07/MWh.

Any actions with a total duration of less than the CADL are flagged. Since 1 April 2019, CADL has been set at 10 minutes (reduced from 15 minutes).

0.6% of Buy actions and 0.4% of Sell actions were CADL Flagged in September. The majority of CADL Flagged Buy actions (93%), and CADL Flagged Sell actions (85%) came from Pumped Storage BMUs, with CCGT BMUs accounting for a further 7% of CADL Flagged Sell Actions.

SO-Flagged and CADL Flagged actions are known as 'First-Stage Flagged'. First-Stage Flagged actions may become 'Second-Stage Flagged' depending on their price in relation to other Unflagged actions. If a First-Stage Flagged balancing action has a more expensive price than the most expensive First-Stage Unflagged balancing action, it becomes Second-Stage Flagged. This means it is considered a system balancing action and becomes unpriced.

**Graph 2.2** shows First and Second-Stage Flagged action volumes as a proportion of all actions taken on the system. Note these are all the accepted balancing actions – only a proportion of these will feed through to the final price calculation.



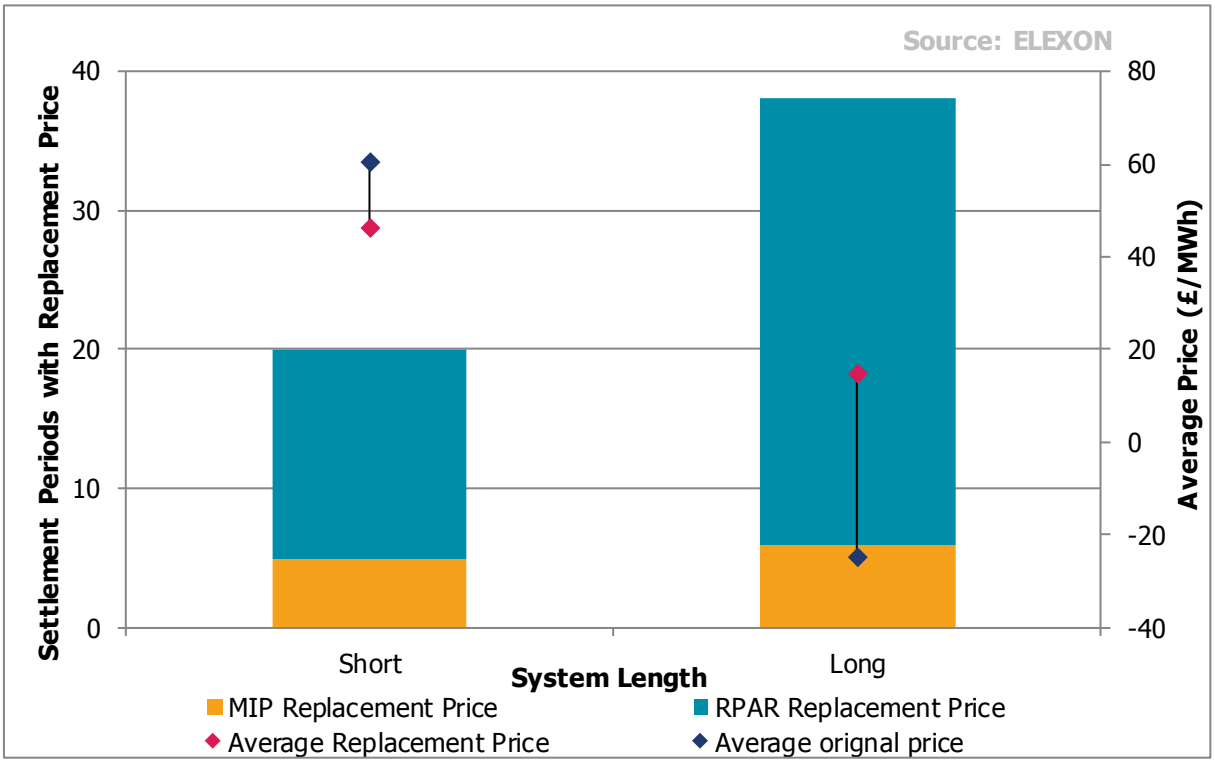

**2.2 Flagged Balancing Volumes**

In September, an average of 45% of balancing volume received a First-Stage Flag, with an average of 49% of this volume going on to receive a Second-Stage Flag. On the 14 September, 78% of balancing volume was flagged; with 51% of this volume receiving a Second Stage Flag.

### The Replacement Price

Any Second-Stage Flagged action volumes left in the NIV will be repriced using the Replacement Price. In total, 49% of Sell volume in September were Flagged. Of this Flagged Sell volume, 2% was assigned a Replacement Price.

