

Meeting on energy supplies for Crimea

Vladimir Putin held a videoconference meeting on energy supplies for Crimea following the completion of work to build an energy bridge via the Kerch Strait.

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The first section of the energy bridge, built from Krasnodar Territory, began operation on December 2, 2015. The second section started work on December 15, doubling the energy bridge's throughput capacity. The third section was launched on April 14 this year, thus ending the electricity shortage in the region, and the fourth section will bring total energy supply delivered from Russia's unified electricity grid to 800 MW, enough to cover Crimea's power supply demands.

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President of Russia Vladimir Putin: Friends,

Let me congratulate you all on the completion of this energy bridge linking Crimea to the rest of Russia.

The energy bridge across the Kerch Strait was a technically very difficult project and you used the very latest technologies in this work. The work itself proceeded at a truly rapid pace with the result that we have ended the energy blockade of Crimea in a very short time. I have no doubt that we would succeed in breaking through any kind of blockade, should anyone take it into their heads to test us.

I want to thank the engineers and the workers, everyone who took part in the project, for their dedicated labour and conscientious and highly responsible approach to the job. There is no need to tell you how important this task was for the country, and you have done an outstanding job of it.

A total of more than 800 MW of electricity will now flow via the energy bridge to Crimea. Along with the region's own generating capacity this is enough for normal power supply and even a little more than is needed for routine operation. In any event, this will ensure uninterrupted power supply for infrastructure, production and social sector facilities and will ensure a reserve too for the increased demand during the summer holiday season, when millions of holidaymakers come to the region.

Let me note that, together with its own generating capacity, Crimea now has total capacity of 1,270 MW, while the forecast summer peak demand level comes to 1,100–1,150 MW. I remind you too that together with the reserve capacity that will remain in the region, we can guarantee up to 1,800 MW if needed.

At the same time, much work remains to be done to complete the overall work to modernise the region's energy sector, build modern new generating facilities and generally modernise the sector. I remember my visit to Simferopol, where we looked at the energy bridge construction work, and if I remember correctly, the equipment at the electricity distribution facility there had not been changed since the 1950s. Reconstruction work is currently underway there. More than 50 billion rubles have been allocated through to 2020 for the modernisation and new construction. This work goes unnoticed to observers from outside, but it is absolutely vital for the region's life.

Construction is underway of two electricity power stations in Simferopol and Sevastopol. In September 2017, each of them will bring their first unit on line. The two stations will have total capacity of 470 MW, and in 2018 they will add another 470 MW. This will give Crimea a large infrastructure reserve to cover future economic development, the opening of new production facilities, and work to develop the social sector and housing and utilities sector. I ask the Energy Ministry to keep these projects and development programmes under constant monitoring.

Once again, I congratulate all of you on the launch of this energy bridge. I wish you success. Let's hear now from our colleagues at the site.

Energy Minister Alexander Novak: Allow me to say a few words.

Vladimir Putin: Please, go ahead.

Alexander Novak: Mr President, colleagues,

Acting on your instruction to ensure reliable power supply for Crimea and provide it with its own energy resources, we completed construction of the second stage of the energy bridge linking Russia's unified grid system, via the Krasnodar Territory, to the electricity system in Crimea. Today, we will start operation of the final, fourth underwater cable on the Taman-Kamysh-Burun line.

Mr President, a large number of electricity supply facilities were built as part of this unique project. We built two modern new substations – the Taman substation with 500 kV capacity and the new Kafa substation with 220 kV capacity. We rebuilt and modernised five existing substations: Kubanskaya, Vyshestebliyevskaya, Slavyanskaya, Simferopolskaya, and Kamysh-Burunskaya.

The total length of electricity transmission lines built and laid over this short time comes to more than 800 kilometres. These are 220–500 kV transmission lines. Four 220-kV transmission chains, each comprising four sections 14.5 kilometres in length, have been laid across the Kerch Strait seabed. The total length of these undersea cables thus comes to more than 230 kilometres. This is a unique project given that the last big project to lay undersea cables was carried out as part of the Russky Island APEC summit preparations. This really is a major technological undertaking.

Mr President, you noted the well-coordinated work of the engineers, builders and project designers and the regional authorities in Crimea and Krasnodar Territory. Indeed, the energy sector people and officials taking part in this project worked in such a way as to complete construction in even shorter time than was planned, ahead of the timetable approved when we planned this work as part of the federal targeted programme. Some facilities were completed 18–24 months earlier than planned.

As you noted in your opening remarks, starting from today, we can now deliver up to 800 MW of electricity from our unified energy system to Crimea. If we add to this Crimea's own generating facilities along with diesel generators and mobile gas turbine power stations we set up there, we now have total generating capacity of more than 1,270 MW, as you noted, excluding solar and renewable energy sources.

