



ESB Announces Major Investment in Co Mayo Infrastructure

ESB has announced that it will be spending EURO 52m over the next three years in a major investment programme to ensure that the projected demand for electricity in Co. Mayo is met.

Demand for electricity in Mayo has been growing rapidly over the last number of years. Development plans for the Region indicate that this demand will continue and ESB is making the investment in the infrastructure to meet the present and future needs of the industrial, commercial and domestic sectors. The work will be undertaken by ESB staff based in Co Mayo and the use of contractors. Already extensive work has been taking place throughout the county on networks in the Castlebar area where work on 38kv stations is ongoing.

In order to improve both the reliability of supplies and their quality in terms of voltage, we have been upgrading our lines in North Co Mayo.

This work will be accelerated there this year, following the major agreement we have concluded to allow for the introduction of contractors to supplement ESB's own resources. Locations such as Bangor-Erris will see immediate benefit from this. Plans for 2002 alone are to refurbish approximately 350 km of the local (10,000 volts) distribution network around Belmullet under ESB's Network Renewal Scheme using contractors. There is also significant work planned this year in Achill, Westport and Newport areas in 2002 comprising another 500 km, under the Network Renewal Scheme. This work will bring significant improvements for those customers affected.

There is also work under way to construct new substations at Castlebar (Knockaphunta), Claremorris and Westport. These will provide bulk supply points into the local networks. The Cloon-Castlebar line, when completed, will bring a significant improvement to the voltage quality in Co Mayo. Other developments outside the county, such as the Flagford-Sligo 220kV line, will also improve the quality in County Mayo.

As with all major infrastructure programmes, ESB needs the support of the public to ensure these projects can be completed on time.

North Mayo has experienced some of the most severe storm weather condition that this island has been subjected to in the last number of winters and this has had an impact on local supply continuity. Local ESB staff who live, and are employed, in Co Mayo have given sterling service to restore supply as quickly as possible, working in extreme weather conditions. Because they live locally, they share the awareness of all customers in Co Mayo of the need for upgrades and are committed to this.