The Replacement Price is either based on the Replacement Price Average Reference (RPAR currently based on the most expensive 1MWh of Unflagged actions), or if no Unflagged actions remain after NIV Tagging, the Market Index Price (MIP). In September, 47 (3%) Settlement Periods had a Replacement Price based on the RPAR and 11 (1%) Settlement Periods had a Replacement Price based on the MIP. However, the majority of Settlement Periods (96%) did not have a Replacement Price.




**2.3 Average Replacement Price, original price of repriced actions and number of Settlement Periods with Replacement Price**

**Graph 2.3** displays the count of Settlement Periods which had a Replacement Price applied, split by the system length and if the Replacement Price was based on RPAR or the MIP. The graph also displays the average original and Replacement Price of Second-Stage Flagged actions.

Sell actions will typically have their prices revised upwards by the Replacement Price for the purposes of calculating the System Price. The average original price of a Second-Stage Flagged repriced Sell action was -£24.74/MWh and the average Replacement Price for Sell actions (when the System was long) was £10.52/MWh.

46% of Buy actions were Flagged; of these Flagged Buy actions, 1% had the Replacement Price applied. Buy actions will typically have their prices revised downwards by the Replacement Price. The average original price of a Buy action with the Replacement Price applied was £60.32/MWh, and the average Replacement Price was £47.79/MWh.

If there are no Unflagged actions remaining in the NIV, the Replacement Price will default to the MIP. This occurred in six long and five short Settlement Periods in September, compared to 12 long and 18 short Settlement Periods last month.

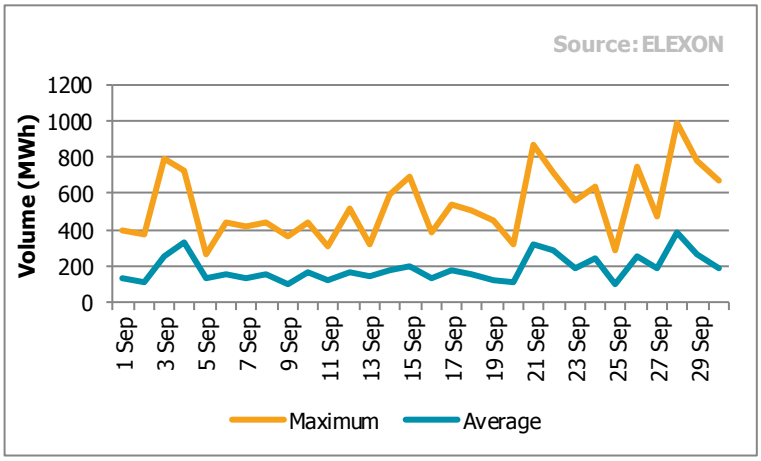
### NIV and NIV Tagging

The Net Imbalance Volume (NIV) represents the direction of imbalance of the system – i.e. whether the system is long or short overall. **Graph 2.4** shows the greatest and average NIV when the system was short, and **Graph 2.5** shows the greatest and average NIVs when the system was long. Note short NIVs are depicted as positive volumes and long NIVs are depicted as negative volumes.

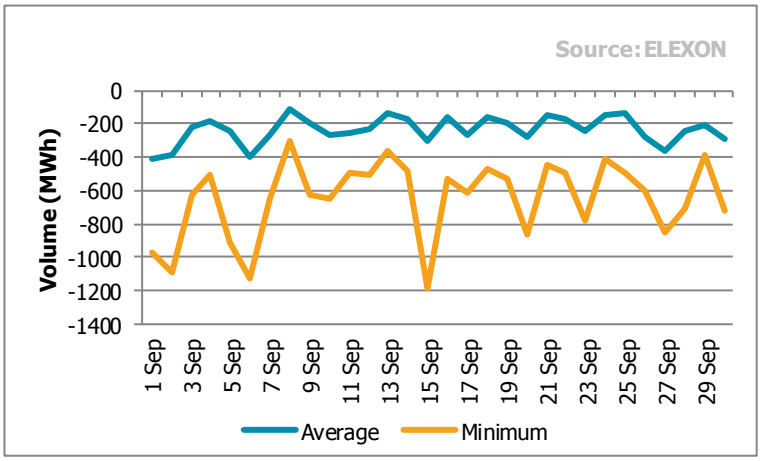
In almost all Settlement Periods, the System Operator will need to take balancing actions in both directions (Buys and Sells) to balance the system. However, for the purposes of calculating an Imbalance Price there can only be imbalance in one direction (the Net Imbalance). 'NIV Tagging' is the process which subtracts the smaller stack of balancing actions from the larger one to determine the Net Imbalance. The price is then derived from these remaining actions.

