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Press release

Gas Connect Austria appointed as market area manager

On 30 April 2012 Austrian energy regulator E-Control issued a notice appointing Gas Connect Austria as manager of the market area east. For much of the past year Gas Connect Austria has been making extensive preparations to take on the heavy responsibilities that go with this role. As a market area manager Gas Connect Austria will be the nerve centre of network control tasks and will be in charge of infrastructure planning. Its wide-ranging duties will include designing a standardised calculation scheme for transmission system injection and withdrawal capacity in the market area east, managing the balancing groups and balancing energy, coordinating network planning, and running a capacity platform.

Thanks to its long experience as a transmission system operator, Gas Connect Austria (renamed from OMV Gas GmbH at the start of this year) is ideally placed to perform these tasks. "We are confident that we will be able to fulfil this highly responsible remit to the satisfaction of all market participants. Thanks to existing synergies and our broad-based expertise we will be able to come up with efficient and affordable solutions," said Gas Connect Austria managing director Harald Stindl. In exercise of its statutory powers, E-Control has appointed Gas Connect Austria as the market area manager up to mid-2014.

The first steps for Gas Connect Austria in its role will be the preparation of a standard calculation scheme and a co-ordinated network development plan, as well as rolling out implementation of the market rules, and contracting IT support services. The goal of all these activities is a market- and customer-friendly transition to the new market model. Gas Connect Austria will launch a new area on its website entitled "Market area manager". This information and communication platform will keep market participants up to date with the latest developments related to Gas Connect's new responsibilities.

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 101 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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