

The value of this project is around 350 MEUR and in order to prevent abuses “it will be overseen” by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

A new system for remote reading of electricity consumption reduces costs, and the meter owners should not go to the teller of power distribution

The Electric Power Industry of Serbia will announce the tender for the purchase of new “smart meters” in the next days by which within two years from their incorporation this public company would know exactly how much it spends, where are the real losses in the electricity delivery, what is the reason and where it happens. The value of this deal is that, otherwise, the cost of EPS, and not the consumer, is about 350 MEUR.

Therefore, for this tender there is a great interest both of domestic producers and competition from abroad. In addition, the introduction of “smart meters” should be financed by loans from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) of 80 MEUR.

Jovan Vujasinovic, president of the Group of equipment producers for electricity measuring in the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, says that they are ready for tender. They bring together 11 national manufacturing companies, spread across Serbia, Nis and Bor to Backa Palanka, with more than 600 employees and 20 MEUR of revenue annually. If “domestic ones” get the job we will open 1,500 new jobs. According to him, this tender on which domestic production should be supported, is great and the last chance for the revival of the electronics industry in Serbia. As a good example of an identical job he represents France, whose Prime minister announced that after the introduction of “smart meters” the domestic industry would get exactly 80 percent of the job, which would create 10,000 new jobs.

Aleksandar Obradovic, director of EPS, says that this case does not refer only on the “smart meters”, but on a complete system for remote reading and management of power consumption.

- This will help households not to come to the tellers of the power distribution and not to complain about the high electricity bills, because it will be the most modern way of automatic metering system, explains the first man in EPS.

At this moment, adds Obradovic, EPS only has accounting losses, which totaled 15 percent. How much losses actually there are on the ground, no one can exactly say, because the EPS system has been totally broken, as the company still has five distribution and 28 branches. Each of these companies has its way for reading the consumption. In many places the electricity is still reading by the system of “two write three remember”, says Obradovic. He admits that there also were obstructions about the tender and the introduction of the ordinary counters why a tender for their acquisition, announced in December 2012th, has not been completed yet.

Various lobbying groups for this great and valuable work were finding loopholes and complained at various bases in order to impugn the selection of the best bidder. Tenders

were always a hot topic, because a lot of money is the game, why none of them has completed the previous director, he says.

The new tender for “smart meters” is announced in cooperation with EBRD.

-They have already got the green light for a technical solution and joint teams of EPS and EBRD work on the harmonization of tender documents, after which they will get tender with EBRD seal what will prevent any potential abuse and the various obstructions to tender end, he says.

-Installing a new, the most modern meter for reading the electricity consumption, EPS will be able in future to monitor power consumption as well as losses from the current source of power, or the places where electricity is imported. It will practically all the time, physically monitor the current flow, which will help to know how many losses there are on each substation, which has been never the case, Obradovic is categorical.

-As so far consumers will have its own meter, just as it will be as mobile phones with software that provides many other benefits. The most important is that the electricity would not be stolen or unpaid, there would not be the illegal connections, because such meters will automatically signal that something is wrong, says Obradovic.

On the conclusion that the domestic meters producers have recently complained asking from EPS the priority in their procurement, as by this they would also employ approximately 1,500 employees, Obradovic said that this tender would be closed to anyone and that also the local factories would get the opportunity.

In the race are Bodiroga, Vojin Lazarevic...

Four companies would be fully able to meet the needs of the market and produce “smart meters” by world class technology, says Vujasinovic.

These are “Sitel”, daughter of the company “Microelectronics” from Banja Luka, EVG owned by former basketball player Dejan Bodiroga, “Enel” of Dragan Vasiljevic from Belgrade and “Meter end control” within “Rudnap group” of Vojin Lazarevic, who entered the top five companies in the world for the production of “smart meters”, he says.

Dragan Vasiljevic, a representative of the company “Enel”, has recently explained that domestic producers usually did not get a job in tenders financed by international financial institutions such as the EBRD or the World Bank, why it was necessary political and Government support to domestic meters producers to get this significant job.