

PRESS RELEASE

**NEW ELECTRICITY LINES FOR NORTH EAST WILL INCREASE CAPACITY AND
ENABLE MORE DEVELOPMENT AND COMMERCE**

Monday, 1st October 2007: EirGrid, the organisation responsible for putting in place major electricity transmission infrastructure to support all regions and the economy nationally, has launched two projects in the North East.

The two projects will;

- Ensure a future secure supply of electricity throughout the North East.
- Facilitate cross-border sharing of electricity
- Help promote better competition
- Facilitate use of renewable energy
- Upgrade existing electricity supplies.

The two projects are;

- The first project is a new 400kV Interconnector between Cavan and Tyrone that will more than double the current power transfer capacity between the North and the South. The new interconnector will span approximately 45km in the Republic of Ireland, will cost in the region of €180 million and will be routed from a proposed new substation near Kingscourt in Co Cavan, through Co Monaghan and onwards to Co Tyrone. This project is being undertaken in co-operation with Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE).
- The second project is the Woodland (Co Meath) to Kingscourt (Co Cavan) 400kV Power Line. It is approximately 58km long and will cost in the region of €100 million. This power line will reinforce the power system in the North East, facilitating competition and secure supplies of power for all customers.

A number of route corridor options for both projects are currently being investigated and a shortlist of proposed route corridors will be presented to the Elected Members of Counties Cavan, Meath and Monaghan in early October.

Maps and details about each of the proposed route corridor options for both projects will be presented at Public Open Days in early October in Trim, Castleblaney and Kingscourt. All stakeholders will have an opportunity to make their views known at that stage, before route option studies are completed and a final route is chosen.

The Public Open Days will be as follows

Thursday 11th October, Castle Arch Hotel, Trim Co Meath

Tuesday, 16th October, Glencarn Hotel, Castleblaney, Co Monaghan

Wednesday, 17th October, Cabra Castle Hotel, Kingscourt, Co Cavan

“These proposed new lines are vital in order to facilitate security of supply, facilitate competition benefiting existing customers, and also to supply the needs of the new householder and commercial customers who have connected in recent years”, says Aidan Corcoran, Project Engineer, EirGrid. “Both projects will be subject to the full

planning processes. EirGrid will provide ample opportunities for the public to make their views known, so that the best route options are chosen for these projects.”

“The extensive design and route option studies will continue until 2008, when a preferred route will be chosen. The studies will take into account input from a wide range of stakeholders, as well as environmental and economical impacts,” continues Aidan Corcoran.

The network strengthening in Cavan, Monaghan, and Meath will support growth in the region and ensure continuing reliability of supply as well as giving existing industries a major boost when competing for business and inward development in the area. It will also complement the proposed additional Interconnector between Kingscourt and Tyrone.

“The Irish Economy has grown strongly during the past decade leading to unprecedented growth in electricity demand countrywide. The average annual increase in peak demand nationally has been around 4% and this growth has led to a need for a major reinforcement of the electricity infrastructure in the North East,” says Aidan Corcoran.

It is European Union policy that links between electricity systems are a key way of ensuring secure and competitively priced electricity markets into the future. A Single Electricity Market for Ireland is due to come into effect later this year. The increased capacity provided by this Interconnector will help promote competition and better sharing of generation resources, for the benefit of all customers. It will lead to fuel savings, result in fewer emissions and facilitate integration of wind generated energy. In addition to the benefits on an all island basis, the strengthening of the high voltage network in Counties Cavan, Monaghan and Meath will add to the availability of bulk high quality power in the North East.

For more information and public consultation updates, visit www.EirGrid.com

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