

News Release

EIRGRID'S UPGRADE TO NATIONAL GRID TO CREATE UP TO 300 JOBS OVER FIVE YEARS

- Grid25 programme to create and sustain jobs in engineering, project management, construction and other areas

Thursday, 22 April, 2010 – Grid25, EirGrid's strategy for Ireland's future electricity transmission network, is to create up to 300 additional jobs over the next five years, EirGrid Chairperson Bernie Gray said today at the launch of the company's Annual Report.

She said this underlined the crucial nature of EirGrid's work on infrastructure which would support high quality power supplies in all regions, facilitate renewable energy, and enable high tech industries to be attracted and retained.

The EirGrid 2009 Annual Report launched today detailed a number of significant milestones during the year, said EirGrid Chief Executive Dermot Byrne, including:

- The lodging of a planning application with An Bord Pleanála for the Meath-Tyrone 400kV Interconnection Development
- The commencement of offers to connect 3,900MW of new generation, mainly wind farms, under the Gate 3 offer process
- The granting of planning for the East-West Interconnector that will link Ireland's transmission system with that of Wales and signing of the construction contract for the project.
- In Sligo the Srananagh 220/110kV substation was added to the network.
- Acquisition of System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI).

The Annual Report shows that the company's operating profit for the year to September 2009 was €9.4 million, compared to €8.6 million for the nine months to September 2008. Revenue for the year to September 2009 was €410.7 million, compared to €282.7 million for the nine months to September 2008. The increase in revenue was largely due to the acquisition of System Operator Northern Ireland (SONI).

The Chairperson, Ms Gray, said that Grid25 will ensure that each region has access to reliable and high quality power supplies. It will facilitate access to Ireland's abundant renewable energy resources, and will provide major benefits for security of supply and sustainability.

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It will involve doubling the capacity of the national bulk transmission grid by 2025. This will be achieved through a combination of upgrading the existing network and the construction of new transmission infrastructure.

Among the jobs which will be created in the next five years as a result of the Grid25 project:

- **Approximately 30 jobs in EirGrid in the areas of engineering, project management, planning, design and other specialist areas, with recruitment beginning this year.**
- **Employment in building power lines and substations around Ireland which is expected to ramp up over the five year period to an additional 200 jobs.**
- **A minimum of 50 additional jobs in the professional services sector, such as outsourced specialist skills supporting Grid25, in the first two years.**

In addition to this, potential also exists for thousands of jobs that can be created through the successful implementation of Grid25, which will create a platform for economic growth.

“Through enabling high quality bulk transportation of power the Grid25 project will provide support for sectors such as renewable energy, the pharmaceutical industry and IT, which require strong transmission of electricity, therefore delivering many more indirect jobs,” commented Ms Gray.

It was likely, she said, for a significant proportion of construction jobs during Grid25 projects to be won by local people and contractor businesses, as it will be the best practical solution for construction work.

Table below: Key Financial Highlights (€'m) from EirGrid plc Annual Report

	Year to 30 Sep 2009	9 months to 30 Sep 2008
Revenue	410.7	282.7
Direct costs	330.7	227.2
Other operating costs	70.6	46.9
Operating profit	9.4	8.6

Ends

Editor's note: EirGrid plc is a leading energy company committed to delivering high quality services in Ireland and Northern Ireland. The Group includes the EirGrid Transmission System Operator (TSO) business in Ireland; System Operator Northern Ireland (SONI), the licenced TSO in Northern Ireland; and the Single Electricity Market Operator (SEMO) which operates the Single Electricity Market on the island of Ireland.

For general information about careers at EirGrid please refer to the website at www.eirgrid.com/aboutus/careers/