

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UK Will Not Meet Zero Carbon Targets Unless Energy Regulation Is Addressed, says Burns & McDonnell

BIRMINGHAM, England — A radical revision of energy regulation is required if the United Kingdom is going to meet its target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050, according to [engineering-construction firm Burns & McDonnell](#).

Speaking while at the [Low Carbon Networks & Innovation \(LCNI\) Conference](#) in Glasgow, [Jonathan Chapman, Managing Director for Burns & McDonnell in the U.K.](#), warned that under current and planned regulation utilities are unable to recover “no regrets” investment in their networks to meet future needs, potentially stifling the innovations needed to chart the path to net zero.

Chapman also identified that for energy storage to help propel the U.K. toward a zero carbon future, regulation must provide adequate rewards that reflect the benefit zero carbon provides networks and energy customers. In an era in which energy storage is a technology resource that helps regulate frequency and provides continued system reliability, Ofgem and BEIS should develop policies that reward new technology appropriately.

Burns & McDonnell, an employee-owned engineering, design and construction firm with 7,000 global employees, has more than 120 years of experience designing and building energy infrastructure. In the U.K., it recently led a study, as part of the [Energy Innovation District](#), which revealed how local, smart energy systems could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 34%.

Speaking while at the LCNI Conference, Chapman said:

“The U.K. is showing unquestioned leadership in striving to become the world’s first major economy to achieve net zero carbon emissions. Reaching this target will require a radical revision of current energy regulation.

“In the zero carbon era, projects to enable transmission and distribution networks to respond will be of a significant scale and complexity, requiring many years to engineer and build. Obliging network operators to wait until demand forces them to act will create needless delays and impediments in critical network developments. These improvements will be vital to support the generational changes we will be seeing. This includes EVs, renewable energy from multiple distributed points on the grid, bidirectional power flows, and further technology advances we cannot envision today.

“We also need to see stronger partnerships among all key players, including Ofgem, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the investment community, power generation developers and network operators. I am very optimistic about the future of the U.K. energy sector and our ability to meet the ambitious target set out before us. But the way forward will require definitive action to ensure we can stimulate, not just try to keep pace with, essential innovations and technological advancements.”

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About Burns & McDonnell

Burns & McDonnell is a private, employee-owned engineering, design and construction firm with 7,000 professionals located in offices throughout the world. We strive to create amazing success for our clients and amazing careers for our employees.

We develop solutions through creating passionate partnerships, placing client service front and centre, understanding clients’ needs and striving to make them successful. Our employee ownership culture means that our success is closely aligned to our clients’ success. We are bold in how we develop solutions and challenge the norm, drawing from the whole company to find answers to some of the toughest questions. We work on some of the world’s most crucial infrastructure projects, delivering completely integrated service from concept to completion.

In 2017, Burns & McDonnell opened the U.K. office in Birmingham. With more than 120 years of experience designing and building infrastructure throughout the world, Burns & McDonnell is now taking forward a long-term investment plan in the U.K.

With the U.K energy market undergoing a transformation, our focus is on providing a differentiated service across technical consultancy, engineering services and project delivery as the U.K. adapts to a low carbon future underpinned by smart technologies. For more information, visit burnsmcd.com.