NIV Tagging has a significant impact in determining which actions feed through to prices. In September, 86% of volume was removed due to NIV tagging. The most expensive actions are NIV Tagged first; hence NIV Tagging has a dampening effect on prices when there are balancing actions in both directions.

The maximum short system NIV of the month (995MWh) was seen in Settlement Period 33 on 28 September, where the System Price was £78.50/MWh.



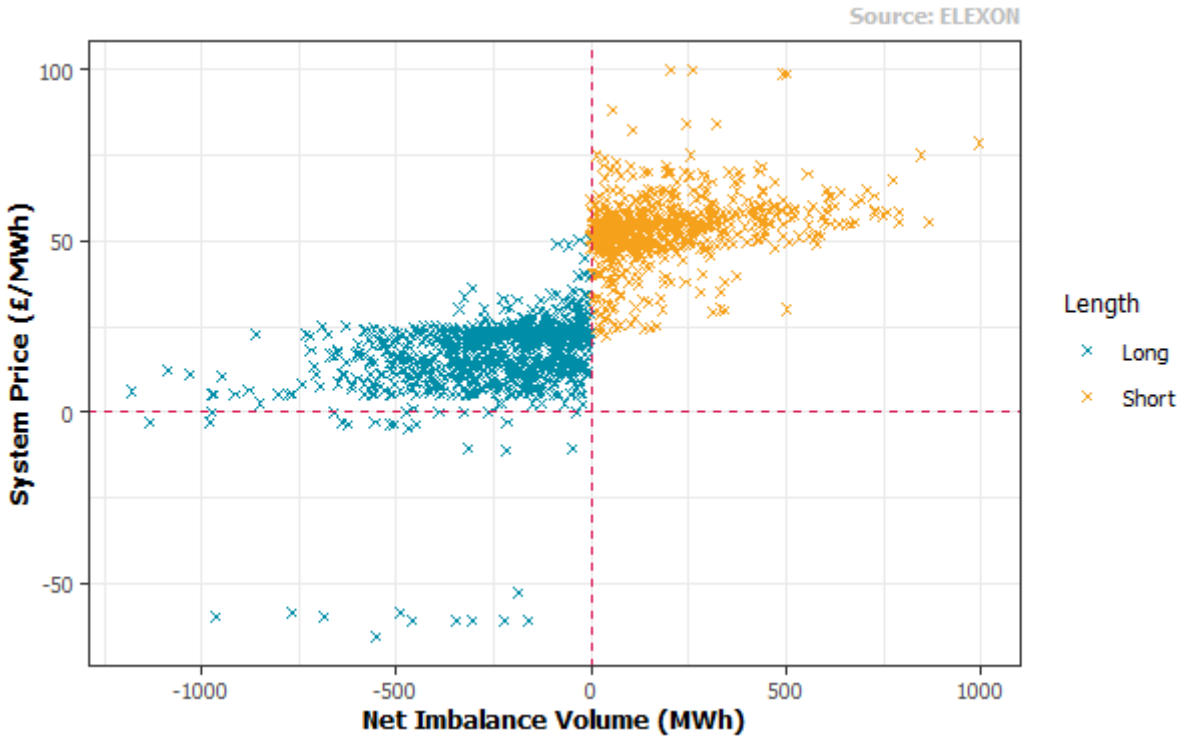

**2.4 Short system NIV over the last month**




**2.5 Long system NIV over the last month**

The minimum long system NIV of the month was -1,180MWh, in Settlement Period 17 on 15 September, where the System Price was £6.00/MWh.

**Graph 2.6** displays a scatter graph of NIV and System Prices. The dashed lines display a 0MWh NIV and a £0.00/MWh System Price. There were 24 negative System Prices in September ranging from -£3/MWh to -£65.82/MWh; this is second highest number of negative System Prices since the implementation of P305 on 5 November 2015, following April 2019 with 27. The NIVs in the 24 Settlement Periods ranged from -47MWh to -1,130MWh.




**2.6 Net Imbalance Volume and System Price in the last month**

### PAR Tagging

PAR Tagging is the final step of the Imbalance Price calculation. It takes a volume-weighted average of the most expensive 1MWh of actions left in the stack. The value of PAR decreased from 50MWh to 1MWh on 1 November 2018 as part of BSC Modification P305.

Following the change of PAR, PAR Tagging is active in almost all Settlement Periods. The only periods not affected by the new parameter have a NIV of less than 1MWh.

