

# Interties: Alberta's Power Connector

Interties are transmission interconnections between neighbouring electric systems that allow power to be imported and exported.

Albertans benefit from interties by having the ability to import power when electricity is less expensive in other markets and export power that is surplus to the needs of Albertans. This enables us to make the most efficient, economic and environmentally beneficial exchange for our resources.

Interties can also provide immediate access to power from our neighbours to assist in emergency situations, such as when generator outages occur or when severe storms cause transmission equipment failures.

Interties are essential to a competitive market because they support reliability, attract generation investment and encourage continued economic growth in Alberta.

The Provincial Energy Strategy (PES) released in 2008 describes the province's plan to adopt and implement a policy to build interties to other markets to ensure an adequate supply of electricity to Alberta.

Alberta currently has two operating interties, one with B.C (rated capability of 1,000 MW for export and 1,200 MW for import) and the other with Saskatchewan (rated capability of 150 MW for both export and import). A third intertie is currently under construction to Montana (rated capability of 300 MW for both export and import). The actual operating capability of these interties is less than the rated capability in many cases due to reliability requirements and constraints on Alberta's transmission system.

Alberta's Transmission Regulation directs the AESO to restore the capacity of the existing interties as near as possible to their rated capability. The AESO is currently working with stakeholders on several initiatives to achieve this.

## Relevant Facts

- A 300 MW intertie with Montana to be built by a merchant (independent) transmission company is in the developmental stages with a planned in-service date of late 2011
- Power flows in both directions on the interties – typically flowing out of Alberta during periods of low demand (at night) and into Alberta during high demand periods, and in response to the price of electricity
- Alberta has been a net importer of power since 2002
- Alberta's export of power has typically been about one per cent of the power produced in Alberta. Imports have typically been about two per cent
- In 2010 Alberta imported 2,205 GWh from BC and Saskatchewan, this is equivalent to 3.1% of the total energy (71,723 GWh). Alberta exported a total of 459 GWh (or 0.6%) of the total energy.
- On average, Alberta imports five times as much energy as we export