

17 July 2012

## **Press release**

### **Gas logistics in Austria: market area manager launches information drive to highlight changes in balance group management**

**Gas Connect Austria (GCA) is anticipating lively demand for a series of roadshows designed to clarify the changes in the gas market model, and in particular their impact on balance groups. The company, which has assumed the role of manager of the Eastern market area, welcomed over 70 visitors to the opening information event in Vienna.**

The spotlight will be on the changes brought about by the Natural Gas Act 2011 and the Gas Market Model Ordinance 2012. The new model will have implications for all gas market participants. The changeover will culminate in the introduction of a new market model in January 2013.

#### **Domestic gas market logistics: putting market participants in the picture**

A key requirement is the need for all system users to join a balance group or form one of their own by 10 September, 2012. GCA's one-day roadshows will give the other market participants affected by the changes – such as the operator of the virtual trading point, the distribution manager, the balance group coordinator, and representatives of the regulator E-Control – a compact overview of the requirements that balance group representatives are expected to meet.

Gas Connect Austria Managing Director Harald Stindl said: *"In our position as market area manager, we have been quick to take steps designed to enhance coordination. The clock is already ticking for system users."*

To this end the market area manager will be launching a one-stop shop to provide market participants with a wide range of essential information and details of registration procedures. The online platform is scheduled to go live at the end of July, once consultations on the various sets of general terms and conditions have been concluded.

The wide-ranging changes introduced by the new market model include the replacement of cross-border shipments and control areas with market areas. System access will be based on an entry-exit system as opposed to point-to-point shipments, and the balance group regime will be extended to the transmission system level. These and the new system of contractual relationships are just some of the key aspects of the revised framework.

Further information and resources relating to the new market model are available online at [www.gasconnect.at](http://www.gasconnect.at). Alternatively, registrations for an additional roadshow to be held on 7 August can be made by email at [marktgebietsmanager@gasconnect.at](mailto:marktgebietsmanager@gasconnect.at).

## **Background information**

### **Gas Connect Austria GmbH**

Gas Connect Austria is a wholly owned subsidiary of OMV Gas & Power GmbH. Gas Connect (head count approx. 380) is the independent transmission operator (ITO) that runs Austria's 2,000-km high-pressure gas pipeline network, which has a marketed capacity of some 100 billion cubic metres/year. It operates the physical hub in Baumgarten an der March, near the Slovak border, which is the heart of the Austrian gas grid. The Baumgarten hub receives incoming gas supplies, mostly imported from Russia, and dispatches them to domestic distribution networks, and to Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy and Slovenia. As a key link in Europe's interconnected gas grid, Gas Connect plays a crucial part in maintaining supply security for Austria and the EU as a whole. About one-third of all Russian exports to Western Europe are handled by the Baumgarten hub. Austria's gas transportation capacity is steadily being expanded to keep up with growing gas demand.

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