

French Transmission Chief Says Network Is Independent

France's chief of the country's electricity network says it is one of the most independent in Europe and he doubts unbundling it from production will make for a more competitive energy market. "The French power transport grid is the most independent in Europe," says RTE chief Andre Merlin. "We have never been caught favouring our shareholder by the French energy regulator." RTE is 100 per cent owned by government-controlled energy provider Electricite de France with 60 per cent of its profits going to its owner. The European Commission has proposed utilities should sell off their energy networks to improve competition following the completion of an inquiry into competition levels in Europe's energy sector. French law currently allows a share of the state-owned company to be taken over by a public entity. "If we opened RTE's capital it would not have any major impact on the grid's independence," Merlin says.

[Source esaa news]