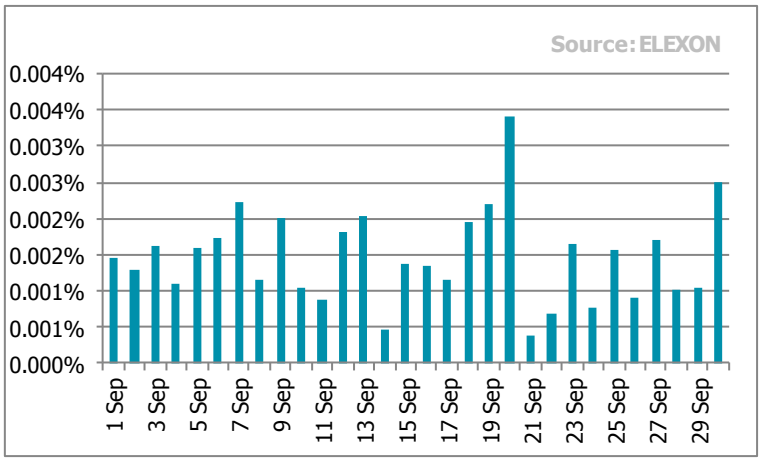
During September, there were four Settlement Periods on four dates where PAR Tagging was inactive. The average NIV in these Settlement Periods was 0.288MWh. Settlement Period 5 on 9 September had the lowest absolute NIV (0.345MWh), and therefore was the most balanced Settlement Period of the month.

### DMAT and Arbitrage Tagged Volumes

Some actions are always removed from the price calculation (before NIV Tagging). These are actions which are less than the De Minimis Acceptance Threshold (DMAT) Tagging or Buy actions which are either the same price or lower than the price of Sell actions (Arbitrage Tagging).

On 1 April 2019, DMAT reduced from 1MWh to 0.1MWh, resulting in less actions being DMAT tagged compared to previous months.

**Graph 2.7** shows the volumes of actions removed due to DMAT Tagging. 0.001% of total Buy and Sell volume was removed by DMAT Tagging in September, the same percentage as last month. 59% of DMAT Tagged volume came from CCGT BMUs, whilst Other BMUs (mostly Battery Storage) accounted for 14%.

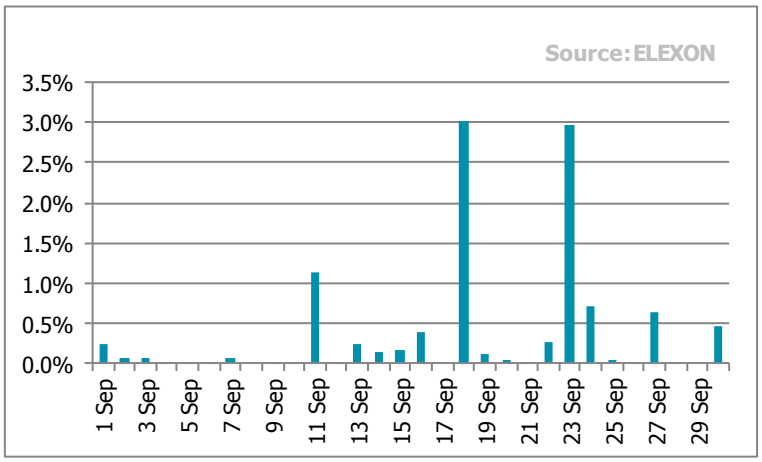



**2.7 Daily percentage of DMAT Tagged volume over the last month**

**Graph 2.8** shows the volumes of actions that were removed due to Arbitrage Tagging. 0.3% of total Buy and Sell volume was removed by Arbitrage Tagging in September. 50% of Arbitrage Tagged volume was from BSAAs, with 39% from CCGT BMUs.

In September, the average initial price of an Arbitrage Tagged Buy action was £22.81/MWh, and for a Sell action was £29.99/MWh. The maximum initial price of an Arbitrage Tagged Sell action was £115.15/MWh, and the lowest priced Arbitrage Tagged Buy action was -£145.77/MWh.

On 18 September 2019, 1,121MWh of actions were Arbitrage Tagged, representing 3% of the daily volume of balancing actions. The average price of an Arbitrage Tagged Buy action was £0/MWh, and for a Sell action was £22.71/MWh on this day. 50% of the Arbitrage Tagged volume on this day came from BSAAs and 50% from CCGT BMUs.




**2.8 Daily percentage of Arbitrage Tagged volume over the last month**

## 3 BALANCING SERVICES

### Short Term Operating Reserve (STOR) costs and volumes

This section covers the balancing services that the System Operator (SO) takes outside the Balancing Mechanism that can affect the price.

