

La Défense, November 4<sup>th</sup> 2010**Analysis of the winter period 2010-2011:  
the security of the power supply should be maintained**

**RTE is today publishing its analysis of the electricity supply-demand balance for the winter period 2010-2011. For temperatures close to seasonal norms, the forecast outlook for the electricity supply to mainland France should be broadly more favourable than last winter, through to January 2011. RTE believes the risk of an interruption in supply to be moderate throughout the winter period. Imports could become necessary between the end of November 2010 and the end of January 2011, to meet the demand for electricity and comply with security criteria. To do this, suppliers would have to look to the European markets, in addition to invoking demand response (load reduction) agreements with their customers. In the event of a sustained spell of intense cold weather, the import levels required should remain compatible with the technical limits of the French power network.**

Every year, RTE conducts a prospective study of the balance between supply and demand for electricity for the coming winter period, covering the whole of mainland France. This time of the year generally sees high levels of electricity demand as temperatures fall.

The study is used to identify periods where the supply-demand balance comes under strain; it explores the measures that can be taken by electricity market players and RTE to avoid any interruption in supply during peak consumption periods in France.

For the winter period 2010-2011, the study is based on demand forecasts that are relatively stable compared with last winter, with demand expected to peak at 85,700 MW during the first week of January, assuming temperatures are in line with seasonal norms.

Based on information provided by the generators in September 2010, the availability of the French generating fleet over the coming winter period is expected to be significantly higher than last winter during the months from November to January.

However, from February and until March, new generation units coming on stream will be insufficient to compensate for the scheduled shutdowns of some existing power plants for maintenance reasons. The overall availability of generating facilities is therefore expected to be lower during this period than last winter.

For temperatures close to seasonal norms, imports could be required between the end of November and the end of January, to cover French electricity demand and satisfy the technical security criterion stipulated by RTE. To do this, suppliers would have to look to the European markets, in addition to invoking demand response (load reduction) agreements with their customers.

The estimated level of imports could reach up to 3,500 MW during the month of December.

From February, although down compared with last winter due to the lower availability of the French generating fleet, the country's balance of exchanges should remain positive (i.e. France should remain a net exporter).

In the event of an intense and sustained cold snap, forecast reserves will fall, as electricity demand is particularly sensitive to changes in outside temperatures. Higher imports could be needed to satisfy electricity demand in France.

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If temperatures remain 8°C lower than seasonal norms for a sustained period, these imports would remain within the acceptable forecast limit for the French system.

In such circumstances, French market suppliers could invoke additional demand response clauses in their contracts with their own customers, or obtain supplies on the European market using the interconnection capacities made available by RTE.

Any additional reduction in the availability of the French generating fleet would reduce forecast margins and raise the risk of an interruption in the electricity supply in the event of a cold snap.

In winter, the daily peaks usually occur at around 7pm. All other things being equal, the rise in the demand peak acts to reduce the power system's operating security margins.

Consequently, actions taken by individuals to manage or reduce electricity use during peak periods can help to improve the country's security of supply.

In order to manage electricity demand efficiently, including instantaneous demand, RTE encourages consumers to actively adopt regular habits, such as switching off lights in unoccupied rooms, switching off electronic equipment in stand-by mode, using electric heating and household appliances wisely, and so on.

RTE also continues to monitor closely the structural weakness in the electricity supply to the Brittany and Provence-Alps-Côte d'Azur regions. These two geographic zones consume more electricity than they generate, and both are electric "peninsulas", supplied by the national power network. In partnership with the State and regional stakeholders, RTE is focusing efforts to develop the network, accommodate new local generating facilities and promote demand side management measures.

For the coming winter, RTE has continued with measures designed to strengthen the network in Brittany and PACA. Alongside these measures, RTE is forging ahead with its Ecowatt eco-awareness initiative, which aims to encourage people living in Brittany and the Côte d'Azur to moderate their electricity use during peak periods in winter. Appeals to reduce electricity consumption will be launched from the Ecowatt Brittany and Ecowatt Côte d'Azur information websites. These appeals will be based on day-ahead forecasts for the status of the power network in these two regions, and will include two alert levels (orange and red).

View the analysis of the supply-demand balance for the winter period 2010-2011.

[http://www.rte-france.com/lienrapide/20101103\\_hiver2010.php](http://www.rte-france.com/lienrapide/20101103_hiver2010.php)

*RTE is the French electricity transmission system operator. A public service company, its mission is to operate, maintain and develop the high- and extra-high voltage network. It guarantees the reliability and proper operation of the power network. RTE transports electricity between electricity suppliers (French and European) and consumers, whether they are electricity distributors (ERDF and the local distribution companies) or industrial sites directly connected to the transmission system. With 100,000 km of lines between 63,000 and 400,000 volts and 45 cross-border lines, the network operated by RTE is the biggest in Europe. In 2009, RTE posted turnover of €4,130m and currently employs around 8,500 staff.*

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