

Joint Press Release

Ratingen, 12 November 2010

Thyssengas to join NetConnect Germany market area cooperation

Thyssengas GmbH is planning to shortly join the NetConnect Germany market area cooperation. An agreement to that effect has been signed by Thyssengas and the NetConnect Germany partners - *bayernets* GmbH, GRTgaz Deutschland GmbH and Open Grid Europe GmbH.

The gas transmission system operators aim to incorporate the Thyssengas H-gas, Thyssengas L-gas and Open Grid Europe L-gas market areas into the market area cooperation. This step paves the way for meeting the requirements of the new Gas Network Access Code, which envisages a reduction in the number of market areas to three by 2011.

Open Grid Europe, bayernets and GRTgaz Deutschland, three leading companies on the German gas transmission market, are already partners in NetConnect Germany. Through the accession of Thyssengas and the integration of further market areas, NetConnect Germany will gain another competent partner and the German gas market will acquire additional liquidity. The high-pressure pipeline system in Germany's largest market area would then have an overall length of approx. 20,000 km and integrate over 500 (downstream) gas networks. Apart from the aforementioned companies, ENI Transport Deutschland S.p.A. and GVS Netz GmbH form part of the market area cooperation through service ties.

NCG's business areas include balancing group management, procurement and billing of balancing and control energy as well as provision and operation of the NCG virtual trading point including a market area information platform on behalf of the cooperation partners.

Accession by Thyssengas to NetConnect Germany is still subject to approval by the antitrust authorities.

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