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ABB selected for a €270 million order for UK-France power link

ABB is awarded the HVDC converter stations for the IFA2 interconnection

ABB has won an order worth approx. €270 million from the UK grid operator National Grid and Réseau de Transport d'Electricité (RTE), the French network owner and operator, to provide key HVDC (high-voltage direct current) technology that will help interconnect the electricity networks of France and the UK.

ABB will participate in the interconnection project, which further integrates the UK and French electricity markets. With a capacity of 1,000 megawatts, the link will run from Chilling, Hampshire, on the southern coast of England to Tourbe in northern France, covering a distance of 240 kilometers across the English Channel.

ABB will provide the two high-voltage direct current HVDC Light® converter stations, to be located in France and England, which will be linked with a subsea cable. Each station converts alternating current into direct current, and then back again before distribution. This enables the efficient and reliable transmission of large amounts of electricity over long distances, with minimum losses – the key advantage of HVDC technology. ABB's HVDC Light technology also incorporates advanced features such as regulating grid fluctuations and power restoration in the event of an outage. These features provide economic benefits for the network operator and reliable electricity supply to the end users.

"This order further strengthens our leading HVDC position and provides momentum to our transformational drive for profitable growth, as a partner of choice for enabling a stronger, smarter and greener grid," said Claudio Facchin, President of ABB's Power Grids division.

The converter stations will be equipped with ABB's advanced MACH™ control and protection system, supporting the company's ABB Ability™ based digital offering. MACH acts like the brain of the HVDC link – monitoring, controlling and protecting the sophisticated technology in the stations, managing thousands of operations to ensure the reliability of power supplies. Incorporating advanced fault registration and remote control functions, it also helps protect the link from unexpected disruptions, such as lightning strikes.

ABB pioneered HVDC technology more than 60 years ago and has been awarded over 110 HVDC projects, representing a total installed capacity of more than 120,000 megawatts, accounting for around half the global installed base. ABB further developed HVDC in the 1990s by introducing a voltage sourced converter (VSC) solution named HVDC Light® and leads the way in this technology as well, having delivered 18 out of 24 VSC HVDC projects commissioned in the world. ABB's HVDC interconnectors are helping more than 15 countries transport reliable power over long distances.

ABB (ABBN: SIX Swiss Ex) is a pioneering technology leader in electrification products, robotics and motion, industrial automation and power grids, serving customers in utilities, industry and transport & infrastructure globally. Continuing more than a 125-year history of innovation, ABB today is writing the future of industrial digitalization and driving the Energy and Fourth Industrial Revolutions. ABB operates in more than 100 countries with about 132,000 employees. www.abb.com

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