Luxembourg, 19/05/2016

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: CALVIN SMARTMETER ROLL-OUT

Project Number: 2016-0114

Country: *UK*

Project Description: Framework facility to support the roll-out of portfolios of smart gas and electricity meters for a number of energy suppliers in Great Britain.

EIA required: no

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise[1]: no

(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

Environmental and Social Assessment

The project is a framework facility to support to the roll-out of gas and electricity smart meters for a number of energy suppliers in Great Britain. The project is part of the national Smart Metering Implementation Programme established by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC[2]) involving the replacement of around 53 million gas and electricity meters.

The framework facility comprises the installation of up to 13 million gas and electricity smart meters that will allow remote readings, near real-time consumption information and better management of the electricity distribution network. The project will enable to improve operators' efficiency as well as customer information and awareness and will allow for potential energy savings.

Environmental Assessment

The project is not subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment per Directive 2011/92/EU. The telecommunication system will use the GSM networks (global system for mobile communication) for remote access via the Wide Area Network and open protocols (mainly Zigbee wireless technology) using the 868 MHz and 2,400 MHz harmonised bandwidths for local access via the Home Area Network. The project is in line with the national and EU standards.

The main impacts of the project relate to electromagnetic radiation and to the disposal of the old meters being substituted by this project.

Public Health England (PHE) considers that the evidence to date suggests exposures to radio waves produced by smart meters do not pose a risk to health. A review of health effects from radio waves has been prepared by the Advisory Group on Non-Ionising Radiation (AGNIR) in April 2012[3]. Regarding smart meters, AGNIR considers that "given the low output power of typical devices, it is not expected that people's exposure will exceed the ICNIRP[4] restrictions". Independent assessments will be conducted by PHE and published as smart meters are rolled out.

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[1] Only projects that meet the scope of the Pilot Exercise, as defined in the EIB draft Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: above 100,000 tons CO2e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tons CO2e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

[2] Department of Energy and Climate Change

[3] http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140629102627/http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1317133826368

[4] International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection

Appropriate procedures will be established to streamline the disposal process of the meters managed by the meter asset provider and reduce the environmental impact of the waste disposal.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Various public consultations related to the roll-out of smart meters have been held by DECC[5] and Ofgem[6] since 2008 and consumer organisations have been consulted.

In particular, issues related to data privacy have been addressed and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has been consulted accordingly. In order to ensure data privacy, specific obligations set out in the Smart Energy Code and in the energy suppliers' licences are incumbent upon the operators, in particular the Data Communication Company and the energy suppliers.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The meter asset provider has a well-established internal quality and environmental management system.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The meter asset provider has the experience and the capacity to appropriately manage the project. Whilst the programme is expected to facilitate energy savings, in itself the programme is not expected to have significant impact on CO_2 emissions.

Based on the information available, the project is expected to have minor residual impacts and thus is acceptable in environmental terms for Bank financing.

[5] Department of Energy and Climate Change
[6] Office of Gas and Electricity Markets