



Following a new safety analysis, additional measures will be adopted for the grid in and around Mechelen. Throughout the repair work that will be undertaken after the storm, limited power outages may occur this weekend. These can be avoided through local reductions in the use of electricity

- During the repair work this weekend, one of the two high-voltage lines (70 kV) currently supplying Mechelen with power will be temporarily switched off. This line crosses the destroyed 150 kV line.
- All options have been considered. Temporarily switching off the line is the only way to guarantee the safety of our technical teams and local residents as the damage to the affected houses is cleared.
- So as not to overload the remaining line, residents have been asked to limit their use of electricity between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. This will help to prevent a local power outage.

LEEST - MECHELEN | Following a new safety analysis, Elia will adopt additional measures this weekend to provide maximum protection for its technical teams and local residents during the work that will address the damage caused to houses in Leest. One of the two high-voltage lines (both 70 kV) currently supplying Mechelen with power will be switched off as a preventive measure. This line crosses the 150 kV high-voltage line that was severely damaged by last Tuesday's storm. If a line were to spring back while being cut, there is a risk that the underlying 70 kV line would be hit. In turn, this could cause an electric arc to form, which carries an electrocution risk. So as not to overload the remaining line, residents in and around Mechelen have been asked to limit their use of electricity between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. over the weekend.

Since last Tuesday, power to the Mechelen area has not been supplied by the usual 150 kV line, which went down after a heavy storm destroyed nine high-voltage pylons. The high-voltage lines fell across a distance of about four kilometres, with 10 or so houses affected as a consequence. Since the incident, the power supplied to Mechelen and the surrounding area has been fully carried by two high-voltage lines which have lower voltage levels (70 kV).

Elia has studied all possible scenarios in preparation for the work to clear up the area. This work is set to start tomorrow. This afternoon, additional measures to be taken over the weekend were agreed upon. To ensure that our technical teams and local residents stay as safe as possible, the 70 kV line (which crosses the area where the work will be undertaken) – will be taken offline between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.

So as not to overload the remaining high-voltage line, Elia chose to undertake the work during a time when locals tend to use less electricity. Less electricity is consumed during the weekend; additionally, a lot of solar power (approximately 30 MW) is due to be produced this weekend.

Collectively using less electricity

Despite the above, Elia and Fluvius are calling on residents in and around Mechelen to limit their use of electricity this weekend. This will help to prevent a local power outage. Should it become necessary, industrial customers will be disconnected first. Fluvius has informed them of this possibility.

In addition, Fluvius has adopted a number of supporting measures. For example, it has called on local cogeneration plants to generate power at full level this weekend. Infrabel is also playing its part in reducing the local load on the grid. Trains in the local area will run and accelerate more slowly.

The clearing work carried out next to the 70 kV line should be completed by Sunday evening, at which point the line will once again be able to handle a full load.

Additional reinforcement necessary

Given the loss of the impacted 150 kV high-voltage line, the local network in and around Mechelen must be reinforced in order to better protect it from any further incidents. Over the last few days, Elia's experts have been working on a technical solution that involves the deployment of a backup line. Elia is working with the municipal authorities and relevant landowners on an emergency procedure that will involve the construction of five temporary pylons. Elia would like to start this work on 23 July. The backup line should be operational by mid-August.

About Elia Group

One of Europe's top 5 TSOs

Elia Group is a key player in electricity transmission. We ensure that generation and consumption are balanced 24/7, supplying 30 million end users with electricity. Through our subsidiaries in Belgium (Elia) and the north and east of Germany (50Hertz), we operate 19,460.5 km of high-voltage connections, meaning that we are one of Europe's top 5 transmission system operators. With a reliability level of 99.99%, we provide society with the robust power grid that is so important to socio-economic prosperity. We also aspire to be a catalyst for a successful energy transition, helping to establish a reliable, sustainable and affordable energy system.

We are making the energy transition happen

By expanding international high-voltage connections and incorporating ever-increasing amounts of renewable energy into our grid, we are promoting both the integration of the European energy market and the decarbonisation of society. We also continuously optimise our operational systems and develop new market products so that new technologies and market parties can access our grid, thus further facilitating the energy transition.

In the interest of society

As a key player in the energy system, Elia Group is committed to working in the interest of society. We are responding to the rapid increase in renewable energy by constantly adapting our transmission grid. We also ensure that investments are made on time and within budget, with a maximum focus on safety. In carrying out our projects, we engage in proactive stakeholder management by establishing two-way communication channels between all relevant parties very early on in the development process. We also offer our expertise to different players across the sector in order to build the energy system of the future.

International focus

In addition to its activities as a transmission system operator, Elia Group provides consulting services to international customers through its subsidiary Elia Grid International. In recent years, the Group has launched new non-regulated activities such as re.alto – the first European marketplace for the exchange of energy data via standardised energy APIs – and WindGrid, a subsidiary which will continue to expand the Group's overseas activities, contributing to the development of offshore electricity grids in Europe and beyond.

The legal entity Elia Group is a listed company whose core shareholder is the municipal holding company Publi-T.

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