

Press release

Collaboration agreement

Red Eléctrica de España and Elia sign an innovative agreement for enhancing asset management

- Elia and REE will establish a joint Asset Management Expertise Centre to develop innovative grid management approaches
- Elia and REE will also further develop the SAGA platform, which relies on artificial intelligence to optimise asset management

Madrid, 15 June 2021

Red Eléctrica de España (REE) and its Belgium counterpart, Elia, have signed a collaboration agreement to work on innovative solutions that will help to transform the management of their respective electricity grids. The innovative pact, which is the first of its kind across Europe, will enable both companies to successfully address the challenges presented by the energy transition.

“It is only through the establishment of robust, smart and flexible grids that we will be able to build a fully-integrated internal energy market and achieve a climate-neutral Europe by 2050, as outlined in the European Green Deal. The challenges that the energy transition bring are clear, and we have to be ready and be able to anticipate them through the introduction of innovative solutions. The alliance between REE and Elia is a step forward in this journey, as we hope it will set the path for strengthening this collaborative approach between TSOs across Europe”.

Roberto García Merino, CEO Grupo Red Eléctrica

“By working together with REE, we will be combining the best of both companies, while challenging and strengthening each other's expertise. Due to a rapid increase in variable renewable production and international power exchanges, the electricity grid is regularly stretched to its limits. To maintain security of supply, it is important that our infrastructure is in good condition. With new technologies, we can better monitor and plan the maintenance and replacement of our assets. This will generate major efficiency gains and make our grid more reliable than ever, despite the significant changes brought about by the energy transition”.

Chris Peeters, CEO Elia Group

Two leading European TSOs

The agreement connects two leading European TSOs: Elia, the sole TSO in Belgium, and REE, the sole TSO in Spain. Elia is a subsidiary company of Elia Group, which also owns 50Hertz, a TSO in northeastern Germany.

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Together, Elia Group and REE manage over 63,770 km of power lines and 1,571 substations. Both Elia and REE are united in their vision for the future: to harness the potential of new technologies to accelerate the transformation of their asset management strategies in order to meet the challenges facing the energy sector.

Minimising asset failure risks for maximum grid availability

The agreement includes two strands, with the first of these addressing the establishment of an Asset Management Expertise Centre. This unique hub will allow Elia and REE to share knowledge, resources and experience to develop innovative tools and solutions related to asset management (amongst other objectives). A multidisciplinary team made up of experts from both companies has already defined the vision for the hub's work and areas of focus for 2021.

These developments will enable REE and Elia to establish new asset management strategies with the following key aims in mind: embedding predictive maintenance based on the current and future condition of their grid infrastructure; adopting a holistic approach to maintenance and asset activity planning; and implementing the latest technologies.

Both TSOs will therefore be able to optimise the planning of their activities, minimise the risk of asset failure, maximise grid availability, and generate efficiencies. This will be key for both companies to continue reliably supplying electricity in an increasingly demanding environment - one which is defined by the energy transition and digital transformation.

SAGA, an innovative platform for the electricity sector

The two companies have also agreed to work on the development of the SAGA platform, which was developed by Red Eléctrica. SAGA is an innovative platform which allows electricity transmission and distribution companies to move away from using traditional periodic maintenance models to using risk-based maintenance models for their assets and the electricity system as a whole. From today onwards, REE and Elia will join forces to jointly manage and develop the platform, so that it remains at the cutting edge of technological innovation in the sector.

Specifically, SAGA facilitates the following capabilities:

- the clear application of data governance rules: SAGA enables the data associated with assets to be organised, managed and used in line with data governance rules;
- improved decision-making: the software helps transform information into knowledge to facilitate decision-making processes;
- predictive management and maintenance: SAGA proactively predicts, proposes and enables the deployment of advanced asset management strategies.