

R/27

27 June 2005

OFGEM PUBLISHES GUIDELINES ON RELEASE OF INFORMATION TO GAS MARKET

- **Ofgem to consider proposals to make more information available on a case-by-case basis**
- **Guidelines provide increased clarity as to how Ofgem's Authority would make decisions on proposals to increase the level of information available to the gas market**

Ofgem today (Monday) published guidelines outlining how it intends to take decisions on proposals to change gas industry rules that attempt to make more information available to the gas market. This could potentially include information about the offshore gas industry.

Ofgem has also confirmed that it will not be making any amendments to the gas transporters licence (including Transco's National Transmission System (NTS)* licence) that could limit the amount of information provided to the market. Therefore any proposals to amend the rules governing the gas industry, by raising a modification to the gas network code to release more information, will be considered by Ofgem on a case-by-case basis.

The guidelines will give the industry increased certainty and clarity on Ofgem's decision making process. Together, with new arrangements to allow appeals to the Competition Commission on Ofgem's decisions on modifications to the gas network code, the guidelines will also add further accountability and transparency to Ofgem's decision making process.

Ofgem Chief Executive, Alistair Buchanan, said: "Accurate and timely information is essential for all markets to work efficiently. Much importance is attached to the release of this information by gas customers, while producers understandably have concerns regarding commercial confidentiality. Ofgem has set down a clear framework which will allow it to balance these conflicting views on a case-by-case basis."

*The NTS is the high pressure pipeline network which transports gas around the country. The gas is then distributed to homes and businesses through the lower pressure distribution networks.

ends

Notes to editors

1. Ofgem's February document Offshore gas production information disclosure, Initial consultation and draft impact assessment (19/05) sought views on three options for an enduring regulatory framework regarding information release under the gas transporters licence. The guidance notes issued today by Ofgem were noted as a key part of Option One of the February consultation and will provide increased clarity in respect of the Authority's decision making process regarding modifications to release information to the gas market. As noted in the February consultation, this decision also removes with immediate effect the temporary informal derogation that relates to Standard Special Condition A7 of Transco NTS's Gas Transporters licence.

2. Ofgem's governing Authority is due to consider a modification to the industry's governing network code, raised by energywatch, to allow the publication of real-time data from offshore gas sub-terminals later this summer (Uniform Network Code Modification Proposal 006). The information flows covered by this proposal do not relate to the temporary informal derogation in respect of Transco NTS's GT licence.

3. Copies of: *Information release under Gas Transporters Licence Standard Special Condition A7, Guidance Document*, (153/05) and *Offshore gas production information disclosure: Decision letter* (154/05), are available on the Ofgem website at www.ofgem.gov.uk. Hard copies can be obtained from the Ofgem Distribution Centre on 020 7901 7116 or by email at: distribution@ofgem.gov.uk.

4. Ofgem is the Office of the Gas and Electricity Markets, which supports the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority, the regulator of the gas and electricity industries in Great Britain. Ofgem's aim is to bring choice and value to all gas and electricity customers by promoting competition and regulating monopolies. The Authority's powers are provided for under the Gas Act 1986, the Electricity Act 1989 and the Utilities Act 2000.

For further press information contact:

Mark Wiltsher : 020 7901 7006 Chris Lock: 020 7901 7225

Out of hours contact: 07774 72 8971