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**Minutes of meeting of Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation**

**19 May 2003**

The second meeting of the Authority for Energy Regulation took place on 19 May 2003. The discussions concentrated on the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment consultation paper on a New Energy Strategy for Northern Ireland. The general opinion was that the document did not represent a coherent strategy that would reduce energy costs and improve the environment. In fact it would increase electricity costs as it was proposed that the price of ROCs would be set in GB when, on the evidence available, the NI renewable costs are lower than GB costs.

It was also felt that prices would increase through a proposed load profiling approach to domestic competition introduced prematurely before the necessary conditions for a more competitive market were met and the Authority welcomed the Department’s recognition of this.

Concern was also expressed that the all island market was not being developed as a partnership between NI and ROI as each was driven by different timetables and agendas.

It was agreed that the Authority’s response to the DETI Energy Strategy paper would highlight the following areas of concern :

· High generation costs - options;  
· Energy efficiency - to include non fuel poverty issues;  
· Renewables - non support of Renewable Obligation;  
· All Island Market - how will it help;  
· Natural gas - how to capitalise on it;  
· Energy security.

Other issues which were discussed included the Authority’s Forward Work Plan, the Department of Regional Development consultation paper on Water Reform in NI and staffing issues.

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