

Energy Regulatory Office

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Conference organised by the President of URE looks at smart grids

Smart grids are an area where business activity can develop and an opportunity for new market players, and so for a development of competition on the energy market - said the President of URE, host of the "Smart grid - market, consumer and the sustainable development principle" conference.

Mr Marek Woszczyk, the President of URE emphasised that smart grid is not the same as smart metering. It is a tool to manage risks related to the continuity of energy supply, therefore, this tool is important in terms of energy security. In this way, he directed the attention to the integration function of the smart technology, combining power industry with information and communications networks, which enables the customer to become an active market participant.

Panel participants have unanimously acknowledged that implementation of smart grids in the power sector is necessary because of e.g. constant changes on the market. At the same time, they stressed the fact that the educational aspect should be taken into account during the smart grids implementation process.

Professor Tadeusz Skoczkowski claimed that public awareness is the most important condition for implementation of the smart grid technology. Professor Waldemar Skomudek expressed the same opinion and pointed out the necessity to promote smart grids to convince the customers about real benefits resulting from the innovative solutions in the energy system. Moreover, President Woszczyk noted that *the possibility of the smart grid project implementation is equal to the customers' awareness of the benefits it brings and their willingness to use it.*

On the other hand, Mr Henryk Majchrzak, PhD (Eng), President of the Management Board of PSE Operator S.A. claimed that the most important condition for the smart grid implementation is to formulate legal regulations that would systematize the process of

smart grid implementation and functioning, and popularize the smart grid equipment among customers. Mr Rafał Czyżewski, President of the Management Board of Energa Operator S.A. said that the process of smart grid implementation should start with widespread installation of smart meters, which would constitute a basis for creating a smart region. During the conference Mr Czyżewski also presented “SmartPeninsula” pilot project that is carried out in the Hel Peninsula.

Mr Zbigniew Szpak, President of Polish National Energy Conservation Agency (KAPE), stressed the point that despite the fact there are sceptics and enthusiasts of implementing smart grid solutions, some actions aimed at increasing energy security must be undertaken. To this end, he suggested using financial support mechanisms such as white certificates.

The conference focused also on the existing and new regulations on the energy market. In the video message broadcasted during the conference Mr Bogusław Sonik, MEP, presented a brief summary of the energy efficiency directive adopted on 11 September 2012 in Strasbourg.

In Mr Sonik’s opinion the new directive, which includes a requirement to lower energy consumption, will motivate Member States to seek for new energy sources and use available resources more efficiently.

On invitation of the President of URE, the conference was attended by guests from Sweden. Ms Karin Widegren, Director at the Swedish Coordination Council for Smart Grid, discussed the role of the Swedish regulator in the process of smart grid implementation. Mr Mats Hakonsson and Mr Jonas Person from Mälarenergi shared their experience of using smart grid technology and the ways to engage customers in the energy market.

The participants of panel discussion, Mr Jan Rączka, President of the National Fund of Environmental Protection and Water Management (NFEP&WM), Mr Marek Woszczyk, President of URE, professor Tadeusz Skoczkowski, professor Waldemar Skomudek and Mr Andrzej Kaczmarek, Director of the IT Department at Inspector General for the Protection of Personal Data (GIODO) discussed e.g. issues related to measurement data security and barriers to implementation of the smart grid system. At the end of the discussion, Mr Rączka, who described smart grids as an ally in energy saving, informed about the possibility of financing smart grid-related projects by the National Fund of Environmental Protection and Water Management, e.g. from Inteligentne Sieci Energetyczne (ISE) (*the Smart Grid*) Priority Programme and government programme GEKON - Ecological Concepts Generator.

250 guests - scientists, industry and administration representatives - attended the “Smart grid - market, consumer and the sustainable development principle” conference which took place on 18 September in Zielna conference centre in Warsaw, while approx. 2,000 Internet users watched it live. The meeting’s objective was to share views on and experience in

smart grid implementation and discuss the role of the regulator and specific electricity market participants in this process.

The conference was a part of the “Information and educational campaign to promote effective and economical use of energy with benefits for natural environment and household budgets” financed by the National Fund of Environmental Protection and Water Management.

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