

## SUBMISSION FROM IEISS

For several years IESIS has promoted the principle that government decisions for energy policy in general, and for the electricity system in particular, should be based on reliable information gathered by an independent expert national body - see: <http://www.iesisenergy.org>.

To express this more clearly, we have developed the concept of 'third axis thinking' to represent a set of guiding principles that should underpin the work of such a body and indeed should be used to support all government policy planning. Third axis thinking is widely used to minimise risk when working in situations of complex uncertainty.

Guiding principles relevant to the assessment of security of supply for the electricity system in Scotland include:

- Seek to use the most advanced technology/scientific methods that are appropriate to the context;
- Seek expert advice;
- Be sceptical about the reliability of all information that relates to the context. Experts are not always right. Actively seek second or more opinions. Be wary in particular of ideas that are mainly based on intuition, not backed up by reliable information;
- If information is found to be unreliable or if previous decisions are found to be inappropriate, then corrective steps should be taken;
- Adopt a system that is open to audit;
- Use a system approach in that all relevant issues should be considered in making assessments.

We believe that it is only by using such principles that the inherent risks in government policy making for electricity supply can be properly controlled. These risks are explained in the accompanying IESIS submission authored by Sir Donald Miller and Mr Colin Gibson. While the Scottish Government has limited devolved powers in relation to energy planning, the monitoring and planning that it does should be based on third axis principles.

For more information on third axis thinking see: <http://www.iesis.org/thirdaxis/>

For a message to all political parties about needed actions in relation to the GB electricity system see: <http://www.iesisenergy.org/message-to-parties.pdf>