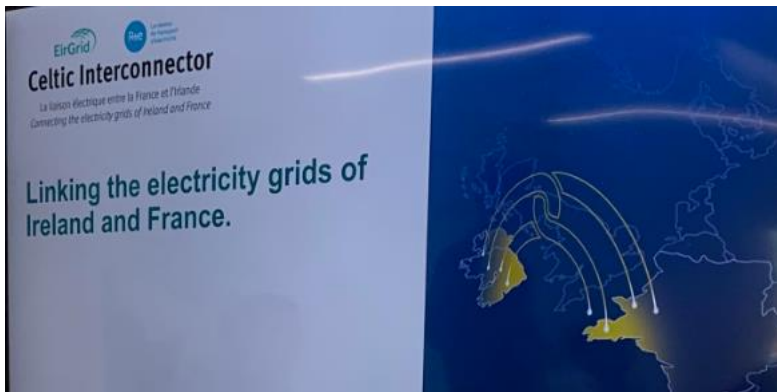




**THE IRISH ACADEMY OF
ENGINEERING**
ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP IN A TIME OF GREAT CHANGE

ACADEMY NEWS –2nd September 2025 –Site visit to Celtic Interconnector & Southern Region meeting



Chair of the Southern Region Brendan Murphy and deputy chair John T Murphy welcomed attendees at a site visit to the Celtic Interconnector followed by a regional meeting hosted in the offices of Mott MacDonald in Little Island.

Academy President Sean Finlay, accompanied by Tom Leahy Academy Special Advisor/Director, Joe Harford Hon. Sec. and Tim Corcoran Treasurer/Chair of Infrastructure committee were warmly welcomed.

The Academy thanked the Eirgrid site visit hosts:

- Shane Cooney – Onshore Project Manager, Ireland
- Kieran French – Engineering & Interface Manager
- Adrian Dennehy – Deputy Interface Manager
- Jonathan Ruddy – Commissioning Manager

who gave a very interesting tour of the onshore facility under construction and briefed the group on the interconnector project. In thanking Eirgrid for the visit, Sean Finlay noted that this major infrastructure project was an exemplar of timely and efficient delivery.



Irish Academy of Engineering team visits Celtic Interconnector project offices

The Celtic Interconnector Project is an ambitious project to link the electricity grids of Ireland and France. It has a total length of 575Km. and 700 MW carrying capacity (The equivalent to providing power tom 450,000 homes). Eirgrid is the Transmission Systems Operator (TSO) responsible for ensuring a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity across the island of Ireland now and in the future.

Rte is the French transmission systems operator managing 105,000 km of high and ultra -high voltage lines across France with interconnections to Belgium, UK, Italy, Spain, Switzerland.

The capacity of the interconnector is 600 MW comprising two submarine cables of 320KV and nestled between them a fibre optic cable.

Planning for such a project is complex involving consents across 3 jurisdictions Ireland, France and the UK.

The main contractor was Nexans and Mott MacDonald has led the project design and environmental assessment for the Ireland onshore element of the overall Celtic Interconnector project.

Milestone dates

- ABP Approval May 2022,
- Foreshore Licence granted August 2022,
- MMO Marine Licence granted September 2022
- All French consents in place September 2022.

The contract between Eirgrid and Rte was signed in November 2022.



The 497 Km. Marine routing was particularly complex to avoid UK territorial waters, SPA's, variable seabed geology and navigate 18 service cable crossings with a max water depth of 100-110 m.



The subsea cables were manufactured in Norway and are expected to be fully completed by 2027



Marine pipelaying vessel AETHRA

The site visit included the Ballyadam onshore convertor station (under construction) with a major convertor hall (in the background to the group photo) and spares building. The subsurface conditions at Ballyadam were challenging, with Boulder Clay underlain by Karstic Limestones.



Site visit kindly hosted by Eirgrid team

Southern Region meeting

The Southern Region meeting at Mott MacDonald's Cork Office was welcomed by Barry Williams MD, who also attended the site visit, and President Sean Finlay thanked all at Mott MacDonald for their kind hospitality.

Agenda items discussed included:

- Report by Tom Leahy on latest Academy developments (based on Council meeting of 14 July 2025)
- Report by Tim Corcoran Chair Infrastructure Committee
- Briefing by Joe Harford FIAE on progress on Parsons Medal 2025 – Event planned for Birr Castle on 16th October 2025.
- DPER meeting and delivery of NDP (Tom Leahy)
- A very interesting discussion on Ireland's Ports-Supporting Offshore Wind Development Working Group chaired by Barry O'Sullivan FIAE.

Save the date – The next meeting of the Southern Region Committee is planned for 25th November 2025 followed by an early Christmas lunch.