

Comparison of electrical collection topologies for multi-rotor wind turbines

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Authors response

The following section outlines the authors response to reviewers questions. The following layout will be used throughout:

1. Reviewers comment
 - Authors response
 - Action taken by author in revised manuscript

All line numbers refer to the marked up version of the manuscript. These may vary slightly from the revised manuscript as the marked up version includes deleted text.

Authors response to first reviewer - Peter Dalhoff

1. The paper is well written. The topic of electrical topologies for MRWT's is novel and only little research has been published on this so far. The method is well described. Uncertainties and assumptions have been outlined clearly. The results lead to favourite design(s) and show a path where to do more research on. A sensitivity study would be beneficial to better understand the influence of the sometimes large uncertainties in component cost and mass.
 - The authors are grateful with the reviewer for the time and effort spent in reviewing our work. We now proceed to answer the reviewer comments individually.
 - No action required
2. Line 24: I recommend 'more and better material' instead of 'more material'
 - Agreed, this has been added to the revised version of the paper
 - Added 'and better' to line 31
3. Line 94: Why did you not use the same rated power as in Innwind (444 kW instead of 500 kW)? Is there a specific reason, e.g. power boost option?

- Although the Innwind project uses 444kW turbines, the authors believe that the same swept area could realistically produce 500 kW given that rotors of this size produce 500 kW in industry standard turbines like the Enercon E40 turbine (500 kW, rotor diameter of 40.3m) and the Vestas V39 turbine (500 kW, rotor diameter of 39m). The authors believe that this gives a fairer representation of the energy capture possible with such a system. An additional sentence has been added to the revised version of the paper to clarify this to the reader.
 - Added 3 sentences for clarification of this point. Starting line 118.
4. Line 108: How does the tower connect to the space frame? It would be good to understand from figure 1, whether the tower reaches to the top, to the bottom or somewhere in between the space frame. In line 133 and line 142 you mention the "base of the structure". What does it mean in particular and is it in conflict with line 108? Maybe it would be good to define the overall support structure and its elements (tower and space frame). A visualization of support structure and the electrical components within would be excellent.
- Thanks for your suggestion. In order to provide better understanding of the support structure of the system, a diagram that describes the overall structure of the system has been included in the revised version of the paper (Figure 1) and an additional paragraph has been added to section 3 to better describe the system.
 - Figure 1 has been adapted to show the physical layout of the system, and a further description of the system has been added at the start of section three to clarify the support structure design. Line 103 - 112.
5. Figure 8: Why are there only 4 wt's? Shouldn't it be 5?
- Thanks for the observation, Figure 8 has been amended to include 5 turbines in the revised version of the paper.
 - Figure 8 amended.
6. Table 1: - For which power range is the table valid?
- Valid range of power ratings vary from component to component. To make this clearer for the reader an additional column has been included in Table 1 (now Table 2) to indicate the range in which the relationships are valid for each component.
 - Additional column added to Table 2 (Summary of mass and cost estimations of each component) in which the valid range of each component is stated. (marked up version of manuscript has issue displaying this table properly. Please see proper table in revised manuscript pdf.)
7. Table 1 - Some of the cost equations contain physical units, e.g. GBP/kVA and some contain variables, e.g. P. I recommend to keep it consistent - LSST in kNm?
- Equations are presented in a consistent manner throughout the table in the revised version of the paper – equations containing units have been changed to contain variables.
- Yes, LSST in kNm, this has been included in the revised version of the paper.

- Table 2 (previously Table 1) has been amended so all equations are based on variables and do not include units. Equations have also been simplified where possible but are still the same relationships. LSST has been stated to be in kNm in line 252.
8. Why do you call a 1500 rpm generator "medium speed". I thought this is high speed. Please clarify or cite a definition for medium and high speed Line
- You are correct that a 1500 rpm is considered high speed. The original cost relationship used is for medium speed generators – this relationship has been adapted to a relationship for high speed generators. This does not affect the final results as each system uses the same type of generator.
 - The relationship used for cost and mass estimation has been adapted to be accurate for high speed generators instead of medium speed generators. Section 6.1 (Generators) has been rewritten to describe this method. Information in Table 2 has also been updated to reflect the changes made. All mentions of medium speed generators have been changed to high speed generator.
9. Line 186: You name a 2012 paper "up to date". I understand that it is more up to date than the 2006 paper you refer on, but still it is not up to date in absolute terms.
- With regards to referring to a 2012 paper as up to date – this is a fair comment. The revised version of the paper makes it clear that the information presented is taken from ABB website and is presented there as their current technology. Thanks for these observations.
 - This section is no longer in the manuscript due to the change in section 6.1. However, it is also mentioned later in section 6.7 (Losses) - an additional sentence has been added to clarify that this is ABB current technology - line 350.
10. Line 196: 1500 rpm is high speed in my opinion and needs 3 stage gearbox. Several hundred rpm is medium speed and needs 1 to 2 stages. Rotor speed is low speed and does not require gearbox. Maybe I am wrong with this definition, therefore please check and ideally cite a definition of high and medium speed.
- You are correct with this. This has been amended in the revised version of the paper.
 - This has been amended in the revised manuscript - see item 8.
11. Line 199: The torque density (kNm/kg) has been increased in recent years and is an ongoing research and optimization topic. The torque densities from 2006 to 2020 might have doubled approximately. As such your assumption "that the mass of gearboxes has not decreased considerably" might be wrong.
- Thanks for your observations. The authors agree that this statement requires more clarification and research. However, a different value of generator mass will not affect the results presented in the paper as each topology uses the same gearbox. The issue of sizing of gearboxes is an interesting topic that will be addressed in future research.

- Sentence added for clarification starting line 250.
12. Line 327: Wouldn't it be better then to call it "simplified cost of energy"? OPEX and losses are a huge factor. I guess any wind farm influences (cable losses, wake effects, HV station) are not considered? I can understand that it is difficult to consider all these effects, but then it would be fair to name them simplified CoE
- Yes, this a fair comment and the revised version of the paper has been updated accordingly. Thank you for this suggestion as it is a good way of clarifying the difference between true LCOE and the cost effectiveness figures used here for comparison.
 - All instances of LCOE in the manuscript have been changed to simplified COE.
13. Line 330: Which k-factor of the Weibull distribution has been used?
- Values of $k=2$ and $C=9.5$ have been used. The revised version of the paper has included this values in section 7
 - Values added to line 387.
14. Line 378: I would recommend not to make a guess here. E.g. in offshore wind farms, cables can and have been damaged by ships. This will not be the case for MRWT internal cables. Without having a database on root causes, I would recommend not to make guesses here.
- The authors agree with your suggestion. This statement has been omitted from the revised version of the paper.
 - Sentence omitted from line 444.
15. Line 389: What do you mean by "similar"? Why did you not describe the approach to estimate the DTU-RWT cost? When you apply the same approach as you used for the MRWT, what will the result be for the DTU-RWT?
- The authors agree that using the term “similar” is not ideal here. After checking over the analysis, the methods were in fact the same. This has been corrected in the revised version of the paper.
 - ‘Similar’ replaced with ‘the same’ in line 455.
16. Table 4: Element AC star/Component count: here you give a "+" with high component count. At DC series/parallel you give a "0" with high component count? On which basis did you make the rankings and why the difference between the two?
- The base case of AC radial has a high component count compared to the rest of the topologies. The DC series/parallel has the same component count as the AC radial. The only topology with a higher component count than the AC radial and the DC series/parallel is the AC cluster. The high component count comment for the AC star was to distinguish the difference in reliability between AC and DC star. In order to clarify the matter, the AC star note has been changed to “medium component count” in the revised version of the paper, and a note has been added to the base case AC radial to indicate that it has a high component count also. Thank you for the observation.

- Table 4 - Notes column amended to include ‘high component count’ for AC radial, ‘medium component count’ for AC star and ‘high component count’ for AC cluster.

17. Line 2 (an others): MRWT

Line 163: "it“

Line 166: "string“

Line 200 "shaft torque (LSST)“ in kNm?

Line 235 Why do you write kV A instead of kVA?

- All typos have been corrected in the revised version of the paper
- corrected in:
 - line 2
 - line 201
 - line 252
 - line 292

Authors response to second reviewer - Anonymous Referee 2

1. This is generally an interesting topic. The research is entirely, especially now that MRWT is gaining attention. This study will provide the much needed insight into MRWT electrical system topologies and associated considerations. The manuscript is written and structured very well, apart from some occasional typos. However, there are some minor issues that need to be addressed before the paper is published
 - The authors are grateful with the reviewer for the time and effort spent in reviewing our work. We now proceed to answer the reviewer comments individually.
 - No action required
2. Abstract: Although the abstract is well written, it would be good to provide some concluding remarks on findings from this research.
 - Following the reviewers advice, the authors have included some of the findings of our research in the abstract section
 - Abstract extended to include more key findings. Line 13 to line 21.
3. Introduction: P 2, Line 41: It would be beneficial to provide further explanation on the relationship between “smoother load profile over MRWT structure” and the fatigue of MRWT.

- Thanks for your suggestion. Larger load variations lead to more fatigue damage, and this must be accounted for when designing the support structure. Loading is generally highest at rated wind speed (just before blades start to pitch). It is highly unlikely that all individual rotors will be operating at rated wind speed at the same time due to the nature of wind. This results in a load averaging effect over the MRWT support structure, meaning that loading over time is smoother and has less variation. Support structure elements will be subjected to smaller variations in loading over the life time of the structure, which will lead to less degradation in the structural components. An additional paragraph has been added to the section to clarify this.
 - Section of text added to clarify this point. Line 49 to line 55.
4. Line 41 – 43: In addition, the claim that “Various studies performed at Kyushu University in Japan (Göltenbott et al., 2017; Ohya et al., 2017; Goeltenbott et al., 2015) have shown that clustering turbines together can improve their performance” needs to be more specific in the context of this paper by stating the actual performance components that has been enhanced.
- The studies show that there is an increase in C_p when clustering turbines together, which will lead to an increase in annual energy capture. An additional sentence has been added to the revised version of the paper to clarify this
 - Changed sentence to read “Various studies performed at Kyushu University in Japan (Göltenbott et al., 2017; Ohya et al., 2017; Goeltenbott et al., 2015) have shown that clustering turbines together can result in an increase the coefficient of power, CP , which can lead to increases in annual energy capture. Line 57.
5. P3, Line 64: Typo – Section 2 “describes” ...
- Corrected.
 - Corrected - line 79
6. Design constraints: It would be most appropriate if the properties of the models used in this study (10MW and MRWT) are summarised in a table for clarity.
- Following the reviewers advice, a table will be included in section 3 of the revised version of the paper to summarise these properties.
 - Table 1 added to revised version of manuscript.
7. Lines 98 – 100: there appears to be something missing in “diameter or 41 m. . .”. Please crosscheck. Again, these values are best presented in a table and they should be supported with reference(s).
- Thanks for the observation. This is a typo and should read “diameter of 41 m”. ”. A new table summarising these properties has been included to the revised version of the paper.
 - Sentence omitted due to this detail being included in Table 1 in the revised version of the manuscript. Line 130

8. Notwithstanding the assumptions made, could provide some details on the platform? This is important even if does not support the transformers/ converters.

