

# FERC Fives – Brian Gemmell, VP, Strategy and Performance, FERC Jurisdiction

**Author:** Nathan

Brian Gemmell joined National Grid on January 2 in the newly created position of VP, Strategy and Performance, FERC Jurisdiction, overseeing Strategy & Performance (S&P), Transmission Commercial Services (TCS) and Transmission Line Services New England (TLS). He is responsible for delivering safe operating performance, positive financial results, delivery of the capital investment plan, and successful engagement of the jurisdiction's external stakeholders. Immediately prior to coming to National Grid, Brian was VP of Transmission Solutions at Siemens Energy, Inc. and was based in Orlando, FL.

## **What drew you to National Grid?**

National Grid is a very well-known utility in the United States and the UK – first known to me when I worked at Scottish Power as “big brother south of the Border”! I was always highly impressed with the thought leadership and growth aspirations of the company in the UK, US and beyond. I wanted to be part of that growth, especially so in such an exciting period of market, technology and regulatory change that the US is experiencing right now. It's fun to work in energy with so many innovations, especially in renewables.

## **What is your initial vision for your teams?**

There are four parts to my initial vision:

The first is coming up with the strategy playbook to grow both the electric and gas businesses within the FERC jurisdiction – the familiar term internally is *Growing the Core*. That is the foundation and life blood of the regulated utility assets.

The second is proactively shaping the debate as it relates to our part of the business, one example being off shore wind. Massachusetts recently enacted a law requiring the state's utilities to contract for a total of 1,600 MW of offshore wind by 2027. Shortly thereafter, the governor of NY announced a 2,400 MW goal for offshore wind by 2030. All of this wind requires transmission to interconnect it to the mainland grid, which could be accomplished several different ways. We are actively participating in the discussion in these two states with the goal of bringing our considerable expertise with

submarine cable transmission to bear for the benefit of energy customers.

The third is to manage the connections of existing and the interconnection of new customers, and this is achieved by robust stakeholder management of the TCS group.

The fourth is to deliver on the capital investment plan specifically through enhanced long-term planning. An important aspect is the execution of the overhead line construction and maintenance in New England with the TLS group.

**Coming from Orlando are you prepared for the Northeast weather?**

I'm from Scotland where the winters can be just as cold as they are here. My wife is originally from the Boston area, and we also live in upstate New York, so we are ready for the winters. My first ever visit to the US was in 1992, when I came over to study, arriving in the middle of Massachusetts winter – my first experience of “wind chill factor”. I don't like to be a hermit in the winter so we do lots of outside activities with our children, including building snowmen. I've skied a couple times and both my children are looking forward to learning how to snowboard.

**What has been your proudest achievement to date – personally, professionally or both?**

Personally I got my U.S. citizenship last year, which I'm very proud of. Professionally I started my career in the utility business and during the past 16 years in the US I've gained the business and leadership experience necessary to be considered for the role I now have at National Grid. I'm prepared to bring what I've learned to build upon and enhance the solid core that National Grid has created.

**Is there something outside of work about which you are passionate?**

I enjoy giving back by sharing my knowledge and experiences with schools, especially related to science, engineering, and math. I've visited fifth-grade classes and expressed the importance of these subjects to students at that level, but more often I have visit colleges and give technical presentations and career advice. I get a lot out of those discussions and selling how exciting and rewarding a career in engineering can be. Qualified engineers are in short supply, and we all need to do our utmost to promote this industry to the next generation.

**Date:** 02-03-2017

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