

Law for smart meter rollout: Speed-up with handbrake on - better use of potentials

- **VDE FNN welcomes the fact that the rollout of smart metering systems is to be simplified and made less bureaucratic and that hurdles such as market declarations are to be removed**
- **Good agile rollout concept, but the adjustment in calibration law required is missing**
- **Successive expansion of control and comprehensive data provision for network to be welcomed, but role concept control jeopardizes secure network operation**

(Berlin/Frankfurt am Main, 09.12.2022) VDE FNN welcomes the fact that the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection is now launching the Act to Restart the Digitization of the Energy Transition (in German: GNDEW). This will noticeably speed up the urgently needed rollout of smart metering systems and make them much more attractive to customers by adjusted prices.

However, VDE FNN regrets that the reduction in bureaucracy does not go far enough in many places and that the role concept in control jeopardizes secure grid operation. For example, there is a lack of adjustments in calibration law, further simplification of the supply chain, positive signals for users on the all-important TR-03109-5 interoperability directive, which is supported across all sectors, and more courage in the interim targets up to 2030.

In addition, the draft provides that with the coordination of control actions, a core task of the network operators is to be taken over by the metering operator. But the metering point operators do not have an overall picture of the current and forecast network condition. And they are also not responsible for secure network operation in accordance with Section 11 EnWG. It is therefore imperative that the coordination of control be anchored in the law with the distribution system operator.

Furthermore there must also follow incentives for customers to provide needed flexibility from e-mobility, heat pumps and electricity storage. "The energy transition can only succeed if the power grid and end customers become active partners in digitalization and flexibility," says VDE FNN Managing Director Heike Kerber. She adds, "For secure and stable grid operation, it is necessary that grid operators can reliably initiate and coordinate control and switching actions via the smart metering system."

Dealing with flexibility: creating incentives for customers

Whether it's e-cars, electricity storage, heat pumps or photovoltaic systems, the expansion of renewables means the power grid has to accommodate millions of new consumers and weather-dependent generation plants. The new law aims to accelerate the development of a digital infrastructure to provide flexibility for generation and consumption in the power. Only when flexibility is worthwhile for customers and the power grid will it be available on a comprehensive basis and can be used in a targeted manner for secure grid operation.

On the positive side, the draft for GNDEW provides for some simplifications in the administration and delivery processes for smart meters, which will speed up the rollout. It will also simplify the use of anonymized consumer data for network operators, so that network control can be improved. However, in the view of VDE FNN, for the energy transition to succeed, it is also necessary that

- anchored in the legal framework that the grid operators are responsible for coordination in the power grid, because only they have an overall view of the stability of the grid. While the metering operator carries out control actions on the digital grid connection, the distribution grid operator must ensure the optimal use of flexibilities.
- the prerequisite is created for establishing a common market for flexibilities. This could enable customers to be offered the option of making part of their power available at certain times – for example in the form of a reduced grid usage fee.
- the economic viability of meter operators is strengthened by the planned evaluation of the price caps in 2024 and additional incentives are established for pioneers in the rollout.
- changes are made to calibration law. The existing rules prevent the sustainable and economic use of smart metering systems and thus counteract the objectives of the law.

About VDE FNN

The Network Technology and Operation Forum within VDE (VDE FNN) develops the electricity grids with foresight. The aim is to ensure reliable system operation at all times with 80 percent renewable energies. VDE FNN makes innovative technologies practicable and provides answers to the grid technology challenges of tomorrow. Here, various specialist groups with different interests work together on solutions. Its members are over 470 manufacturers, grid operators, suppliers, system operators, authorities, and scientific institutions.

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About VDE

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Our passion is the advancement of technology, the next generation of engineers and technologists, and lifelong learning and career development “on the job”. Within the VDE network more than 2,000 employees at over 60 locations worldwide, more than 100,000 honorary experts, and around 1,500 companies are dedicated to ensuring a future worth living: networked, digital, electrical. Shaping the e-dialistic future.

The VDE (VDE Association for Electrical, Electronic & Information Technologies) is headquartered in Frankfurt am Main. For more information, visit www.vde.com

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