- An assumption made about the MRWT concept in previous studies is that there will be a small platform attached to the structure between the top of the tower and the base of the wind turbine array. In order to provide more details on the platform, a new diagram (Figure 1) has been included in the revised version of the paper.
- Figure 1 has been adapted to show the physical layout of the system, and a further description of the system has been added at the start of section three to clarify the support structure design. Line 103 to line 112.

9. Proposed electrical topology designs: The authors have based some assumptions on the topology design on common offshore collection network. Does this mean that this method is applicable to offshore MRWT concept? If yes, how does it handle the effect of offshore environment on each topology? Also, going by the assumption that the “base of the structure”, which I assume is the foundation; since offshore environment may not have space to accommodate the transformer/converter at the “base of the structure”, what impact will this have on these topologies? A graphic illustration of the platform, rather the textual description, showing the electrical component is recommended.

- The authors have drawn from knowledge in the literature regarding offshore collection network design, as it is analogous to the electrical system required for MRWT’s. Both have the purpose of collecting power from a number of turbines and exporting it to a wider electrical network at one single point of connection. The designs proposed in the paper are applicable to both onshore and offshore MRWT’s. The effects of an offshore environment on components is an interesting topic, however, this is out of the scope of this project as it will not affect the results of the study. Large wind turbines are satisfactorily protected from the offshore environments so it is assumed that MRWT nacelles are also satisfactorily protected.

The base of the structure is misleading and an illustration has been included to clarify this (Figure 1) in the revised version of the paper. By base of the structure, the authors refer to a platform between the top of the tower and the bottom of the wind turbine array. This has been included in the design as it is part of the conceptual design outlined in previous studies.

- Added clarification about the electrical system being analogous to an offshore collection network. Line 145.

Figure 1 has been adapted to show the physical layout of the system, and a further description of the system has been added at the start of section three to clarify the support structure design. Line 103 to line 112. Instances of “base of the structure” amended to read “platform” - line 148 and line 166.

10. It would good if you could provide recommendations on how to mitigate the noted disadvantages of each cluster topology or otherwise.

- Thanks for the suggestion; unfortunately, the disadvantages of the cluster topologies are inherent in the design of those topologies. There is no real way to mitigate them without changing the design so they are no longer cluster

topologies. Because of this reason, we provide to the reader with several topologies to help evaluate the pros and cons of each system.

- No action required.

11. Cost, Mass and Loss Estimation: Typo in Line 178, . . .include “the” . . .

- Corrected
- Corrected - line 215.

12. Costs estimate has been presented in Table 1 without stating the type of wind turbine for which it applies. Please clarify.

- Thanks for the observation. In order to clarify, detail has been added in the revised version of the paper to inform the reader that these cost estimates have been made for pitch regulated, variable speed wind turbines.
- Updated Table 1 (now Table 2) title to “Summary of mass and cost estimations of each component for variable speed, pitch regulated wind turbines”. Wind turbine type also included in Table 1.

13. There are some inconsistencies in the use of units. Please check carefully.

- Table 1 (now Table 2) will be updated so all cost and mass functions use variables instead of units in the formula. The units expressed consistently where possible in the revised manuscript.
- Table 1 (now Table 2) has been amended to ensure all formula include variables and not units. Units specified in appropriate subsection of section 6 for each component, and are kept consistent where possible.

14. Gearbox rpm: You may need to update your speed regime classification. Typically, 1. Slow-Speed: rated speed less than 400 rpm. 2. Medium Speed: rated speed of 400 rpm to 1200 rpm. 3. High-Speed: rated speed of 1200 rpm or more.

- The reviewer is correct in mentioning that a 1500 rpm is considered high speed. The original cost relationship used is for medium speed generators – this relationship has been adapted to a relationship for high speed generators in the revised version of the paper. This does not affect the final results as each system uses the same type of generator.
- The relationship used for cost and mass estimation has been adapted to be accurate for high speed generators instead of medium speed generators. Section 6.1 (Generators) has been rewritten to describe this method. Information in Table 2 has also been updated to reflect the changes made. All mentions of medium speed generators have been changed to high speed generator.

15. Power electronic converter: Although the estimation of converter mass shows a linear scaling relationship for LV - BTB converters, but this relationship is only limited to low power ratings. Any thought how this would affect the topologies performance and its commercial viability?

- With regards to the converter mass scaling, Figure 10 shows that the linear relationship holds well for power ratings up to 6 MW. Higher power ratings still show a linear relationship, but there is slightly higher variance above 6 MW. Higher ratings are unlikely to be required in MRWTs. In view of this, the authors do not believe this would affect the commercial viability of the MRWT.
- No action required

16. Cables (Line 236): Cable damage is a common occurrence in offshore environment; there is need to consider this in the topology design if this study is to be applied of offshore MRWT.

- Although cable damage is common in offshore wind farms, cable failure rates are typically much lower compared to other components in an offshore wind farm, like generator and converter failures. The topic of reliability analysis for MRWT's is a very interesting and important topic, but detailed work on this subject is out of the scope of this study. The paper does include a qualitative analysis on reliability, which is highlighted in the comparison table presented at the end (Table 4). Cable failures are considered in this at least in a qualitative manner and in terms of how many turbines would be lost because of a cable failure. A recommendation for future work on the topic of MRWT reliability is recommended in the paper as the authors recognise it is an important area for investigation (line 442).
- No action required

17. Transformers (Line 248): There is high inconsistent use of units in this section. Please crosscheck all units carefully.

- Mass estimates are based on power rating in kVA, and cost estimates used are based on VA. This has been changed in the revised version of the paper so both units are consistent. Thanks for the observation.
- the relationship for mass has been amended to be in VA instead of KVA so both mass and cost estimates are consistent with units. Line 311 and Table 2 (previously Table 1)

18. The conclusions should be improved to include summary of key findings and their impact on MRWT. Although a good investigation of the various components of electrical topologies design have been undertaken, the results have not been completely validated in terms of their optimal values and their impact on the overall performance on MRWT. It is suggested that the authors should consider this doing it

- Thank you for these comments. A summary of key findings has been included in the conclusion of the revised version of the paper. The authors recognise that numerous parameters like voltage level, number of turbines in clusters and different electrical configurations within the topologies should be considered in future work, but is out of the scope of this project. An additional paragraph has been added to the end of section 8 in which the authors make recommendations for future work on these topics. The authors believe that this paper provides insight into the effectiveness of various topology designs, and although not all parameters are fully optimised, the work can form a base for future projects and full optimisation of the system.

– Conclusion amended to include summary of key findings - line 474 onwards.

Short paragraph added to end of section 8 to recommend future work - line 469.

Abstract. Multi-rotor wind turbines (MRWT) have been suggested in literature as a solution to achieving wind turbine systems with capacities greater than 10 MW. ~~MWR~~MRWT's utilise a large number of small rotors connected to one support structure instead of one large rotor, with the aim of circumventing the square cube law. Potential benefits of MRWT's include cost and material savings, standardisation of parts, increased control possibilities and improved logistics for assembly and maintenance.

5 Almost all previous work has focused on mechanical and aerodynamic feasibility, with almost no attention being paid to the electrical systems. In this research eight different topologies of the electrical collection network for MRWT's are analysed to assess which are the most economically and practically viable options. AC and DC collection networks are presented in radial, star, cluster and DC series topologies. Mass, capital cost and losses are estimated based on scaling relationships from academic literature and up to date commercial data. The focus of this study is the assessment of the type of electrical collector topology

10 so component type and voltage level are kept consistent between topology designs in order to facilitate a fair comparison. Topologies are compared in terms of four main criteria; capital cost, cost effectiveness, total mass, and reliability. ~~The most suitable collection topology for MRWT's is shown to be of the star type, in which each turbine is connected to the step up transformer via its own cable. DC~~ A comparison table is presented to summarise the findings of the research in a convenient way. It is found that the most cost effective solutions are the AC radial and AC star topologies, with the least cost effective being the DC series/parallel and DC cluster topologies. This is due to the high cost of DC-DC converters and DC switchgear, along with the lower efficiency of DC converters. Radial designs perform best in terms of efficiency and annual energy capture. DC systems achieve a slightly lower nacelle mass compared to their equivalent AC systems. DC topologies are generally found to be more expensive when compared to their AC counterparts due to the high cost of DC-DC converters and DC switchgear. Star topologies are considered to have the best reliability due to having no shared equipment. The most suitable collection

15 topology for MRWT's is shown to be of the star type, in which each turbine is connected to the step up transformer via its own cable.

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1 Introduction

As the wind industry tries to continue reducing the cost of energy, it is desirable to have as much rated capacity on one support structure as possible, particularly offshore. The substructure of a wind turbine is typically a large portion of the capital cost

25 so increasing the size and power rating of the turbines is an obvious way to reduce the cost of energy (Manwell et al., 2014). Additionally, there is less sites to be maintained, which can drastically reduce the O&M costs of a wind farm, particularly in offshore environments when access can be difficult. This has led the industry to develop very large wind turbines like the GE Haliade-X, with a rotor diameter of 220 m and a power rating of 12 MW. However, there is physical and economical limits as to how large single rotor wind turbines can become. It is shown in (Sieros et al., 2012) that as the radius of a wind

30 turbine rotor increases, the loads due to self weight that are encountered in the blades and tower increase at a faster rate. This implies that more and better material and hence higher capital costs are required to manufacture blades and towers as rotors

increase in diameter. There are additional practical limits as to how large wind turbine components can become. For onshore wind turbines, the size of components has already reached a practical limit due to difficulties involved in transportation of large components. Larger components are possible when installed offshore, but there is still significant issues involved with transporting and installing large components. Large components require large vessels to transport and install which come at a significant cost to installers.

