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Press Release

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"Pipe clear for H₂ ": OGE and Nowega start first conversion of a pipeline from natural gas to hydrogen

Under the motto "Pipe free for H₂ ", the long-distance gas network operators Nowega and OGE today celebrated an important step on the way to the hydrogen age in Lower Saxony. For the first time in Germany, the conversion of a long-distance gas pipeline to transport hydrogen was started at OGE's Emsbüren compressor station.

The highlight of the day was a symbolic push of a button: the guests thus gave the signal for OGE's mobile compressor to start extracting natural gas. This involves pumping the gas from the Emsbüren-Bad Bentheim and Bad Bentheim-Legden pipeline sections into another pipeline section. This process will take around two days. Immediately afterwards, the pipeline sections, which are approx. 46 km long in total, are disconnected from the natural gas network. After this, the upgrading measures for the transport of hydrogen will begin, which is expected to take place from 2025. The conversion will enable numerous industrial and SME customers to be connected to the hydrogen supply in the future.

The pipeline sections are part of the GET H2 Nucleus project, and have been selected for funding as IPCEI (Important Project of Common European interest). The Emsbüren-Bad Bentheim section is owned by OGE, the Bad Bentheim-Legden section is owned 50% each by OGE and Nowega. Another Nowega pipeline running from Lingen to Bad Bentheim will be converted to hydrogen from November 2023, and Nowega started building a new pipeline to close the gap in Lingen at the end of September. Both transmission system operators are part of the GET H2 initiative, which aims to establish the core for a nationwide hydrogen infrastructure.

During her visit today, State Secretary Silke Krebs, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Industry, Climate Protection and Energy of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, emphasized the state-wide significance of this conversion: "Hydrogen plays a decisive role on our way to the green transformation of our economy. These first 46 kilometers of hydrogen pipeline will lay the foundation for a



powerful and efficient grid of the future. It will be an important part of our future energy supply and will also help companies in North Rhine-Westphalia to focus their energy strategy more on this important technology for managing the transformation to climate neutrality."

Quote State Secretary Anka Dobslaw, Lower Saxony Ministry for the Environment, Energy and Climate Protection : "Lower Saxony wants to become climate neutral by 2040 and be at the forefront of green hydrogen. To achieve this, we need to convert our gas infrastructure to green gases. Today, we are taking an important step together for the hydrogen network throughout Germany."

"This conversion of a natural gas transmission pipeline to hydrogen for the first time in Germany is a crucial piece of the puzzle for the energy transition and for the German hydrogen network. OGE is proud to take this step together with nowega as the first transmission system operators," said Dr. Thomas Hübener, Member of the Management Board of OGE.

Frank Heunemann, managing director of Nowega, added: "Converting existing pipelines to hydrogen makes it possible to enter the hydrogen economy quickly and cost-effectively. These projects show that cooperation among transmission system operators works and that together we can build a high-performance hydrogen network."

The mayor of Emsbüren, Markus Silies, also welcomed the project: "The planned hydrogen infrastructure will create new development potential for the municipalities. In Emsbüren, the planned hydrogen pipeline runs along the Emslandpark industrial park at the A30/A31 interchange. By providing hydrogen in the future, we can strengthen existing businesses in sustainable production. The hydrogen infrastructure is a clear locational advantage also in the case of inquiries for new company settlements and thus strengthens our region."

About OGE

OGE is one of Europe's leading transmission system operators. With our approximately 12,000 kilometers of pipeline network, we transport gas throughout Germany and, due to our geographical location, we are the



link for gas flows in the European single market. Our approximately 1,450 employees stand for security of supply. We make our network available to all market participants on a non-discriminatory, market-oriented and transparent basis. We shape energy supply. Today and in the energy mix of the future. For more information about the company, please visit www.oge.net.

About Nowega

Nowega GmbH is a long-distance pipeline operator based in Münster. The subsidiary of Erdgas Münster GmbH operates, maintains and markets around 1,500 kilometers of high-pressure gas pipelines. The pipeline network stretches from the Dutch border across Lower Saxony and parts of North Rhine-Westphalia to the Wendland region and is part of the intra-European transport routes for natural gas.