WIND TURBINES AND RADAR

Solution for radar and wind farms to go ahead

British wind industry puts forward £1.6million towards resolving radar issues

Solution likely to release 6 gigawatts of projects, enough to power 3.4 million homes

The British Wind Energy Association (BWEA) announced on 20th October that it welcomed the signing of the contract between the Department of Energy & Climate Change, The Crown Estate, NATS En Route and the wind industry’s Aviation Investment Fund Company (AIFCL) to progress the development of the Raytheon solution.

The Raytheon solution is a hardware and software fix to the detection of wind turbines on radar systems, which will eliminate wind turbine interference of en route radar displays. It is estimated that currently there are six gigawatts of wind energy capacity held back due to objections from civil and Ministry of Defence (MoD) aviation authorities. This is enough capacity to power 3.4 million homes.

Simon Christian, Project Director at ScottishPower Renewables and Chair of the Aviation Investment Fund Company commented, “The industry is delighted to have set up the AIFCL and that this major contract has been made between all the parties. This is one of the most exciting developments for the potential removal of aviation objections, and we are very pleased to have instigated it.”

BWEA has also welcomed the role of The Crown Estate as a major sponsor to accelerate and de-risk Round 3 wind farm developments.

Colin Ormston, Development Director at Vattenfall said, “Vattenfall are very pleased to celebrate this significant achievement. The signing of this document demonstrates the commitment of the Government, the aviation industry and the wind industry to investigate how new technologies may be used to enable the wind industry to work more closely with the aviation community in addressing climate change.”
While the Raytheon solution has the potential to fix the en route radar problem, issues still remain with MoD radar, and the Aviation Investment Fund Company has also recently committed to fund an MoD and IBM study for expanding the UK Air Defence and Ground Environment Command and Control System (UCCS) to accept air traffic control radar feeds as wind farm mitigation.

BWEA is the trade and professional body for the UK wind and marine renewables industries. Formed in 1978, and with 532 corporate members, BWEA is the leading renewable energy trade association in the UK. Wind has been regarded as the world’s fastest growing renewable energy source for the last seven years, and this trend is expected to continue with falling costs of wind energy and the urgent international need to tackle CO2 emissions to prevent climate change.

Fourteen member companies of BWEA have joined forces investing in a central industry fund – the Aviation Investment Fund Company – so that resources can be directed towards addressing the radar issue. NATS En Route have been appointed to manage the Research and Development with Raytheon Canada, the suppliers of the radar system.