

# Statement of Directors' Responsibilities for Preparing the Accounts

The Directors are required by the Companies Act 1985 to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the Group as at the end of the financial year and of the profit or loss of the Group for the financial year.

The Directors consider that in preparing the accounts (detailed in the following sections: Principal Accounting Policies, Accounts and Notes to the Accounts) the Company has used appropriate accounting policies, consistently applied and supported by reasonable and

prudent judgements and estimates and all applicable accounting standards have been followed.

The Directors have responsibility for ensuring that the Company keeps accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Company and of the Group and which enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 1985.

The Directors have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to them to safeguard the assets of the Group

and to prevent and to detect fraud and other irregularities.

The Directors, having prepared the accounts, have requested the Auditors to take whatever steps and to undertake whatever inspections they consider to be appropriate for the purposes of enabling them to give their audit report.

The Directors confirm that the Audit Committee continues to review the adequacy of the system of internal financial controls adopted by the Group.

# Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of National Grid Transco plc

We have audited the accounts which comprise the Group Profit and Loss Account, the Balance Sheets, the Group Cash Flow Statement, the Group Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses and the related notes. We have also audited the disclosures required by Part 3 of Schedule 7A to the Companies Act 1985 contained in the Directors' Remuneration Report ('the auditable part').

## Respective responsibilities of Directors and Auditors

The Directors' responsibilities for preparing the Annual Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and accounting standards are set out in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities. The Directors are also responsible for preparing the Directors' Remuneration Report.

Our responsibility is to audit the accounts and the auditable part of the Directors' Remuneration Report in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and United Kingdom Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. This report, including the opinion, has been prepared for and only for the Company's members as a body in accordance with Section 235 of the Companies Act 1985 and for no other purpose. We do not, in giving this opinion, accept or assume responsibility for any other purpose or to any other person to whom this report is shown or into whose hands it may come save where expressly agreed by our prior consent in writing.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the accounts give a true and fair view and whether the accounts and the auditable part of the Directors' Remuneration Report have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the Directors' Report is not

consistent with the accounts, if the Company has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding Directors' remuneration and transactions is not disclosed.

We read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the accounts. The other information comprises only the items listed in the contents section of the Annual Report, excluding the 2004 audited accounts and the auditable part of the Directors' Remuneration Report.

We review whether the corporate governance statement reflects the Company's compliance with the seven provisions of the Combined Code, issued in June 1998, specified for our review by the Listing Rules of the Financial Services Authority, and we report if it does not. We are not required to consider whether the Board's statements on internal control cover all risks and controls, or to form an opinion on the effectiveness of the Group's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

## Basis of audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the accounts and the auditable part of the Directors' Remuneration Report. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Directors in the preparation of the accounts, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the accounts and the auditable part of the Directors' Remuneration Report are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the accounts.

## Opinion

In our opinion the accounts give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and the Group at 31 March 2004 and of the profit and cash flows of the Group for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985; and those parts of the Directors' Remuneration Report required by Part 3 of Schedule 7A to the Companies Act 1985 have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985.

## PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors  
London  
19 May 2004

# Accounting Policies

## a) Basis of preparation of accounts

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable UK accounting and financial reporting standards.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with UK GAAP, which differs in certain respects from US GAAP. A summary of the results under US GAAP is shown in note 31 to the accounts and an explanation of the main differences between UK and US GAAP is set out in note 32.

The preparation of accounts in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

The Group has adopted Urgent Issues Task Force (UITF) 38 'Accounting for ESOP trusts' during the year. The impact of the adoption is shown in note 1.

The Group is following the transitional arrangements of Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 17 'Retirement Benefits'. The required disclosures are shown in note 7.

## b) Basis of consolidation

The Group accounts include the accounts of the Company and all its subsidiary undertakings ('Group undertakings'), together with the Group's share of the results and net assets of its associate and joint ventures ('associated undertakings'), less any provision for impairment. An associated undertaking is an entity in which the Group has a participating interest and over which it exercises a significant influence. The accounts of Group and associated undertakings used for consolidation are generally made up to 31 March. However, where this has not been practical, the results of certain Group and associated undertakings have been based on their accounts to 31 December.

The results of newly acquired Group and associated undertakings are included in the Group accounts from the date the Group acquires control or, in respect of associated undertakings, an equity interest which enables

it to exercise a significant influence. The results of Group and associated undertakings are included in the Group accounts up to the date that control or the exercise of significant influence, as appropriate, is relinquished.