Multi-rotor wind turbines (MRWT) offer an alternative solution to achieving wind turbine systems with large scale power capacity. The idea is to have a large number of small turbines on one support structure instead of one very large rotor, circumventing the square cube law and achieving significant savings on material costs for blades and drive train components. It is shown in (Jamieson and Branney, 2012) that the blades and major drive train components in a MRWT have $1/\sqrt{n}$ times the mass of an equivalent single rotor system where n is the number of rotors, implying significant savings in material costs for MRWT's.

Various studies within the literature have shown that the MRWT concept has potential and should be investigated further. An initial investigation of support structures required for MRWT's is conducted in (Manwell et al., 2014). Although the total mass of the MRWT is shown to be higher than that of an equivalently sized single rotor turbine, the cost of the MRWT is approximately 22% lower. This is due to a reduction of expensive materials required for blade and drive train components. Various loading scenarios were investigated in the Innwind study (Jamieson et al., 2015). It was shown that MRWT's benefit from reduced loading in all scenarios compared to that of an equivalently sized single rotor. ~~An A load~~ averaging effect is also demonstrated, which ~~leads to a smoother load profile~~ could result in increased fatigue life. Larger load variations lead to more fatigue damage, and this must be accounted for when designing the support structure. Loading is generally highest at rated wind speed, just before blades start to pitch. It is highly unlikely that all individual rotors in a MRWT system will be operating at rated wind speed at the same time due to the nature of wind. This results in a load averaging effect over the MRWT structure, which could result in support structure, meaning that loading over time is smoother and has less variation. Support structure elements will be subjected to smaller variations in loading over the life time of the structure, which will lead to less degradation in the structural components and an increased fatigue life. Various studies performed at Kyushu University in Japan (Göldenbott et al., 2017; Ohya et al., 2017; Goeltenbott et al., 2015) have shown that clustering turbines together can ~~improve their performance~~ result in an increase in the coefficient of power, C_P , which can lead to increases in annual energy capture. All of these studies show that clustering conventional turbines results in modest gains in ~~power~~ C_P , whereas clustering wind-lens turbines can produce significant increase in ~~power~~ C_P . This was also shown through simulations in the Innwind project, where a MRWT consisting of 45 turbines is expected to have an ~~increased power coefficient~~ increase in power of 8%. Operation, maintenance and installation costs are also expected to be reduced using the MRWT concept, as components would be small enough to use small vessels without specialist equipment required. It is proposed in the Innwind project that each ~~MWRT~~ MRWT platform would be equipped with an on-platform crane capable of removing and replacing an entire rotor assembly with no additional lifting equipment required. MRWT's would also benefit significantly from an increased redundancy. If one small rotor fails only a small portion of the total power is lost and can be replaced at the next regular service interval without significant loss of revenue. The Innwind project also compares the levelised cost of energy (LCOE) of the

conceptual 20 MW 45 rotor MRWT with two 10 MW reference wind turbines (RWT) and estimates that the MRWT would have a reduction in LCOE of 15%. Some disadvantages of the MRWT concept are more complex support structure design and increased component count.

70 Although some work has been done to provide insight into the feasibility of MRWT's, the electrical system has been largely neglected. The aim of this study is to assess various electrical collection topologies that could be used in a MRWT in order to determine the most suitable option. There are several areas that must be considered when identifying possible electrical collection topologies for MRWT's. The cost of the system should be minimised as to not outweigh the savings in material costs. Mass distribution must be optimised in order to avoid unnecessary reinforcement of the support structure. The ability to vary rotational speed of individual rotors is an important aspect of power maximisation and load alleviation, so the independent operation of individual rotors is an important consideration. It is desirable to maximise the built in redundancy within a MRWT system, so reliability of components and redundancy within the electrical system is an important consideration.

This study performs an initial analysis of eight different electrical collection topologies that could be used within a 45 rotor MRWT system. Section 2 ~~deeseibes~~ describes the methodology used, Section 3 describes the system outline, Section 85 4 discusses the design constraints of the system, Section 5 outlines the proposed electrical collection topologies, Section 6 describes how the mass, cost and losses of each component has been estimated, Section 7 ~~desribes~~ describes how the cost effectiveness of each system is compared, Section 8 presents the results of the analysis and conclusions are made in Section 9.

2 Methodology

In this initial analysis of different electrical systems, the emphasis is placed on determining the most suitable *type* of system so no detailed design work for each component will be conducted within this study. Instead, various AC and DC electrical topologies are designed using realistic components that are trusted and understood by the wind industry. If the benefits of the MRWT concept can be shown to be true while still using known and well understood components, it is more likely to be accepted as a viable alternative to the single rotor wind turbine. Mass, cost and losses are estimated for each component using information from industry data sheets where possible.

90 A number of steps were carried out in this study:

- Design constraints were established.
- Eight collection topologies were designed. Both AC and DC topologies are included. The focus of the study is to analyse the type of collection topology, so component type, voltage level and number of turbines in strings and clusters is kept consistent across all designs where possible.
- 95 – Capital cost and mass of each collection topology were estimated using a combination of scaling relationships and up to date commercial information.
- Loss profiles of each component were used to estimate the total losses of each collection topology over the entire operating range of wind speeds.

– Cost effectiveness of each collection topology was assessed based on the capital cost and total losses over a 20 year
100 lifetime of the project.

3 System outline

A MRWT system consisting of 45 rotors will be considered in this study. Figure 1 shows a simple representation of the physical layout of such a system with each circle representing a single wind turbine rotor. The MRWT concept as described in (Jamieson et al., 2015) includes a small platform situated at the bottom of the turbine array with enough space to accommodate a large step up transformer which is required to step up the output voltage to a suitable level for connection to a wider collection network. For DC systems, a DC to AC power converter is also situated on the platform. Each wind turbine unit includes a nacelle which contains all the power train components (gearbox, generator, power converters, brake system) much like a standard three bladed variable speed wind turbine. A steel tubular lattice style space frame is used to support the 45 turbine units. Various concepts regarding the support structure and yaw system are outlined in the Innwind report (Jamieson et al., 2015) including floating systems and systems with fixed base. How the space frame connects to a floating platform or traditional tower is out of the scope of this paper, as the work focuses on the electrical system connecting the individual turbines. The reader is directed to the Innwind report (Jamieson et al., 2015) for a detailed description of various possible design solutions.

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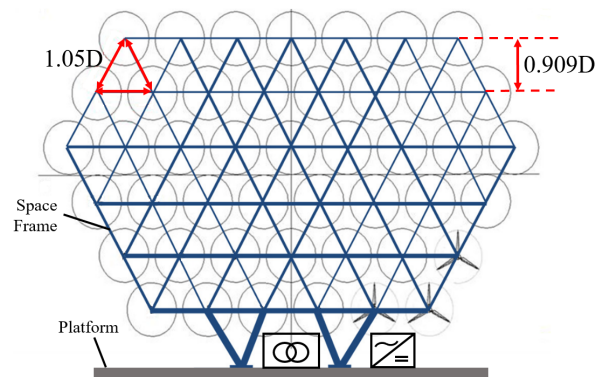


Figure 1. Proposed layout of a 45 rotor MRWT system. Adapted from (Jamieson et al., 2015).

This number of rotors allows a balanced and compact design and is used in various studies such as (Jamieson and Branney, 2012) and (Jamieson et al., 2015). The Innwind study provides a conceptual design for such a system and also makes comparisons to an equivalent system consisting of two 10MW RWT's from DTU to highlight the reduction in LCOE that could be realised by the MRWT concept. It is therefore desirable to use a similar system in this study to allow for easy comparison to both systems. Each rotor has a diameter of 41 m which results in the same total swept area as the two 10 MW RWT's. Using examples of commercial wind turbines of this approximate size of rotor. Although the Innwind project uses 444 kW turbines, commercial examples of turbines with similar swept area are capable of producing 500 kW rated power. Examples

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120 are the Enercon E40 turbine with a rated power of 500 kW and a diameter of 40.3 m (Wind Turbine Models, a) and the Vestas
 V39 turbine with a rated power of 500 kW and a rotor diameter of 39 m (Wind Turbine Models, b). In order to give a fair
 representation of the energy capture possible with such a MRWT system, a representative rated power of 500 kW was selected
 for each turbine ~~, giving the system a total rated power of 22.5 MW,~~ in this study. The characteristics of each turbine unit are
 shown in Table 1, along with the characteristics of the 10 MW RWT used for comparison (Bak et al., 2013). The diameter of
 125 the DTU RWT is scaled up to 194.5 m in the Innwind report (along with the capital costs associated) in order to match swept
 areas of the two systems; this upscaled diameter is used for comparison in this paper.

Table 1. ~~Proposed layout~~ Characteristics of ~~a 45-rotor~~ each individual turbine unit used in the MRWT system and the 10 MW RWT.

Characteristic	Individual MRWT turbine	RWT
Turbine type	3 blade, variable speed, pitch regulated	3 blade, variable speed, pitch regulated
Rated power	500 kW	10 MW
Rotor diameter	41 m	194.5 m
Rated wind speed	11.5 m/s	11.5 m/s
Maximum C_P	0.45	0.48
Rated rotor speed	30 rpm	9.6 rpm

4 Design Constraints

The following design constraints have been used to design the electrical topologies:

1. The system in question must have 45 rotors: to facilitate fair comparison with results in the Innwind project.
- 130 2. Each turbine ~~must have a rating of 500 kW, diameter of 41 m, rated wind speed of 11.5 m/s, maximum coefficient of power (C_P) of 0.45, and rated rotor speed of 30 rpm~~ has the characteristics shown in Table 1: these values have been selected as representative values from available wind turbines of this scale used within the industry.
3. Each turbine must have independent speed control: This is required in order to maximise energy capture and minimise loading on blades and drive train components.
- 135 4. It is assumed that each turbine operates in a maximum C_P tracking mode below rated wind speed, and then power is held constant at rated power above rated wind speed via pitch control.
5. Each topology must connect to an AC collection network at 33kV: this is a common voltage level used within the wind industry for collection networks. DC collection networks have been discussed in literature, but there is still no real world applications.
- 140 6. It is assumed that there is a platform ~~at the top of the tower that is as shown in Fig. 1~~ large enough to ~~contain a support a step up~~ transformer and/or converter ~~for the multi-rotor array~~ as described in the Innwind report (Jamieson et al., 2015).

5 Proposed Electrical Topology Designs

A total of eight topologies were designed and each are described in this section. Each topology is based on commonly discussed collection network topologies for offshore wind farms as they are analogous to the electrical system required for MRWT's.
 145 Both have the purpose of collecting power from a number of turbines and exporting it to a wider electrical network at one single point of connection.

