

North / North-West Operator Messages

We would like to thank the RCC for the hospitality and the constructive discussions we had at the Stakeholder and Implementation Group meetings in October. As the RCC may be aware, the North/North-West Operators met on the 30 November to discuss the process and progress of the regional initiative. We would like to thank Maya van Steenhoven for joining us for part of this meeting. At the meeting it was considered useful to provide the RCC with some feedback on the issues we discussed. Our comments below are aimed at improving the process and communication between all stakeholders in order that we can make the regional initiative a success.

One of the key issues, particularly for a region the size of the North/North-West, is the communication between all stakeholders. From our perspective we have found the face to face meetings, in the Stakeholder and Implementation Groups, very constructive and efficient. However we feel the follow up procedure could be improved, particularly in terms of providing minutes of meetings in a timely manner. We think it would also be useful to summarise all of the main agreements at the end of each Implementation Group meeting and potentially issue these shortly afterwards as a draft record.

In terms of moving forward, we understand that the RCC will introduce enabler groups. The aims of which appear two fold, to speed up the process and to gain greater stakeholder input at an earlier stage. We particularly support the latter of these aims, as this has been a concern of the Operators for some time. With regard to the first point, we support the RCC's desire to make rapid progress, however there is always a balance to be struck between time and quality, therefore we need to check that we have the right balance to deliver sustainable progress.

To ensure that enabler groups work effectively, we would like to make a few suggestions. Firstly the members of the enabler groups should be considered as focal points, but not representatives of the other companies in their sector. To assist this there will need to be enough time between enabler group discussions, for members to confer with other sector participants. This is important in order to ensure the enabler group heads in a direction broadly supported by all stakeholders. In choosing the Members of the enabler group, we should make certain that they intend to follow this model and have the time and energy to make a valuable contribution. Also of particular importance, the process should allow for written comments to be provided by all stakeholders, as this is really the only way to ensure that everyone is heard. Finally we believe that there should be a face to face kick off meeting, the way of working should largely be face to face or conference calls and in making arrangements we should be cognisant of other meetings to ensure optimum efficiency.

With regard to the current versions of the priority papers, as the RCC knows, we are generally supportive of them. However, we do have some concerns about the process for reviewing and making changes to the documents and their final approval. In our opinion, we should avoid sending out too many draft versions and would prefer that if changes are made that these are track changed. In addition a consistent approach to version control would be beneficial. It would also be helpful to explain and discuss why changes have not been accepted, where this is the case. This is particularly

important in order to ensure that all stakeholders fully support the papers. We will shortly provide the RCC with our final comments on the papers, for the RCC's consideration.

In terms of the questionnaires, we are happy to report that the Operators are making good progress on their completion. We anticipate that many Operators will be able to adhere to the specified deadlines. Although it should be stated that in some cases, most notably for the primary and secondary capacity questionnaire, the data requests for Operators with several interconnection points are very onerous. We did suggest that the length and complexity of this questionnaire should be reduced, however this has not happened to any great extent. Therefore this may lead to some delay in answering this particular questionnaire. On reflection, we would also suggest in future that we use a structure with less open questions, as often we could answer the questions, for example "how do you calculate capacity?", in two or three lines or alternatively with a 50 page report. It would therefore be useful to either close the question or provide guidance on the level of granularity required in the answer.

We understand that Poland may now become a Member of the region. It would be useful to clarify this, as well as the status of Norway in the Region. We would also be interested in the RCC's views on keeping the region together and how we can effectively deal with any particular issues raised by Poland.

We hope the RCC finds the above comments constructive and please do not hesitate to contact us with regard to any points raised within this note. We look forward to working with the RCC and the other stakeholders over the coming months to make a success of the regional initiative.