

CCBS – LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

28 September 2018 – 5 October 2018



Northern Ireland
Assembly

The Northern Ireland Assembly was dissolved at 00:01 on Thursday 26 January 2017.



Tuesday 2 October 2018

Department of Health

Lisa Chambers asked the Minister for Health if the stockpiling of medicines has commenced in preparation for a no-deal Brexit; if not, when he plans to commence same; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Simon Harris: The Department of Health and its agencies, including the [HSE](#) and the Health Products Regulatory Authority, are engaging in intensive Brexit preparedness and contingency planning in the area of health. This includes planning for a no-deal Brexit scenario.

Priorities include ensuring continuity in the supply of medicines and medical devices, ensuring access to services, recognition of qualifications, continuation of existing cross border health co-operation and public health arrangements.

It is important to note that all Member States will potentially face issues regarding the supply of medicines after Brexit. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the European Commission are providing guidance to help pharmaceutical companies prepare for Brexit, and this guidance is based

on the assumption that the UK will become a third country as of 30 March 2019. The HPRA's guidance to pharmaceutical companies and other stakeholders is also based on this assumption.

In addition to working with the relevant agencies, the Department of Health will continue to support the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in its engagements with the European Commission's Article 50 Taskforce and its Brexit Preparedness Group in the ongoing review and discussion of mitigating actions at national and EU level.

Source <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-10-02a.1114&s=cross+border+2018-09-28..2018-10-05#g1116.r>

Tuesday 2 October 2018

Department for Communications, Climate Action and Environment

Brendan Smith asked the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment further to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 50 and 80 of 18 September 2018, if it is the case that EirGrid has not had sight of or been consulted regarding the two independent reports he commissioned in respect of the proposed North-South interconnector; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Denis Naughten: Eirgrid is a commercial State company which holds the licence, from the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities, as transmission system operator (TSO) in Ireland, in accordance with EU and Irish law. CRU issued the licence to Eirgrid under S.14(1)(e) of the Electricity Regulation Act 1999 on 20th June 2001. In this role as transmission system operator, EirGrid, as the national authority, is responsible for the operation, development and maintenance of Ireland's electricity transmission system. Eirgrid's role is to deliver connection, transmission, and market services to generators, suppliers and customers utilising the high voltage electricity system and to put in place the grid infrastructure to support the development of Ireland's Economy. Moreover, EirGrid is statutorily obliged "to explore and develop opportunities for interconnection" as well as developing, operating and maintaining a "safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient electricity transmission system by virtue of Regulation 8 of SI 445 of 2000, the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations, 2000. This SI gave effect to various elements of Directive No 96/92 /EC, and specifically provided for the establishment and designation of the transmission system operator (TSO) and set out its functions. In determining the approach to improving the operation of the All-Island Single Electricity Market, the development of an overhead line, linking sub-stations in Meath and Tyrone, was determined as the best fit, being the economical and the best technical solution. The project has been subject to substantial study and review, with planning permission granted in December 2016.

In relation to the two independent reports dealing with the North-South Interconnector (NSIC) that I commissioned following engagement with members of the Oireachtas and community interests, these were considered by Government this morning and are being published on the website of my Department. One considers the technical feasibility and cost of undergrounding the NSIC, while the second addresses comparative international practice and approaches to compensation of property owners in proximity to high-voltage lines. On the technical feasibility and cost of undergrounding, the

report concludes that from a techno-economic point of view, an Alternating Current Overhead Line is the most beneficial way of meeting the need for enhanced power transfer capability between Ireland and Northern Ireland. On comparative international practice in relation to compensation, that report indicates that Ireland has a comparatively generous compensation regime in place.

The International Expert Commission who conducted the technical study met with a number of bodies, including the CRU and EirGrid, during the course of their work. In their capacities as the national regulator and the transmission system operator, the final reports relating to the North South Interconnector were provided to both EirGrid and the Commission for Regulation of Utilities.

In addition to publishing the reports on the website of my Department, I am forwarding copies of the two Reports to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Communications, Climate Action and Environment.

Source: <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-10-02a.1312&s=all-island+2018-09-28..2018-10-05#g1314.r>