

EirGrid Reports Significant Response to North-South Public Consultation

May 16 - There has been a significant response from the public to last week's announcement that EirGrid is embarking on a fresh round of non-statutory public consultation for the North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development.

Staff have been dealing with numerous enquiries to the project lo-call number 1890 252690 and demand for copies of the *Preliminary Re-Evaluation Report* has been high.

Aidan Geoghegan, EirGrid project manager, said: "There is a significant amount of interest in the project. In fact demand for the *Preliminary Re-Evaluation Report* is so high we have had to order extra copies from the printer".

EirGrid commenced a comprehensive review of the project shortly after the original application was withdrawn in June 2010. The preliminary findings of the review were published last week in a *Preliminary Re-Evaluation Report*, which will form the basis for non-statutory consultation over the next six weeks.

There are a number of ways to obtain a copy of the report. It can be collected from the EirGrid Information Offices in Kennedy Road, Navan and the Workhouse, Carrickmacross, it can be requested from one of EirGrid's representatives who will be calling on stakeholders in the area over the next few weeks or it can be requested via the lo-call number. It is also available for immediate viewing online at www.eirgrid.com and EirGrid hopes, with the kind permission of the local authorities, to make copies available in certain libraries and local authority offices in the area. Mr Geoghegan said however that "the best way to get your copy of the report would be to pop into an Information Centre and pick one up. The offices are staffed by people working on the project who would be very happy to answer any questions people might have."

This week EirGrid is extending the opening hours at the Information Centres to enable people call in to meet members of the EirGrid team and have their questions answered.

The offices are open for five days, from Monday 16th to Friday 20th May 2011 from 1pm to 7pm.

After that, the Navan Centre will open every Tuesday and the Carrickmacross Centre will open every Wednesday between 1.00pm and 7.00pm or by appointment.

EirGrid plans to spend the coming weeks consulting with landowners and other stakeholders. Feedback will be taken on board by the EirGrid team as the process evolves towards a preferred project solution that will ultimately form the basis of a new application to An Bord Pleanála.

ENDS

Note to editors: EirGrid withdrew its original planning application following an issue in relation to the public notice for the development which arose at the planning hearing. The North-South 400 kV Interconnection Development will facilitate cross-border sharing of electricity; improve the efficiency of the electricity market, resulting in lower electricity bills for customers; allow more renewable energy to be connected to the network, reducing Ireland's dependency on imported fossil fuels; and ensure a future secure supply of electricity throughout the North East.