

Press release

Location, date Laufenburg, 15 December 2017

Pages 1 / 2

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Green light for faster electricity grid expansion

Today, Parliament voted in favour of the «Electricity Grid Strategy». This bill will contribute to optimizing and speeding up the approval processes for grid renovation. Swissgrid welcomes the decision of Parliament, which is an important step in increasing the security of supply in Switzerland.

The Swiss electorate voted in favour of the energy reform in the spring of 2017. In order for this to succeed, the electricity grid will also have to be modernized. However, the progress made in renovating and expanding the transmission grid has been slow to date due to the lengthy approval procedures.

Today, Parliament voted in favour of the «Electricity Grid Strategy». Swissgrid greatly welcomes this decision. The «Electricity Grid Strategy» will optimize and speed up the approval procedures. The bill thus creates an important legal basis for the timely modernization of the transmission grid.

In addition to optimizing the procedures, the «Electricity Grid Strategy» also clarifies the responsibilities and roles in grid planning. This will lead to greater legal security.

In future, Swissgrid will contact the affected parties, authorities and associations even earlier than before. This will make communication more transparent. The sectoral plan will be upgraded as a result of Parliament's consent to the «Electricity Grid Strategy»: The decision regarding technology (overhead lines or underground cables) is already part of this process. This will lead to greater investment and planning security.

These improvements will have a positive impact on the security of supply in Switzerland. They will make a significant contribution to the timely implementation of the necessary renovation and expansion of the grid infrastructure.

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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.