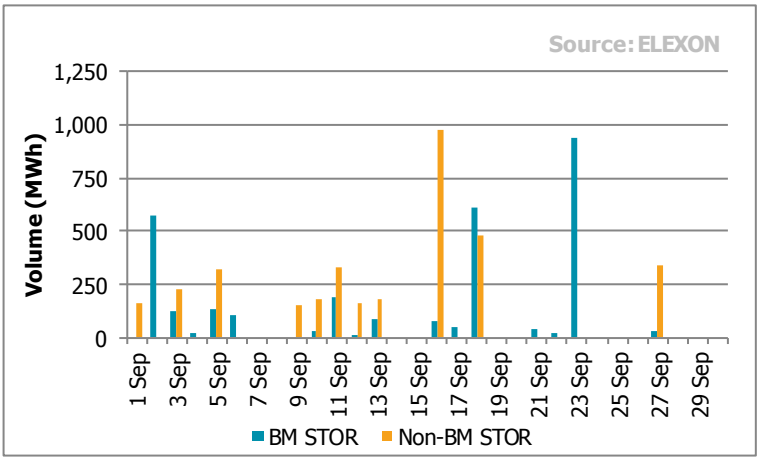
In addition to Bids and Offers available in the Balancing Mechanism, the SO can enter into contracts with providers of balancing capacity to deliver when called upon. These additional sources of power are referred to as reserve, and most of the reserve that the SO procures is called Short Term Operating Reserve (STOR).

Under STOR contracts, availability payments are made to the balancing service provider in return for capacity being made available to the SO during specific times (STOR Availability Windows). When STOR is called upon, the SO pays for it at a pre-agreed price (its Utilisation Price). Some STOR is dispatched in the Balancing Mechanism (BM STOR) while some is dispatched separately (Non-BM STOR).

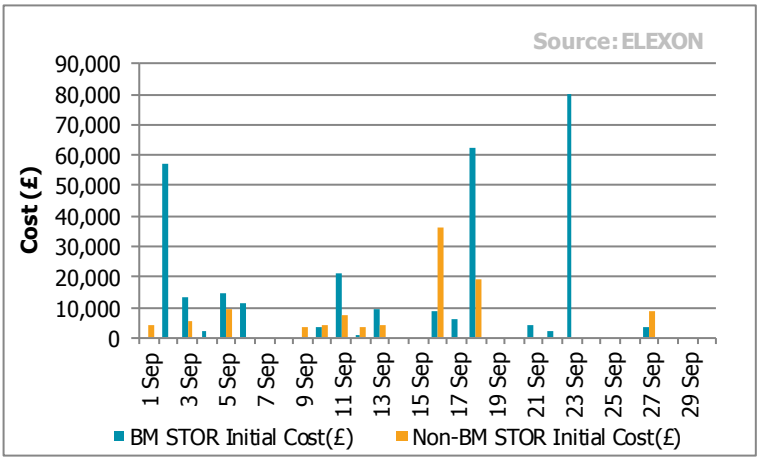
**Graph 3.1** gives STOR volumes that were called upon during the month – split into BM STOR and non-BM STOR. 53% of the total STOR volume utilised in September came from outside of the Balancing Mechanism.

**Graph 3.2** shows the utilisation costs of this capacity. The average Utilisation Price for STOR capacity in September was £61.75/MWh (£98.52/MWh for BM STOR and £29.74/MWh for non-BM STOR).

On 23 September the second largest amount was spent on STOR volume for the month (£80,004), all of this cost was from BM STOR providers. The utilised BM STOR volume on this day was 943MWh, compared to the average of 101MWh across the month.




**3.1 Daily STOR vs Non-BM STOR volume across the last month**




**3.2 Daily STOR vs Non-BM STOR utilisation costs across the last month**

### De-Rated Margin, Loss of Load Probability and the Reserve Scarcity Price

There are times when the Utilisation Prices of STOR plants are uplifted using the **Reserve Scarcity Price (RSVP)** in order to calculate System Prices. The RSVP is designed to respond to capacity margins, so rises as the system gets tighter (the gap between available and required generation narrows). It is a function of **De-Rated Margin (DRM)** at Gate Closure, the likelihood that this will be insufficient to meet demand (the **Loss of Load Probability**, LoLP) and the **Value of Lost Load** (VoLL, set at £6,000/MWh from 1 November 2018).

