* **Board Minutes 20 August 2003**
* **Publish Date** 20th August 2003

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

**20 August 2003**

The fourth meeting of the Authority for Energy Regulation took place on 20 August 2003 and was based at Coolkeeragh Power Station, Londonderry.

Discussion took place in relation to the Authority’s response to the DETI Consultation paper on a New Energy Strategy for NI. In particular discussion centred on a perceived view, especially in the Renewables lobby, that the Authority was against renewables when in fact the Authority had keenly championed renewables and was only opposed to the proposed Northern Ireland Renewable Obligation (NIRO) because it was not a cost effective way of promoting renewables and the extra unnecessary costs could weaken consumer support for renewables.

Emissions Trading was also discussed and members said that they were concerned by the short period of time remaining to ensure NI’s interests were capable of being taken fully into account in DEFRA’s drawing up of a National Allocation Plan for submission to the EC by 31 March 2004.

Discussion also took place in respect of a North South Interface Study which was being undertaken to identify the best means for the NI market to interface with the new market in the ROI. It was concluded that an arrangement should be made for the IME Groups consultants to make a presentation at the Authority’s October meeting.

Discussion then centred on Gas Issues such as the Phoenix Gas Tariffs, the Judicial Review and the Gas Distribution Licences.

Other topics which were discussed included 2004 Market Opening, NI Carbon Bank and Eaga Proposal (it was agreed that EAGA should be invited to explain the proposal in greater depth at a future meeting), Decommissioning of Power Station West, an update on CHP, a Memorandum of Understanding between NIAER and GCCNI, and the Aims and Objectives of the Public Service Agreement.

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