

ABB to provide new communications technology for Swiss power utility, Axpo

FOX615 multiplexers to enhance capacity and improve system security

Zurich, Switzerland, June 4, 2013 - To keep pace with increasing demand for power, as well as benefit from the latest advances in technology, Axpo Power AG, a leading Swiss utility, has chosen to use ABB equipment in the expansion of its communications network. The new generation multiplexer, the FOX615, will enhance the capacity and flexibility of Axpo's network, and is fully compatible with the company's existing network management system.

The new devices will add functionality to the existing WAN (wide area network), which serves substations in northeastern Switzerland (at Grynau, Sarelli, and the Ruppenswil power plant). The installations will also provide high-performance communication channels for teleprotection applications, and enable future upgrades to packet-switched technologies, as approvals are granted for utility applications.

Communication plays a key role in coordinating operations in electricity networks. It provides the real-time data services required by most operational networks and supports multiple applications, from teleprotection, operational telephony and SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) to high-speed Internet services for administrative purposes.

Driven by demand for higher bandwidth to accommodate fast-growing Internet, television and telephony services, packet-switched technologies, eg, Ethernet/IP, are used extensively in public telecoms systems. The FOX615, which is utility-hardened and fully approved for mission-critical applications, uses the established circuit-switched technology, but will also support packet-switched technologies as and when these gain acceptance in the industry.

"We are very pleased to be working with Axpo on this expansion project," said Jens Birgersson, head of ABB's Network Management business unit, part of ABB's Power Systems division. "Our emphasis on reliability and technology advancement while protecting investments is in line with the company's own aims to provide reliable, sustainable power supplies to its customers in Switzerland and beyond."

The ability of ABB's new multiplexer to accommodate both circuit- and packet-switched communications technologies make it the ideal choice for customers seeking to enhance existing infrastructure with equipment that is both forward and backward compatible. The new device is also compliant with IEC61850, the international standard for substation automation, which has been widely adopted in the utility sector. This provides a number of specific advantages, including the interoperability of devices from multiple manufacturers.

ABB has supplied several hundred FOX multiplexers to Axpo and other Swiss customers in recent years. The company's comprehensive suite of communication solutions provides a durable foundation for modern power networks and the smarter grids: the intelligent networks needed to handle challenges posed by aging infrastructure and increasing demand for secure, sustainable electricity supplies.

ABB (www.abb.com) is a leader in power and automation technologies that enable utility and industry customers to improve their performance while lowering environmental impact. The ABB Group of companies operates in around 100 countries and employs about 145,000 people.

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For more information please contact:

Head of Communications
ABB Power Products & Power Systems
Tel: +41 43 317 6480
Fax: +41 43 317 6482
harmet.bawa@ch.abb.com