

FAQs on Open Access (OA)

1 What is OA?

The definition of Open Access in the Electricity Act, 2003, is *“the non-discriminatory provision for the use of transmission lines or distribution system or associated facilities with such lines or system by any licensee or consumer or a person engaged in generation in accordance with the regulations specified by the Appropriate Commission”*.

According to sub-section 2, of section 42 of the Electricity Act 2003, electricity consumers now have the right to procure power from the supplier of their choice other than the distribution company that they were buying from. They can use the existing transmission and distribution infrastructure after paying appropriate charges determined by their respective State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) For e.g., a consumer in Assam has the right to select any generator for supplying electricity to his desired destination by using the existing transmission and distribution network. This generator chosen may be generating power in Assam or any other State in India.

From using these networks, the consumer has to pay transmission, wheeling and other OA charges to Assam Electricity Grid Corporation Limited (AEGCL) and Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL). Open Access consumers also have to pay operation and scheduling charges to the State Load Dispatch Center (SLDC).

2 What are different technical and financial requirements for availing OA?

- Minimum volume of power should be 1 MW i.e. any consumer having connected load of 1 MW and above can avail open access. Thus, industrial and commercial consumers like office complexes, hotels, hospitals, shopping malls and other large establishments can avail Open Access.
- Availability of Transmission and Distribution corridor
- Installation of special Energy Meters (SEM) and Remote Terminal Units (RTU) having provision to communicate with SLDC in real time
- Payment security mechanism
- Clearance of outstanding dues
- No Objection Certificate from SLDCs

3 Do I need dedicated line to avail OA?

Yes. As per fourth provision of Regulation 4 of the AERC (T&C for Open access) Regulations, 2018, *“consumers who are connected by dedicated feeders irrespective of their voltage of supply, and where there is no operational constraint, shall be allowed Open Access”*.

4 What is intrastate OA and Inter State OA?

When buyer and seller are located in the same state, then it is called an Intra-state transaction. In this case, the open access charges comprising transmission losses and charges wheeling losses and charges (if applicable) and cross-subsidy of that particular State are applicable. However, when the buyer and seller are located in different states then it is called as an Inter-state transaction. In this case, apart from the open access charges

applicable in intra-state transactions, Point-of-Connection (POC) charges and losses of the regional grids where the buyer and seller are located are also applicable.

5 What is STOA, MTOA & LTOA?

STOA or Short Term Open Access means open access for a period upto one month at a time.

MTOA or Medium Term Open Access means the right to use the inter-state transmission system or distribution system for a period exceeding three months but not exceeding five years

LTOA or Long Term open Access means the right to use the intra-state transmission system or distribution system for a period exceeding 7 years.

6 Who is the nodal agency for OA?

For STOA – State Load Dispatch Center (SLDC)

For MTOA and LTOA – State Transmission Utility (STU) i.e. AEGCL.

7 What is the application procedure for Intra State OA?

Procedure for STOA

- First time applicant shall have to submit application to SLDC with payment of Rs 5000.00 and also submit a copy of this application to STU and Discom.
- STU and Discom shall submit report on corridor availability to SLDC.
- If OA feasible, the applicant will be informed by SLDC and he will have to install the SEM and Communication system.
- SLDC will allow the applicant to participate in STOA

Procedure for MTOA & LTOA

- Application to be submitted to STU with copy to DISCOM
- Fee payable is Rs 50,000/- for MTOA and Rs 100000/- for LTOA.
- STU & DISCOM to carry out System Study for the feasibility and inform the applicant within 30 days
- SEM and communication system to be established
- Agreement has to be executed between the Applicant and AEGCL.
- SLDC to be informed by the STU &
- In case OA is not feasible, augmentation of system has to be carried out. The cost of augmentation/ strengthening of the network have to be borne by the applicant. Augmentation of the system should not be done solely for the purpose of granting Open Access in case of MTOA and STOA consumers.

The detailed procedure and forms for Open Access has been approved by the Commission and these are available at the website of SLDC, Assam.

8 What is the process of scheduling and dispatch of power in OA?

The process for scheduling and dispatch is stated below sequentially:

- All generators to submit day ahead schedule by 8.00 am
- Buyers to submit their drawal schedule by 10 am

- Embedded OA consumers have to submit their drawal schedule to discom and SLDC by 10.00 am showing quantum of drawal through OA and DISCOM
- SLDC shall finalize the schedule for next day and upload in website after receipt of transaction schedule from Power Exchanges
- The schedule will be of 15 minutes time block, there will be 96 blocks in a day starting 12. 00 am.

9 How is the billing done for OA consumers?

Based on the SEM record SLDC shall prepare the energy account for each block showing the entitlement, actual drawl, deviation etc.

SLDC bills for deviation to generator, licensee, and OA consumers other than the embedded consumers

Discom bills for embedded consumers

10 What are different kinds of OA charges?

The different kinds of charges applicable for OA are:

- Scheduling & System Operation charges
- Transmission charges
- Wheeling charges
- Cross subsidy surcharge
- Additional Surcharge
- Reactive energy charges
- Standby Charges
- Charges for Deviation
- Taxes and Duties

For details please visit: <http://www.aerc.nic.in/Regulations.htm>