



EirGrid Response to the Energy Research Strategy

Introduction

EirGrid welcomes the publishing of an Energy Research Strategy for Ireland prepared by the Irish Energy Research Council and is pleased to have an opportunity to comment on the proposals and to participate in the consultation meeting.

EirGrid has supported research and development in the power system area for many years and was the inaugural funder of the Electricity Research Centre at University College Dublin (UCD ERC). EirGrid is represented on the Board of the UCD ERC and also on the ESRI Energy Research Policy Steering Committee.

There are many challenges in the energy sector with the need to address climate change and reduce energy related greenhouse gas emissions. A strong Energy R&D sector has an important role to play in meeting these challenges.

Research on Grid / Infrastructure

EirGrid welcomes the fact that the Grid / Infrastructure is included as one of the major areas of research activity the strategy supports (reference Section 8). This recognises the significant activity and investment that has been carried out in related research to date, the capacity that has been built up and the criticality of the grid in facilitating achievement of the renewable energy targets in Ireland. EirGrid is currently working on a Grid Development Strategy which is considering the infrastructure required in circa 2025 to accommodate predicted demand and an increase in renewable generation commensurate with government targets.

EirGrid notes that one of the proposed strategic actions for this element of the strategy is for SEI to develop and administer a programme of applied RD&D on this area of research. In doing this we believe that it is essential that the programme is drawn up in conjunction with the Transmission System Operator and the Distribution System Operator. This will help reduce the risk of duplication with other research being carried out and facilitate focus on the appropriate and relevant topics.

Implementation and Coordination

EirGrid considers that the on-going management of the implementation of the strategy is crucial and supports the Council's recognition of this fact. There is a cross-sectoral element to energy-related RD&D which spans academic lines, government departments and agencies and energy companies.



Maximising the opportunity and benefit of the proposed Energy Research Strategy for Ireland will be critically dependent on the strong co-ordination and effective dialogue of the different areas which can impact on the achievement of Ireland's goals and targets.

In the strategy it is noted that there is a need for close contact between the energy research community and the energy related business sector. The Council would like to see continuous and effective dialogue between industry, the energy research communities and the agencies involved. EirGrid supports this approach and will be pleased to participate.

EirGrid also welcomes that the strategy recognises the need for strong linkage and co-ordination at the EU and international level and also on the island of Ireland.

Conclusion

EirGrid welcomes the publishing of a comprehensive Energy Research Strategy for Ireland. We support the thrust of the strategy and believe that on-going management of implementation and co-ordination across sectors is crucial to the successful delivery of the strategy. We will be pleased to participate further in the consultation meeting and contribute to the further development and refinement of the implementation approaches and structures and policy development.