

Press Release

SONI Awards Power Contract to The AES Corporation

Issued Wednesday 5th November 2014. The System Operator Northern Ireland (SONI) has awarded a contract to The AES Corporation to provide additional electricity generation capacity in order to meet a projected shortfall over the coming years.

AES was awarded the three-year contract following a competitive tendering process. Under the agreement AES will provide an extra 250 megawatts (MW) of capacity, enough electricity to power 160,000 homes across Northern Ireland.

In January 2013, SONI estimated that that from January 2016 the margin of spare generating capacity in Northern Ireland would reduce from 600MW to 200MW, due to a number of factors. These include the withdrawal of 510MW capacity at Ballylumford station, cable replacement work on the Moyle interconnector and some restrictions on generation at Kilroot station, as a result of the European Union Emissions Directive.

The Utility Regulator, along with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, examined a number of options to address the situation and concluded that SONI should secure additional generation capacity.

SONI General Manager Robin McCormick said “We welcome today’s agreement to award a contract to AES and we look forward to working with AES over the next three years. Meanwhile, we will continue work to advance the construction of the North-South interconnector, which will provide a longer-term security of supply solution for Northern Ireland.”

Carla Tully, President of AES UK and Ireland, said “We welcome the opportunity to work with SONI over the next three years to further secure electricity supply in Northern Ireland.”

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About SONI

SONI is responsible for the safe, secure, efficient and reliable operation of the high-voltage electricity system in Northern Ireland.

SONI is the licensed independent electricity Transmission System Operator and, in conjunction with EirGrid is the Market Operator of the Single Electricity Market.