In translating into sterling the Group's share of the net assets and results of a joint venture operating in a hyper-inflationary economy for the years ended 31 March 2003 and 2004, adjustments have been made to reflect current price levels. Such adjustments have been reflected through the Group profit and loss account or statement of total recognised gains and losses as appropriate. The Group's share of the gain on net monetary liabilities has been credited to the Group profit and loss account through 'net interest', and where the effect is material is shown as part of the Group's exceptional financing costs (see note 4(c)).

The 21 October 2002 business combination of National Grid and Lattice met the merger accounting criteria under UK GAAP and the Companies Act 1985 and therefore the transaction was accounted for as a merger. The consolidated accounts have been prepared as if National Grid and Lattice had always comprised the Group. The combined accounts were adjusted for the issue on Merger of 1,323m shares with a nominal value of £132m and for the elimination of balances between the former groups.

## c) Goodwill

Goodwill, representing the excess of the fair value of the consideration given over the fair value of the identifiable net assets acquired, is capitalised and amortised on a straight-line basis, through the profit and loss account over its estimated useful economic life, principally 20 years.

## d) Foreign currencies

The results of the Group's overseas operations are generally translated into sterling at weighted

average rates of exchange for the period the overseas operations are included within the Group accounts. In certain limited circumstances, where the use of a weighted average rate would distort material transactions, those transactions are separately translated at the rates of exchange relevant to the dates on which the transactions occurred.

Exchange differences arising on the translation of the opening net assets of overseas operations, the re-translation of the retained earnings of overseas operations from average to closing rates of exchange and the translation of foreign currency borrowings or derivatives taken to hedge overseas assets are taken directly to reserves. Tax charges or credits arising on such items are also taken directly to reserves.

Assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are generally translated at the rates of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. In respect of certain assets or liabilities that are matched by an exact and directly related forward exchange derivative, the relevant asset or liability is translated at the rate of exchange under the related derivative.

All other exchange differences and related tax charges or credits are taken to the profit and loss account and disclosed separately where deemed exceptional.

## e) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are included in the balance sheet at their cost less accumulated depreciation. Cost includes payroll and finance costs incurred which are directly attributable to the construction of tangible fixed assets.

Tangible fixed assets include assets in which the Group's interest comprises legally protected statutory or contractual rights of use.

### Depreciation periods for categories of tangible fixed assets

	Years
Plant and machinery	
Electricity transmission plant	15 to 60
Electricity distribution plant	15 to 60
Interconnector plant	15 to 60
Gas plant – mains, services and regulating equipment	30 to 65
Gas plant – storage	40
Gas plant – meters	10 to 33
Freehold and leasehold buildings	up to 65
Motor vehicles and office equipment	up to 10

Additions represent the purchase or construction of new assets and extensions to or significant increases in the capacity of tangible fixed assets. Contributions received towards the cost of tangible fixed assets are included in creditors as deferred income and credited on a straight-line basis to the profit and loss account over the estimated economic lives of the assets.

No depreciation is provided on freehold land and assets in the course of construction. Other tangible fixed assets are depreciated, principally on a straight-line basis, at rates estimated to write off their book values over their estimated useful economic lives. In assessing estimated useful economic lives, which are reviewed on a regular basis, consideration is given to any contractual arrangements and operational requirements relating to particular assets. Unless otherwise determined by operational requirements, the depreciation periods for the principal categories of tangible fixed assets are, in general, as shown on the previous page.

During 2004, the Group modified some depreciation periods to more accurately reflect the economic lives of the assets. There has not been any significant change to the depreciation charged in the year as a result of the modification.

#### **f) Impairment of fixed assets**

Impairments of fixed assets are calculated as the difference between the carrying values of the net assets of income generating units, including, where appropriate, investments and goodwill, and their recoverable amounts. Recoverable amount is defined as the higher of net realisable value or estimated value in use at the date the impairment review is undertaken. Net realisable value represents the net amount that can be generated through sale of the assets. Value in use represents the present value of expected future cash flows discounted on a pre-tax basis, using the estimated cost of capital of the income generating unit.

Impairment reviews are carried out if there is some indication that an impairment may have occurred, or where otherwise required, to ensure that fixed assets are not carried above their estimated recoverable amounts.

Impairments are recognised in the profit and loss account, and where material are disclosed as exceptional.

#### **g) Replacement expenditure**

Replacement expenditure represents the cost of planned maintenance of the UK's gas mains and services assets by replacing or lining sections of pipe. This expenditure is principally undertaken to repair and to maintain the safety of the network and is written off as incurred. Expenditure that enhances the performance of the mains and services assets is treated as an addition to tangible fixed assets.

