

65 low wind days since March 17



We need a mix of energy which combines renewables with other sources

GMB, the Union for energy workers, reports that there have been more than two months of low wind days (65 days) since the start of March 2017 when wind was supplying less than 10% of the installed and connected wind capacity for more than half of the day to the grid.

From 7 March 2017 every one in 5.6 days has been a low wind day (65 days in total) when the output of the installed and connected wind turbines in the UK have produced less than 10% of their installed and connected capacity for more than half of the day.

There were 138 days when there was at least one period – of half an hour – during the day when wind output was less than 10% of the installed capacity.

For 12 of those days, output was less than 10% of installed capacity for every period during the day. Those days were 10th and 18th March 2017, 2nd and 19th June 2017, 5th and 10th July 2017, 21st, 26th and



31st August 2017, 1st and 17th September 2017 and 11th January 2018.

Over the same period there were also 29 days when solar output in every period of the day was below 10% of the installed capacity. Those days were 18th and 19th October 2017, 20th and 21st November 2017, 5th, 6th, 10th, 13th, 17th, 20th–25th December 2017, 2nd, 4th, 9th, 12th–14th, 20th, 21st, 24th, 27th January 2018, 3rd, 19th February 2018, 1st and 2nd March 2018.

For 341 days in the year, solar output was below 10% of installed capacity for more than half of the day.

Justin Bowden, GMB National Secretary, said:

“Renewable sources of energy are really intermittent. There were 138 days in the past 12 months when there was at least one period – of a half hour– during the day when wind output was less than 10% of the installed capacity.

“There were also 341 days over same period when solar was supplying less than 10% of installed capacity to the national electricity grid for more than 12 hours a day. When this happens cannot be predicted, so back up energy sources have to be available when demand for electricity is high.

“These are the facts for the 12 months to 8 March 2018 and facts are stubborn things. It is the facts, not the hype, which should determine the UK’s energy policy decisions.

“The wind and solar fleets combined are a very valuable addition as UK based energy sources in that they are carbon free and are a positive help with the UK’s balance of payments.

“That they are intermittent should not be a point of contention but a reason why base load lower carbon gas and zero carbon nuclear energy sources are essential for a balanced and secure low emissions future. Anyone who disputes this is axe grinding.

“If we are to address the reality of climate change – whilst keeping our country’s lights turned on, our homes heated and our economy working – then we have to face up to the fact that we need a mix of energy which combines renewable sources, like wind and solar, with the reliable base load electricity capacity that comes from gas and zero carbon nuclear, to see us through all those times when the wind doesn’t blow and the sun doesn’t shine.

“Those advocating a renewables only energy policy cannot just shrug their shoulders on cloudy, windless days, or when it is dark, and pretend that more windmills and solar panels on their own can keep the lights on. They have to accept that unless and until there is a scientific breakthrough on carbon capture or solar storage, then a balanced energy supply mix –which includes nuclear and gas as the only reliable shows in town – is a reality.”



Press office

07958 156846

press.office@gmb.org.uk

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info@gmb.org.uk

