

EirGrid Chief Executive Tells New York Conference of New Wind Energy Record

New York, March 14 - Dermot Byrne, Chief Executive of EirGrid plc, today told a conference of top US executives that Ireland has recently established a new wind energy record, with 1,284 megawatts of wind-generated electricity exported to the national transmission system.

Addressing an audience of Fortune 500 CEOs and representatives from US companies who have invested in Ireland at the *Ireland Day Summit* at the New York Stock Exchange, Mr Byrne said: "This represented nearly one third of all electricity being used in the Republic of Ireland at the time - something that would have been inconceivable 10 years ago."

Mr Byrne said that Ireland has made considerable progress towards meeting its national and European Union renewable energy targets. He added that Ireland had excellent resources in the areas of on-shore wind power, off-shore wind power and of ocean energy, which could provide export potential.

The Irish Government has set a target that 40% of all electricity consumption in the country must be met from renewable sources by 2020, which equates to 37% of energy being produced by wind - the highest such target in Europe.

Over the course of 2011, approximately 15% of the country's electricity demand will be derived from renewable energy. In planning for Ireland to meet its 40% target by 2020, EirGrid has published ground-breaking research on integrating renewable energy.

Mr Byrne told the business leaders and investors that in terms of electricity, Ireland is very definitely open for business. He said the Irish power system delivers reliable, secure power supplies and that EirGrid is implementing "the most far-reaching redevelopment of the electricity transmission system since the foundation of the state" through its Grid25 strategy.

Ends

Note to editors: The new wind energy record was set on Saturday the 12th of February at 6.30pm in the evening.

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