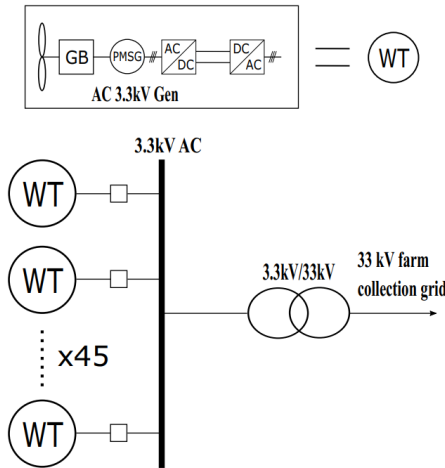


Figure 2. AC star topology.

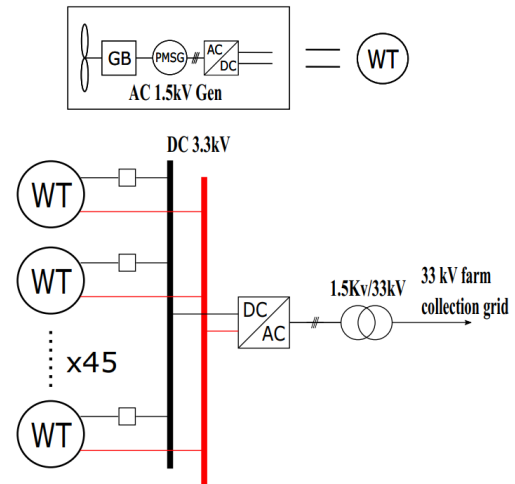


Figure 3. DC star topology.

The AC star and DC star topologies are shown in Fig. 2 and Fig. 3 respectively. In both the AC and DC star topologies each turbine is connected via its own cable to the converter or transformer situated at the base of the structure on the platform shown in Fig 1.
 150 The AC star uses a 3.3kV permanent magnet synchronous generator (PMSG) with a fully rated back-to-back IGBT based voltage source converter (VSC). The DC star uses a 1.5 kV PMSG with controlled IGBT based VSC. Various types of DC output wind turbines have been suggested in the literature with some utilising diode rectifiers to reduce weight and cost, and others utilising controlled IGBT based rectifiers. The advantage of using an IGBT based VSC is that it is able to easily control both the torque of the generator as well as the reactive power to the generator. This allows for independent speed control of each turbine while maintaining a constant DC output voltage, and also allows the use of any type of generator. A controlled rectifier
 155 has been selected for these reasons for each DC topology in this study. To allow for a fair comparison between topologies, all use a PMSG. The DC star topology uses a lower rated generator in order to have the DC cable voltage directly comparable to the AC star topology, which facilitates a fair comparison between the two and keeps the emphasis on the type of system rather than system voltage. Medium voltage (MV) generators are required to avoid high conduction losses in low voltage (LV) cables and also to remove the need for a transformer within the nacelle. The star topologies benefit from excellent redundancy
 160 as a fault in any one component within the array only results in the loss of 1/45th the total rated power. The disadvantage is that there is a large total cable distance, but cables with a smaller cross sectional area (CSA) can be used compared to other

topologies. The DC star topology also may benefit from greater efficiency and lower mass due to fewer conversion steps and the use of DC cables (DC cables are known to be lighter and smaller compared to AC cables (Lakshmanan et al., 2015)).

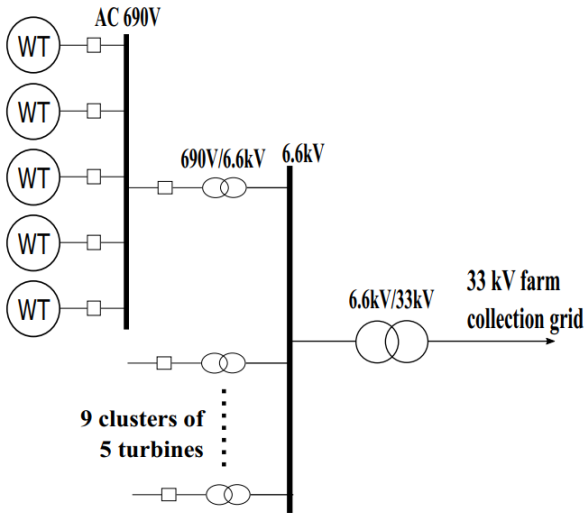
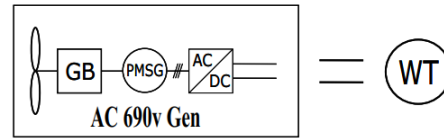
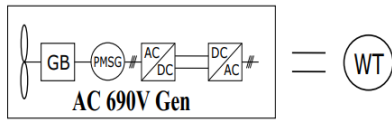


Figure 4. AC cluster topology.

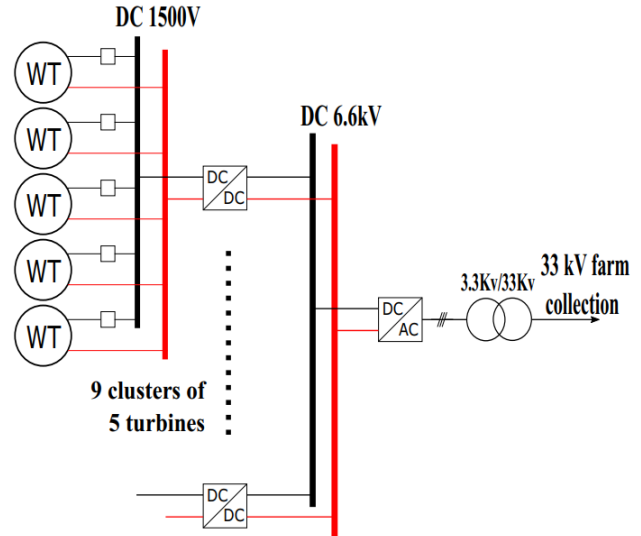


Figure 5. DC cluster topology.

The AC and DC cluster topologies are shown in Fig. 4 and Fig. 5 respectively. The cluster topologies gather power from a number of rotors, step up the voltage using either an AC transformer or a DC-DC converter and then transmit the power to the converter/transformer ~~at the base of the structures~~situated on the platform. This allows for the use of industry standard 690 V generators as the cable distance between each rotor and the transformer or DC-DC converter is very small. Cluster topologies use much smaller cable distances compared to the star topologies, but require cables with larger CSA to handle higher currents. DC-DC converters are used in the DC topology and a 50/60 Hz transformer is used in the AC topology. DC-DC converters are smaller and lighter compared to AC transformers (Lakshmanan et al., 2015) but are also significantly more expensive, so it is expected that the DC cluster topology be more expensive but lighter than the AC cluster topology. The main disadvantage of the cluster topologies is the failure of the cluster transformer/DC-DC converter would result in the loss of the entire cluster of turbines.

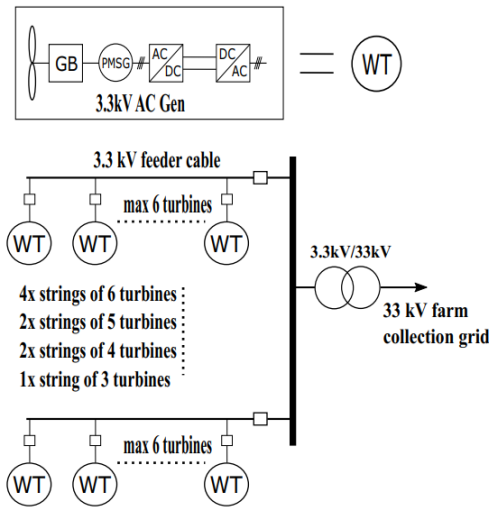


Figure 6. AC radial topology.

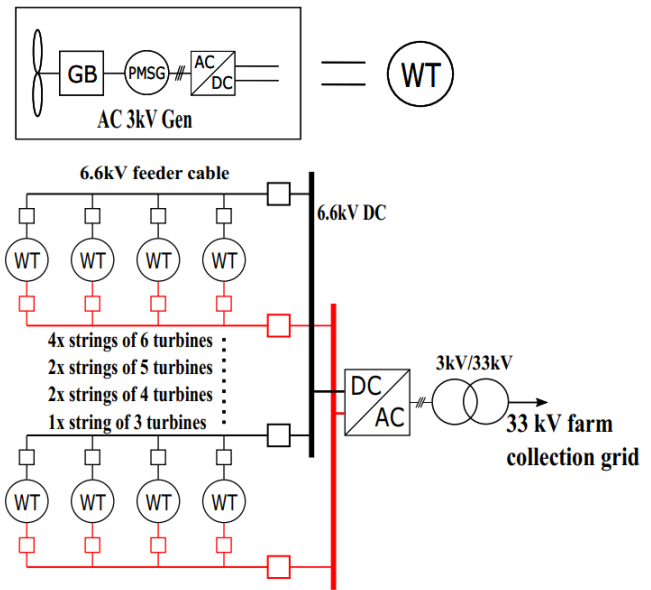


Figure 7. DC radial topology.

The AC and DC radial topologies are shown in Fig. 6 and Fig. 7 respectively. These are based on the most common type of offshore collection network; the AC radial collection network (Bahirat et al., 2012). As it is the most common configuration, the AC radial topology will be used as the base topology throughout this study. In the radial topologies, a number of turbines are connected to a feeder cable which transmits the power to the transformer/converter at the base of the support structure. The amount of turbines connected to a feeder cable is determined by the current carrying capacity of the cable and the power output of the turbines. For simplicity, both AC and DC radial topologies use non tapered cables in each string. Use of a 3.3kV feeder cable in the DC radial design was originally used, but after initial assessment it was deemed unrealistic due to the large CSA of cables required so the next standard voltage level of 6.6 kV was selected. Radial designs benefit from short cable distances, simple design and operational experience. The main drawback is poor reliability as a fault in a feeder cable would result in the loss of the entire string. It should be noted that failure rates for cables are significantly lower than that of power electronic converters or generators.