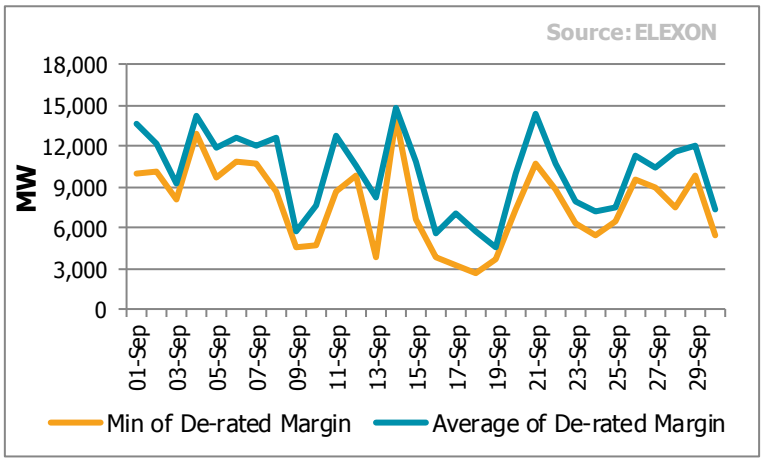
**Graph 3.3** shows the daily minimum and average Gate Closure DRMs for September 2019.

The System Operator has determined a dynamic relationship between each DRM and the LoLP[2], which will determine the RSVP.

The minimum DRM in September was 2,650MW on 18 September in Settlement Period 40, compared to 2,919MW in August. This DRM corresponded to a LoLP of 0.0002 and RSVP of £1.03/MWh (see **Table 3.4**). The largest cost (£81,013) from STOR providers was also seen on this day.

The RSVP re-prices STOR actions in the Imbalance Price calculation if it is higher than the original Utilisation Price.

There were no actions repriced with the RSVP during September. Under a VoLL of £3,000 (the pre-November 2018 scenario), there would have also been zero actions repriced at the RSVP.




**3.3 Minimum and average DRMs**

### 3.4 Top 5 LoLPs and RSVPs

| Date | SP | DRM | LoLP | RSVP | RSVP Used | System Length | System Price |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **18/09/2019** | 40 | 2,649.58 | 0.0002 | **1.03** | No | Short | 72.00 |
| **18/09/2019** | 41 | 3,144.45 | 0.0000 | **0.11** | No | Short | 46.44 |
| **17/09/2019** | 40 | 3,169.11 | 0.0003 | **2.01** | No | Short | 69.99 |
| **17/09/2019** | 41 | 3,336.54 | 0.0002 | **1.12** | No | Short | 69.99 |
| **18/09/2019** | 39 | 3,556.32 | 0.0000 | **0.01** | No | Short | 72.00 |

[2] The System Operators methodology for LoLP is set out in the LoLP Methodology statement: https://www.elexon.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Loss_of_Load_Probability_Calculation_Statement_v1.0.pdf

## 4 P305 - PAR ANALYSIS

This section compares live prices with a **PAR 50 pricing scenario**. From 1 November 2018, the System Price calculation parameters changed as part of BSC Modification P305. The changes were:

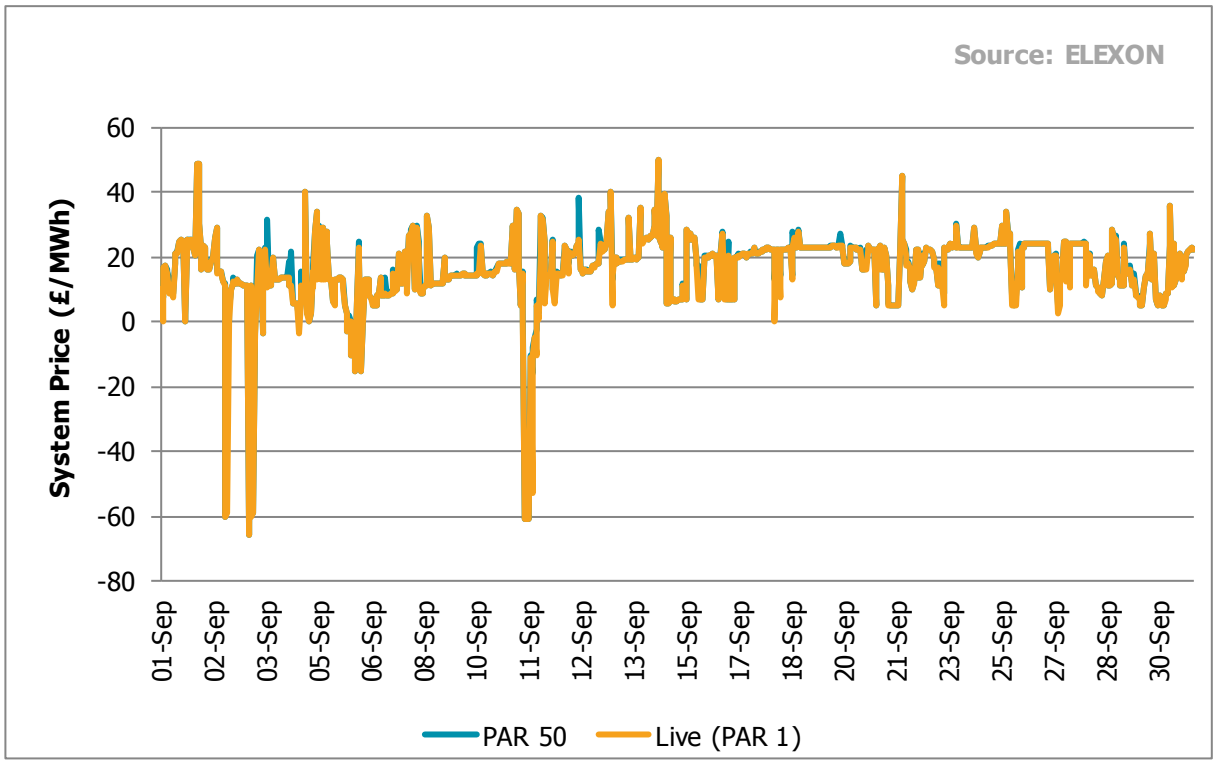
- A reduction in the PAR value from 50MWh to 1MWh;
- The introduction of a 'dynamic' LoLP function; and
- An increase in the VoLL from £3,000/MWh to £6,000/MWh. The PAR 50 scenario uses a VoLL of £3,000/MWh in the RSVP function.

