

Press Release

14 July 2009

More opportunities for Belgium/UK gas flow through the Interconnector

Since 1 July 2009, Interconnector UK and Fluxys shippers have been able to use a wider variety of natural gas from their portfolios for flows between Belgium and the UK. This improvement is the result of Interconnector UK and Fluxys having adjusted the lower limit for the Wobbe Index of natural gas to be delivered at the Interconnector Zeebrugge Terminal (IZT).

The adjustment alleviates one of the bottlenecks for shippers to transit natural gas from entry points in the East of Belgium to the UK via the Interconnector. It also enhances the arbitrage opportunities between the Zeebrugge Hub and the NBP.

Interconnector UK and Fluxys have adjusted the lower limit for the Wobbe Index at the Interconnector Zeebrugge Terminal (IZT) from 14.13 kWh/m³ (50.9 MJ/Nm³) to 13.82 kWh/m³ (49.8 MJ/Nm³). This brings the lower limit in line with the lower UK specification of 47.2 MJ/Sm³ as set out in the Gas Safety Regulations 1996.

With respect to the higher limit for the Wobbe Index, the value allowable in the UK is significantly lower than the value allowable in continental Europe. This disparity potentially limits gas flows to the UK. Fluxys and Interconnector UK, in conjunction with the wider industry are seeking to address this issue.

The Wobbe Index is one of the natural gas parameters for which shippers need to ensure compliance with specific requirements at interconnection points. It characterizes combustion, energy flow through a burner nozzle and flame stability.

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Fluxys

Fluxys is the independent operator of the natural gas transport, transit and storage infrastructure in Belgium. Through its subsidiaries Fluxys LNG and Huberator, the company also operates the liquefied natural gas terminal in Zeebrugge and the Zeebrugge Hub, one of the leading short-term natural gas markets in Europe. Thanks to its first-mover approach, Fluxys has developed its infrastructure into a central crossroads for international gas flows in Western Europe. The Zeebrugge area plays a key role in this crossroads function. The Zeebrugge area has a throughput capacity of some 48 billion cubic metres of natural gas per year, approximately 10% of the border capacity needed for Europe's natural gas supply.

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Interconnector (UK)

Interconnector (UK) Limited ("IUK") operates a sub-sea pipeline and terminal facilities connecting the UK and continental Europe. The company's 40" diameter carbon steel pipeline stretches 230 kilometres between Bacton in north Norfolk and Zeebrugge in Belgium. It is capable of transporting 20 billion cubic metres per year (bcm/yr) from Bacton to Zeebrugge and 25.5 bcm/yr in the opposite direction.

Owned by 7 major companies, IUK has sold capacity in the pipeline to gas shippers. A dedicated and award winning IT system, ISIS, manages the nominations and flows and provides constantly updated information to IUK and its customers.

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