185 ~~AC-radial-topology. DC-radial-topology.-~~

DC series and DC series/parallel connected wind farm collection networks have been discussed in the literature and show enough promise to be included in this study (Bahirat et al., 2012; Ng and Ran, 2016; Lundberg, 2003). The main idea behind the DC series topology is to connect DC output turbines together in series to increase the voltage of the string without the use of AC transformers or large DC-DC converters, resulting in a very lightweight system. Figure 8 shows the DC series topology and Fig. 9 shows the DC series/parallel topology. In the DC series topology, a standard 690V AC PMSG is used with a controlled rectifier to produce a DC output of 1.5 kV. Each string contains five turbines connected in series to produce a string voltage

of 7.5 kV. Generator torque control is performed by the controlled rectifier and the string DC-DC converter maintains the DC voltage of the string. A fault in one turbine can be isolated by using a circuit breaker that operates in short circuit, maintaining a path for the DC current within the string. In the case of a fault within the string, the DC-DC converter at the end of the string can vary its duty ratio to maintain the 11kV bus voltage. This system should have a low mass due to the small number of converters used, but may be expensive due to the use of DC-DC converters and more expensive DC protection devices. There may also be issues regarding insulation as some components will require an insulation level high enough to withstand the whole string voltage to ground. This will be explored further if the topology shows promise.

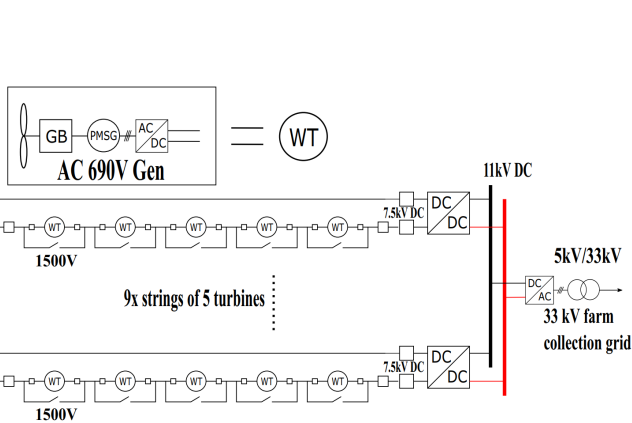


Figure 8. DC series topology.

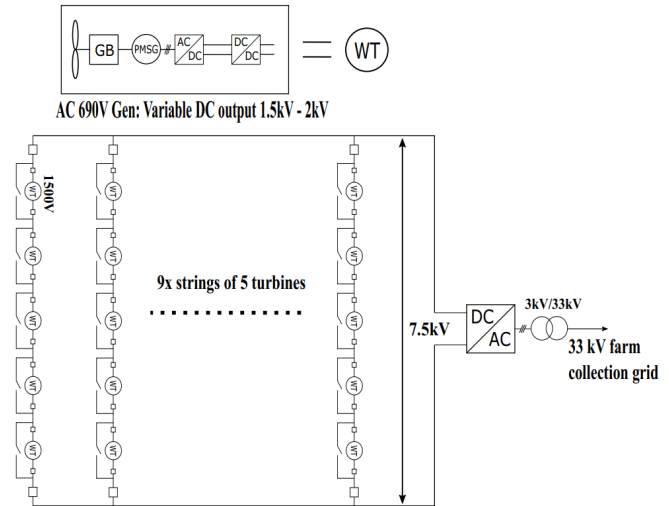


Figure 9. DC series/parallel.

The DC series/parallel topology is similar to the DC series topology in that is-it utilises DC output turbines connected in series to produce a high voltage within strings. It utilises a variable voltage output DC wind turbine where the generator is connected to a controlled rectifier and a DC-DC converter. As multiple strings of DC series turbines are connected together in parallel, the voltage of each string-string must be kept the same as the others. This is achieved by the use of the DC-DC converter at the turbine level. If one turbine within a string fails, the voltage is maintained by the other turbines in the string increasing their output voltage. This topology is designed to reduce the cable distance, but will undoubtedly require heavier and more expensive cables to utilise. Disadvantages of this topology are similar to those of the DC series topology.

~~DC-series topology: DC-series/parallel-~~

6 Cost, Mass and Loss Estimation

The cost, mass and loss performance of each component used in the proposed topologies must be estimated in order to determine each topologies suitability. A variety of academic literature and commercial information has been used to accurately estimate the properties of each component used. Information regarding cost and mass of components is rarely available in

the public domain for the exact power rating and size of components required. It is therefore necessary to rely on scaling relationships from the academic literature that estimate the cost and mass of generic components based on parameters like component power rating, P , or torque rating. Within this study, these scaling relationships have been adapted where possible to include the most up to date commercial information in order to reflect realistic components used within the wind industry.

215 A summary of the relationships used to estimate [the mass and cost of components in this study is presented in Table 2, along with the valid range in which these relationships are applicable.](#) The cost of components can often be difficult to estimate as component producers will vary prices depending on market pressures, location of projects, availability of materials etc. It is therefore necessary to rely on the academic literature in order to estimate the price of each component. Although the estimated prices may not be exact, they are sufficient to compare the cost effectiveness of each topology. All cost estimates used within

220 this study are presented in 2019 GBP.

Table 2. Summary of mass and cost estimations of each component [for variable speed, pitch regulated wind turbines.](#)

Description	Mass (kg)	Cost (2019 GBP)
Medium-High speed PMSG	$7.78P^{0.9223}$ 2600 (only valid for 500 kW)	$59.984P-15P$
3 stage gearbox	$70.94 \times LST^{0.759}$	$18.033P^{1.249}$
MV back-to-back VSC	$1.01P - 9.852$	$\pounds 132/kVA$ 132P
VSC (inv. or rec)	half of back-to-back VSC 0.505P - 4.926	half of back-to-back VSC 66P
Bi-directional DC-DC converter	$(P/500) * 590$ 1.18P	$\pounds 110/kVA$ 110P
Cables (per km)	mass/km taken from data-sheets	$1000 \cdot (0.46 \times CSA + 94.671)$
Transformers	$1.982P + 481.11$ 1.982 × 10⁻³ P + 481.11	$-115,968 + 205.73P^{0.4473}$
AC switchgear	N/A	$30,720 + 0.576V_{rated}$
DC Switchgear	N/A	twice cost of AC switchgear 61440 + 1.152V_{rated}

6.1 Generators

~~NREL provide a mass estimation relationship. The cost scaling relationship for high speed PMSG's used in this study is developed from an NREL study (Fingersh et al., 2006) in which a scaling relationship is presented for medium speed PMSG's in (Fingersh et al., 2006). However this relationship was produced in 2006 and does not reflect any of the recent developments in generator design made over the last decade. Information is available from ABB about mass of generators in (ABB, 2012b), which provides an up to date and industrial comparison point to check the NREL relationships against. Table ?? shows a comparison between actual mass given by ABB and the relationship in cost between medium speed and high speed PMSG's which is presented in (Hart et al., 2014). The NREL study provides a cost scaling relationship for medium speed PMSG's used with a 1 stage gearbox which is dependant on the power rating of the generator in kW. This relationship is valid for turbines with rotor radius between 25 m and 70 m, which equates to an approximate power rating range between 0.5 MW and 6MW. The Hart study shows a detailed comparison in cost between various PMSG's and gearbox combinations. Comparing the cost of a medium speed PMSG (used with a one stage gearbox) and a high speed PMSG (used with a three stage~~

225

230

gearbox), it is shown that the high speed generator is around 25% the cost of the estimated mass using the NREL relationships from the 2006 study, as well as a correction factor required so that the two agree. It is clear that the original relationships overestimate the mass of PMSG's significantly, which reflects the advancement in this technology in recent years. The most conservative correction factor has been applied to the relationship. This medium speed one. Combining these two relationships results in the relationship shown scaling relationship for the cost of a high speed PMSG that is presented in Table 2, which also closely agrees with data given by The Switch in (The Switch, 2013). The cost of the PMSG's are also estimated using relationships provided by NREL in (Fingersh et al., 2006). Both mass and cost relationships are calculated based on the rated power of the machine in kW. estimations from this relationship match the costs presented in (Carroll et al., 2015), which are developed from data provided from real offshore wind turbines from an unnamed industry partner. This study also shows the same relationship between costs of a medium speed and high speed PMSG's, further improving the confidence of the scaling relationship developed for this study. Mass of the high speed PMSG can be taken directly from a data sheet available from The Switch which lists the mass of a 500 kW high speed PMSG at 2600 kg (The Switch, 2019).

245 6.2 Gearboxes

All generators in this study are assumed to be used in connection with a three stage gearbox. This assumption is based on a typical rated speed of a medium-high speed PMSG of 1500 rpm and rated speed of the wind turbine rotors. This results in a required gearbox ratio of 1:50, which is easily achievable with a three stage gearbox. The cost and mass estimation relationship for a three stage gearbox is taken from the same NREL study as the generator relationships. It is assumed that the mass of gearboxes has not decreased considerably since the publication of this report as the gearbox was considered a mature technology in 2006. The torque density of gearbox's may have increased since the time of the publication, but all topologies use the same gearbox, so this mass estimation is sufficient for comparison between the different systems. The mass of the gearbox is calculated based on the low speed shaft torque (LSST) in kNm and the cost is based on the rated power of the gearbox in kW.

255 Comparison of NREL estimated mass and given mass of medium speed PMSG generators from ABB. Power rating (MW)
 Given Weight (kg) NREL estimate Weight correction factor-

~~3 12,500 16,926 0.739~~

~~5 18,200 27,122 0.671~~

~~7 24,900 36,977 0.673~~

260 6.3 Power Electronic Converters

The mass of low voltage (690V AC), IGBT based back-to-back VSC's designed specifically for wind turbines are given for units of different power ratings in a data sheet provided by ABB (ABB, 2018). The mass is given for complete units and includes the converters, filters, circuit breakers, casings, cooling systems and any other auxiliary systems that are required for the converters to operate. This information has been plotted and a linear approximation has been used to develop a scaling relationship that can estimate the mass of the back-to-back converter with power rating required for the MRWT system. Figure

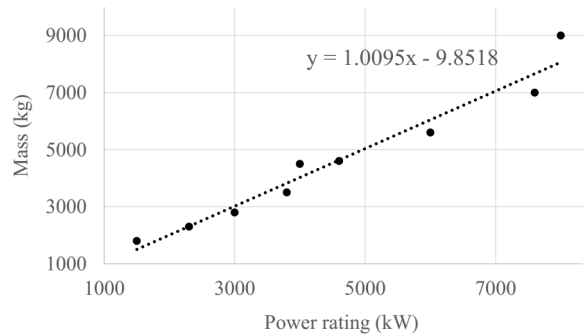


Figure 10. Scaling relationship for LV BTB converters.