This section looks at the difference in System Prices between a PAR 50 and a PAR 1 scenario for September 2019. Regardless of length, System Prices were different in 43% of Settlement Periods, with 13% of these changes greater than £1/MWh. System Prices are an average of £0.66/MWh lower when the system was long, and £0.89/MWh higher when the system was short, compared to a PAR 50 scenario.

Live System Prices when the system is long are the same or lower compared to PAR 50, and when the system is short prices are the same or higher.

**Graph 4.1** compares live System Prices with prices recalculated using the PAR 50 scenario when the system was long.

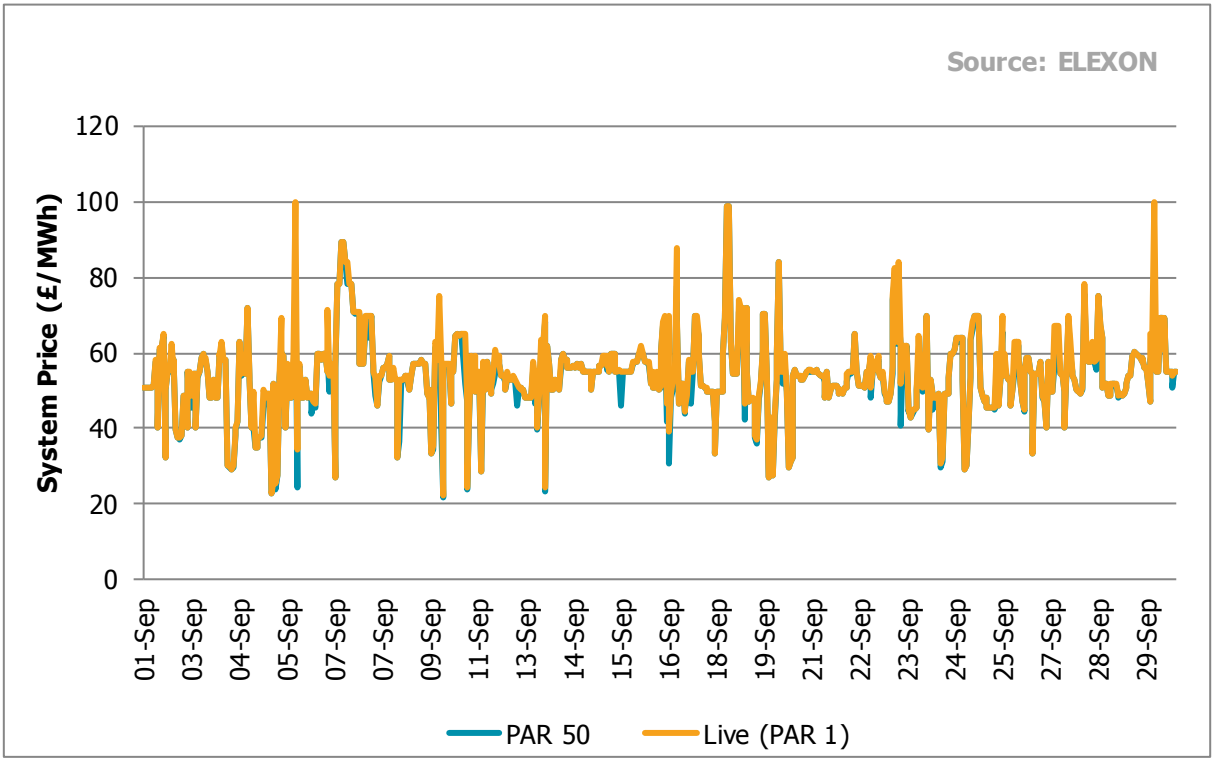
When the system was long and System Prices changed, price changes were less than £1/MWh in 79% of Settlement Periods, and greater than £5/MWh in 8% of Settlement Periods. The biggest shift from the PAR 50 to the live scenario in price was -£52.12/MWh (Settlement Period 23 on 2 September), when the price would have been -£6.70/MWh under a PAR 50 scenario compared to the current live System Price of -£58.81/MWh.




