

Energy transition must be affordable – Smart capacity products limit network expansion costs

▪ **Transmission system operators submit draft Network Development Plan Gas 2013 to Federal Network Agency**

Berlin, 2 April 2013. On 1 April 2013, the German transmission system operators submitted their Network Development Plan Gas 2013 (NDP Gas 2013) to the Federal Network Agency. The NDP Gas 2013 is based on the general scenario submitted by the transmission system operators in October 2012 and confirmed by the Federal Network Agency. The preparation of the general scenario and the submission of the draft NDP Gas 2013 were both preceded by intensive consultation procedures; opinions were submitted by a large number of market players.

The content of the NDP Gas 2013, which presents various network model variants for the period from 2013 to 2023, focuses on specific network expansion measures and the associated costs. The transmission system operators and the market players participating in the consultation process share the objective of ensuring the best possible overall cost/benefit analysis for network expansion. An intensive comparison of the various model variants clearly shows that capacity products for gas-fired power stations and gas storage bring economic benefits. “This model variant, which we have developed jointly and which includes investments of about €1.6 billion, will lay the foundation for a high level of security of supplies and flexibility for gas trading in the future,” says Ralph Bahke, Chairman of the newly established Vereinigung der Fernleitungsnetzbetreiber Gas e. V. (FNB Gas). According to the calculations presented in the NDP Gas 2013, network expansion creating freely allocable capacities for new gas storage facilities and new, system-relevant power plants would double the additional economic cost. “It is very important for the energy transition to be affordable. This calls for more smart capacity products rather than more steel,” Bahke added.

Fall in production and imports of group L gas

Another topic which will represent a considerable challenge for gas network operators in the future is already on the horizon – the changeover from group L to group H gas as a result of falling group H gas production. The severe decline in capacities for export to Germany announced by the Netherlands calls for rapid reactions by transmission system operators. By 2023, the import volume will already fall by 30% compared with 2020. From 2030 onwards, there will be no further imports of group L gas from the Netherlands. At the same time, group L gas production in Germany is also declining. The investments required for changeover or conversion plants must already be made now.

All the documents of the Network Development Plan Gas are available on the Internet at www.netzentwicklungsplan-gas.de.

Background

With their high-availability natural gas infrastructure that has been developed in line with demand, German transmission system operators make a key contribution to secure energy supplies. In combination with conversion processes, the natural gas system also has the potential to provide storage for excess electric power generated from renewable sources. In this context, the natural gas system can play a key role in the upcoming conversion of energy supplies and the efficient utilization of energy infrastructure.

In order to determine the natural gas transport capacities required in the future against this backdrop, the transmission system operators produce a network development plan each year in close cooperation with the Federal Network Agency. The NDP Gas 2013 was prepared on the basis of the general scenario developed by Prognos AG on behalf of the transmission system operators.

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