



**Response to NIAUR Consultation on
Aligning the Price Control Reviews of Northern
Ireland's Gas Distribution Networks**

08 March 2010

Airtricity welcomes the Authority's proposal to align the price control reviews of the two gas distribution networks (GDNs) in Northern Ireland. As noted, there are numerous benefits to doing so, including attaining economies of scale regarding both the demand on internal resources and the costs of procuring consultancy services, improving the dataset for benchmarking the GDNs and creating sufficient pause within the regulatory process to afford the Authority opportunity to improve the regulatory service.

Regarding the options for achieving the proposed alignment, Airtricity sees the rationale in Option 2, which contributes the additional benefit of alignment with Ofgem's GDPCR and the opportunity to have input from that into NIAUR's GDN price control review process.

While Option 2 involves a delay of two years to PNGL's price control review, which in itself is a significant cause for concern, we are reassured with the "mini price control" which the Authority has suggested and is inclined to implement. **We strongly recommend a very incisive mini price control be included as part of Option 2.** Bearing in mind the recent all encompassing economic changes, it is only safe to assume that some elements used in the determination of the price control will no longer hold true.

For clarifications on this response please contact:
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