

Media release
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Extra-high-voltage line in Balzers

Continued operation is intended to ensure a stable and reliable supply of electricity in Liechtenstein and Switzerland

The vast majority of landowners in the Liechtenstein municipality of Balzers have decided not to renew the easement contracts for the Rüthi–Bonaduz extra-high-voltage line, which expire in August 2021. Swissgrid has therefore submitted an application for expropriation to the government of the Principality of Liechtenstein. The aim is to ensure the continued stable and reliable supply of electricity in the Swiss control area, which also includes Liechtenstein.

Since December 2020, Swissgrid has been asking the landowners on Liechtenstein territory to extend the easement contracts, which expire in August 2021, and has even contacted them personally. Securing the easements for the current line is necessary, regardless of the question of a possible relocation of the route in the municipality of Balzers.

Swissgrid has emphasized the vital importance of the Rüthi–Bonaduz line for the stable and reliable supply of electricity to the Principality of Liechtenstein and eastern Switzerland. The line transports energy from the Grisons hydropower plants to the Rüthi substation. Together with the Sarelli and Montlingen substations and the Eschen switching substation, this feeds the distribution grid of Liechtensteinische Kraftwerke (LKW) and thus ensures a secure electricity supply for the population and economy of Liechtenstein.

Swissgrid also guarantees Liechtenstein's security of supply

Swissgrid is responsible for the secure and efficient operation of the transmission grid in the Swiss control area. A control area is a geographically defined network of electricity grids at the highest voltage level, the operation of which is the responsibility of one specific transmission system operator. The Principality of Liechtenstein, which has always been closely connected to the Swiss transmission grid, is part of the Swiss control area.

With its services to the Swiss control area, Swissgrid ensures that exactly as much electricity as is needed flows through the grid in Liechtenstein at every second of the day and night. This includes the provision and billing of balance energy, auctions for line capacities at the northern Swiss–Liechtenstein border in order to avoid grid overloads or shortages, as well as frequency and voltage support in the grid.

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Swissgrid has submitted an application for expropriation

Since the vast majority of the landowners affected by the current line, including those in the municipality of Balzers and members of the Bürgergenossenschaft Balzers (Balzers Citizens' Cooperative), have rejected an extension of the easement agreements, Swissgrid has submitted an application for expropriation to the government of the Principality of Liechtenstein in accordance with Liechtenstein law.

Regardless of the application for expropriation, which is necessary for the continued operation of the current line, discussions on the options for a relocation of the line in Balzers are still ongoing. Swissgrid is confident that it will succeed in finding a solution that is viable for all parties involved.

More information: media@swissgrid.ch or call +41 58 580 31 00.

Powering the future

Swissgrid is the national grid company. As the owner, it is responsible for operating the grid safely and without discrimination and for maintaining, modernising and expanding the Swiss extra-high-voltage grid efficiently and with respect for the environment. Swissgrid has around 600 skilled employees from 22 countries at its sites in Aarau, Prilly, Castione, Landquart, Laufenburg, Ostermundigen and Uznach. 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 European exchange of electricity. The majority of Swissgrid's share capital is jointly held by various Swiss electricity companies.