

Electricity labelling in the UK demanded by consumers

Electricity labelling in the UK could lead to a change in current power trading systems, according to delegates at British Energy's (BE) annual *Talk Power* conference, in London, on Wednesday.

If a labelling scheme comes to fruition, traders could make decisions based on information provided about the exact source of the electricity available on the market, ensuring that customers who demand renewably-generated electricity are provided with it.

Major UK energy user British Telecom (BT) is pushing for accurate electricity labelling from energy companies, according to Richard Tarboton, head of energy and carbon management at BT.

Last week, a letter highlighting the growing demand for accurate information concerning the source of electricity for individual customers was sent to the UK government, led by BT and backed by Andrew Bainbridge, director general of the Major Energy Users' Council (meuc).

The call is for electricity to be rated A to G. Grade A would indicate a zero-carbon power source, while a G product would be from a dirty coal source. Tarboton insisted that the scheme

would require robust validation and auditing, to ensure that energy suppliers provided accurate ratings of their electricity.

Reaction

The proposal was met with mixed reactions. Popular opinion was that there would not be enough Grade A power to meet demand from companies wanting to boost their green credentials. However, Tarboton told the audience that demand would act as a trigger to further increase supply. Meanwhile, one commentator thought it to be an added layer of bureaucracy, while another said that, although a good idea in principle, it would take a while to feed into the industry.

Energy companies to sell illumination, not units

The conference also highlighted the looming issue of the "energy gap" in the industry. This is the time period between conventional plant coming off line (as a result of old age and the influence of the Large Combustion Plant Directive, LCPD) and new nuclear and renewable generation.

An audience vote saw attendees regarding the energy gap as the main factor driving policy – closely followed by meeting

[continued on next page](#)