10 shows that the linear approximation achieves a reasonable estimation of converter mass, particularly at lower power ratings. Some topologies also use medium voltage converters, but little information is available on the mass of commercially available MV converters, particularly at low power ratings. Wind turbines have traditionally used LV generators of 690V until recently when power ratings of wind turbines have increased significantly and it became more appropriate to use MV machines. It can
 270 be assumed that the same relationship holds for both low and medium voltage back-to-back converters. Comparing the mass of LV and MV back-to-back converter units of similar power ratings, both produced by ABB, it is seen that the MV converter mass is lower compared to its LV counterpart (ABB, 2019), suggesting that the mass estimation for low power medium voltage converters may be conservative. Mass for controlled rectifiers or inverters will be taken as half of the back-to-back converter mass.

275 Due to the variety of designs present in the literature and lack of commercially available high power DC-DC converters, estimates of mass are tricky. Mass estimates of various converter types are given in (Chen et al., 2013) which shows a mass of around 800kg for a buck/boost IGBT based 5 MW converter. The problem here is that this mass is solely based on the switches and passive elements in the DC-DC converter. When a commercially produced converter is available, the mass of the unit is likely to be considerably higher due to cooling and other auxiliary systems that are required. This lower estimate in mass could
 280 cause an unfair comparison between AC and DC topologies. Solar PV applications utilise DC-DC converters on the same scale as is required for the MRWT topologies. Dynapower provide some information about a commercially available bi-directional DC-DC converter in (Dynapower, 2019), which lists a mass of 500 kW unit as 590 kg. Comparing this to the estimated mass of 800 kg given in (Chen et al., 2013) for a 5 MW unit highlights the difference between academic mass estimation and commercially available units. The Dynapower DC-DC converter can be used in a modular fashion to produce higher power
 285 DC-DC converters, so the mass of this unit will be used to estimate the mass of DC-DC converters required for this study. Mass of all power electronic devices in this study are estimated based on the rated power of the devices in kW.

Costs used in two recent studies (Parker and Anaya-Lara, 2013; Lakshmanan et al., 2015) have been converted to 2019 GBP to give a cost of a back-to-back converter (regardless of type) of £132/kVA and a controlled rectifier of £66/kVA. DC-DC converter price estimates vary significantly in the literature due to the lack of commercially available converters for

290 wind applications and the variety of designs suggested. It is therefore most appropriate to take a range of prices available in the literature for suitable DC-DC converters and take an average of this price. The studies used for this are: (Lakshmanan et al., 2015; Fingersh et al., 2006; Max et al., 2007; Lundberg, 2003; Georgios and Wheeler, 2010). This gives an average cost of $\pounds 110/kVA$.

6.4 Cables

295 Mass of cables can be easily assessed using mass per km values given in data sheets of cables from a variety of cable manufacturers.

Cable costs are estimated from (Dicorato et al., 2011) which provides a cost function for a kilometre of cable based on the CSA of the cables in mm^2 . The study uses available costs from numerous sources and averages them for each CSA then uses a least square linear regression to produce the relationship. The paper states that this relationship is valid for medium voltage
300 copper conductor XLPE insulated cables. Although not stated, most offshore installations use three core cable, so it will be assumed that this is the cost for three core cable. Suitable cables have been selected for each topology based on the required current carrying capacity of the cables. Cable distances have been estimated for each topology based on realistic cable layout designs that follow the triangular lattice support structure beams as closely as possible to avoid loose hanging cables within the structure.

305 6.5 Transformers

Mass of transformers has been estimated by using information given in (Declercq, 2003) regarding the ‘SLIM’ range of transformers for wind turbines manufactured by Pauwels International (now ‘CG’). The mass of transformers from different power ratings was plotted and a linear approximation for how the mass varies with power rating was developed. Additional information from (Islam et al., 2014) was used to develop the relationship shown in Table 2, which estimates the given masses
310 of transformers very well. It also generally agrees with other information from data sheets for ABB distribution step down transformers. The mass of transformers is estimated based on the power rating of the transformer in ~~kVA~~ VVA .

Lundberg (Lundberg, 2003) provides a formula for estimating the cost of MV/HV transformers rated between 6.3 and 150 MVA, with low side voltage rating between 10.5 and 77 kV and high side rating between 47kV and 140kV. The transformers required in this study do not quite fall into this category, but will be assumed to follow this cost model. This cost model provides
315 the base for many cost estimates of transformers in the literature, with (Parker and Anaya-Lara, 2013; Dicorato et al., 2011; Lakshmanan et al., 2015) all using this relationship and scaling it to present day value in the currency of the paper. The cost estimates for transformers in this study are based on the rated power of the transformer in $V A$.

6.6 Switchgear

Lundberg (Lundberg, 2003) also provides a cost model for AC switchgear based on the voltage rating in V , which is commonly
320 used within academic literature. The cost of DC switchgear is also required for this study, which is more difficult to estimate

due to the lack of commercially available DC switchgear. It is suggested in (Lakshmanan et al., 2015) that the cost of DC switchgear could be as much as four times that of AC switchgear, but this figure is based on a study from 2007. Since then advancements in DC switchgear have been made, so a relationship of two times the cost of AC switchgear will be used here to reflect advancements in technology. The mass of switchgear is assumed to be negligible in this study as the VSC mass estimations includes some switchgear masses.

6.7 Losses

Losses of each individual component were estimated at each 0.5 m/s wind speed increment between cut-in and cut-out wind speed. Mechanical power is calculated as follows

$$P_{mech} = \frac{1}{2} \rho A v^3 C_P \quad (1)$$

where P_{mech} is the mechanical power produced by the turbine, ρ is the density of air, A is the swept area, v is the wind speed and C_P is the coefficient of performance. Loss profiles that describe the losses of each component over the entire operating range of wind speeds were used in order to account for varying efficiencies of components when operating at part load. For each topology, the mechanical power was calculated using Eq (1) and losses for each component subtracted at each wind speed. The output power of each component was used as the input power of the next component. For example, the input power of the generator is the mechanical power produced by the turbine minus the gearbox losses. Matlab scripts were created to calculate the total losses at each wind speed of each collection topology.

An equation is presented for gearbox efficiency in (Jamieson, 2011), which was developed by GL Garrad Hassan. It comprises of a loss that varies in proportion to the operating power level, and a constant loss that is related to the rated power and number of stages:

$$L_{gear} = \frac{\left(\frac{10}{3} + 2N\right)P_r + 5NP_i}{1000} \quad (2)$$

where L_{gear} is the losses in the gearbox in kW, N is the number of stages, P_r is the rated power of the gearbox in kW (constant) and P_i is the input power of the gearbox in kW (variable). This equation is used to estimate losses of gearboxes in this study.

Losses for generators, power converters and DC-DC converters were estimated by using a combination of data presented in a Lundberg study (Lundberg, 2003) and various data sheets from commercial suppliers. The Lundberg study presents losses of various components as a percentage of rated power over a full range of wind speeds, so can be applied to a variety of different power ratings while the commercial data is used to ensure up to date losses at rated power of the different components are used. This allows for a simple method suitable for early stage analysis, while allowing the loss characteristics of different components at part load to be included. Loss data for each component was produced based on the Lundberg study and reconfigured to reflect commercial rated efficiencies and a different rated wind speed, while maintaining the below rated characteristics of the components.

Medium-High speed PMSG efficiency at rated power is listed as over 98% by ABB (ABB, 2012b). (ABB, 2012a). This is available on the ABB website and is presented as their currently used technology. Back-to-back converter efficiency at rated power for LV converter unit is given as 97% in (ABB, 2018). Back-to-back converter efficiency at rated power for MV converter unit is given as 98% in (ABB, 2019). These efficiencies include back-to-back converters, filtering, cooling systems etc. and is used in this study. For controlled rectifiers, an efficiency at rated power of 99% for MV and 98.5% for LV has been used.

There are a huge amount of DC-DC converters proposed and studied in the literature in recent years. The advancement of power electronic devices and the increasing need to minimise mass in offshore applications has led to an increased interest in DC-DC converter topologies that are suitable for use in offshore wind farms. In (Parastar et al., 2015) a multilevel modular DC-DC converter for high voltage DC wind farm is suggested and reports efficiencies of around 97% at rated power for a small scale prototype. In (Chen et al., 2013) various types of converters are compared in terms of mass, number of components, efficiency and volume. The two best candidates are a buck/boost converter based on IGBT's with a rated efficiency of 97.5% and a resonant switched capacitor converter with a very high efficiency of over 99%. In (Max and Lundberg, 2008) three converter types are analysed and compared, with the author concluding that the most suited type of converter for use in a DC wind farm is a full bridge converter based on IGBT switches. The study presents efficiencies of both a turbine level and group level converter as 97.08% and 97.97% respectively. Finally, various topologies of DC turbine configurations are also shown in Lundberg's 2003 comprehensive study which all are approximately 97% efficiency (Lundberg, 2003). The conclusion reached is that a rated efficiency of 97% will be used for the DC-DC converters in this study, with below rated efficiencies capturing the characteristics of the converters presented in (Lundberg, 2003). This provides a realistic and slightly conservative estimate of losses within a DC-DC converter suitable for the MRWT application.

Losses in cables can be approximated by

$$L_{cable_3\Phi} = 3I_{RMS}^2 R_{AC} \quad (3)$$

$$L_{cable_DC} = 2I_{DC}^2 R_{DC} \quad (4)$$

where $L_{cable_3\Phi}$ is the losses in the three phase AC cables in W, I_{RMS} is the rms AC current in each phase in A, R_{AC} is the resistance of the AC cable in Ω , L_{cable_DC} is the losses in the DC cable in W, I_{DC} is the DC current in A and R_{DC} is the resistance of the DC cable in Ω (Starke et al., 2008). Resistances of the cables can be calculated by considering the total length of cables within the topology and the given resistance per length for the cables CSA.

Transformer efficiencies are estimated using a combination of the loss profile presented by Lundberg in (Lundberg, 2003) and full load efficiencies presented in (Islam et al., 2014). Losses in switchgear are considered negligible.

7 Cost effectiveness

380 In order to analyse the cost effectiveness of each topology a ~~levelised~~-simplified cost of energy (~~LCOE~~COE) calculation was performed that considered the capital cost of the drive train and electrical components and the total electricity produced by each topology over a 20 year lifetime of the project in net present value (NPV). Equation 5 was used to calculate ~~this LCOE~~ the simplified COE and the NPV of electricity produced was calculated according to Eq (6) where AEC is the annual energy capture, i is the discount rate which is equal to 10% and n is the lifetime of the project in years. No costs associated with
385 operations and maintenance or loss of power due to failures were included in this calculation.

$$\underline{LCOE}_{elec} \text{ Simplified COE} = \frac{\text{Capital cost of electrical components and gearbox}}{\text{sum of electricity produced over lifetime}} \quad (5)$$

$$NPV = \frac{AEC}{i} \left(1 - \frac{1}{(1+i)^n} \right) \quad (6)$$

The wind speed is assumed to follow a Weibull distribution ~~and with an~~ average wind speed of 10 m/s ~~is and values of k=2~~ and ~~C=9.5 are~~ used. Total energy capture was calculated by multiplying the output power at each wind speed by the number of
390 hours per year the wind will be at that speed and summing the results together.