**4.1 Live prices vs PAR 50 prices: Prices when the System was long**

**Graph 4.2** compares live System Prices with PAR 50 prices when the system was short. Prices were higher in 39% of short Settlement Periods compared to the PAR 50 scenario; 13% changed by more than £5/MWh and 5% by more than £10/MWh. The biggest difference in price from the PAR 50 to the live scenario was £25.22/MWh (Settlement Period 27 on 30 September); the price would have been £74.78MWh under the PAR 50 scenario, compared to the current live System Price of £100/MWh.

The highest live System Price was £100/MWh. Under the PAR 50 scenario, the maximum System Price was £98.70/MWh.




**4.2 Live prices vs PAR 50 prices: Prices when the System was short**

## 5 GLOSSARY

| Term | Abbrev. | Definition |
|---|---|---|
| **Bid** | | A proposed volume band and price within which the registrant of a BM Unit is willing to reduce generation or increase consumption (i.e. a rate below their FPN). |
| **Bid/Offer Acceptance** | **BOA** | A Bid or Offer within a given Settlement Period that was Accepted by the SO. BOAs are used in the Imbalance Price calculation process e.g. to calculate NIV or the System Price. |
| **Offer** | | A proposed volume band and price within which the registrant of a BM Unit is willing to increase generation or reduce consumption (i.e. a rate above their FPN). |
| **System Price** | | A price (in £/MWh) calculated by BSC Central Systems that is applied to imbalance volumes of BSC Parties. It is a core component of the balancing and settlement of electricity in GB and is calculated for every Settlement Period. It is subject to change via Standard Settlement Runs. |
| **Replacement Price** | | A price (in £/MWh) calculated by BSC Central Systems that is applied to volumes that are not priced during the imbalance pricing process (detailed in BSC Section T) It is calculated for every Settlement Period, and is subject to change via Standard Settlement Runs. |
| **Utilisation Price** | | The price (in £/MWh) sent by the SO in respect of the utilisation of a STOR Action which:<br>(i) in relation to a BM STOR Action shall be the Offer Price; and<br>(ii) in relation to a Non-BM STOR Action shall be the Balancing Services Adjustment Cost. |
| **Market Index Price** | **MIP** | The Market Index Price reflects the price of wholesale electricity in the short-term market (in £/MWh). You can find an explanation of how it is calculated and used in the Market Index Definition Statement (MIDS). |
| **Reserve Scarcity Price** | **RSVP** | Both accepted BM and non-BM STOR Actions are included in the calculation of System Prices as individual actions, with a price which is the greater of the Utilisation Price for that action or the RSVP. The RSVP function is based on the prevailing system scarcity, and is calculated as the product of two following values:<br>- the Loss of Load Probability (LoLP), which will be calculated by the SO at Gate Closure for each Settlement Period; and<br>- the Value of Lost Load (VoLL), a defined parameter currently set to £6,000/MWh. |
| **Replacement Price Average Reference** | **RPAR** | The RPAR volume is a set volume of the most expensive priced actions remaining after NIV tagging, and is currently 1MWh. The volume-weighted average of these actions, known as the Replacement Price, is used to provide a price for any remaining unpriced actions prior to PAR Tagging. |
| **Long** | | In reference to market length, this means that the volume of Accepted Bids exceeds that of Accepted Offers. |
| **Short** | | In reference to market length, this means that the volume of Accepted Offers exceeds that of Accepted Bid. |
| **Net Imbalance Volume** | **NIV** | The imbalance volume (in MWh) of the total system for a given Settlement Period. It is derived by netting Buy and Sell Actions in the Balancing Mechanism. Where NIV is positive, this means that the system is short and would normally result in the SO accepting Offers to increase generation/decrease consumption. Where NIV is negative, the system is long and the SO would normally accept Bids to reduce generation/ increase consumption. It is subject to change between Standard Settlement Runs. |
| **Price Average Reference** | **PAR** | The PAR volume is a set volume of the most expensive priced actions remaining at the end of the System Price calculation, and is currently 1MWh. |