



East West Interconnector Project (EWIC)

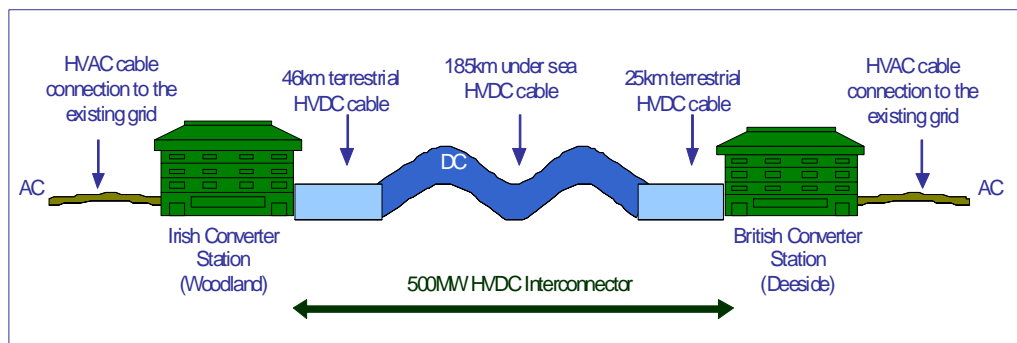
Status Report - 31 August 2009

CER 09/177

Background:

In March 2009, the Government and the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) approved the development of the East West Interconnector (EWIC) between Ireland and Wales. The investment in this project is €600 million. The interconnector is due to be constructed over the next three years and come into operation in 2012. Swedish engineering firm ABB was awarded the contract to design, manufacture and install the interconnector.

The EWIC project represents the construction of a cable, rated at carrying 500MW (megawatts) of electricity, from an electricity sub-station in Ireland to an electricity sub-station in the UK, and vice versa. The components of the construction are outlined diagrammatically below.



The High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) interconnector will allow the Irish system to connect to the much larger UK system while allowing control of the power flow. The EWIC will have both importing and exporting capacity and be able to transmit direct current (DC) between the two converter stations, proposed for Woodland, in Ireland and Deeside in Wales. The Electricity Interconnector cable is 256km in length – 185km of sub sea cable and 71km of terrestrial underground cable. The converter stations will convert the current to the usual form of alternating current (AC) for onward transmission on the transmission network in the UK and Ireland.

Progress Overview:

Planning (Ireland):

A planning application was submitted to An Bord Pleanála in November 2008 and a public oral hearing took place in March 2009. Subsequently on the 14th May, An Bord



Pleanala advised EirGrid that it would provisionally approve the proposed development subject to receipt of additional information from EirGrid. This information has since been provided and public consultation is currently underway. It is expected that full planning permission will be awarded in Q3 of 2009. (Note: since the period ending of this report planning permission has been received from An Bord Pleanala)

Planning (UK):

On the UK side, a planning application for the HVDC converter station at Shotton (Deeside, North Wales) was submitted to Flintshire County Council during Q2 of 2009. A Foreshore License application was submitted to the Marine Fisheries Agency in Britain with environmental survey and analysis provided. Both are progressing to schedule and outcomes are expected by the end of Q3 of 2009. (Note: since the period ending of this report planning permission has been received from Flintshire County Council)

Licences:

Foreshore license applications have been made in Ireland and Britain to the respective bodies. They were both well received, with no adverse comment from statutory consultees. EirGrid have commenced negotiations with utilities to be crossed by the 260km cable.

Construction:

Manufacturing is expected to commence during Q2 of 2010. This will involve specialist international construction and engineering staff and result in approximately 100 jobs in Ireland during the construction period. Preparatory consultation with landowners and residents along the proposed route are currently underway to obtain their views and input.

Overall Progress

Subject to receiving all necessary permissions, consents, etc. the EWIC is scheduled for completion in Q3 2012. EirGrid is delighted to report that the project is on target to meet this date.