



Media Information

For immediate release: 19/6/06

Independent Energy Inquiry Calls for Urgent Action

Within twenty five years, Scotland is likely to lose all of its electricity-generating capacity from large plants and must take urgent steps to achieve a secure, competitive, socially equitable and low carbon emissions energy supply. The report of The Royal Society of Edinburgh's major, independent Inquiry into Energy Issues for Scotland, launched today (19 June 2006), states that there is a critical need for action and highlights opportunities and challenges for Scotland.

The wide-ranging report which makes 37 key recommendations emphasises that diversity of energy sources will be crucial to security of supply, and suggests that Scotland:

- must develop a coherent, overarching approach to energy issues
- has an opportunity to make important decisions on energy infrastructure
- is in a position to influence decisions on electricity
- can and should improve performance on waste management
- must improve on energy loss in building
- should reject the false polarization of a nuclear v wind debate and stimulate public engagement
- has much potential in renewable technologies which should be explored.

The strategic aim should be for a secure, competitive, socially equitable and low carbon emissions supply of energy for Scotland.

To achieve this, the RSE report recommends a comprehensive and integrated strategy and four key changes:

- (1) increasing the efficient use of energy
- (2) using cleaner energy sources
- (3) researching and developing new technologies to benefit Scotland
- (4) implementing more effective measures to improve market operation.

Context & Urgency

Scotland's Energy demands are predicted to increase by 50% between 2000 and 2050, yet we are facing a reduction in North Sea oil and gas production and our coal and nuclear electricity-generating plants are approaching the end of their economic lives. Without early decisions by government and by the market, there will be problems of energy supply.

Using Scotland's Skills & Resources to Help Tackle Climate Change

Energy and environment targets have been set for 2020 and Scotland has an opportunity to contribute fully to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and seek to help in tackling the global threat of climate change. Scotland can contribute by developing its rich resources of renewable energy and by harnessing its intellectual and technological prowess.

Diversity of Supply

There is no one, single solution to the energy gap we face. Scotland will require energy from a diversity of fuels, countries, and technologies, helping us to be competitive in global markets, with all sections of society having access to affordable energy, and using technology with the lowest greenhouse gas emissions throughout their life cycle. It is essential that informed decisions are made through a process of public engagement in which democracy rather than any lobby groups prevail.

The President of The Royal Society of Edinburgh, Sir Michael Atiyah said:

Scotland needs to take urgent action to avoid an energy gap. Diversity of supply will be key as there is no 'magic bullet'. We must all work together to achieve a balance of security of supply, continued economic growth, low carbon emissions and affordable fuel for all. I appeal to the leaders of all the main political parties to engage afresh in open debate with the people of Scotland and across the present party-political divides to seek a consensus solution. I commend this balanced, informative report which seeks to contribute to the debate and thank Professor Maxwell Irvine and his Committee for all their work.

Timescales for Decisions:

A number of key decisions need to be made in the near future if replacement plants and other infrastructure is to be available and the requisite strategies and policies are in place. These are summarised in the table below:

Decision	When	By whom
UK Energy strategy	Mid 2007	UK Government
UK energy targets	End 2006	UK Government
Scottish Energy strategy	End 2007	Scottish Executive
Emissions targets for Scotland	End 2007	Scottish Executive
New electricity generating plant	Mid 2007	Scottish Executive/generators/National Grid Company

National Grid upgrade in Scotland	Mid 2007	National Grid Company/Ofgem
National Grid upgrade Scotland/England	Mid 2007	National Grid Company/Ofgem

Committee Members:

Chairman: Professor Maxwell Irvine, FRSE, Professor of Physics, University of Manchester. Former Principal & Vice-Chancellor, University of Aberdeen; Former Principal & Vice-Chancellor, University of Birmingham

Professor Geoffrey Boulton OBE, FRS, FRSE, Vice-Principal and Regius Professor of Geology and Mineralogy, University of Edinburgh