This will compensate completely for the power supply previously coming from the Ukrainian electricity system. In other words, all of this work has been completed since last November, when this power supply was cut off for reasons beyond our control. Today, we have completely replaced 85 percent of this power supply and the generating capacity needed in Crimea. This is certainly enough today to guarantee in full sufficient power supply for the holiday season, and for the social sector's needs, housing and utilities and general life. It will also ensure power supply for industrial facilities, which is also important for Crimea's socioeconomic development.

The power supply we will be sending through to the region will also cover future demand and the needs of socioeconomic growth in Crimea and also in the Krasnodar Territory, as the substations we have built will contribute too to this region's socioeconomic development and to the development of its port infrastructure, including the road and rail links via the Kerch Strait.

Mr President, let us report now on the state of readiness of the Krasnodar Territory-Crimea energy bridge facilities.

Vladimir Putin: Go ahead.

Alexander Novak: Chairman of the Management Board of the Federal Grid Company Andrei Murov, at Taman substation, report on the substation's readiness to start power transmission.

Andrei Murov: Mr President, I am Chairman of the Management Board of the Federal Grid Company of the Unified Energy Systems Andrei Murov.

We speak to you from the 500-kV Taman substation. This is a new hub substation that will receive electricity from the Krasnodar Territory grid and eventually from the Rostov Region

grid too and will then transmit it onwards to the Crimea electricity system.

As Mr Novak said, the substation was built in very rapid time. Essentially, we built it in just a year, though facilities of this type usually take 3.5 years. It uses all of the latest Russian-made equipment. The most valuable components here are the power transformers, made in Togliatti, the closed switchgear, made in Velikiye Luki, and the relay protection and automation equipment, made in Chuvashia. We can thus say with pride that our local manufacturers, like our construction teams, have made their full contribution to this important undertaking. Let me add too that this substation will serve the electricity transmission needs not just of Crimea but also in part of development in the Krasnodar Territory too, with power going to new port facilities and the new bridge facilities.

Mr President, all of the substation's technical systems have gone through comprehensive testing and the facility is ready to start transmission.

This ends my report. Thank you.

Alexander Novak: Let's move over to the Kerch Peninsula crossing point and hear the report on this facility's readiness to receive power transmission via the undersea cable.

Alexander Nekrasov: Mr President, all four sections of the undersea power transmission cables between the Krasnodar Territory and Crimea are ready for operation.

This is Director of Rubezh-RemStroy Alexander Nekrasov reporting. Our company is the subcontractor for the Federal Grid Company.

Vladimir Putin: Mr Nekrasov, thank you to you and everyone I see behind you, everyone who put their labour, best technology and knowledge to use and achieved this result. Thank you very much.

Alexander Novak: Let's go now to the Kafa substation in Feodosia to hear about the substation's readiness to start operation.

Nikolai Pozdnyakov: Mr President, this is General Director of the Engineering and Construction Management Centre of the Unified Energy Systems Nikolai Pozdnyakov reporting. We are speaking to you from the 220-kV Kafa substation in the Crimean Federal District. Once switched on, the substation will receive maximum power supply coming from the southern Russia electricity grid to the grid here in Crimea.

The Russian Energy Agency acted as the state contractor in this project, and a subsidiary of the Federal Grid Company acted as general contractor. All substation equipment and systems have gone through comprehensive testing and are ready to be brought into planned operation and begin power transmission. Your instructions have been fulfilled in full.

This ends my report.

Vladimir Putin: Thank you, Mr Pozdnyakov.

Mr Aksyonov, what is the view from Crimea and Sevastopol? How do you assess the work and the prospects ahead?

Head of the Republic of Crimea Sergei Aksyonov: Mr President, your instructions were carried out ahead of the deadline. We made an effort to work fast at all stages of the construction. Thank you to all colleagues, you really have accomplished a tremendous amount of work and a great united effort.

This coordination has made it possible to cover Crimea's power supply needs in full now. From now on, there will be no more power shortages and planned outages. We now have the conditions we need to ensure the holiday season meets the highest standards and to make sure there will be no more winter blackouts.

Thank you for your great support and for taking this project under your personal control.

Vladimir Putin: I want to thank you and all of your colleagues who worked on this energy bridge. I also want to thank the officials in Crimea and Sevastopol for managing to organise work and carry out a lot of explanatory work among the public during the difficult period when you faced energy shortages.

I want to thank the people of Crimea and Sevastopol for their understanding, patience, and for the confidence they have placed in us all.

Alexander Novak: Mr President, all facilities are ready to start operation. Can we switch on the energy bridge?

Vladimir Putin: Switch it on.

Ceremony launching the energy bridge's operation

Alexander Novak: Mr President, the energy bridge facilities have all been switched on and are in full operation, transmitting maximum power supply of 800 MW from the Russian unified energy system to Crimea. Your instruction has been completed in full.

Vladimir Putin: Thank you.

Mr Novak, thank you for giving this project the needed attention. I want to draw to all colleagues' attention that a lot of new technological solutions and new equipment have been used in this project and will require particular attention from the specialists operating these facilities. I hope that everything will be done at the very highest level, just as was the case with building these energy supply facilities for Crimea.

Thank you very much.

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