8 Results and discussion

The total capital cost of each electrical topology is shown in Fig. 11. It is clear that DC topologies will incur a significantly higher capital cost compared to AC topologies. This is due to the increased cost of DC-DC converters and DC switchgear. The AC star and radial topologies have the lowest capital cost of topologies analysed, while the most expensive are the DC
395 series/parallel and DC cluster topologies.

Capital Cost of Topologies

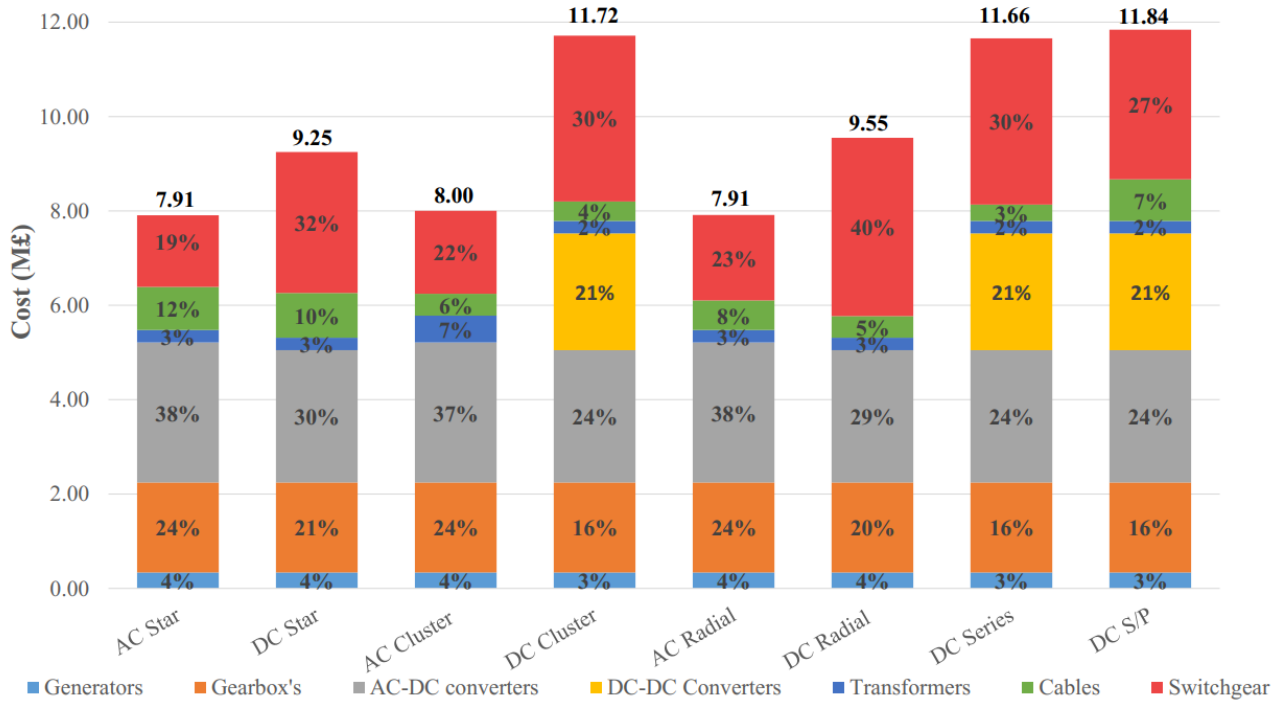


Figure 11. Total capital cost of electrical topologies with breakdown by component. Total capital cost is shown above each bar. Percentage of total capital cost is also shown for each component. Taking AC star as an example, the total capital cost is £7.91 million, with the generators accounting for 4% the total cost, gearboxes accounting for 21% and so on.

The total mass and breakdown of component mass is shown for each topology in Fig. 12. Although some topologies are lighter than others, the difference in total weight is not significant. The system with the highest mass is the AC cluster topology, with its high mass due to the use of AC transformers within the system. The lightest is the DC star topology, with DC radial and AC star very close behind. Gearbox and generator mass is a significant portion of total mass, accounting for 75-85% of the total mass in each case. This mass can be reduced by considering different generator and gearbox combinations, but has not been considered in this study so as to make a fair comparison of the type of electrical systems. As the large transformer and/or inverter are situated on the build-in platform of the MRWT, the mass per nacelle is a more appropriate measure of how the mass of each system will effect the design of the support structure. This is shown in Table 3 and includes all components housed within the nacelle as well as a share of the cable mass and shared components. The DC star and DC radial topologies perform well in this category due to their low component count. The DC star achieves a 10% reduction in mass of each nacelle compared to the base case of the AC radial.

Losses at rated power of each topology are shown in Fig. 13, with the most efficient topologies being the DC radial and AC radial designs. The DC radial design is slightly more efficient than the AC radial due to lower losses in the DC cables.

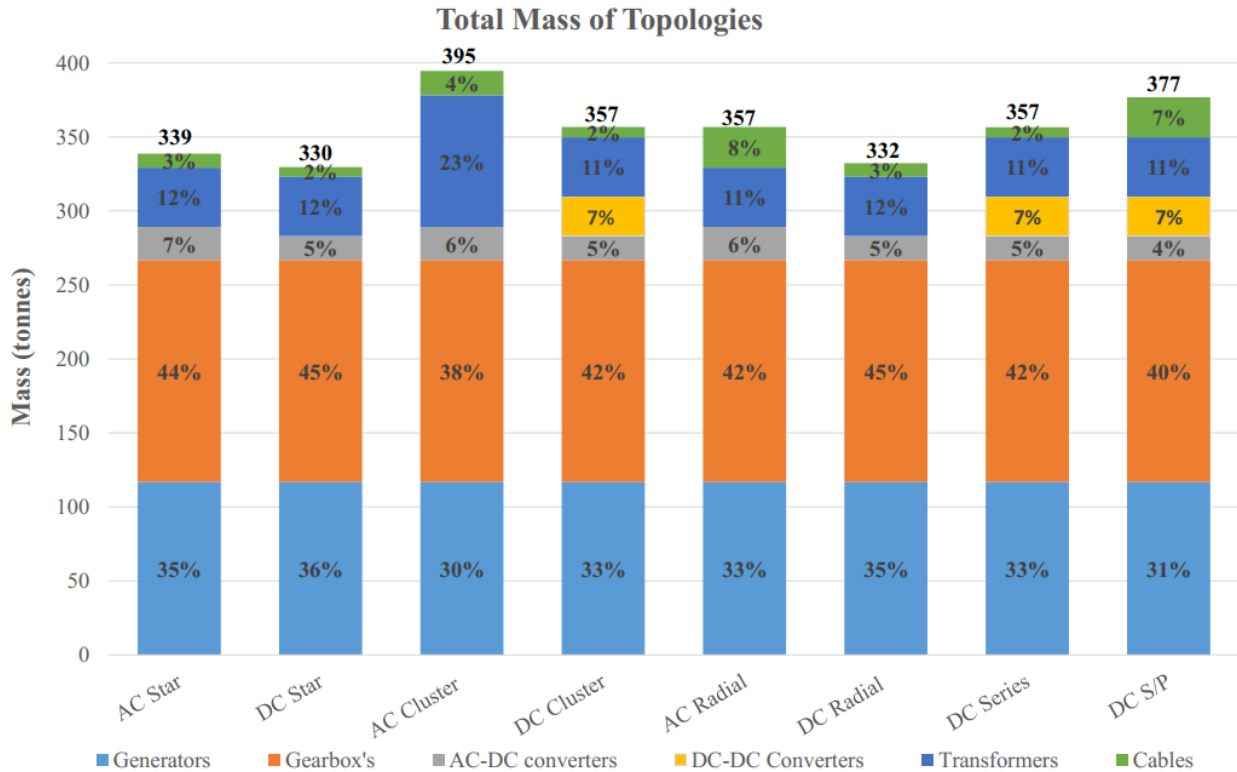


Figure 12. Total mass of electrical topologies with breakdown by component.

Table 3. Comparison of characteristics of each electrical topology.

<u>Topology (MW)</u>	<u>Simplified COE (£/MWh)</u>	<u>Mass per nacelle (kg)</u>	<u>Annual lost energy (GWh)</u>
<u>AC star</u>	<u>11.41</u>	<u>6634</u>	<u>8.70</u>
<u>DC star</u>	<u>13.3</u>	<u>6317</u>	<u>8.45</u>
<u>AC cluster</u>	<u>11.82</u>	<u>7876</u>	<u>10.59</u>
<u>DC cluster</u>	<u>17.38</u>	<u>6921</u>	<u>10.94</u>
<u>AC radial</u>	<u>11.36</u>	<u>7034</u>	<u>8.28</u>
<u>DC radial</u>	<u>13.66</u>	<u>6377</u>	<u>8.02</u>
<u>DC series</u>	<u>17.3</u>	<u>6917</u>	<u>10.98</u>
<u>DC series/parallel</u>	<u>17.82</u>	<u>7367</u>	<u>12.05</u>

This is due to the higher voltage level and the reduced conduction losses in DC cables. The DC cluster topology has higher
 410 losses compared to the AC cluster topology due to the much reduced efficiency of the DC-DC converters compared to AC
 transformers.

