Industrial Energy Efficiency Networks

WHAT THEY ARE

Industrial Energy Efficiency Networks (EENs) are an information instrument in the industry policy package. EENs differ in structure, but they generally consist of a group of energy managers from different industrial sites that meets regularly to share knowledge and experience on improving energy efficiency in the industrial sector.

EENs can operate solely to share information between peers, or they can include elements such as energy reporting and the setting of energy saving targets. These networks act to guide industries in becoming more efficient, in line with government policies, and to improve government insight into industry for more effective policy development.

There are over 1 000 Industrial Energy Efficiency Networks worldwide, and this number is growing as governments seek to expand their policies and industries seek to reduce costs, energy use and emissions.

To establish an EEN, the government must form a network structure to identify and to remove the different barriers to increase industrial energy efficiency. This involves a programme to design, co-ordinate and manage the network.

Maintaining government control over the network, which can be managed either internally or through an external body, ensures alignment of goals between government policy and the network participants and ensures that government has access to the network for feedback on policy and to gather data and information on industrial energy consumption.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT

An EEN may take several forms, but successful EENs report the following components:

- Industry expert(s) facilitate the exchange.
- Membership is built around energy consumption size/profile.
- Members make a concrete commitment to improving energy efficiency and emissions reductions, often supported by their registration to an energy management standard or process.
- Special working groups or focus areas are created to share experiences and challenges on energy efficient design, specific technologies, process improvements and utilities.
- Tools and standardised guidelines are provided to lower implementation and transaction costs and to ensure a high quality of energy savings.
- Knowledge sharing opportunities and/or training are offered for network members and for the staff in the participating companies.

HOW TO MONITOR

Ongoing monitoring, targeting and evaluation are essential elements to the operation of an Industrial EEN, both at the individual member level and at the overall network governance level. Therefore, a defined methodology, in line with the policy objectives, must be determined when the EEN is established. It should be reviewed and updated regularly.

Within the EEN, the members must agree to:

- An initial energy review/audit for each site taking part in the EEN
- The setting of short term (one year) and longer energy efficiency targets (five to 10 years)
- Annual reporting, monitoring and benchmarking
- Annual energy efficiency target review.

Typically, information and data gathered in the process of monitoring and evaluation is then collated and analysed by the network operator and compiled into a published annual report.