



## **GAS COORDINATION GROUP**

### **RULES OF PROCEDURE**

*As adopted by written procedure on 11 January 2012*

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## **RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE GAS COORDINATION GROUP**

THE GAS COORDINATION GROUP,

Having regard to Regulation 994/2010 of 20 October 2010 concerning measures to safeguard security of natural gas supply and repealing Council Directive 2004/67/EC<sup>1</sup>, in particular Article 12,

Having regard to Commission Decision of 11 August 2011 establishing the composition and the operation provisions of the Gas Coordination Group and repealing Commission Decision 2006/791/EC, in particular Article 3,

HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RULES OF PROCEDURE:

### *Article 1*

#### **Convening a meeting**

1. Meetings of the group are convened and chaired by the Commission, who may convene a meeting either on its own initiative, or at the request of a Member State.
2. The Commission shall convene the group as soon as it declares a Union or regional emergency in accordance with Article 11 of Regulation 994/2010.
3. Joint meetings of the group with other groups may be convened to discuss matters falling within their respective areas of responsibility.
4. The working language of the meetings is English, unless specified differently in the invitation letter.

### *Article 2*

#### **Agenda**

1. The Commission shall draw up the agenda and send it to the members of the group.
2. The agenda shall be adopted by the group at the start of the meeting.

### *Article 3*

#### **Forwarding of documents to group members**

1. The Commission shall send the invitation to the meeting and the draft agenda to the group members no later than twenty calendar days before the date of the meeting.
2. The Commission shall send drafts on which the group is consulted and all other working documents to the group members no later than fourteen calendar days before the date of the meeting.
3. In urgent or exceptional cases, the time limits for sending the documentation mentioned in 1 and 2 may be reduced to five calendar days before the date of the meeting. In cases when security of supply is highly endangered, the Commission shall send the relevant documentation to group members as soon as possible.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 295 of 12.11.2010, p. 1

#### *Article 4*

##### **Opinions of the group**

1. As far as possible, the Group shall adopt its opinions or reports by a consensus.
2. In the event of a vote, the consensus is obtained by a simple majority of Member State representatives.

#### *Article 5*

##### **Sub-groups**

1. With the consent of the Commission, the Group may set up sub-groups to examine specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the Group; they shall be disbanded as soon as they have fulfilled those terms of reference.
2. The sub-groups shall report to the group.

#### *Article 6*

##### **Admission of third parties**

1. The Commission may invite experts or observers<sup>2</sup> with special expertise on a matter on the draft agenda to participate in the group's or sub-groups' work where appropriate and/or necessary.
2. Experts or observers are not present when the group adopts an opinion or report.

#### *Article 7*

##### **Written procedure**

1. If necessary, the Group's opinion on a specific question may be delivered via a written procedure. To this end, the Commission sends to the group members the drafts on which the group is being consulted and any other working documents.
2. The opinion is adopted unless a majority of the Member State representatives oppose its adoption in writing. The period set for opposing to a proposal in writing shall not be shorter than 14 calendar days.
3. However, if a simple majority of group members asks for the question to be examined at a meeting of the Group, the written procedure shall be terminated without result and the Commission shall convene a meeting of the group as soon as possible.

#### *Article 8*

##### **Secretariat**

The Commission shall provide secretarial support for the Group and any sub-groups created under Article 5(1) above.

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<sup>2</sup> The status of an observer can be used to invite representatives of other European or international institutions to participate in the group's deliberations.

#### *Article 9*

##### **Summary minutes of the meetings**

Summary minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and the opinions delivered by the group are drafted by the Commission and shared with the members of the Group. The minutes do not mention the individual position of the members during the group's general deliberations.

#### *Article 10*

##### **Attendance list**

At each meeting, the Commission shall draw up an attendance list specifying, where appropriate, the authorities, organisations or bodies to which the participants belong.

#### *Article 11*

##### **Prevention of conflicts of interest**

1. At the start of each meeting, any member whose participation in the group's deliberations would raise a conflict of interest on a specific item on the agenda shall inform the Commission.
2. Members appointed in a personal capacity shall sign a declaration certifying that their participation will not result in conflicts of interest.
3. In the event of such a conflict of interest, the member shall abstain from discussing the items on the agenda concerned and from any vote on these items.

#### *Article 12*

##### **Correspondence**

1. Correspondence relating to the Group shall be addressed to the Commission, for the attention of the Chair.
2. Correspondence for group members shall be sent to the e-mail address which they provide for that purpose.

#### *Article 13*

##### **Transparency**

1. The principles and conditions concerning public access to the group's documents are the same as laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001<sup>3</sup>. It is for the Commission to take a decision on requests for access to those documents. If the request is addressed to a Member State, that Member State shall apply Article 5 of the abovementioned Regulation.
2. The Group's deliberations are confidential.

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<sup>3</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2002, p. 43).

*Article 14*

**Protection of personal data**

All processing of personal data for the purposes of these rules of procedure shall be in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Regulation (EC) 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. (OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1).