

Press release

Location, date Laufenburg, 13th November 2017

Pages 1 / 2

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Timely grid renovation and expansion jeopardized

The grid renovation that is necessary for Switzerland's security of supply is progressing very sluggishly. The «Electricity Grid Strategy» is to contribute to optimising and accelerating the permitting procedure. Differences between the National Council and the Council of States on topics that are not related to the permitting procedure, are currently jeopardizing the entire proposed legislation, however.

Swissgrid is responsible for the secure operation of the Swiss transmission grid. In order to be able to overcome the current and future challenges, it is urgent that the transmission grid be renovated and expanded. The approval procedure necessary for this should be optimised and accelerated through the «Electricity Grid Strategy». The entire proposal is currently endangered by differences between the National Council and the Council of States on metering and pricing, i.e. on issues that are not related to the important provisions in the proposal for optimising the procedures. This puts at risk the timely conversion and expansion of the transmission grid.

The «Electricity Grid Strategy» creates a new legal framework for grid development

Besides optimising the procedure, the «Electricity Grid Strategy» also clarifies roles and responsibilities, which leads to more legal certainty. Additional topics important for Swissgrid are the national significance of the transmission grid as well as transparent communication and early integration of the affected parties, authorities and associations. In addition, the sectoral plan will be upgraded: the technology decision (overhead lines or underground cabling) as part of the sectoral plan will result in more investment and planning security.

All these improvements make it possible for Swissgrid to fulfil its legal mandate and to realise the necessary renovation and expansion of the Swiss grid infrastructure.

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Expanding the grid is a prerequisite for the energy transition

If the in-itself-undisputed «Electricity Grid Strategy» were to fail due to unrelated elements, the renovation and timely modernisation of the transmission grid would be in question. Swissgrid regrets this development very much. The Energy Strategy 2050 approved this spring by the electorate can only be realised if the grid expansions necessary for this are undertaken in a timely manner.

For further information write media@swissgrid.ch or call +41 58 580 31 00.

Powering the future – Swissgrid is the national grid company. As the owner of Switzerland's extra-high-voltage grid, it is responsible for the safe operation of the grid without discrimination, and for maintaining, modernising and expanding the grid efficiently and with respect for the environment. Swissgrid employs over 450 highly qualified people from 24 countries at its sites in Frick, Laufenburg, Uznach, Landquart, Ostermundigen, Prilly and Castione. As a member of the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E), it is also responsible for grid planning, system management and market design in the cross-border exchange of electricity in Europe. Several Swiss electricity companies hold the majority of Swissgrid's share capital.