NEMO LINK announces €500m contracts to build the first interconnector between GB and Belgium

08 Jun 2015

- World first use of HVDC XLPE cables at 400 kV
- NEMO LINK to provide further integration of the European energy market
- Work to start in both Kent and Zeebrugge later this year

NEMO LINK today announced the two winning contractors who will build the first electricity interconnector between GB and Belgium. They are Siemens and J–Power Systems, the Japan-based company, a subsidiary of Sumitomo Electric Industries, Ltd.

The contracts are together valued at about €500m. Siemens will build the converter stations in both Kent and Zeebrugge using their HVDC Plus technology and they will have a 5 year service and maintenance agreement. J-Power systems will design, manufacture and install the state of the art HVDC XLPE[1] cable system – the first time it will be used operationally as a High Voltage Direct Current link at 400kV

NEMO LINK is the joint venture between National Grid and Elia, the Belgium Transmission System Operator, to deliver the 1000MW subsea link between the two countries. It will run 140 kilometres and will provide enough electricity to power half a million homes.

The link will increase energy security for both countries and support integration of renewable energy. It has been designated as one of the European Commission's Projects of Common Interest as it will help create an integrated European energy market.

Alan Foster, NEMO LINK board member, said

"We are delighted that Siemens and J-Power Systems have won these contracts. The use of this state-of-the-art cable technology allied to the very efficient converter stations will make NEMO LINK the most innovative interconnector in Europe, bringing new supplies of competitively-priced electricity to the market".

Sadao Fukunaga, J-Power Systems Corporation president said

"This is a great honour for us. It is the first time the state-of-the-art HVDC cable technology of Japan will be adopted in such an important European infrastructure project. Our long term experience of similar projects will help us to deliver NEMO LINK successfully and on time."

Siemens will be responsible for the turnkey installation of both converter stations delivering 1000 MW with a transmission voltage of 400 kV DC.

Siemens HVDC Plus technology allows efficient transportation of electrical power over large distances and in particular for subsea applications. These state of the art converter stations will convert AC to DC and DC back to AC on the other side of the link. This system is highly controllable and allows power to flow in both directions. The power converters contribute to a high level of stability in the transmission system.

"We are very pleased to be working with NEMO LINK on another HVDC landmark project that will support the integration of the European energy market," said Tim Dawidowsky, CEO of the Transmission Solutions Business Unit at Siemens. "Siemens is a world leader in high-voltage direct current transmission and has installed projects in its HVDC Plus technology with a total capacity of 4.6 Gigawatt worldwide."

The engineering design work and site preparation should begin later this year and it's anticipated that the interconnector will go into commercial operation in 2019.

[1] HVDC for High Voltage Direct Current

Contact for media information only

Share this page

Notes for editors

About NEMO LINK

NEMO LINK is the joint venture between National Grid and Elia, the Belgium Transmission System Operatorto deliver the 1000MW subsea link between the two countries, improving the link between UK and European electricity generation with consumers in the UK and across the continent. It is a joint project between Nemo Link Limited, a subsidiary company of the UK's National Grid Plc, and the Belgian Elia group. The project will give both countries improved reliability and access to electricity and sustainable generation. Information about the project can be found at the website

About Siemens

Siemens AG (Berlin and Munich) is a global technology powerhouse that has stood for engineering excellence, innovation, quality, reliability and internationality for more than 165 years. The company is active in more than 200 countries, focusing on the areas of electrification, automation and digitalization. One of the world's largest producers of energy-efficient, resource-saving technologies, Siemens is No. 1 in offshore wind turbine construction, a leading supplier of combined cycle turbines for power generation, a major provider of power transmission solutions and a pioneer in infrastructure solutions as well as automation, drive and software solutions for industry. The company is also a leading provider of medical imaging equipment – such as computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging systems – and a leader in laboratory diagnostics as well as clinical IT. In fiscal 2014, which ended on September 30, 2014, Siemens generated revenue from continuing operations of €71.9 billion and net income of €5.5 billion. At the end of September 2014, the company had around 343,000 employees worldwide on a continuing basis. Further information is available on the Internet at www.siemens.com.

About J-Power systems

J-Power Systems Corporation, a subsidiary of Sumitomo Electric Industries, Ltd., is a Japan based cable manufacturer specialized in high voltage power cables and systems, established in 2001. Sumitomo Electric Industries, Ltd. produces a wide range of products from Power Cables, optical fiber/cables and components for electronic devices and automotive parts. Through effective R&D and business diversification, since its establishment in 1897, Sumitomo Electric has become one of the world's leading companies in wire and cable industry. The company operates in more than 40 countries, employing 240,000 people. Sumitomo Electric reported group net sales of $25.7 billion(*) for the fiscal year ended March 2015. For more information, visit http://global-sei.com
(*)Average exchange rate between US$ and JPY during FY2014 has been applied as conversion rate(JPY109.76/US$).

Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news
National Grid undertakes no obligation to update any of the information contained in this release, which speaks only as at the date of this release, unless required by law or regulation.