

UK Energy Prices Rise

United Kingdom Finance Minister Alistair Darling has written to energy regulator Ofgem seeking a meeting to discuss gas and electricity prices, following price increases announced at the beginning of January. The letter welcomes Ofgem's role as an independent regulator, but Darling says that he would like to hear an assessment of gas supply conditions in the UK and Europe, particularly the relationship between wholesale price movements and retail prices. The letter also sought Ofgem's view on the availability of gas supplies from the continent over the rest of the UK winter. Ofgem says it has a regular dialogue with the ministry and would be happy to discuss issues raised by the Minister. "We constantly keep the energy markets under surveillance to make sure they are working effectively for customers, who are our primary concern," Ofgem says. "Over the last five years we have seen this happen and companies with high prices have been punished severely by customers," it adds.

[Source essa news]