#### **h) Deferred taxation and investment tax credits**

Deferred taxation is provided in full on all material timing differences, with certain exceptions. No provision for deferred taxation is made for any timing differences on non-monetary assets arising from fair value adjustments, except where there is a binding agreement to sell the assets concerned. However, no provision is made where it is more likely than not that any taxable gain will be rolled over into replacement assets.

Deferred tax assets are only recognised to the extent that they are considered recoverable.

Deferred tax balances have not been discounted.

Investment tax credits are amortised over the economic life of the asset giving rise to the credits.

#### **i) Stocks**

Stocks are carried at cost less provision for deterioration and obsolescence.

#### **j) Regulatory assets**

The US Statement of Financial Accounting Standards 71 'Accounting for the Effects of Certain Types of Regulation' (SFAS 71) establishes US GAAP for utilities whose regulators have the power to approve and/or regulate rates that may be charged to customers. Provided that through the regulatory process the utility is substantially assured of recovering its allowable costs by the collection of revenue from its customers, such costs not yet recovered are deferred as regulatory assets. Due to the different regulatory environment, no equivalent accounting standard applies in the UK.

Under UK GAAP, regulatory assets established in accordance with the principles of SFAS 71 are recognised in debtors where they comprise rights or other access to future economic benefits which arise as a result of past transactions or

events which have created an obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party. Measurement of the past transaction or event and hence of the regulatory asset is determined in accordance with UK GAAP.

#### **k) Decommissioning and environmental costs**

Decommissioning and environmental costs, based on discounted future estimated expenditures, are provided for in full and where appropriate a corresponding tangible fixed asset or regulatory asset is also recognised. The unwinding of the discount is included within the profit and loss account as a financing charge net of the unwinding of the discount on any related regulatory asset.

#### **l) Turnover**

Turnover primarily represents the amounts derived from the supply, transmission and distribution of energy and the provision of related services, including the recovery of stranded costs. Turnover includes an assessment of energy and transportation services supplied to customers between the date of the last meter reading and the year end, excludes inter-business and inter-company transactions, and is stated net of value added tax and similar sales-based taxes. Where revenues received or receivable exceed the maximum amount permitted by regulatory agreement and adjustments will be made to future prices to reflect this over-recovery, no liability is recognised.

#### **m) Pensions and other post-retirement benefits**

The cost of providing pensions and other post-retirement benefits is charged to the profit and loss account on a systematic basis over the service lives of the employees in the schemes. Variations from the regular pension cost are allocated over the estimated average remaining service lives of current employees, with the interest component of any variation being reflected in net interest and the other component reflected through staff costs.

#### **n) Leases**

Operating lease payments are charged to the profit and loss account on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

### **o) Financial instruments**

Derivative financial instruments ('derivatives') are used by the Group mainly for the management of its interest rate and foreign currency exposures and commodity price risks in respect of expected energy usage. The principal derivatives used include interest rate swaps, currency swaps, forward foreign currency agreements, interest rate swaptions and indexed swap contracts relating to the purchase of energy.

All transactions are undertaken with a view to, or maintained to, provide a commercial hedge of the interest, currency or commodity price risks associated with the Group's underlying business activities and the financing of those activities. Amounts payable or receivable in respect of interest rate swaps are recognised in the profit and loss account over the economic lives of the agreements or underlying position being hedged, either within net interest or disclosed separately where deemed exceptional.

Termination payments made or received in respect of derivatives are spread over the shorter of the life of the original instrument or the life of the underlying exposure in cases where the underlying exposure continues to exist. Where the underlying exposure ceases to exist, any termination payments are taken to the profit and loss account.

Those derivatives, relating both to interest rates and/or currency exchange, that are directly associated with a specific transaction and exactly match the underlying cash flows relating to the transaction are accounted for on the basis of the combined economic result of the transaction including the related derivative.

All other currency swaps and forward currency agreements are translated at the rate of exchange prevailing at the balance sheet date with the corresponding exchange adjustment being dealt with in reserves or the profit and loss account as appropriate.

Liabilities recognised in respect of index-linked swap contracts relating to the purchase of energy are measured on the basis of their estimated market value. In addition, a corresponding movement in the value of a related regulatory asset is also recognised.

### **p) Restructuring costs**

Costs arising from Group restructuring programmes primarily relate to redundancy costs. Redundancy costs are charged to the profit and loss account in the period in which the Group becomes irrevocably committed to incurring the costs and the main features of the restructuring plan have been announced to affected employees. Redundancy costs are classified as part of 'other operating charges' as these costs do not relate to services provided by employees for the year.