

PRESS RELEASE

European Energy Regulators investigate blackout in Europe

- Energy Regulators launched an inquiry at a European level on Saturday's blackout
- Energy Regulators will provide advice on specific actions for consideration by the European Commission in their Strategic Review
- Regulators already warned the Commission of regulatory gaps.

Top of the agenda for the European Energy Regulators when they met today in Brussels was the blackout on Saturday 4th November which left over ten million customers across Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain without electricity power.

The Council of European Energy Regulators (CEER) agreed today to undertake an urgent inquiry at a European level on the blackout, to provide preliminary advice before the end of the year, and a final report not later than February 2007 on remedies to avoid such events in the future. Yesterday, the European Commission (in its press release) turned to the independent energy regulators "to meet as soon as possible to provide a report to the Commission on the lessons to be learned from this event".

The CEER will advise the European Commission on what specific actions should be considered in their Strategic Review foreseen in January and what measures need to be taken in the third package of energy legislation next year.

Commenting on the blackout, CEER President, Sir John Mogg, stated "this recent blackout demonstrates the need, now more than ever, for an integrated European electricity grid subject to proper regulatory oversight. We need new legislation that formally mandates the Transmission System Operators (TSOs) to co-operate across borders and we must have effective unbundling that would facilitate proper exchange of information".

There is a critical gap in the regulatory framework which urgently needs to be filled. TSOs do not have a broad European policy to infrastructure development and to dealing with blackouts, and do not adequately exchange information.

CEER has already highlighted in its comments on the European Commission's Energy Green Paper that the regulatory framework to ensure full co-operation between TSOs is inadequate and has recommended that new legislation be put in place which would impose European obligations on network companies to co-operate and in turn that there be effective independent regulators to oversee the fulfilment of those obligations.

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Notes to Editors:

1. The Council of European Energy Regulators (CEER) is the European association of independent national energy regulators from the Member States of the European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA). Its overall aim is to facilitate the creation of a single competitive, efficient and sustainable internal market for gas and electricity in Europe. CEER website address: www.ceer-eu.org.
2. In parallel investigations into the blackout are already underway at a national level by energy regulators. National regulators impacted by the blackout requested the CEER to undertake an inquiry at the European level. This inquiry is headed up by Mrs. Asta Sihvonon-Punkka, the CEER Vice President.
3. The European Commission's Strategic Review, expected in January 2007, is their follow up to their March 2006 Green Paper on a European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy.
4. See the CEER Comments on the Green Paper (C06-SEM-18-03) on the CEER [website](#).

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