Secretary: Professor Roger Crofts, CBE, FRSE, Former CEO, Scottish Natural Heritage

Dr Robert Hawley, CBE, FRSE, FREng, Engineer, Former Chairman, British Energy; Former Chairman, Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council

Dr Malcolm Kennedy, CBE, FREng, FRSE, Chairman, National Energy Action

Professor Andrew Miller, CBE, FRSE, Secretary & Treasurer, the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland; Former General Secretary of the RSE; Former Principal, The University of Stirling

Professor Janet Sprent OBE, FRSE, Member of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution

Professor Joyce Tait CBE, Director, ESRC Centre for Social and Economic Research on Innovation in Genomics (Innogen), University of Edinburgh

Dr George Watkins, CBE, Former CEO, CONOCO UK, Former Chairman, Grampian Enterprise

Committee Secretary: Mr William Hardie

Platform Party at Press Conference (19 June 2006) Seated L-R as viewed facing:

Professor Maxwell Irvine (Inquiry Chairman)	Professor Sir Michael Atiyah (President of The Royal Society of Edinburgh)	Professor Roger Crofts (Inquiry Secretary)
--	---	---

Evidence:

The Inquiry has consulted widely, taking oral and written evidence. Written evidence submitted to the independent committee can be seen at: <http://www.royalsoceid.org.uk/enquiries/energy/evidence/index.htm>

Donors:

Donors to the RSE Inquiry into Energy Issues for Scotland Resources were sought from a wide range of supporters, balanced so that no sectoral, nor political, bias could be impugned. The RSE gratefully acknowledges the financial support received from the following contributors:

Aberdeenshire Council
 The Binks Trust
 Buccleuch Estates Ltd
 Highlands & Islands Enterprise
 Scottish & Southern Energy plc
 Scottish Enterprise Energy Team
 Total E&P UK plc

Report Format & Copies:

The Summary Report is available in hard copy and online. The Full report is available online and in hard copy, by request (ISBN: 0 902198 742) www.royalsoced.org.uk and available from:

Mr William Hardie, Committee Secretary:
 22-26 George Street,
 Edinburgh EH2 2PQ
 Tel: 0131 240 5000
 Email: evidenceadvice@royalsoced.org.uk
www.royalsoced.org.uk

Notes for Editors:*1. Independent Inquiries*

Other recent independent inquiries undertaken by the RSE include:
 Inquiry into the Future of the Scottish Fishing Industry - March 2004
 Inquiry into Foot & Mouth Disease in Scotland - July 2002
 The Scientific Issues Surrounding the Control of Infectious Salmon Anaemia (ISA) in Scotland – June 2002
 Encouraging Resolution: Mediating Patient/Health Service Disputes in Scotland – June 2002.
 Full details of these inquiries:
www.royalsoced.org.uk

2 The Royal Society of Edinburgh

The Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) is an educational charity, registered in Scotland. Independent and non-party-political, we are working to provide public benefit throughout Scotland and by means of a growing international programme. The RSE has a peer-elected, multidisciplinary Fellowship of 1400 men and women who are experts within their fields. We seek to provide public benefit in today's Scotland by:

- ◆ Organising lectures, debates and conferences on topical issues of lasting importance
- ◆ Conducting independent inquiries on matters of national and international importance

- ◆ Providing educational activities for primary and secondary school students throughout Scotland
- ◆ Distributing over £1.7 million to top researchers and entrepreneurs working in Scotland
- ◆ Showcasing the best of Scotland's research and development capabilities to the rest of the World
- ◆ Facilitating Scotland's international collaboration in research and enterprise
- ◆ Awarding prizes and medals

Stuart M Brown
PR & Communications Manager
The Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE)
T. 0131 240 5000
F. 0131 240 5024
Mob. 077 11 710 249
e sbrown@royalsoced.org.uk
www.royalsoced.org.uk

~ ENDS ~