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CRE supports the generalisation of Linky Meters

Based on the results of an experiment conducted over a year by ERDF on over 250,000 customers, the CRE proposes to generalise the advanced electricity meter called Linky.

In its deliberations, the CRE drew attention to the following points:

Advanced electricity meters need to be developed to continue to ensure power network stability. In particular, TSOs must cope with the development of renewable energy sources which are intermittent and decentralised sources of electricity production that render electricity demand and supply balancing harder. The Linky meter which will allow much closer real-time tracking is an essential element in the development of smart electricity grids.

Generalising the Linky meter would benefit consumers. It would contribute to maintaining electricity network stability. Above all it would improve service quality, particularly for low voltage service through generalising remote meter reading, invoicing consumers using actual and not estimated data, encouraging the multiplication of supplier price offers to meet individual requirements. Generalising the Linky meter would help control demand during peak periods.

The technological and economic analysis suggests that generalising the Linky meter would be broadly neutral financially-speaking. The project's net present value for the distributor would be slightly positive, depending on the underlying assumptions. It has been estimated at about 0.1 billion Euros 2010 for an initial investment of nearly 4 billion Euros 2010 through future savings in operating costs following the meter's installation. An early decision to generalise the Linky meter would be very favourable to the French industry. Among developed countries, France currently has a competitive advantage with regard to smart meters.

The experiment by the TOS, ERDF is unparalleled in its scope and wealth of information collected abroad. An early decision to generalise the Linky meter in France would also favour the adoption of French standards abroad.

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The Linky meter must be deployed using "G1 PLC" technology. This technology is mature, robust, already used by ERDF, and sufficient to implement Linky meter features. Due to industrial issues, the CRE nevertheless stressed the importance of announcing at the start of deployment that "G3-PLC" technology currently in development phase would ultimately be the target technology. "PLC G3" technology will provide significant improvements for electricity network operators without including any additional features for the consumer.

Founded on 24 March 2000, the French Energy Regulatory Commission (CRE) is an independent administrative body. CRE works to guarantee smooth and efficient operation of the electricity and natural gas markets for the benefit of the end-user. It also works to guarantee the absence of discriminatory practices, cross-subsidies or restrictions on competition.

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