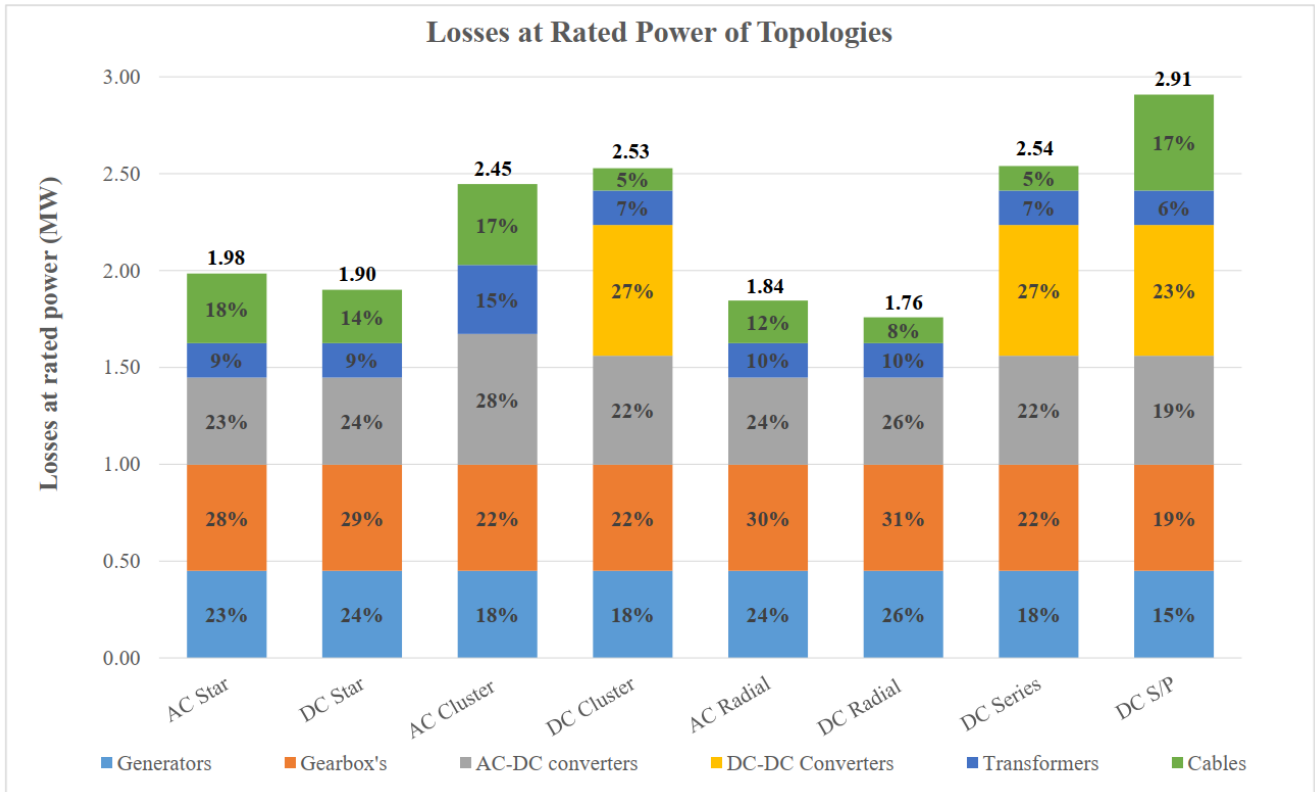


Figure 13. Total losses at rated power of electrical topologies with breakdown by component.

Comparing AC to DC equivalent systems the DC systems always have higher cost due to the high cost of DC-DC converters and switchgear, with the mass of DC systems being marginally lower and the losses between AC and DC systems being very similar. This shows that the lower losses in DC cables at this power range and cable lengths are not large enough to make a significant difference in the overall efficiency of the systems. Comparing the AC and DC star topology efficiencies shows this well. Cables do not significantly contribute to the total mass, with the lightest system simply being the one with the fewest components.

Comparison of characteristics of each electrical topology: Topology (MW) LCOE (£/MWh) Mass per nacelle (kg) Annual lost energy (GWh) AC star 12.62 6435 8.70

420 DC star 14.47 6117 8.45

AC cluster 13.06 7676 10.59

DC cluster 18.88 6721 10.94

AC radial 12.81 6834 8.28

DC radial 15.11 6177 8.02

425 DC series 18.80 6717 10.98

~~DC-series/parallel-19.34-7167-12.05-~~

The ~~LCOE~~ The simplified COE of the electrical system and gearbox of each topology is shown in Table 3. Low capital cost and losses in the AC systems results in low ~~LCOE~~ simplified COE for the AC star, AC cluster and AC radial topologies. High capital cost and losses result in high ~~LCOE~~ simplified COE for the DC series, DC series/parallel and DC cluster topologies. AC topologies have a lower capital cost and lower ~~LCOE~~ simplified COE compared to the DC systems analysed, showing that the proposed benefits of DC systems in offshore collection networks do not cross over to collection systems for MRWT's.

A comparison of each topology can be seen in Table 4. The AC radial is considered the base topology as it is the most commonly used collection network in offshore wind farms. Base levels are marked with 'O' in Table 4 with '+' symbols used to indicate an improvement in the specified category compared to the base case and '-' symbols used to indicate a decrease in performance in that category compared to the base case. Component count includes gearbox, generator, converters, transformers and switchgear units for each topology. The reliability category is considered as a combination of component count and amount of shared equipment. As an example, the DC cluster topology performs badly in this category as a fault in the shared DC-DC converter would result in a loss of five turbines and the DC star topology performs excellently in this category due to having no shared equipment and a low component count. This category is seen as an important characteristic of each topology as it highlights one of the key benefits of a MRWT system. Failure of components in a large single rotor turbine will likely result in the loss of 100% of the power from that turbine, whereas a MRWT can still produce a high percentage of power after the failure of components. Further work should be conducted in order to quantify monetary value of this characteristic for each topology, but a first pass attempt has been made here to at least indicate which topologies will benefit the most from this characteristic. Although cable failure rates are significantly lower than other components used in wind turbines, cable failures have still been included in this analysis. ~~Cables in MRWT arrays will have less physical protection than sub-sea cables used in wind farms so failure rates may be higher than stated in wind farm collection network failure studies.-~~

The AC star topology is the best solution overall as it only performs slightly worse than the base case in the category of efficiency and performs very well in each of the other categories, specifically reliability and mass per nacelle. The DC star topology also performs well overall and could see an improvement in reliability compared to the AC star topology due to its lower component count. It is recommended that more detailed design and analysis work are carried out for these two topologies.

The basic cost estimation of electrical components made in the Innwind project (Jamieson et al., 2015) totals to £4.6 million. This cost estimation was lacking detail and significantly underestimated the cost of electrical systems required for a MRWT, with this study showing the cheapest system to cost in the region of £7.9 million. The capital cost of electrical components (as well as gearbox cost) in the Innwind project is 13.3% of the capital cost of the entire system, and ~~LCOE~~ the simplified COE of the electrical system and gearbox is estimated to be 10.65 £/MWh. Although lower than the ~~LCOE~~ simplified COE of each topology in this study, it is reflective of the level of detail between the two studies. Using ~~a similar~~ the same methodology, the ~~LCOE~~ simplified COE of the electrical system of two DTU RWT's (inc. gearbox) is 36.85 £/MWh, showing that even the most expensive topologies are significantly cheaper compared to a large single rotor turbine. Combined with the savings in material costs for blades, improvements in O&M costs, reduced installation and transport costs and power increases due to

Table 4. Comparison of topologies.

Topology	Cap. cost	Efficiency	LCOE -Simplified COE	Total Mass	Mass per nacelle	Component count	Reliability	Notes
AC radial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	High component count
DC radial	-	+	-	+	++	++	+	Shared cables (max. 6 turbines) but low component count
AC cluster	0	--	0	-	--	-	-	Shared transformer (5 turbines) and short shared cables; High component count
DC cluster	--	--	--	0	+	+	--	Shared DC-DC converter (5 turbines) and short shared cables
AC star	0	-	0	+	+	+	++	No shared equipment (high-medium component count)
DC star	-	-	-	+	++	++	+++	No shared equipment (low component count)
DC series	--	--	--	0	+	+	--	Shared DC-DC converter (5 turbines) and long shared cables
DC series/parallel	--	--	--	-	-	0	--	Long shared string cables, high current collection cables transmit all power, high component count

460 clustering of turbines it is still expected that the MWRT concept will achieve a much improved overall LCOE regardless of the increase in cost of electrical components.

The cost estimates presented here are highly sensitive to the cost of DC-DC converters and DC switchgear. Although these costs may fall in the future, the reductions would have to be significant for the DC systems to be comparable in price to the AC systems in the context of MRWT electrical systems. DC systems may be more attractive if the MRWT would connect to a DC
465 collection network, however there is currently no DC collection networks in operation, and the feasibility of their existence within the near future is still low. DC systems could also reduce cost and mass significantly by using diode rectifier in place of controlled rectifiers, but this would jeopardise the controllability of the entire system and in most cases lose the ability to control the speed of the turbines individually.

Future work is recommended on further optimisation of topologies to see the effects of varying voltage level, number of
470 turbines in clusters and strings, different generator types, different power train configurations and different rated power levels of turbines used within the MRWT system.

9 Conclusions

Eight different electrical topologies have been proposed and analysed in terms of mass, cost effectiveness, component count and reliability. There are several key findings from this study. AC topologies consistently have the lowest ~~LCOE~~ simplified COE
475 of the electrical system ranging between ~~12.62 to 13.06~~ 11.36 to 11.82 £/MWh. DC systems have higher ~~LCOE~~ simplified COE of the electrical system between ~~14.47 and 19.34~~ 13.3 and 17.8 £/MWh. The increased cost is attributed to the high cost of DC-DC converters and DC switchgear. ~~The AC systems have lower capital cost and lower simplified COE compared to the equivalent DC systems. The lowest simplified COE is seen in the AC radial system, very closely followed by the AC star and AC cluster topologies. The topologies with the highest simplified COE are the DC series/parallel, followed by the DC cluster and DC series. The radial topologies have the highest efficiency at rated power and the lowest annual energy loss. The~~
480 ~~difference in total mass between the systems is not significant, but DC systems do see a reduction in mass per nacelle. It is unclear at this point how much the mass of each nacelle will effect the cost and complexity of the support structure required for a MWRT.~~ MRWT. Both star topologies are considered to have the highest reliability due to having no shared equipment. Lower losses in DC cables do not result in a significant reduction of total system losses. Reduced cost of DC cables do not outweigh the increased cost due to DC-DC converters and DC switchgear.

DC-DC converters and DC switchgear are still commercially unavailable and it is therefore hard to estimate the cost of such equipment. Due to this, the results are very sensitive to the cost of DC-DC converters and switchgear. Systems that lose only a small portion of rated power due the failure of one component are clearly more desirable than systems that will lose a higher portion of rated power. Further work is recommended on this topic to investigate the monetary value of this characteristic of
490 MRWT's.

From the systems analysed, the most promising type of system is the AC star topology; it performs well in a large range of categories, and has very good reliability compared to other systems. The high reliability is due to the design of the system

which has no shared equipment between turbines. The DC star topology also performs well overall and could have even higher reliability than the AC star topology due to its lower component count. Both topologies should be considered for more detailed design and analysis in future work.

Data availability. No data sets were used in this study.

Author contributions. PP carried out all design and analysis work under supervision and guidance from DC and OA.

Competing interests. The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest

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